UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

The drivers of service sabotage amongst

frontline employees

William Nunes

96124017

A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration

7 November 2016

ABSTRACT

Frontline employees play a crucial role in service industries and the rapid expansion of these industries and their contribution to GDP in developing countries is becoming increasingly important. The "darker side" of service dynamics are the acts of sabotage by employees, which damage the service experience. Despite the growing prevalence of service industries and the acknowledgement that acts of service sabotage exist, to date there has been little published data on the drivers of service sabotage among frontline retail staff.

The objective of this research was to explore the drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline employees in a retail context. Eighteen qualitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted, using the long interview method. Respondents included senior management as well as frontline employees.

The study established eight drivers of service sabotage in the sample population. The drivers encompass a broad range of factors, both internal and external to the organisation, and provide useful starting points for further improvement in overall service levels. The study includes a discussion of the results and suggestions for management and for future research.

KEYWORDS

service sabotage, deviant behaviour, frontline employees

i

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Table of Contents

iii

Chapter 3: Research Methodology 28

vi

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Background and Problem Setting

1.1 Introduction

This study investigates the drivers of service sabotage in the retail context in South Africa. Within the retail industry, service encounters between employee and customers are common. These occur in a variety of situations, for example, when customers wish to locate products within a store environment and request assistance from a service-counter employee, or when they enquire at the information kiosk or transact at the checkout.

The aim of this study is to establish the drivers, as identified in the study by Harris and Ogbonna (2012), in a South African retail context. The study also aims to identify any other drivers that are unique to the retail industry in South Africa.

The research paper begins with a brief background, a research motivation and research questions. A literature review that locates the theoretical base of the study will follow, as well as an overview of previous studies. A discussion of the research design and methodology will follow, after which the findings and conclusion of the study will be presented.

1.2 Background and research motivation

Previous studies by Harris and Ogbonna (2012); Chi, Tsai and Tseng (2013); Chen, Lei and Hao (2015); and Harris (2013) have focused on service sabotage in Western settings. Studies were conducted in the hospitality, airline and hairdressing sectors. The researcher is unaware of any study of service sabotage within a retail setting within South Africa.

Service sabotage focuses on the negative aspects of employee service behaviour. Service sabotage studies have shown that it is a common occurrence amongst employees. For example, a study by Harper (1990) found that up to 75% of staff have engaged in a form of deviant behaviour. Robinson and Bennett's (1995) study of deviant behaviour established that 33% to 75% of acts by employees are deviant. These acts manifested themselves as stealing, cheating and other forms of service sabotage. Similarly, a study by Harris and Ogbonna (2002) found that up to 85% of frontline employees had engaged in service sabotage the week prior to their study. A study by Slora (1991) found that the range for deviant behaviour by employees can

2

vary from 5% to as much as 96%. Chen et al. (2015) argued for the importance of improving service quality through service-staff behaviour was essential for ensuring repeat customer business, which will ultimately affect the financial performance of the firm. The financial costs for service sabotage are difficult to establish, Murphy (1993, cited in Harris & Ogbonna, 2012) suggest that sabotage behaviour by employees cost US businesses up to 200 billion US dollars annually. These figures highlight the prevalence of acts of service sabotage and further support research to promote a greater understanding of these acts.

Service-related activities account for approximately 80% of the gross domestic product of developed countries (Gustafsson, Aksoy & Brady, 2015). From a South African perspective, service industries accounted for 68.1% of GDP in 2014, up from 60.4% in 1994 (World Bank Data, 2016). These figures illustrate the growth and importance of the service sector.

Within a South African context, the need to build "powerhouse" service sectors, as well as ensuring that these are the dominant sectors, is a common view held by business stakeholders and government (Maswanganyi, 2015). The growth and development of the service sector in South Africa has been widely argued to be a key driver of growth, since the country has a competitive advantage in service industries (Schwab, Sala-i-Martin & Brende, 2015).

The South African retail industry can be defined, according to the Standard Industrial Classification from Statistics Africa, as the sale of untransformed new or used goods to the general public. It excludes the sale of food and drink for on-premises consumption and excludes the automotive industry (Economic Analysis Unit of SRM Gauteng Province, 2012). Thus, the context for this study, a major food retailer within South Africa, fits well with the retail industry classification.

In their study of an Italian retailer, Martinelli and Balboni (2012) argued that high levels of service are an essential component of a retailer's winning strategy. It is necessary to differentiate the service provided by the retailer's frontline staff in an increasingly competitive market (Lindblom, Kajalo, & Mitronen, 2016), with demanding customers, and new and disruptive retail channels such as online shopping. Frontline employees are essential to the establishment of the customer's perceptions of service quality, as they represent an organisation to its customers (Kim & Aggarwal, 2016).

The importance of the interpersonal service relationships that exist between the

3

employee and the customer are critical in a service setting (Patterson & Baron, 2010). These relationships have become engrained through popular sayings such as "The employee is the service" and "The employee represents the service brand" (Patterson & Baron, 2010). Poor customer service was historically related to the employee's inability to meet the customers expected standards (Patterson & Baron, 2010).

Customer service programmes have been established to address only one side of the problem, namely the behavioural demonstration by the employee towards the customer. In their study, Nguyen, Groth, Walsh and Hennig-Thurau (2014) found that service scripts improve the service behaviour of frontline staff towards customers. Very little work has been done on the dark side of customer service, establishing the reasons why employees knowingly and willing engage in poor service performance (Harris & Ogbonna, 2002, 2006, 2012; Lawrence & Robinson, 2007).

The work by Harris and Ogbonna (2012) established the motives for service sabotage within a hospitality outlet in a Western setting and identify five drivers, namely "financial", "customer-driven", "stress-related", "group reasons" and "employee-firm" orientated motives. The developed Western setting of their study differs vastly from a developing South African setting.

Kim and Aggarwal (2016) argue for the importance of understanding the role of culture and cultural diversity in different countries. They further state that customer marketing initiatives may, in fact, emphasise cultural differences, thereby creating unintended consequences for frontline employees. The socio-economic climate is vastly different within South Africa. This country has the highest income inequalities in the world, which place considerable strain on the poorest in society (Van der Berg, 2010). Effects of decades of the apartheid regime have had a devastating effect on the marginalization of society and unequal development based on race within South Africa. This has led to an unequal education system which has further polarised society and resulted in a skills shortage amongst frontline employees.

The research further answers the call by Ostrom, Parasuraman, Bowen, Patricio and Voss (2015), in which they argue that an understanding of employees and organisational issues are critical to successful service. It is defined as one of their twelve service-research priorities that frontline employees will continue to play a crucial role in service encounters.

4

From the discussion above, there is an obvious need to investigate the drivers of service sabotage within a South African retail environment.

1.3 Problem statement

Poor customer service is a problem in all service industries, particularly the retail industry. Organisations in South Africa continue to spend large amounts of money on programmes to address the problem, without necessarily understanding the drivers of the poor service behaviour. The researcher is unaware of any studies that have focused on the drivers of service sabotage within the retail industry in South Africa.

This study aimed to establish the drivers of service sabotage within the retail environment in South Africa and, in so doing, to contribute to the body of knowledge on service sabotage within the retail industry in a South African context.

1.4 Purpose statement

The purpose of this research was to investigate, analyse and understand the underlying reasons which drive service sabotage by frontline staff within a South African retail environment.

1.5 Research objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To identify factors which drive frontline staff to provide poor service

- To gain insight into the underlying reasons which drive service sabotage behaviour in frontline retail staff.

1.6 Research questions

These questions the researcher sought to answer are:

- What are the drivers of service sabotage within retail in a South African context?
- How relevant are societal factors as a driver within the South African context?

5

1.7 Research scope and approach

The research was conducted in the retail sector of a large, grocery-focused retailer operating within South Africa. Access to both senior management and to the frontline employees was secured for this purpose.

An exploratory, qualitative research design was selected for this research. An exploratory design allowed new questions to be asked and new insights to be gathered, so that the topic could be approached from a different perspective (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Creswell (2009) supports the emergent nature of a qualitative design, in which the initial plan was reviewed as the researcher progressed through the various phases of the project.

1.8 Contribution of the research

The researcher aimed to make a theoretical contribution to the body of knowledge on service sabotage by establishing the drivers of service sabotage in the retail industry in a South African context.

As a practical contribution the research aims to highlight topics which could be considered by management practitioners to pursue and implement in their operations.

1.9 Limitations

The study was limited to a large grocery-focused retailer in South Africa, and was not necessarily applicable across the broader service sector. Due to time and cost constraints, it focused on a single geographical region.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate and analyse the drivers of service sabotage within a retail context. Harris and Ogbonna (2012) described these acts as ingrained mental behaviours that manifest largely as a result of resistance against the organisation. It was therefore essential that the underlying reasons that drive these behaviours were identified.

In order to understand these drivers of service sabotage, the study was located within two broad theories, namely Job Demands-Resource theory and counter-productive work behaviour (CWB). Job Demands-Resource (JD-R) theory provided a model that assisted in understanding elements in the characteristics of a job and the impact they could have on employees' well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Its relevance to the study was that job demands could impose strain on an employee; if resources were absent, they could lead to increased strain and exhaustion, manifesting as stress and resulting in counter-productive work behaviour (CWB), such as sabotage.

2.2 Definitions of terms and concepts

The major terms used in this study are defined, namely, service sabotage, Job Demands–Resource theory and Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB). The latter is the over-arching term used to describe deviant employee behaviour, of which service sabotage is one example.

2.2.1 Service sabotage

A deliberate and intentional act is defined as service sabotage, so it was important to determine whether an act of service sabotage by a frontline employee was intentional or a failure of protocol. This view was supported by Harris and Ogbonna (2012), who maintained that service sabotage referred to "organisational members' behaviours that are intentionally designed to negatively affect service".

7

2.2.2 Job Demands–Resource (JD-R)

Research by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) provided the over-arching JD-R model which confirmed that every occupation has its unique risk-factors associated with job stress. These researchers classified such factors into two categories: demands and resources.

2.2.3 Counter-productive Work Behaviour (CWB)

Counter-productive work behaviour was a central theme of this study and referred to "violational acts (by employees) that harm or intend to harm organisations and their stakeholders (e.g. clients, co-workers, customers, and supervisors)" (Spector & Fox, 2005, pp. 151-152). A number of researchers have used a variety of terms to describe these behaviours, such as "employee deviance" (Robinson & Bennett, 1995) and "dysfunctional behaviour" (Griffin, O'Leary-Kelly & Collins, 1998) to name two. A number of terms have also been used by researchers to describe work behaviour that went beyond acceptable conduct in the workplace, but CWB was the over-arching term applied throughout this study to refer to any counter-productive behaviour by employees that went beyond the norms of the organisation and reduced its effectiveness (Appelbaum, Iaconi & Matousek, 2007).

Within the CWB construct, there were two broad areas of focus: CWB aimed at individuals (CWB-I) and CWB that targeted the organisation (CWB-O). Acts of service sabotage directed at customers were dealt with by Klotz & Buckley (2013), who located their study within CWB-O literature (Klotz & Buckley, 2013). An overview of this theory, which pertained to both JD–Resource Model theory and CWB, is presented in the next section.

2.3 Job Demands–Resource Model Theory

Various studies have examined the significant effect that job characteristics can have on an employee's well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Zablah, Franke, Browne and Bartholomew (2012) argued that frontline service employees were regularly involved in unscripted and challenging customer interactions that added to job stress and disengagement.

A model was required to assist frontline employees in coping better with challenging

8

work environments and increased customer demands - one that brought together the demands and resources available to employees.

Within the services industry, the JD-R model was originally developed by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner and Schaufeli (2001) to understand the antecedents to burnout. Balducci, Schaufeli and Fraccaroli (2011) argued that the numerous studies and empirical findings of the JD-R model could explain the outcome of diverse stress processes. These outcomes included counter-productive work behaviour (CWB), which was a symptom of job stress. The link between the JD-R model and CWB will be discussed later in this chapter. An overview of the JD-R model follows.

The JD-R model was an over-arching model based on two early models, namely the Demand Control Model (DCM) and the Effort Reward Imbalance model (ERI). The basic assumptions for both the DCM and ERI model were that job demands led to job strain (and in extreme cases, to health issues), because specific job resources were lacking. In the DCM, this was related to autonomy, and in the ERI model to salary, esteem reward and security/career opportunities.

Bakker and Demerouti (2007) argued that the simplicity of the DCM and ERI model was cause for concern, since far more variables had been identified as job demands and job resources. As a result, the application and relevance of the two models to the universe of different occupations was also questioned. In different occupations, a combination of other demands, and a lack of resources other than those incorporated into the two models might have affected employee well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). A more integrated and holistic model was required, one that allowed multiple variables in both demands and resources to be incorporated - hence the JD-R model.

The JD-R model postulated that every job might have unique risk factors related to job stress. These factors could be grouped into two categories, job demands and job resources (Bakkar & Demerouti, 2007) and were applicable across diverse occupations (Balducci et al., 2011).

2.3.1 Job demands

Job demands referred to the physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of a job, which required continuous physical or psychological effort and skill. These were, therefore, associated with physical and psychological costs. Examples included long hours, concentrated pressure of work and emotionally intensive

9

interactions with customers (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

In addition, poorly-designed jobs or sustained job demands impacted employees' health by depleting their mental or physical resources, or both. In order to avert these effects, employees resorted to performance-protection strategies that could include either sympathetic activation or the individual's active control of evaluating information. The greater the effort made, the more the psychological cost was likely to be to the individual. Bakker and Demerouti (2007) suggested that primary task performance was reduced and several indirect motives for performance decline could be observed. These might have involved strategy adjustment, such as increased selectivity, and risky choices, due to higher levels of fatigue (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Within the current study, the factors that place additional demand-driven burdens on an employee could have assisted in determining their impact as potential drivers of service sabotage.

2.3.2 Job resources

Job resources referred to the physical, psychological, social and organisational factors that were functional in achieving work goals. The combination of physiological and psychological costs was found to be reduced through job demands and/or stimulating personal development, growth and learning (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job resources encouraged a motivational process, leading to improved work engagement (Balducci et al. 2011), low cynicism and exceptional performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Motivation was intrinsic, developed through the employee's growth, learning and development, or extrinsic, as a result of the workplace fostering increased dedication and engagement within the employee (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Establishing the current level of job resources available to frontline staff could have provided insights into factors that could increase frontline employee's resources, thereby reducing CWB. An understanding of the development of CWB and its importance as a framework for analysing deviant behaviours was crucial. It is discussed in the next section.

10

2.4 Counter-productive work behaviour (CWB) theory

2.4.1 Introduction

The past decade has seen a growing interest in the study of counter-productive work behaviour (CWB), primarily because of its increased occurrence globally, as well as the severe damage it has caused to organisations (Behaviour & Central, 2012; Roy, 2012; Klotz & Buckley, 2013).

Hunter and Penny (2014) argued that most of the research in this area focused on understanding the antecedents of CWB directed at the organisation and its internal targets, namely supervisors and employees. Hunter and Penny (2014) also emphasised the importance of understanding the antecedents of CWB directed at individuals external to the company.

Customer-directed CWB has a greater potential to affect an organisation's bottom line than interpersonal or organisational CWB (Hunter & Penny, 2014). Understanding the drivers of customer-directed CWB therefore allowed organisations to develop strategies to counter these costly behaviours. Raman, Sambasivan and Kumar (2016) argued that it was the immediacy of CWB in the service sector that differentiated it from non-service sectors. Raman et al., (2016) established that the negative impact of CWB was immediate and was bound to affect a customer's perception of the organisation.

Yang, Johnson, Zhang, Spector and Xu (2013) argued that, regardless of the target of CWB, its pernicious effects on employee well-being and company performance warranted an investigation into the antecedents of such behaviour. To gain a better understanding of the drivers of service sabotage, a model or framework that explored and explained CWB was critical.

2.4.2 Background to CWB theory

The research conducted by Robinson and Bennett (1995) was a crucial step towards consolidating isolated theories on deviant behaviours. Robinson and Bennet (1995) argued that a typology of employee deviance could encompass previous studies. By focusing on specific types of deviant behaviour, it was possible to systematically develop a theory-based study of employee deviance.

In an earlier study, Mangione and Quinn (1974) classified deviant workplace

11

behaviour in two broad categories, namely, property deviance and production deviance. Property deviance referred to acts by employees such as damaging property or taking supplies from the employer – in other words, theft (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). These authors went on to discuss production deviance, which referred to behaviours that went against the norms of work in the organisation. These included behaviours such as absenteeism, sick-leave abuse and poor work. These acts described deviance directed at an organisation. Robinson and Bennett (1995) argued that further categorisation of deviant behaviour on the part of employees should take into account behaviour directed at individuals, and where possible, identify some relationship between them.

Through the use of multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) Robinson and Bennett (1995) developed an extensive classification of deviant behaviours. MDS was a scaling technique that provides a visual representation of the pattern of proximities (i.e. similarities or distance) among a set of objects. This technique not only highlighted the similarities and differences between deviant behaviours, but also recorded their underlying dimensions. Robinson and Bennett (1995) also maintained that this methodology reduced researcher bias and allows empirically derived typologies to be obtained from individuals who were oblivious of the purpose of the study. Hout, Goldinger and Bradley (2014) supported the argument that MDS required no prior knowledge by research participants.

The two-dimensional typology of Robinson and Bennett, (1995) is presented in Figure 1 below.

12

Figure 1: Typology of Deviant Workplace Behaviour
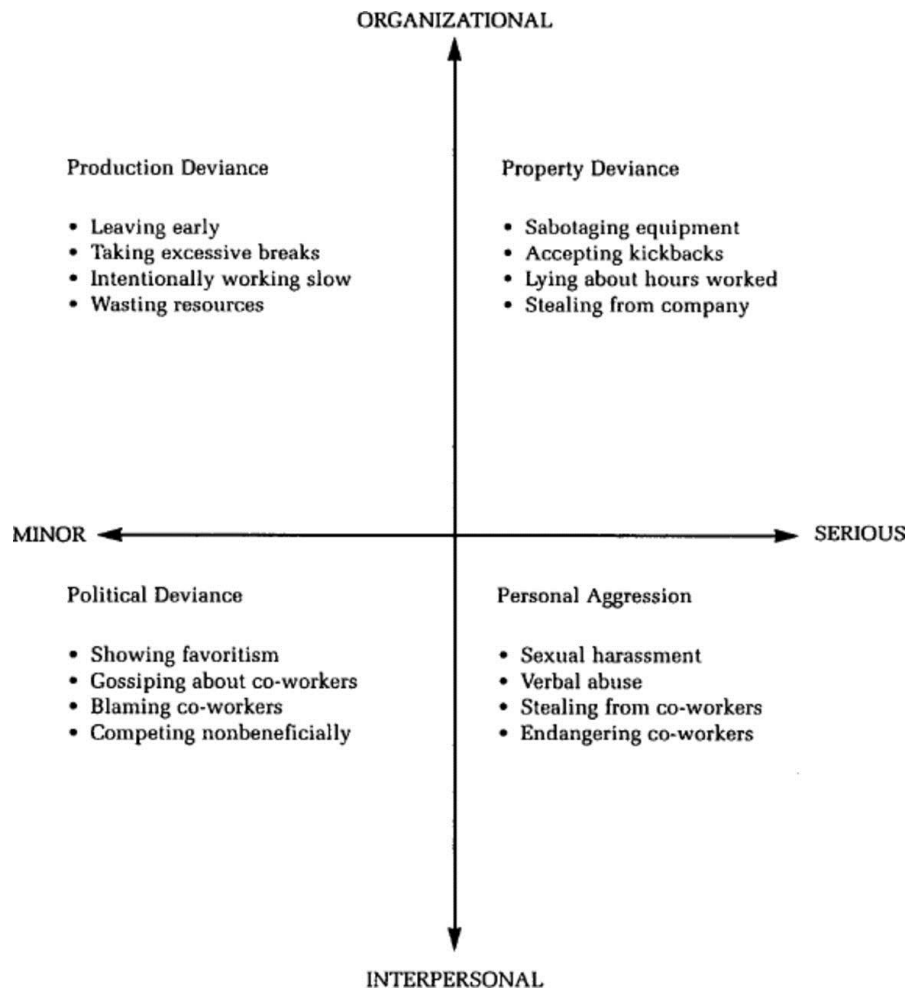
Figure 1 shows workplace deviance occurring along two dimensions. The first dimension of Robinson and Bennett's (1995) typology was the "organisational-interpersonal dimension", with the axis ranging from deviance directed at the individual and deviance directed at the organisation. The second dimension of the typology demonstrated the severity of workplace deviance, ranging from minor to serious.

Robinson and Bennett's (1995) research classified deviant workplace behaviour into four quadrants, namely production deviance, property deviance, political deviance and personal aggression. "Organisational deviance" was a combination of behaviours between the individual and the organisation, which included lateness, theft and sabotage (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). "Interpersonal deviance", on the other hand,

13

included behaviours that were evident between individuals in the organisation, and comprised acts such as arguing, acting rudely and physical aggression (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

Robinson and Bennett's contribution to earlier work was made through the addition of the two previously neglected interpersonal deviance behaviours, namely "political deviance" and "personal aggression". Robinson and Bennett (1995) also argued that workplace deviance research should address socially-directed forms of deviance in response to a broader concern about decreasing social injustice in workplaces.

In conducting this study, the researcher aimed to establish whether social factors within the South African context were drivers of service sabotage. In exploring the drivers of service sabotage on the part of frontline staff, the focus was on acts directed at the organisation, namely production and property deviance. A review of CWB organisational factors is presented in the next section.

2.5 Counter-productive work behaviour - organisational factors

A variety of CWB–O is discussed in this study, across a broad range of industries including hospitality, call-centres, public organisations and banks. The prevalence of workplace deviance is not limited to private organisations. In the United States, 71% of employees in public organisations have experienced incivility in the past five years, as recorded by Alias, Rasdi, Ismail and Sama (2013). The list compiled by these researchers was by no means exhaustive, but provided a few examples of CWB-O and supported the work done by Harris and Ogbonna (2012).

2.5.1 Absenteeism, theft and workplace Incivility

Robinson and Bennett's framework advanced studies into CWB. Everton, Jolton and Mastrangelo (2007) investigated staff behaviour that was due to managers not behaving in a fair and equitable manner. They explored various forms of deviant behaviour such as absenteeism, theft and workplace incivility, in various settings, using Robinson and Bennet's typology (1995). Everton et al. (2007) established absenteeism as a form of production deviance and maintained that the disposition an employee had towards their job was not very significant. They argued that an employee's disposition was more closely related to the ability of the organisation to

14

create the right climate by reducing frustrations and streamlining processes. This supported the driver "employee-firm" orientated motives, identified by Harris and Ogbonna (2012) as causing harm to the organisation and/or to management.

Research by Harris and Ogbonna (2012) also identified group norms as a driver of deviant behaviour and was supported by the work by Everton et al. (2007), in which they stated that the deviant behaviour, theft, was likely to lessen when stealing was not a group norm.

Workplace incivility refers to behaviour that is discourteous and insulting. Although it was a fairly recent phenomenon, Everton et al. (2007) argued that incivility could lead to deviant behaviour directed at either individuals or the organisation. Within the current study, the daily interaction of frontline staff with customers and management in the workplace could have confirmed workplace and customer incivility as a driver of service sabotage. This would support the validity of Robertson and Bennett's model (1995) by integrating the deviance behaviours and relating them to the four quadrants. The next section expands on factors that have been studied and are known to predict CWB-O. The focus is on factors related to both individuals and organisations.

2.6 Predicating workplace deviance – individual-related factors

A number of individual-related factors were precursors that enabled prediction of workplace deviant behaviour. Alias et al. (2013) investigated job satisfaction as a moderator for four factors influencing CWB behaviour. These factors were negative affectivity, agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional intelligence.

Emotionally-based resources were described as variables that could intensify or reduce negative emotional reactions to inequitable treatment and influence the intended mistreatment-sabotage relationship (Wang, Liao, Zhan & Shi, 2011). Further studies have identified additional individual-related factors such as self-efficacy, tenure and mobility and locus of control, which are discussed below.

2.6.1. Negative affectivity

Negative affectivity refers to the extent to which individuals perceive levels of poignant emotions such as anger and anxiety. Individuals with high negative

15

affectivity were found to be more prone to perceive something as negative (Luo & Bao, 2013). In addition, they were perceived negatively by co-workers and thus participated in further deviant behaviour (Alias et al., 2013).

Wang et al. (2011) examined the daily relationship between customers' mistreatment of employees and the resultant employee sabotage of customers. Their study, located in a call-centre in China, focused on the daily relationship between 131 call-centre agents and their customers. It investigated emotion-based resources at the individual and unit level, as well as on resource-based moderators for the customer-employee relationship. In their study, Wang et al. (2011) looked at the effects of two emotion regulators, namely negative affectivity and self-efficacy.

Their study established that employees who had higher negative affectivity were more likely to engage in daily customer sabotage as a result of daily mistreatment by customers. This supported the findings of Alias et al. (2013), who found that negative affectivity was associated with daily acts of sabotage in the workplace (Chi et al.,2015). These findings confirmed that staff with negative attitudes would generally feel anxious when interacting with people (Alias et al. 2013).

Luo and Bao (2013) researched the effect of negative affectivity on rumination, which is concerned with an individual's passive assessment of the symptoms of distress and the possible causes and manifestations of these symptoms. Their study focused on call-centre agents and confirmed that negative affectivity had a direct effect on rumination. Wang et al. (2011) established that stress for employees in the service industry emanated mainly from daily interactions with customers. As established earlier in this chapter, stress has an effect on emotional exhaustion and rumination. Luo and Bao (2013) established that rumination was positively related to emotional exhaustion and sabotage.

Within the current study, available support, as well as workplace atmosphere, was critical in allowing staff who were faced with daily sabotage by customers, time and resources to regroup.

2.6.2 Agreeableness

Agreeableness was another salient and important personality construct that was considered a prominent motivational facet in deviant behaviour. Agreeableness represented the degree to which one avoided hurting others and accommodated the

16

rules (Bowling, Burns, Stewart & Gruys, 2011). As CWB-O focused on harm to the organisation, employees who were high in agreeableness were less likely to engage in CWB-O behaviour. Alias et al. (2013) and Bowling et al. (2011) established that individuals with low agreeableness were more prone to deviant work behaviour. As a result, the extent to which frontline staff accepted the rules and processes, as formulated by the organisation, was crucial in determining CWB.

2.6.3 Conscientiousness

Individuals with high conscientiousness were expected to be orderly and self-disciplined and exert greater effort (Bowling et al., 2011), while those low in conscientiousness were expected to be involved in destructive workplace behaviour (Alias et al., 2013). These findings confirmed that individuals with low conscientiousness were more likely to display deviant behaviour in the workplace. Within the current study, the awareness of the staff in following the prescribed processes automatically highlighted their level of conscientiousness.

2.6.4 Emotional intelligence

Individuals with high emotional intelligence benefited the organisation through positive customer interactions. They were driven by efficiency, the ability to control their emotions and drive favourable behavioural responses (Alias et al. 2013). Emotional stability was previously studied by Mount, Ilies and Johnson (2006), who found that emotional stability did not account for any significant predictor for CWB. Alias et al. (2013) established that employees with lower emotional intelligence were more likely to act deviously. In the current study, emotional intelligence was not measured.

2.6.5 Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy, in terms of emotional regulation, refers to an individual's ability to successfully regulate their own emotions (Wang et al., 2011; Chi et al., 2015). In terms of self-efficacy, Wang et al. (2011) found that employees with higher levels of self-efficacy, who were faced with abuse from customers, might have been more willing to invest effort in regulating emotions such as anger than employees with

17

lower levels of self-efficacy. Wang et al. (2011) argued that self-efficacy moderated the relationship between daily mistreatment by customers and responding acts of sabotage. Chi et al. (2015) argued that when employees experienced negative moods during the day, they were less motivated to control their behaviours. The effort expended to complete various tasks drained the resources used to concentrate and perform these tasks.

Fida, Paciello, Tramontano; Fontaine, Barbaranelli and Farnese (2015) established that employees used moral disengagement as a social-cognitive process which psychologically altered the wrongful and deviant behaviour. This was achieved by dissociating the negative qualities that would hinder the completion of the act, a mechanism used to justify or excuse the behaviour without the employee experiencing feelings of guilt, as they regulated their emotions through moral disengagement.

2.6.6 Tenure and mobility

Wang et al. (2011) argued that tenure as a moderator affected the predisposition to service sabotage. Harris and Ogbonna (2006), however, had already established that the desire of employees to pursue a career within a firm decreased as an antecedent in their study of frontline employees.

Mobility refers to both intra- and inter-organisational transfers spanning the working life of an individual (Wei & Sei, 2013). These researchers found that an individual's perceived mobility, based on the availability of alternative job opportunities, varied among employees and had a direct effect on their tendency to engage in CWB behaviour. Employees with higher perceived mobility were less likely to engage in CWB, as alternatives existed beyond the organisation. Those with lower perceived mobility engaged in CWB in order to get even with the organisation (Wei & Sei, 2013). The employee's awareness of alternatives reduced actions of withdrawal as a result of abusive supervision. The subordinates' perceived mobility did not moderate the relationship between abusive supervision and production deviance and sabotage. The study suggested that, instead of self-control, the interpersonal interaction with supervisors, particular with those who were abusive, had the greatest effect on CWB-O by employees.

These findings on perceived mobility corroborated with the antecedents established

18

by Harris and Ogbonna (2006) concerning the employees' perception of labour-market fluidity: employees were less likely to engage in acts of service sabotage if alternative employment was readily available.

The role of supervisors has been highlighted as a key factor in determining employees CWB behaviour. The manner in which the employee managed to regulate these emotions was critical, and an understanding of the employees' interpretations of these emotions was important in establishing reasons for CWB.

2.6.7 Locus of control

Locus of control refers to the manner in which individuals translate the situations they encountered and the extent to which they attributed this to internal or external factors. Wei and Si (2013) established that the locus of control moderated the relationship between abusive supervision and sabotage, and between production deviance and theft, but not between abusive supervision and withdrawal. The role of supervisors they described supported the findings of Harris and Ogbonna (2012) that service sabotage was intended to harm the firm or management directly. Daily contact with customers by frontline staff has been shown to reduce their resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). While locus of control refers to either internal or external factors, rumination (the internal assessment of symptoms of stress) has been linked to acts of sabotage (Luo & Boa, 2013)

2.7 Predicating workplace deviance – organisational-related factors

Work-related factors have been extensively studied in relation to deviant behaviour by employees. Harris and Ogbonna (2012) argued that deviant behaviour resulted from employee resistance to oppressive management and organisational processes. Lawrence and Robinson (2007) supported the idea that the workplace itself affected employees. Organisational-related factors have been shown to make organisations more vulnerable to acts of employee workplace deviance (Alias et al., 2013). Organisations established themselves as a centre of resistance through the climate, systems and control they embodied. Through this process, a number of factors emerged that have been shown to drive CWB–O: they are discussed below.

19

2.7.1 Deceitfulness, ethical climate and organisational justice

Appelbaum et al. (2007) provided three reasons why individuals might engage in CWB: the first factor was present when the organisation encouraged deceitfulness and dishonesty under the banner of success, and justified it purely in terms of achieving financial results. The second factor related to the fact that social theory explained how deviant role-models in an organisation could influence the other employees. Alias et al. (2013) supported this argument, stating that if the ethical climate of an organisation precluded the unfair treatment of employees and promoted an atmosphere of support and trust, this was critical in reducing destructive reciprocal behaviour by employees. These reasons supported two of the motives established by Harris and Ogbonna (2012), namely financial and group reasons, which are discussed later in this chapter.

The final reason, cited by Appelbaum et al. (2007), was the operational environment, which could exert a strong influence on employee behaviour. Within the current study, both the internal operational environment, which was shared with co-workers and management, and the external one, which was shared with customers and society, might have been possible drivers of staff behaviour.

Alias et al. (2013) studied the effect of three organisational-related factors on workplace deviant behaviour, namely ethical climate, justice and support. They established that the ethical climate, as created by the organisation and human resource professional, played a critical role in the establishment of ethics within the organisation. The more aware an employee was of an ethical climate, the more likely that employee was to engage in citizenship behaviour within the organisation, and the lower the incidence of deviant behaviour (Alias et al., 2013).

Organisational justice is an extensively-studied topic: organisational unfairness perceived by staff has come to be regarded as a strong predictor of deviant behaviours, including sabotage. Perceived unfairness may arise from the organisation, superiors or colleagues (Alias et al., 2013), and provide a source of frustration for employees. Lawrence and Robinson (2007) supported the employee's perception of unfairness of organisational acts as a catalyst for frustration and a motive to seek revenge. Alias et al. (2013) found that a higher perception of organisational justice resulted in lower levels of deviant behaviour. Fatima, Atif, Saqib & Haider (2012) established that higher organisational justice led to greater job satisfaction, and higher levels of job satisfaction reduced CWB. This was, in part, due

20

to the affinity the employee built up towards the organisation, as well as adherence to its rules.

The final organisational factor studied by Alias et al. (2013) was perceived organisational support. Organisational support relates to the employees perception and belief that their contributions are valued by the organisation, and, furthermore, that the organisation has a definite concern and interest in their well-being. Where employees perceived a lack of organisational support, unfavourable moods and distrust resulted. Alias et al., 2013) found that a negative relationship existed between perceived organisational support and deviant workplace behaviour among employees. Trust in management was found to have a similar effect as organisational support.

2.7.2 Work stress

Alias et al. (2013) studied two work-related factors, namely job stress and job autonomy, as significant predictors of deviant behaviour. They argued that these factors increased the employee's frustration, irritation, annoyance and intolerance, which, in turn, affected the employee's behaviour and ultimately, their health. Employee burnout was related to increased levels of frustration (Bakker & Demerouit, 2007) and resulted in deviant behaviour by the employee.

Impolite social interactions in the workplace had an impact on employee behaviour, causing stress that impacted behaviour and possibly resulted in withdrawal and sabotage. Harris and Ogbonna (2006) argued that organisational climate was an important context feature for negative behaviour and should be factored into research on stress.

When frontline employees were mistreated by customers, many adopted strategies for coping, sabotage being one of them (Reynolds & Harris, 2006). Kao, Cheng, Kuo and Huang (2014) argued that organisations that created a service culture and established documented service norms and goals were likely to ensure compliance with the service values by frontline employees. They further established that service climate moderated the relationship between social stressor and service sabotage, and that a high service climate weakened this relationship.

The researcher remarked earlier that spending large sums of money on service-related training programmes appeared to be in vain if the organisation had not

21

created the correct service climate. Social stressors like those identified in this chapter played a significant role in service sabotage and provided further answers to the research question.

2.7.3 Job autonomy

Job autonomy was relevant to the current study as employees in service settings have roles and duties that are largely scripted, which they perform against set standards and targets. Yoo and Arnold (2014) stated that using structured service scripts increased the emotional labour and exhaustion of an employee, which might lead to increased stress and ultimately to CWB behaviour. Lawrence and Robinson (2007) stated that a reduction of autonomy led to increased frustration and to CWB. It followed that the more a manager attempted to control, the more the frustration levels of employees rose and the likelihood of CWB increased. Thus, in order to reduce employee's inclination to CWB, a higher level of job autonomy was required (Alias et al., 2013).

2.7.4 Supervisory factors

Another resource-based variable was unit level supervisory support. Walsh's study (2014) established that the greater the level of supervisor support, the more likely it became that the rate and extent of resource loss from customer mistreatment was reduced or offset by the resource gained from supervisory support.

Walsh (2014) studied the relationship between extra- and intra-organisational antecedents and job satisfaction, and their relation to workplace deviance. This study was the first to explore these two antecedents together. Extra-organisational antecedents were external factors such as customers, while intra-organisation antecedents included controls and procedures, as well as supervisor treatment. This study by Walsh (2014) was conducted across multiple industries and involved 270 diverse service employees. It confirmed the findings of Wang et al. (2011) that supervisory support and knowledge enhanced the service climate and reduced the likelihood of deviant service behaviours.

22

2.7.5 Culture

Many organisations stress the importance of service orientation, where service providers are required to express socially desirable emotions in their interactions with customers (Kim & Aggarwal, 2016). Furthermore, due to the increased human interaction, service firms are especially vulnerable to cultural influences.

This customer-orientated focus was entrenched through the use of maxims such as "The customer is king" and terms such as "consumer sovereignty". This orientation towards customers was relevant to this study as it might have been problematic in a society that already possessed hierarchical structures, as customers could have used their power advantage to place excessive demands on service providers (Kim & Aggarwal, 2016).

Kim and Aggarwal (2016) also stated that power distance, a dimension of the Hofstede multidimensional model, might influence perceived entitlement to superior conduct from the service provider. "Power distance" refers to

> …the degree to which people in a country accept that higher power in institutions and organisations is distributed unequally. A high rating on power distance means that large inequalities of power and wealth exist and are tolerated in the culture, as in a class or caste system that discourages upward mobility. A low power distance rating characterises societies that stress equality and opportunity (Robbins & Judge, 2013, p.184).

In high power distance, cultural sources of power include income, family background, occupation and age. High power distance societies are characterised by a greater tolerance for discrimination based on these factors. The researcher was unable to establish academic data on power distance levels in South Africa. Data was available that represents only the white population (Geert Hofstede) and represented a biased view. Despite this, it is common knowledge that South Africa has one of the highest social inequality measures (OECD 2015) and its workforce is not representative of the countries demographic. In addition, due to apartheid policies, spatial development benefited only a select few. These inequalities might well have provided clues to drivers of service sabotage within the current study.

The importance of understanding roles and cultural settings was established by Kim and Aggarwal (2016), who developed a possible explanation for incivility based on perceived cultural power differences in society. Within the current study, it was

23

expected that cultural factors would present themselves through the data collection process.

An overview of both the individual and organisational factors has been provided, and what follows is a review of the literature on service sabotage.

2.8 Background development of service sabotage

The majority of studies on sabotage behaviours have focused on industrial context, and their applicability to services has been limited, at best (Harris & Ogbonna, 2006). The first researchers to concentrate solely on service sabotage were Harris and Ogbonna (2002), who found that over 85% of their interviewees had been involved in this kind of sabotage.

Their study also focused on individual, group, organisational and environmental factors and developed eleven antecedents to service sabotage, as well as ten employee effects which impacted on customers and had consequences for the organisation. The study thus provided theory construction for future theory testing and establishment.

As discussed above, earlier studies by Harris and Ogbonna (2002) provided the basis for theory construction and testing. This was further refined in their quantitative study (2006) in which they developed their theory of antecedents and consequences, which is depicted in Figure 2 and shows a variety of factors that drive intentional sabotage. This was based on a critical review of the 28 factors found in the earlier study by Harris and Ogbonna (2002), which they interrogated and refined and on which they based their theory of seven antecedents and five consequences of service sabotage.

Figure 2: Antecedents and Consequences of Service Sabotage
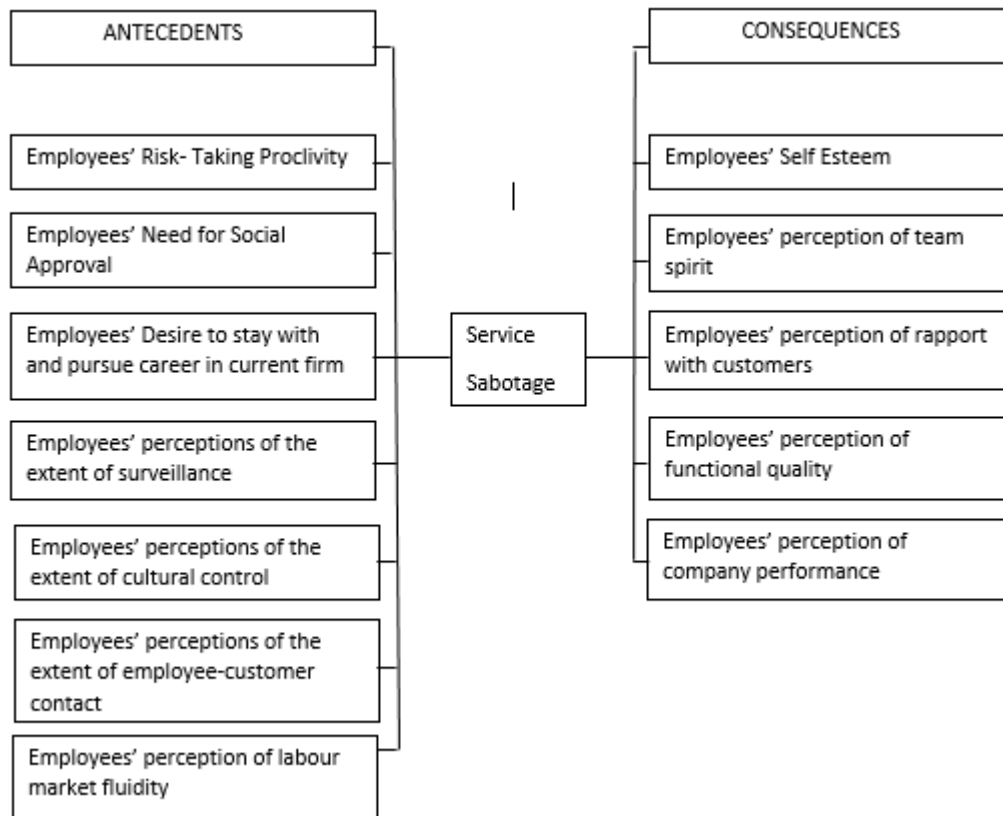
Source: Harris & Ogbonna 2006

Seven antecedents were established and are discussed below, including the employees' risk-taking proclivity, employees' need for social approval, employees' desire to stay with and pursue career in the current firm, employees' perception of the extent of surveillance, employees' perceptions of the extent of cultural control, employees' perception of the extent of employee-customer contact and employees' perception of labour market fluidity. Harris and Ogbonna's study (2006) confirmed all the antecedents except one, the extent of employee-customer contact, as higher levels of customer contact did not lead to service sabotage.

Harris and Ogbonna (2006) also established five consequences of service sabotage, namely employees' self-esteem, employees' perception of team spirit, employees' perception of rapport with customers, employees' perception of functional quality and employees' perception of company performance.

Their study presented the view that service sabotage could be perceived as an employee's overt retaliation to unfair actions by management, and should be

25

incorporated into broader human relations studies. A limitation of the study was that the model could not be generalised as it applied to a specific workplace (Harris & Ogbonna, 2006) and the extent of surveillance and cultural control were workplace-specific.

Harris and Ogbonna (2012) later identified five primary motives for service sabotage. They argued that relatively few studies have been conducted on this aspect of sabotage in a service context. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, numerous studies have focused on personality traits, as well as on the nature and form of CWB acts.

In the same study, Harris and Ogbonna (2012) explored the drivers of service sabotage among frontline employees in the hospitality industry. Through in-depth interviews, they established five drivers of service sabotage: financial, customer-driven, stress-related, group-related and employee/firm-orientated motives.

Financial motives referred to acts aim at improving the financial position of the employees: these account for 25% of the recorded incidents. Customer-driven motives accounted for 24% of all incidents and arose as a response to customer actions. This supported Kim and Aggarwal's conclusion (2016) that customers may, abuse power in hierarchical societies, leading to emotional strain and retaliation by employees.

Stress-related motives revolved around the employees' need to relieve stress or overcome lack of stimulation. Earlier in this chapter, the argument was presented that excessive job demands could lead to exhaustion and ultimately to negative reactions by employees (Balducciet al., 2011).

The findings by Harris and Ogbonna (2012) suggested, however, that employees justified their behaviour in a variety of ways that were highly context-specific. Harris and Ogbonna (2012) suggested that it was necessary to conduct further investigations into the drivers of service sabotage in different contexts and industries.

2.9 Conclusion

For this research, CWB was the over-arching theory in which service sabotage was located. A number of individual factors, as well as organisational factors, were explained, which supported or discouraged deviant behaviour. The JD–R model explained both the psychological and physiological costs that job demands place on

26

an individual, and what the likely outcomes of it were. Rewards, on the other hand, were shown to reduce the effects of job demands.

In an overview, studies were discussed which established the antecedents and consequences of service sabotage. The drivers of this phenomenon were identified by Harris and Ogbonna (2012), but the limitations of their research suggest that their findings might only apply to certain contexts and industries. This study, therefore, explored the drivers of service sabotage among frontline retail staff in South Africa. The methodology and study design that were employed in this research is discussed in Chapter 3.

27

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was employed in gathering and collating data to establish the drivers of service sabotage among frontline staff in a South African retail context. The questions the researcher sought to answer are:

- What are the drivers of service sabotage within retail in a South African context?
- Are societal factors a driver within the South African context?

3.2 Research methodology

The study's research methodology was qualitative and exploratory in nature. Qualitative interviews were used as the study's primary means of data collection. Qualitative research relates to the study of social phenomena in their natural environment and is particularly relevant for business and management research (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). In addition, according to Corbin and Strauss (2015), qualitative methodologies allow participants to explore the world from their viewpoint and to find solutions to problems. Creswell (2009) supported the emergent nature of qualitative design and asserts that the methodology provides a high possibility of continuous review throughout the various phases of the research.

Exploratory research designs attempt to explore general information concerning a topic that is not well understood by the researcher (Saunders & Lewis, 2012), and on which little research is available (Myers, 2013). The application of an exploratory qualitative design was therefore particularly appropriate for investigating the drivers of service sabotage among frontline workers in a retail environment in South Africa, since to date little or no research has been conducted on this topic. An exploratory qualitative design made it possible to explore the phenomenon of service sabotage in a new light and a different context, in order to obtain fresh insights (Myers, 2009). Furthermore, the diverse nature of the drivers of service sabotage made it advisable to employ an exploratory design, which provided greater exposure to the issues related to service sabotage and the situations in which it arises (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). In their study, Harris and Ogbonna (2012) stated that exploratory research elucidated the core concepts and allowed the development of acceptable and reliable insights into poorly-understood phenomena.

28

The assumptions an individual researcher makes about the world around them underpin their strategy, through the type of philosophy they adopt (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Yin, 2011). Saunders and Lewis (2012) identified the main philosophical choices involved in exploratory design as positivism, realism, interpretivism and pragmatism. Positivism deals with observed facts based on the positive information gathered through practical experience (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Myers (2013) suggested that interpretive researchers' access to reality was through the shared meanings that arose through human interactions in a context. The meanings people associated with these phenomena were crucial for the researcher's understanding of these human interactions.

It was expected that the researcher's exploration of the drivers of service sabotage, through interactions with the study's participants, would allow specific observations and patterns to develop. The process also allowed the data to unfold, leading to the emergence of concepts (Yin, 2011) through the researcher's examination and constant comparison (Zhang & Wildemouth, 2009), which ensured that there was a move from specific observations to broader generalisations (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The ingrained nature of service sabotage acts and the mental processes they involve are covert (Harris & Ogbonna, 2012) and investigating them required an exploratory, inductive approach.

Qualitative research hinges on the trustworthiness of the data. Guba's four constructs for enhanced trustworthiness (1981, cited in Shenton, 2004) were taken into account in this study, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative research projects is crucial (Guba, 1985, cited in Shenton, 2004). To ensure that each of Guba's constructs was applied, the researcher took the following actions:

Credibility:

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both senior management and frontline employees

- Familiarity of the culture of the participants was already established as the researcher had worked in the organisation, although not all the respondents were known to him. The researcher secured a letter from the organisation that introduced him to would-be participants and encouraged their participation. This helped to establish a relationship of trust, at the outset, between the interviewer and the participants (Shenton 2004)

29

- Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for step one and personal judgement for step two; however, at some of the interview sites, random sampling was employed where frontline employees were accessible.

- To guarantee the honesty of participants (Shenton, 2004), a number of tactics were employed. Participation in the research was voluntary; participants had the option of refusing to be interviewed, which meant that only willing subjects were interviewed. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, a letter was obtained from the organisation to confirm the anonymity of the study and to ensure that participants were honest and truthful in their responses.

- Notes were taken during the interviews to record or clarify relevant points. Iterative questioning by the researcher ensured that this was done accurately.

*Although interviews were the primary method of investigation, a single focus group was conducted on site. Different methods assist triangulation (Shenton, 2004), and during the analysis process, additional triangulation of results was achieved. This is discussed in detail in Section 4.

Transferability:

- Shenton (2004) stated that the findings of qualitative studies may be limited due to the smaller population and the focus on a particular environment. This study represented a single food retailer in the entire retail market, so it was impossible for the findings and conclusions to apply to all other populations. The researcher mitigated this fact by providing circumstantial detail about the food retail sector, together with information regarding participants, which should assist in the application of the findings and conclusions to other areas.

Dependability:

- Dependability is established if a future researcher can follow the method employed in the project and achieve the same results (Shenton, 2004). In this instance, the researcher explicitly detailed the design and implementation, the process of data gathering and the analysis of data, thereby ensuring dependability.

Confirmability:

- Shenton (2004) stated that triangulation was a reliable method for establishing

confirmability. The researcher has addressed this topic earlier. Furthermore, the predispositions and decisions taken by the researcher were critical and the researcher has explained and supported these in the project, as stated by Miles & Huberman (1994, as cited in Shenton, 2004).

The section below describes the study's research methodology and instruments in detail.

3.3 Research instruments

The researcher adopted a two-step interview process as the primary data collection method. Interviews were conducted with senior managers and frontline staff employed by a retail organisation in South Africa. In studying employees' covert behaviours, it was crucial to employ instruments that allowed an understanding of their behaviours and attitudes. Harris and Ogbonna (2012) argued that in-depth, one-on-one interviews yield useful insights into both. Kvale and Brinkman (2009) argued that in-depth interviewing was particularly suited to novel, ill-defined topics in which more structured data techniques were not feasible. They commented further that interviews allowed exploration of the heterogeneity and diversity of a particular topic. An investigation of the drivers of service sabotage among frontline employees, the subject of this study, was such a topic.

Yin (2011) suggested that qualitative interviews supported conversations by facilitating the two-way interactions that enabled the researcher to understand the participants' world. Saunders and Lewis (2012) argued that the flexible nature of in-depth interviewing allowed the researcher to return to a topic, guaranteeing that all documented questions were asked. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) stated that qualitative interviews combined a flexible structure with open-ended questioning, so that designated topics could be covered while emerging themes could also be followed up. In this case, in-depth interviews allowed the interviewees to explain context-specific events in their own language; this enabled the researcher to probe for understanding and clarification, to explore interesting events (Harris & Daunt, 2013) and to build up rapport through intense, active and engaged listening (Yin, 2011).

Yin (2011) argued that one-on-one interviews were influenced by the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee and that maintaining good rapport is

31

essential. To achieve this, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were the most appropriate technique, given the exploratory character of this study combined with the covert nature of the acts of service sabotage (Harris & Ogbonna, 2012). The probing nature of this data-collection method allowed for increased validity and provided opportunities for the interviewer to ask more detailed questions, thus gaining rich and deep insights (Bryman, 2004). Semi-structured interviews also provided the interviewees with greater flexibility in replying and permitted the interviewer to ask questions not included in the guide, as new issues or themes emerged (Bryman & Bell, 2003).

In-depth interviews were therefore identified as the most appropriate data collection method for establishing the core drivers of service sabotage among frontline employees, and also for exploring their relationships and dynamics.

3.3.1 Data collection

Data collection for this study required a two-step process. Step one consisted of one-on-one interviews with senior managers and store managers in order to elicit the core themes on what they considered to be the drivers of service sabotage among frontline staff. A semi-structured interview guideline was used (See Appendix 1). Step two entailed one-on-one, semi-structured interviews with the frontline staff, with the purpose of understanding the drivers from their perspective (See Appendix 2). The interviews were conducted in an office at the retail site, to allow close proximity and easy access for the staff. Employees from various stores were interviewed in order to gain diverse views from the site.

Qualitative interviews were thus the primary source of data collection. According to Englander (2012), interviews have become one of the most widely used data-collection instruments associated with qualitative research. The exploratory methods chosen for this study supported the use of interviews as a data-collection method (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

The interview guideline for both senior management and frontline employees was piloted with a colleague and frontline staff prior to the planned commencement of the interviews. Permission was obtained from the management of the organisation before asking employees to participate in the study. The sensitive nature of the topic required that the researcher establish and build trust with the participants, and

encourage them to share their responses without reservations or fear of exposure to management.

Saunders and Lewis (2012) argued that, during the preliminary stages of data collection, the researcher's involvement allowed movement between data collection and concept development. These authors also maintained that this guided subsequent data collection, allowing access to data that were more appropriate to answering the research question.

Interviews were audio-recorded and the researcher made notes that captured extra points or comments. The researcher then employed the services of a transcription service to transcribe the recordings, in order to ensure accuracy, validity and completeness and to reduce the risk of observer bias (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The researcher's first round of arranged interviews with frontline staff in a single outlet was temporarily halted due to an intervention by the shop steward of the employees' Union. Management was able to resolve the issue, but the Union requested that the staff speak together rather than in one-on-one interviews.

Barbour (2007) argued that it was critical for the researcher to visualise the likely style and content of the exchange when determining the appropriate data-collection method. One-on-one interviews were originally planned, as outlined above, but because of the Union's objection, the researcher adapted the interview process to a focus-group discussion.

Barbour (2007) supported the use of focus groups where respondents were reluctant to engage with or elaborate on a topic. The reasons for the shop steward's intervention will be explained in section 4.6.5

Focus groups have been defined as follows: "Any group discussion may be a called a focus group as long as the researcher is actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction" (Barbour, 2007, p.2). In this study, the original semi-structured interview guide was used to elicit responses from the participants and assisted in avoiding a focus on the researcher's preconceptions or agenda (Barbour, 2007). The researcher was actively involved in encouraging participants to talk among themselves around certain themes that were introduced and probed by the researcher.

Barbour (2007) warned that focus groups should be used cautiously when attempting to elicit individual responses, as the number and complexity in determining these

33

responses during data analysis is complicated. In this instance, the focus group consisted of only three participants, so the researcher could easily record and code the individual responses during transcription. During their conversation, the participants were each referred to by a number.

Depending on their length, and taking into account their open-ended, questioning nature, focus groups can reflect issues that are pertinent to the participants, rather than following the researcher's agenda (Barbour, 2007), and can yield novel insights. Later, the researcher was able to resume one-on-one interviews with all the other respondents, so data collection was not compromised.

3.3.2 Data analysis

Qualitative content analysis was the method of data analysis used in this study. This method is generally used when the aim of the research is to describe a phenomenon, in this case, the drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline retail staff (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Qualitative content analysis yielded an integrated view of textual data and their specific context (Zhang & Wildemouth, 2009). According to the same authors, content analysis was not merely counting words or eliciting objective content from textual data: it also examined meanings, patterns and themes that allowed the researcher to understand social reality in a subjective, scientific manner (Zhang & Wildemouth, 2009).

The data from this study was organised by assigning a code to each interview; this was done to ensure the confidentiality of the responses. The researcher then familiarised himself with the data, re-reading it and making notes of ideas and themes. Saunders and Lewis (2012) suggested a three-step process for analysing qualitative data: (1) developing codes for the data; (2) determining the unit of analysis based on the aforementioned categories; (3) assigning categories to the relevant units of data.

Coding is the end-process of generating categories and themes through analytical thinking (Zhang & Wildemouth, 2012). Codes were generated inductively by assigning labels or themes to texts and then classifying the data into specific, unique categories (Myers, 2009). Preliminary coding identified themes that provided responses to the research question, which required the identifying of the drivers of service sabotage among frontline retail staff. As the researcher went on coding

34

transcripts, textual themes and concepts began to emerge. These were assigned to categories. Re-coding commenced with the evaluation of the categories, developing them and the emergent themes more explicitly (Lacey & Luff, 2007).

Computer-aided, qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), ATLASti was used to assist in analysing the data by organising, managing and coding it, as well as in exposing the relationships between categories more vividly through visual representation (Saunders & Lewis, 2012; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009)

3.4 Population

Saunders and Lewis (2012) defined a population as a complete set of group members, consisting of employees, people, organisations or any other collective entity. In this study, the relevant population consisted of employees in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) retail sector, in Gauteng province. This sector consisted largely of food and mass discounters. The retail sector was chosen, as frontline employees have close contact with customers through service interactions.

Retail stores within the Gauteng region were selected because of the researcher's location and the convenience in accessing the stores, since the researcher is employed in the FMCG sector. Employees were selected on the basis of their ability to converse in English, as this is the researcher's primary language.

3.5 Sampling

In this study, a purposive, non-probability sampling method was adopted in selecting the participants for step one. This was in compliance with the argument that target participants should be selected to ensure the best understanding of the research question (Creswell, 2009) and relied heavily on the judgment of the researcher (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The population being studied was heterogeneous due to the location and the environment in which its members worked. Senior managers were based in the regional head offices, while the frontline staff fulfilled their duties in a store environment.

Judgment sampling, also referred to as purposive sampling, was used in phase two, as the sample was both illustrative and representative of the population (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The sample size for step one was four managers and for step two it

35

was 15 frontline employees.

For purposes of this study, senior managers were defined as employees responsible for the entire operation of a number of stores. Store managers were defined as employees located at the individual retail stores and responsible for operating a single store. Frontline employees were defined as employees in the retail store who had direct service contact with customers. These included cashiers, packers, merchandisers and service area staff.

Saunders and Lewis (2012) recommended a sample size of more than 15 for heterogeneous populations. Due to time constraints and travel distance, the majority of the population was located in Gauteng.

3.6 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis is the frontline employees within the FMCG retail sector. In analysing data collected from these individuals, the researcher aimed to determine the drivers of service sabotage amongst this particular group.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from both the examining university and the management of the retailer, to make sure that fears and concerns were addressed prior to data collection. Confidentiality was guaranteed for all participants, as well as the assurance that vital information that could prejudice the participant would not be disclosed to their employer.

3.8 Limitations of the research

Potential limitations of the research included the following:

- The focus of study was only in the FMCG retail sector
- The sample size was relatively small
- There was the increased possibility of researcher bias influencing the result, due to the flexible and exploratory methods that were adopted (Welman; Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). The researcher's awareness of his own subjectivity was crucial,

36

ensuring that no leading questions were asked in the interview process.

- Researchers using non-probability sampling can never be sure that the results obtained are representative of the population. The validity of the results could not, therefore, be generalised to the entire population (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).
- The population were selected on their ability to converse fluently in English

37

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

The interviews that were conducted as part of this research project provided some important insights into the drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline retail staff within South Africa.

This chapter commences with an overview of the interviews conducted, a discussion of the processes the researcher used for interview transcription and for ensuring the accuracy and validity of the collected data. A discussion of the interviews and the findings relating to the research question was developed inductively through analysis of the data.

4.2 Summary of interviews conducted

The researcher planned to complete 19 interviews, four with senior management and 15 frontline employees, until a point where data saturation was reached (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Pretoria, as well as permission from the organisation in which the interviews were conducted.

A total of 17 interviews were completed with 20 respondents, as one interview was conducted as a focus group and included three frontline employees. The rationale for this will be discussed later. The interviews lasted 860 minutes and just over 14 hours of audio-recording. Interviews were recorded with a Dictaphone and with the voice recorder on the researcher's cell-phone. After each interview, the researcher backed up the voice recordings in the cloud. Notes were not taken during the interview, but the researcher made mental notes of respondents' comments during interviews in order to find opportunities to introduce deeper discussion or clarification.

After the 17 interviews were completed, nothing substantially new was obtained, and given the amount of data collected and captured at that point, as well as the diverse range of respondents interviewed, the researcher ceased collecting data. Figure 3 illustrates the creation of new codes as interviews were added and coded. One can see the sharp decline in the creation of new codes as more interviews were conducted. This indicated to the researcher that data saturation had been reached.

38

Figure 3: Code Creation and Data Saturation

Code Creation

	27.8.2016	15.9.2016	16.9.2016	17.9.2016	18.9.2016	20.9.2016
Number Primary Docs	5	9	0	3	0	0
Number of Codes	126	33	22	5	3	1
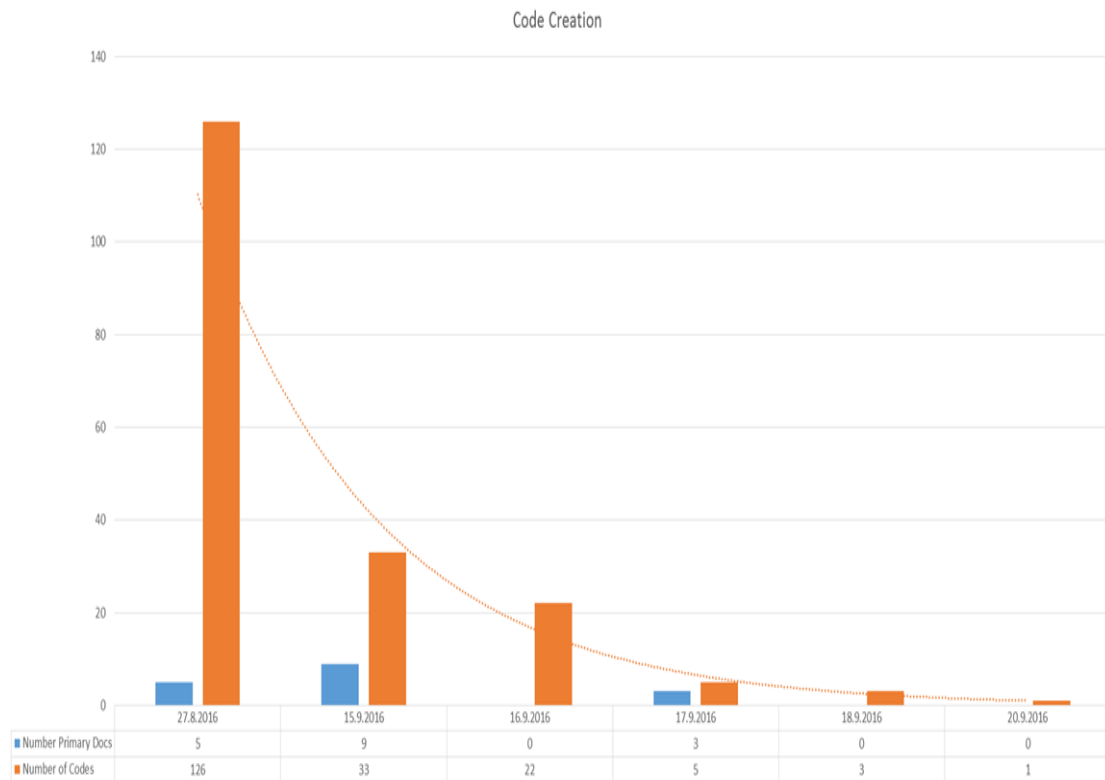
4.2.1 Interviewing senior managers

The recruiting of senior managers was achieved with relative ease as some of the potential participants were known to the researcher and they were able to suggest or introduce others. The researcher interviewed five senior managers in the organisation, across various functions, including store managers, group executive operations, a national customer services manager and the general manager of industrial relations. This enhanced the data collection, as these participants were able to share different views and experiences. Interviews were conducted in the offices of the respective senior managers, over a period of two weeks. The interview guideline in Annexure 1 directed the discussions and required no amendment after the first interview. The interviews lasted 44 minutes on average, which allowed respondents to go into detail on various issues. This, combined with their average length of service of 16 years, ensured that the participants had considerable experience and knowledge and were able to provide rich and deep insights. The details are shown in Table 1.

39

Table 1: Respondents and Interview Statistics

Title	Code	Years in current position	Interview Location	Interview Type	Word Count	Interview Duration (minutes)
MANAGEMENT						
Store Manager	SM1	16	Store E	One-on-one	4 700	37.49
Group Executive	HO1	19	Head Office	One-on-one	6 386	45.08
Store Manager	SM2	14	Store D	One-on-one	8 327	53.04
National Customer Services Manage	HO2	18	Head Office	One-on-one	7 883	53.04
General Mager Industrial Relations	HO3	14	Head Office	One-on-one	4 972	34.04
				Average		44.54
FRONTLINE EMPLOYEE						
Trainee Manager	FE1	4	Store A	One-on-one	6 610	47.51
Departmental Manager	FE2	7	Store A	One-on-one	7 034	40.48
Frontline Employee	FE3	8	Store A	One-on-one	5 223	32.47
Frontline Employee	FE4	11	Store A	One-on-one	2 343	15.07
Frontline Employee	FE5	22	Store A	One-on-one	4 530	31.39
Frontline Employee	FE6	12	Store A	One-on-one	4 903	34.59
Frontline Employee	FE7	22	Store A	One-on-one	4 097	27.21
Frontline Employee	FE8	4	Store A	One-on-one	4 252	26.11
Trainee Manager	FE9	4	Store A	One-on-one	6 401	37.51
Frontline Employee	FE10	5	Store A	One-on-one	4 167	26.51
Frontline Employee	FE11	8	Store B	Focus Group	13 577	64.44
Frontline Employee	FE12	11	Store B	Focus Group		64.44
Frontline Employee	FE13	10	Store B	Focus Group		64.44
Frontline Employee	FE14	5	Store C	One-on-one	8 214	65.02
Frontline Employee	FE15	20	Store C	One-on-one	8 015	47.43
				Average		41.64
				Total	111 634	847.31
				Average	6 202	47.07

4.2.2 Frontline employees

In recruiting frontline employees, the researcher faced a greater challenge. Although the employees were willing, they were concerned that the information they provided did not result in disciplinary action. In order to address this concern, the researcher prepared a letter and requested the Group Executive of Operations to sign it. The letter introduced the researcher, encouraged participation and provided a guarantee of anonymity. The recruitment of frontline staff improved after that, and a total of 15

40

frontline employees were interviewed. Managers of the respective store randomly selected frontline employees to be interviewed, and these interviews were conducted over a two-week period.

The first interview at site B was arranged with the manager, who had recruited four frontline employees. On the day of the interview, the researcher was delayed as the shop steward of the employees' Union intervened and attempted to stop the interviews. The store manager was able to resolve the issue, but the staff requested that the interview continue in a group rather than individually. The researcher adapted the process and a focus group was conducted. The researcher experienced no other challenges from Union representatives at any of the sites, although they were all aware of the interviews. The attitude of the store management to the Union will be discussed later, in section 4.6.5

The interviews followed the frontline employee interview guide provided in Annexure 2. After the start of the first interview, it became apparent that staff members did not fully understand the purpose of the discussion and tended to provide examples of bad service. The researcher had to continually bring the discussion back on track. To address this challenge for future interviews, the interview guideline was reviewed: the questions were still considered appropriate, but the introduction required revision.

The researcher adapted the introduction using the analogy of a problem that frontline employees would have been faced with in their life: a sick child in the family. The frontline employees were then asked what they would do if their child was sick. They all responded that they would take the child to the doctor. When asked what they would ask of the doctor, they responded that they would want to find out what was making their children sick. They were then asked if they knew what was making their children sick what would they do and the majority indicated they would stop immediately what was causing the sickness. The story was then related back to the research – the factors or drivers of sabotage amongst frontline staff, to illustrate, by way of an example, how factors are established. Here is an extract from an interview transcript, in which the interviewee emphasises factors involved in poor performance:

R: *And for me, the big challenge and the big question has been as retailers or businesses, we spend huge amounts of money on training staff and programmes and stuff like that and I am saying maybe that is wrong. Because, do you have children?*

I: *Only one.*

41

R: *One, boy or girl?*

I: *Girl.*

R: *Girl, when she is sick, what do you do when she is sick?*

I: *I take her to the doctor or clinic also.*

R: *And what do you ask them to do? To see what is causing?*

I: *Yes, what is the cause of this sickness?*

R: *You see, now that is where I think business has been wrong. Is because we will go and treat the symptom of bad customer service, we will go train, train, train.*

I: Y*es.*

R: *But you don't go and find out what causes, what causes it, what those factors are. Because you, think about it, you go to the doctor to go and get better, you go and tell him what causes me to be sick the whole time. It is your diet, it is this, you fix it, guess what, you don't get sick.*

     So if we can, so my study and it is not pertaining to organisation, my study is for all retail, I am doing it across all retail, if you can establish what causes people to maybe give bad service then you can understand why do they do it and then you can address those things.

     Or you can say, I can't fix that or I can fix that, you know what I am saying?

I: *Yes, I do.*

The adapted introduction allowed the respondents to focus on contributing factors rather than on examples, and also provided a good anchor-point to refer back to if frontline staff began to digress into examples of bad customer service rather than factors or drivers of service sabotage.

The remaining frontline employees' interviews were conducted across two sites in two regions, as the third planned region was unavailable due to senior management changes and current employee issues. Interviews were conducted at the frontline employees' places of work, either in the front office or a committee room.

4.3 Interview transcription

The researcher employed the services of a professional transcription service. At first a single interview was given to the transcription service in order to verify the service provided. The researcher verified the accuracy of the service by listening to the interview while following the transcribed document. When the researcher was satisfied, the remainder of the files were sent to the transcription service.

On receipt of the transcribed documents, the researcher scrutinised each document; any parts marked as inaudible by the transcriber were interpreted by the researcher based on the context of the conversation and recall of the interview. Common speech mannerisms such "hmmm", "yeah" and "oh" were removed. Any identifying names were removed from the transcribed documents to ensure anonymity for the organisation and the individual respondents.

4.4 Transcript coding and analysis

The data was analysed using ATLAS.ti as per the planned method in section 3.3.2. The researcher followed the suggestion of Friese (2016) in adopting a naming convention when loading the documents. The following convention was used: Site conducted; Role; Number of respondent.

- Site conducted – identified the site of the interview
- Role – identified the staff by store location
- Number of respondent – Each respondent was assigned a number to ensure anonymity

This convention assisted when creating the primary document families in ATLAS.ti, improving analysis and making it easier.

Because of the exploratory nature of the research project and the lack of prior studies on the topic, an inductive approach was followed when coding the documents. Saunders and Lewis (2012) stated that inductive analysis involves the identification of possible propositions regarding the data, as there is no framework from which to begin.

The verification of the transcribed documents gave the researcher a "feel" for the data and allowed for the creation of a basic structure for coding. The structure

43

followed was subject: issue, where. "Subject" was the person being referred to or conducting the action, "issue" described the highlighted passage in the document. The researcher completed the coding of all documents, following this process. The addition of new documents, as shown in Figure 3 above, supported the notion that the researcher followed an iterative process, reviewing the documents and assigning new codes as a different perspective emerged.

A code-table was then generated; codes of low frequency or with similar phrases were merged into a single code. Each document was reviewed again to ensure consistency of coding across the interviews.

An initial code list of 191 codes was established and by means of the process described above, a final code list of 154 codes was established. These codes were exported to Excel, reviewed and analysed to establish any common themes. A total of 34 "family" codes were established. The respective codes list is shown in Annexure 4 and the list of family codes is shown in Annexure 5.

The establishment of codes and the thorough coding of documents ensured that the next phase was possible, namely data analysis.

4.5 Transcript analysis and data verification

Using the ATLAS.ti Word Cruncher tool, an analysis was conducted of all the transcripts to identify the words that occurred most frequently. These words were then compared to the "in vivo" codes generated during the iterative coding process, and a method of validity knowns as triangulation was accomplished.

The full word-count obtained from the ATLAS.ti Word Cruncher tool, before any analysis, totalled 3894 words. The list was then transferred to Excel for further analysis. All the common words that were not descriptive i.e. *the, that, who, what, and,* were removed. This reduced the list to 3370 words.

Further analysis was conducted, so that words that had similar meanings or that were used in different tenses or plurals were grouped under a single heading. For example: *acknowledge, acknowledged, acknowledges, acknowledgement, acknowledging* were all grouped under *acknowledge.* This reduced the word-count to 2830 words. The list was then transferred to Excel Pivot Table, where the words were ordered according to the most frequently-occurring words. All the words that

44

had a frequency of lower than four were removed from the list, resulting in 765 words. Table 2 below highlights the most frequently-occurring words in the transcripts. ATLAS.ti Codes-Primary Documents table was then run across all documents. This finally highlighted the words most commonly occurring in the transcribed documents, which are shown in Table 3:

Table 2: Word-count Top Ten: Word Cruncher

Word	Count
customer	1327
service	737
manager	504
people	442
store	418
bad	409
staff	325
good	281
organisation	247
talk	242

The word *customer* appeared as the most frequent word in the Word Cruncher 1327 times and in Codes – primary documents table 8595 times. Similar words and/or themes occurred in both documents, namely *service*, *manager*, *communication*, *behaviour/action,* further supporting credibility of the data through triangulation.

45

Table 3: Word-count Top Ten: Codes - Primary Documents Table

Words and phrases	TOTAL
Customer	8595
Frontline employee: customer abuse	5441
Work environment/ processes	4163
Service	3737
Problem resolution	3439
Driver: supervisors	3333
Management staff orientation	3323
Behaviour/action	3208
Communication	3147
Store management: staff communication	3107

Code families were created for common themes such as "customer". This supported the development of themes that could be analysed further in the light of the research question. A total of ten codes were grouped under the "customer family" and included the following codes:

- Customer: frustration
- Customer: personal issues
- Customer: staff relationships
- Customer: financial importance
- Driver: customer
- Frontline employee: customer abuse
- Frontline employee: customer interaction

- Frontline employee: customer relationships
- Store management: customer orientation
- Swearing

A total of 34 family codes were created: the list is available in Appendix 5. These 34 family codes were exported to Excel and the researcher went through an iterative process of reading codes and transcripts to create eight super-codes that represented higher-level themes. These are listed in Table 4 and form the basis for further discussion.

The data analysis performed by the researcher has now been discussed, with the aim of to enhance the understanding of the data. The next section discusses the findings in support of the research question.

4.6 Identified themes

The researcher followed a thematic analysis, following the plan outlined in section 3.3.2. In discussing the findings, the researcher sought to find answers to the following research questions:

- What are the drivers of service sabotage within retail in a South African context?
- Are societal factors a driver within the South African context?

Eight super-codes were established and are listed below in Table 4. These represented the higher level themes that emerged through the data analysis process. Each theme will be discussed to establish whether it constitutes a driver for service sabotage amongst frontline retail staff.

47

Table 4: Super-codes: Primary Documents Table

Super Codes	Frontline Employees	Management
Management	17229	4814
Customer	7153	1442
Operations Environment	3088	120
Career	1756	572
Union	838	1155
Financial	759	615
Organisation	379	491
Societal	365	230

Accum. Wordcount	31567	9439
Total Wordcount	38438	13023
Relative Count (%)	82%	72%

4.6.1 Management

Table 4 above identified management as the most frequently-occurring theme, with just over 42% of all themes mentioned. The management super-codes consisted of 12 family groups listed in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Management Super-codes: Family Groups

Family Group	TOTAL	Supercode
Problem Resolution	3439	Management
Management Staff Orientation	3323	Management
communication	3147	Management
Management Style	2458	Management
Management Power	2157	Management
Complaints	1974	Management
Management Quality	1723	Management
Recognition	1618	Management
Acknowledgement	846	Management
Favouritism	792	Management
Management - General	303	Management
Discipline	263	Management

During the interviews, evidence was found that supported frontline employees' view of management as a driver of service sabotage. In the extracts reproduced below, management was seen as driving staff to the point of anger, as well as failing to communicate with employees, demonstrating a lack of respect for their rights and failing to support them when necessary:

> *"Because those are the, I think the most people that we work with a day, we are facing the customers with that anger that we get from our managers or that are passive customers, we take it out to them. Some customers are innocent, we are the ones that are wrong. But know how when you are angry, you don't care whether you are right, innocent or not, you fall in that group, you know"* (P17: B - FE11; FE12; FE13).

> *"Treats you right and we can be nice to the customers. If I like, arrive in the morning and our manager shouts at me, it is going to be a bad day for me, I am not going to be friendly to the customer"* (P 9: A-FE4).

> *"At the frontline, you know what, if you are not communicated with the supervisors and the workers, there is nothing that can be closer to the customer because when you ask something to the supervisor, they take time. Because the customer immediately, when she past to my till, she is going to see my face, ai, that one, she is so angry, why"* (P19: C-FE15).

> *"Because right now we have our own anger that is caused by our managers, of which that anger, sometimes we take it out on the customers"* (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

It is evident from these extracts that management does have an effect on staff behaviour. In order to get a better understanding of actions on the part of management that drive the behaviour above, the individual management code-families will be explored in the following sections.

4.6.1.1 Problem resolution

The store manager is put in charge by the organisation and entrusted with attending to the daily management of the retail operation:

> *"I, as a store manager, I am a visitor on that store, I am only going to be there for a year or two years, 5 months or 6 months, so I have got to leave, my*

49

responsibility is to leave that store in a better state than I found it in, so that it is sustainable for the people that are left behind" (P3: HO-SM2)**.**

As problems and challenges arise, it is human nature for people to expect that these will be resolved. When they are not, feelings of frustration, anger and a lack of respect surface amongst staff. This is supported by the extracts below:

"I went to the manager, they were in the office including my senior supervisor, and I get there, they didn't pay attention to me and yet I was crying, only a senior supervisor came to me and I just said, you know what, there is a customer who is looking for a manager there. And then what my manager said after, he said, why did you leave your till? I said, how was I supposed to do, I mean, a big man like you, standing there shouting and everything and I am sitting down and I was, oh, now I am going to get a slap here. Then I had to walk away from him, he didn't say sorry or whatever or I will deal with the customer" (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

The ability for frontline employees to raise, discuss and obtain solutions to problems was reduced through removal of support structures at store level. The perceived lack of accessibility to management was cited as an issue:

"You know, before we used to have the HR in the stores. It was much better because if someone had so much problem, you can refer that person to the HR, it was easy. But now we don't have HR in the stores who look after the employee on the floor when they have serious problem, who do they go and talk to?" (P7: A-FE2)

"And every, this now a day, I am asking, I say, since now I don't know how many days or how many weeks you don't do frontline meetings to hear our views, what we want to say, what is wrong to us. We are working but in our heart it is wrong. Things are happening in front but nothing is changing, they are going to change the time, we will make a frontline meeting next month," (P19: C-FE15).

Management's accessibility and willingness to address and act upon staff challenges as they occur at the frontline is critical. Management has a duty to ensure that daily activities in the store environment are fully operational and to alleviate stress and frustration for both customers and employees.

"I think, as a staff also, we have got our rights, as our, I can fight with the

50

customer but the manager, the store manager has to be the one that is taking the customer to the position and talking to the customers. Because I think he must tell that customer, I know you have the right but this is my staff, you can't abuse my staff" (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

"Because now what we normally do here in our grocery section, if there is a promo, if it is a huge promo, before I go that night, I have to take everything that is on promo on, put it on the trolley. First thing in the morning because I come in an hour before the store opens. We will open the till, the frontline manager, we start scanning so we start sorting what is it that is promo. That is not scanning correctly, you understand, so we start phoning so that they can it takes 20 minutes to an hour to fix it. But now if the supervisor already knows when we come in that we have got a problem with this and this and this. So the life becomes easier"(P15: A-FE9).

"That is why I was a frontline manager, I would tell them that, uh, you don't be be in a fight with the customer, I will fight you. When I don't it is going to be bad, it is going to be painful. I know, but I don't. But as soon as they see I stand up for them when they start this racism thing then I was like, it stops now. You either get help or you leave our store, unfortunately we cannot accept that. Then in the way they will calm down but then the customer understands, then we are all happy" (P15: A-FE9).

Summary of findings: Problem resolution

The extracts above highlighted that staff need to be able to address issues they encounter with management within a reasonable time-period. Support by management is required in order to address their problems. Management also needs to facilitate a seamless process in the store environment to ensure that the disposition and attitude of staff members are not affected.

4.6.1.2 Management-staff orientation

The second most frequently-occurring theme was management-staff orientation. Codes that were linked to this group included "management's resolution of staff issues", "support provided for staff", "respect for staff", "ensuring staff satisfaction" and creating a sense of "teamwork".

51

The ability of management to recognise staff issues and to support and respect the dignity of frontline staff provides further evidence of the importance of management's role in the success of frontline employees. In the following extract, managers describe how problems with employees are dealt with:

> *"And then if they can't open up with me. I make sure I get somebody and then I note like, the employee has got a problem so please go and see so and so. Or if you are not happy with that person, find somebody and I will make sure that I follow up. That the person finds somebody to speak to, so that he can deal, he or she can deal with the specific problem"* (P6: A-FE1).

> *"As a manager, I believe that you give respect to get respect, isn't it? So you need to respect your staff so that they can respect you back. So, yes, I am a manager, I need to give instruction, they need to follow my instruction but now I am not supposed to abuse my power. You find that, as a manager, I go maybe to an employee and I give them an instruction. Then whilst I am giving the instruction, I am threatening. Before the employee responds or anything, I want you to do this and whatever, whatever, if you don't do it then we will have a problem like this"* (P 6: A-FE1).

> *"Look so I have had, um, I have had customers calling some of my staff sort of the "K" word and I won't tolerate it. I mean, I will happily go to an inquiry for telling a customer to get lost, I will happily go and do it, because I won't allow my staff to be rude to you but I won't allow you to be derogatory to my staff either"* (P 3: HO-SM2).

Teamwork was highlighted as another key area that falls with the area of management's orientation towards staff. The ability to get all employees in the retail unit working towards a common goal improves the morale of staff and reduces instances of bad service.

> *"If we can work as a team and put aside managers, like I am not a manager, I am not a cashier, you know, work as a team, I think organisation can provide a good service. Because even us the cashiers and the packers, if we don't work under pressure and we feel appreciated, we won't have that anger that we have now"*(P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13),

> *"As a manager, I believe that you give respect to get respect, isn't it? So you need to respect your staff so that they can respect you back. So, yes, I am a*

52

manager, I need to give instruction, they need to follow my instruction but now I am not supposed to abuse my power. You find that, as a manager, I go maybe to an employee and I give them an instruction. Then whilst I am giving the instruction, I am threatening. Before the employee responds or anything, I want you to do this and whatever, whatever, if you don't do it then we will have a problem like this" (P6: A-FE1)

Summary of findings: Management's orientation towards staff

Management's staff orientation is critical in ensuring a cohesive and happy workforce. When staff are dealt with respect, they feel supported when faced with challenges; a sense of teamwork is established and it follows that negative behaviour will be reduced.

4.6.1.3 Communication

Communication was the third most frequently-occurring theme and consisted of two codes, namely communication with staff and customers. A lack of communication results in staff retaliating against the customers, providing bad service and not being aware of what is required of them. Communication can inspire staff to assist in achieving the desired performance, as well as giving them an opportunity to discuss their challenges and problems:

"Ja, what would cause staff to give such bad service? Ai, that is why I say they are not communicating with these people, that is, the main important is that. The communication, that is it" (P19: C-FE15).

"There are a lot of internal factors and I think one of the biggest ones you will pick up on is communication. So if you don't get communicated to by management, you are almost flying in the dark, you don't know if the store is doing well, you don't know if it is doing good?" (P2: HO-HO1)

In some cases, management actively pursue opportunities to engage with staff and allow staff the opportunity to raise issues:

"Wednesday there is a Union meeting, but we try every second Wednesday we try attend the meeting with the guys. So not only from one party, but a combined issue. So the guys have got the opportunity to raise issues" (P1: HO-

53

"And then it is going to be easy for me if I keep on communicating to my staff regularly. I mustn't communicate to them when there is a problem, so now it is like, wow, because when there is a problem, it is not like the problem is a new thing in my ears or in my eyes" (P15: A-FE9).

Frontline employees require the weekly meeting to raise issues, as highlighted above. However, there is an interest in the performance of the business and the role they can play to assist in achieving the organisation's goals, as expressed in this extract:

"Because they need, especially if they need to know their figures, what are you expected to do today, what is your budget for today. Tomorrow morning, tell that person how much did you make on that day. It is, sometimes it is so funny, sometimes you end up, you didn't make the budget by R3.00 and you say, ooh, I should have put the R3.00 myself, you know" (P7: A-FE2)

Operational changes at store-level reduced the previously allocated time management had for staff meetings. The lack of management owning the communication process in the store is cause for concern, as the Union communicates far more than management. The Union is discussed later in this chapter, under section 4.10. This extract indicates that employees feel the lack of direct communication:

"You will know that we used to have communication process with our staff where once a week, we would open late and the manager will have these discussions with his or her employees, you know, and talk about our challenges, what we need to achieve in the store. And also the issue of customer service and emphasise that. Uh. I am not saying we need to reinvent that but we need to improve the communications to our employees, you know, because I can tell you now, at organisation, the Union communicates more than the store managers" (P5: HO-HO3).

Summary of findings: Communication

Effective communication by management will not only reduce staff frustrations and anger but also inhibit their retaliatory behaviour. It is essential that management adopts a two-way communication process that allows them to inform and address

staff on issues, but also provides the staff with opportunities to raise and discuss issues. Communication has been shown to inspire some staff to assist in achieving the organisation's goals.

4.6.1.4 Management style

Management style was the fourth most commonly-occurring family code and covered four sub-codes that dealt with "management style", "leading by example", "involvement in department" and "approachability".

Management's involvement in the daily issues on the shop floor is critical in ensuring that the appointed positions are on duty and available to assist frontline employees and customers. This is illustrated by the following extract:

> *"Yes, exactly, it is a give and take relationship, so management, and then sort of management not being available even. You know, customer has got a query, frontline person has got to run around looking where is the manager, a customer is swearing at them and that sort of affects them as well. But then I suppose you, they are there, staff also have their own issues, right"* (P3: HO-SM2).

> *"You know what, if your customers walk in, there are a couple of things they want. They want a clean store where the lights are on, clean, and that comes out. They want to get what they come for, that is availability. They want to know who to go to if they are angry, so it is manager availability or how available they are or can they find him?"* (P2: HO-HO1)

The failure of management to lead by example was highlighted as a frustration among frontline employees, who expressed the view that, in some cases, management deems certain tasks too menial or degrading to perform:

> *"So, but our managers, they can never do a low job because you, like you are going to take them low or something, that is where the problem comes from. If management can know they expect only us to work, and them, they are there for office and they are there just to when you need their autograph because they can sign nicely"* (P17: B - FE11; FE12; FE13).

> *"I think when people see you as a manager, alright, so that comes with*

55

its own sort of stigma, and they say, well, here is the manager. Here is someone who sits there, you can't, he is not approachable, you know. And the minute you start breaking that wall down, and people see, well, this guy is here for us and I know where I stand with him, so if I do this, I know that he is going to get busy with me. But if I do great, I know that I am going to be recognised for it. So people know where they stand, they know what is happening, the store, they know where the store performs" (P3: HO-SM2).

"And go maybe to the butchery and say, guys, how are you feeling. I mean, as our superior, surely if you know us and if we know you, you are open to us. You can tell if X is not feeling well today because these people are in your face on a daily basis, even yourself, as a superior, as our superior, as you walk in there, we can tell by the way you move, the way you carry your body, the way you carry yourself, that surely there is something wrong with our manager" (P18: C-FE14).

Summary of findings: Management style

The manager sets the tone for the store and establishes the culture in the individual retail outlet. The manager's conduct informs the behaviour of staff and becomes a standard against which they regulate and assess their own conduct. An essential element of the management style and approach is recognising that the title of manager does not bestow immediate privileges on that individual. An approachable demeanour appears to be crucial in the high customer-contact retail industry.

4.6.1.5 Management power

The fifth most occurring family code was management power. This code dealt with "staff intimidation", "staff isolation" and "management power". The power and status allocated to management can drive behaviour that is counter-productive in frontline employees, as is illustrated by the following extracts from transcripts:

"You call, like they are managers, you know, like she was saying. There is no supervisor, she is busy, hello, can you please, I need a price, can you please. Why me, you have got your supervisor, find, but that person is the manager. But in front of the customer. The customer is looking at that like, what is

56

happening here, it is like we are stupid people running around, we don't know what we are doing. As a manager, why me, there is a supervisor, there is a frontline supervisor. Whether the supervisor is busy or not, that customer has to wait for the supervisor to finish whatever that she is doing because the manager failed to help you with a price. They are also abusing the manager status, then that customer is going to be furious and you, as a cashier, you have to deal with that customer again" (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

"Even the supervisor themselves, they don't, that is why I say to you, if one, she is starting at 11:00, no, that one she never told me. When I am putting a close sign and say, I am going to the loo, who closed for you? No, I am calling the senior, the senior said I must go. Ai, that one, she is controlling too much, the manager she is coming this side, who close for you, I call my supervisor, said I want to go to the loo. No, no, no, look the queues. What must I do, sometimes I ask the customers, I say, ma'am, sir, please, I am pressed, you can give me two minutes, I want to run to the loo. They say, yes, you see, the other customers there, they are talking to us, they are feeling, they are human being, they know. So, this black management, they don't think about us, that is why I am telling them, the white people are much better than you people" (P19:C–FE15).

Frontline employees face challenges in addressing this behaviour with management, and in some cases are intimidated and afraid to raise the issue:

"Mostly it is the treatment actually from management, as I have said, it is either we are afraid, we are scared, I don't know, I don't know how to describe this" (P15: A-FE9)

Summary of findings: Management power

Management power is related, in some instances, to management style. Managers adopting a power persona alienate staff and create a definite divide which cuts them off from interactions with the rest of the workforce. The demonstration of power in the retail environment occurs, in some instances, in direct view of the customers and other employees. In other situations, retail staff are left to bear the outcome of the interaction. Establishing the appropriate leadership style appears to be a crucial construct management needs to learn, adopt and embrace. Power seems to have an element of societal bias, which will be addressed in an upcoming section.

57

4.6.1.6 Complaints

Complaints was the sixth most frequently occurring code and incorporated other codes such "issue resolution", "nature of complaints", "organisations attitude", "resolving issues", "process for handling queries" and "metrics". Complaints are a common occurrence in environments of high customer contact, and should therefore be a priority, both for the organisation in general and for management, in terms of the focus and level of engagement given to addressing issues. The extracts that follow highlight this point:

> *"I think one of the biggest things for me is, our turnaround times in dealing with customer issues. You know, there is just so much happening all the time that we don't often get to resolving customers queries instantaneously. And a lot of our customer complaints, hey become major issues from small issues, purely because our turnaround times are not always great"* (P4: HO–HO2)

> *"… the other thing is sometimes we do have, I don't want to use the wrong words. But almost an arrogance around things. Which we really need to get away from, the other thing is we are very scared of admitting liabilities which is one of the things that really does irk me. Because it is not always about admitting a liability, it is about putting a human factor into thing. So that is one of the things that really keeps me awake at night, the other thing that keeps me awake, is very much, again, some of our processes and having the right people in place, because some people, most people, a lot of people, don't know how to deal with difficult situations"* (P4:HO–HO2).

Management should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the nature of a complaint to ascertain where the fault lies, as this will support and foster respect in frontline employees. Failure to do this can result in sabotage, with frontline employees becoming abusive to customers:

> *"There was this lady customer, I don't know but she was standing having the conversation with the manager, she said she was going to the tills, she didn't get help. But eventually she got to mine, when she got to my till, she just stood there like this. Folding her arms and then I tell her, I said, hello. And she was just like, hello, I want to withdraw money. I was like, what now. Then I said, how much you looking for, she said something, R1000.00 and I didn't have in*

58

my drawer. And then I told her, I don't have that much money in my drawer, can you just ask another till. Remember, I didn't know, she went past other tills. Instead of telling me that she passed other tills, she just got angry, but when she left my till, I thought she was going to another till. Because she said, okay, let me go next door, when she got next door, she just went to the cashier and tell them to call the manager for her because I just gave her the rude and bad service. Then when we went to the manager, we went to the office and talk and then there I eventually lost it. I didn't even look at the manager, I was talking to her, I just end up even losing, I didn't even talk English, I was talking to her in our African language. Just her and me, and eventually she just started to swear at me and I was like, okay, what now. If I was the one that gave you the bad service, why now are you swearing at me, I will never forget that lady and that day" (P16: A-FE10).

Summary of findings: Complaints

Complaints in any customer-facing business will be a reality. Management's process for acknowledging, handling and confronting the complaints becomes a key determinant into either resolving an issue or it manifesting into a larger problem. If not addressed, it can lead to frontline employees engaging in service sabotage.

4.6.1.7 Management quality

The seventh most common family code management quality was a theme that emerged from codes describing "management's consistency", "level of management", "accountability", "resilience", "favouritism" and "discipline". Management's consistency in dealing with challenge was crucial, but the acknowledgement of good performance was equally important, as these extracts show:

"I am not following and checking why it got to that and now you find that managers have got favourite, that is always the case. There is the favourite person and now they can't hide it. Everybody can see there is this favourite person, so it also demotivates and it makes the other staff demotivated to an extent that the service will drop" (P6: A-FE1).

"If I have favouritism in my staff, that also create because now the ones that

59

are not treated in that manner obviously wouldn't care and the bad thing spreads quickly. The bad thing spreads quickly, then it could mess up everything because of, now you will find out maybe one or two from this department are having the problem with the manager, not being happy with the manager. And then, when they discuss it with their colleague, the other ones they starting now to influence other departments. Then it spreads" (P15: A-FE9).

Management's ability to deal consistently with the whole staff on various issues, including discipline, is essential for reducing frontline counter-productive work behaviour:

"So irrespective of whether it is a manager or whether it is a shop steward, if you step out of line you get dealt with" (P1: HO-SM1).

"And the minute you start breaking that wall down, and people see, well, this guy is here for us and I know where I stand with him, so if I do this, I know that he is going to get busy with me. But if I do great, I know that I am going to be recognised for it" (P3: HO-SM2).

"No, you know, I don't know why, and there has been this excuse to say many years ago, a company signed a customer service code with the Union and the issue of discipline was left hanging there to say, both parties will talk about discipline. That is why management is unable to discipline people, and I am saying that doesn't wash for me, because it is issues of behaviour. You have got procedures that you can use to deal with that, so I think, to some extent, we need to up our game in terms of demanding that customer service from employees, that is the internal issue. However, I take note of the fact that, because of the influence of the Union, it has serious influence on the shop floor that me and you will not understand, sometimes maybe our managers are not keen enough to pursue the matter, you know. That I can say confidently to you, and it is an area that we need to look at, you know?" (P5: HO-HO3)

Knowledgeable, trained and competent management are required to support frontline staff as well as to ensure that the retail site operates and performs effectively.

"And then sometimes I think organisation promotes managers that they don't know anything about what is happening in the frontline" (P17: B-FE11; FE12;

60

FE13).

"So whatever goes right in the store, you know, management sets the tone, whatever goes wrong in the store, management sets the tone" (P3: HO-SM2).

Resilience in the face of customer abuse and misbehaviour was highlighted as a key attribute management should display. Management also highlighted that some staff do not have sufficient resilience when faced the customer abuse or frequent confrontation.

"So, I mean, I had a customer who felt it necessary to get my attention, he would jump on the till. Stand on top of the till and shout, manager, manager, where is the XXXXX manager, and so that is how he used to think of me. And I mean, he would come there and say, you, boy, and I am like, I am not your boy, if you need help I will help you but you are not going to talk to me like that. And probably the first 2 or 3 times it sort of affected me, and afterwards I just got used to it, I mean, that he is and its fine. But sometimes staff don't have that level of maturity to say, this is how that person is, and to be honest, people can ruin your day, so some people take it to heart and others don't" (P3: HO-SM2).

Summary of findings: management quality

High-quality management is a requirement in all businesses. In the retail operation, with a high level of customer and staff contact, management with high resilience and high levels of self-efficacy instil greater confidence in frontline employees.

4.6.1.8 Acknowledgement

The eighth most frequently-occurring family code was acknowledgement. Codes linked to this family group pertained to "recognition" and "acknowledgement". People in general have a need for some form of acknowledgement. In the retail environment, due to the service nature of the operation, it should be encouraged by management and be a key focus of the organisation. The lack of acknowledgement and recognition amongst frontline employees definitely provides a driver for service sabotage:

"Some of the things that cause a bad service, it comes from our senior

61

managers. If our senior managers can learn to appreciate their staff, I think us, as a staff, if our managers can try and work hand in hand with the senior staff and learn to appreciate, I think our service will improve. Because most of the things that our managers are doing to us, of which that anger we take it out on customers" (P17: B – FE11; FE12; FE13).

*"And also you find that maybe the employee has done more and it is good. And then you just pass like you don't see it. You don't even acknowledge, you don't, okay, it is not about money, like okay, here is R100.00, you did, uh, no. Just a recon, thank you, well done, keep it up and then or maybe if it is done but not according to you but it is good. Acknowledge it and also note there the certain parts which needs to be fixed" (*P6: A-FE1).

"Because of, I don't know, I think mainly it is a problem of holding higher positions, you remember, even them, even with them, they started, like I did, perhaps it is a continuous thing. Perhaps even them, when they were in my shoes when I say in my shoes, in my position as a VTE. I mean, as a merchandiser they were always suppressed, they were not listened to their opinions and thoughts didn't count for nothing because at times, you will go and advise your superior about a certain thing and they will take the credit. Remember when the big bosses come visit the store. Your name won't be mentioned that, X is the one who thought about this idea and we don't want that, we are not looking for glory, we are not running after the glory that we want to be mentioned. I mean, like we are human beings so if I take my superior is my human being before he becomes my superior. So surely that person would want to grow with the company, hence he is in that position. So I wouldn't try to drag that person down, however if he doesn't listen to our two cents, of course the business won't do well" (P18: C-14E).

Summary of findings - Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement and appreciation of staff is a key driver to ensure achievement of organisational goals. The service nature of the retail environment and high customer contact places significant demands on frontline employees. Acknowledgement may well be an area for management to improve resources available to frontline employees. Acknowledgement and recognition is important to drive the correct behaviour amongst frontline employees and reduce the occurrences of service sabotage.

62

4.6.2 Customers

As a driver of service sabotage, customers featured as a constantly recurring theme amongst frontline employees. Participants FE4, FE6 and FE7 had "management" as a primary theme, with customers second. Frontline employees had "Union" as the primary theme, followed by management and then customers.

The super-code "customers" covered a number of sub-themes such as "customer abuse of frontline staff", "frontline customer interaction", "frontline and customer relationships", "customer personal issue" and "customer financial importance". The service industry has a high level of customer and staff interactions and these can have negative outcomes for either side. Frontline employees may take part in service sabotage, either in supporting of an agenda driven by the Union, or through experiences with customers in-store.

> *"And you have got that anger and the first person that you are going to serve at that time that you are feeling that anger is the customer who is going to come to till and pay"* (P17: B - FE11; FE12; FE13).

> *"So all those issues, you know, they do keep me awake. If we are in dispute with the Union, for instance, they might, to some extent, sabotage your service indirectly, you know, they won't be unfriendly to customers, but there are activities that they employ, especially when they are on strike, stopping to work overtime and things like that, so those things could affect your customer service"* (P5: HO-HO3).

> *"The customer is right but you find that, like for me, there is this customer I know, he is my Sunday customer. Sunday customer expecting him, I am expecting him to come and scream and fight and kick the machines and do whatever. All those, like kick the door, kick whatever is next to him, he can even push the trolley and. If that kind of customer, it is not like it is only one customer, there are many customers with that kind of attitude. So if I am not a person, I can also, maybe I am short tempered, the customer comes, he is short tempered, I am short tempered then there is a confrontation"* (P6: A-FE1).

> *"Of which some, uh, one day that customer that we are talking about is going to hurt someone in the store, I don't know what will happen that day. Because that man is abusive and the minute he walks .He was here today the minute he*

63

walks in the store our moods change. Our moods changes because no one wants to serve him. We don't want to serve him, we don't want to" (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13)

"Yes, they do it thinking that our cashiers, because they are black, they are Stupid, that is why they are going to sit here forever as a cashier. And that anger that is directed to the cashiers will manifest itself" (P15: A–FE9).

Frontline staff are in direct contact with customers and interaction occurs. A customer may arrive at the cashier, a frontline employee, with personal frustration and issues or as a result of the experience in the store and being the last contact-point, the employee bears the customer's anger.

"Because the other day, there was a lady working, she was packing, I don't know what happened there and then the customer said, don't put this and put this, she was trying to do that. But eventually the customer said voetsek to you. And she was like, okay, what now, why are you swearing? He said, I am not swearing, it is the word that I use, how can you say that. You tell me it is a word that you use, how can you use a voetsek on me and then you say it is a word you use, where? Because there is no word to say voetsek and it is just a word because it is swearing. So it is like then that you say, you know what, let me just stop and think, then I think most of the time it can be the working environment that really can affect a person to do bad service" (P16: A-FE10)

"But I can see some of the customers, they can come from wherever they are coming from, maybe their homes or work, they come to organisation with their stress or whatever. Or maybe traffic, she was brought by traffic and she comes to organisation maybe she comes to organisation to buy something, she is looking for something and she can't find it on the shelves. Then we are the last destination and that is where she is going to relieve her stress" (P8: A-FE3).

"You know, a cashier will greet a customer and a customer just looks at the cashier or tells the cashier, I am not here to talk to you, don't talk to me, and you know, the cashier sort of, what do I do for the next customer and some people are resilient and they will take it on the chin and they will move on. But other people will sort of take that personally and customers can be insulting, I mean, they can, ja…. a customer can ruin your day" (P3: HO-SM2).

"Frontline staff, let's talk cashiers, for example. They are the last face basically

64

that a customer sees. So a customer is now frustrated now because they didn't find three of the promotional items. Something has an incorrect price, whatever, there are a couple of things that happen in stores. Who is the customer going to attack? Your cashier, okay, your cashier is the last person she can actually speak to and she will shout and scream at the cashier. So, again, you haven't got this in stock, why is this wrong, call somebody, useless. I cannot sometimes blame them for not wanting to enter into discussions with the customers. They will say hello, they will barely look at you because they are too scared to sometimes. Because they know the minute they open up that door for you to talk to them, the customer is going to gun them and they have got no control over any of that" (P4: HO-HO2).

Through the interaction with frontline employees and customers, relationships do develop that can be either positive or negative. When they are positive, the frontline employee is aware of the customer's appreciation of good service and they also feel good about the value they have added to the organisation.

"I was always amazed when you talk to a customer and you say, sorry, ma'am, you are standing in a queue, we have got more tills open, can I take you to a till that is open? Most of them say, ja, sure, please. That one customer that one day said to me, no. You know, I said that is not the answer you expect; I mean, what do you mean no? No, no, I am waiting to be with that cashier. Why that cashier? No, she talks about my dog, she knows my son, she always asks how they are. She knows my husband is ill and we just have a chat while I am here. Okay, I said, you sure, you don't, no, no, no. I like her, I want to be served by her, that is the tipping point where you get.I was having this customer buying, eventually on the way we were quiet and I just got singing a song while I was scanning. And she was like, I love that song, just keep singing. I just keep singing and when she went, she said, just keep singing, God Bless you, I had a great service, thank you. And it felt good to make a customer feel happy or somebody, not even a customer, just to make somebody feel good" (P16: A–FE10).

Senior management's view is that "The customer is king", and in some cases the customers thinking that it is their right to behave badly has driven destructive behaviour on the part of employees.

"But I think what you have alluded to something, and I mean, there is three

65

where you have highlighted here is customer. Now customer could be a factor that drives bad service to your point where customers are rude and customers are potentially …I don't say they are just by the way the customer is king" (P2: HO–HO1)

"Maybe we don't take the customer as an important person in the store, maybe when we look at him, it is just like normal person or normal customer who is just a person, so why must I worship or go the extra mile to that customer" (P8: A–FE3).

Summary of findings: Customers

Customer interaction with frontline employees is frequent, and this can result in both positive and negative experiences for both parties. Customer contact has significant effects on frontline staff, increasing frustrations, anger and resentment. The frontline employee, through continued exposure to customer abuse, retaliates through service sabotage, confirming customers as a key driver for service sabotage amongst frontline employees.

4.6.3 Operations environment

The operations environment was the third super-code theme, as seen in Table 4. It represented a theme created from the family codes "work environment / process", "service", "availability", "pricing", and "queues". Frontline employees are located in the operating environment and themes pertaining to "resilience", "personal Issues", "assistance to customer", "attitude", "temperament", and "retaliation" are dealt with in this section. Internal conflict amongst frontline staff members within the work environment also creates tension and can lead to service sabotage:

"Ourselves, I mean, you will find, like I said, there is always, there are VTE's and full timers or permanents, so called permanents. However, so there is still a vast difference, even that factor again, because of now, if you are a full timer, I'm a VTE, and I happen to be working with you at the very same department, some people will take it to that level that they wouldn't, there will be a disharmony. Between us and surely that is someone who will affect the company, will affect the customers because of, now I always see you as, or you always treat me as a VTE, you are so called, what, permanent or full timer.

66

So, ja, the division among us" (P18: C–FE14).

"To wash, even to clean, they don't like to clean, they just want to work, work, work, even if it is dirty, they don't care and when we tell them, why you don't clean here, they say, I am busy, I don't want to keep my product, I don't care. And dirty dustbin, maybe the dustbin is fuller and the customer saw the dustbin was not right. They are stubborn because they don't like their job" (P13: A–FE7).

"…internal relationships not between management and staff but between staff and staff, so people are people. So X and Y are paired together on a till, X and Y have serious issues with each other, now I have got to work with you. Well that is another issue, you know" (P3: HO-SM2).

Frontline employees, especially cashiers, are the last contact in the customer retail experience. Through the shopping experience, or just because of life in general, the customer's frustration or anger can increase when incorrect pricing, lack of availability and lack of assistance is experienced. An incorrect process followed in the work environment can result in increased frustration for the customer, which manifests itself during the interaction with frontline staff.

"The bad service depends on the customer, because mostly, on my experience when it comes to customers having a bad day, like when they get inside, maybe they got a bad service. Then they come to you with that bad whatever they got inside" (P16: A-FE10).

"Because even if the customer cannot get whatever they want on the shelf, the first person that they are going to take their frustrations to is the cashier. They are not going to take their frustrations to the manager the first because they are doing their shopping, they come to your till and pay. And you have to deal with that frustration, not knowing who is packing what or there is nothing on the deli, you are not working on the deli, you are not working at the bakery, but as a cashier, you will suffer for those people who are working at those departments. So as cashiers, I think we experiencing a lot of challenges, lot, lot, lot, lot, lot and those challenges, they are very difficult" (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE1).

"Yes, because you find out, a customer, it is a one day special for store. Then the customer drives all the way to find nothing on the shelf and then the next thing they find you, like anybody, like the staff. In a uniform, like I need this and

67

why, the customer is already shouting. Or maybe even, even they are talking nice but whether you are working there or not, they will ask you and when you say, let me get somebody to assist. It is more like you are taking their time and there is no stock and, and, and. It is a huge frustration" (P6: A-FE1).

If the incorrect processes are followed at the head office, it has a considerable impact on the operation environment and results in increased customer frustration. There were also instances where processes driven by head office were not thought through properly, resulting in increased stress and frustration for the frontline staff, and ultimately in increased tension between frontline employees and customers. This adds to stress, which may manifest itself in sabotage. As one employee expressed it:

"However those people there, they don't interact with the customer, me as a merchandiser, I'm the one who is interacting with the customers on a daily basis. I'm the one who is holding the key for the company to grow or to, to grow, because the customer, whatever challenges that we, I have with the customers, they are being directed at me. The customer don't go to the HR or the marketing team and say, but your customer service at the certain store is pathetic. They will say that the individual at your, or the collective in your, one of your stores is pathetic and I'm the one who is holding the key" (P18: C-FE14).

"Go for gold program that we ran and we had asked a lot of, well, we had told cashiers that they needed to ask customers if they have got everything they were looking for. To me, that was the worst thing we could have ever have done…because they can't do anything about it really. No, but also they are going to be attacked by customer and how do they respond to that? You know, they not trained enough to deal with the conflict, number one. They have got no answer for the customer and are we really going to make that change, you know, so I mean, the customers expectation now is that she has told you, tomorrow it is going to be there, well, it doesn't work that way" (P4: HO-HO2).

"And that is also, because you will find that there are only 5 cashiers, 5 tills open and there are long queues, customers will leave the store because they have to stand long. And while the other tills are closed, there is no one that can work on the tills. Then the Head Office forgets about the policy, that there won't be any queues unless all the tills are open, so the issue is also about the Head Office" (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

68

Summary of findings: operations environment

The operations environment has a considerable impact on frontline employees. Interpersonal relationships between staff are strained due, in part, to the various employment grades, namely FTE (full time employee) and VTE (variable time employee), which create jealously and conflict among staff members. The large number of staff in stores, as well as their close working proximity, often results in interpersonal conflicts. The inability of management to recognise and address the issue increases tensions amongst staff. The poor execution of operations such as pricing, stock availability, queues and promotional offers constitute a considerable driver of customer frustration and tension, which can escalate into negative encounters and eventually manifest in adverse behaviour among frontline staff.

4.6.4 Career factors

"Career" was identified as an additional driver of sabotage, featuring as the fourth most frequent super-theme in Table 4. It included codes that dealt with "tenure", "career progression", "vacancy transparency" and employment opportunities. A large majority of the staff, especially amongst VTE staff, see their position as a temporary solution and expect to move into better positions within the organisation fairly quickly.

> *"Because probably they would have thought that I will do this thing for 3 months, 6 months but two years down the line, the person is still there. So those are the people that, because of their anger, end up sabotaging your service unintentionally"* (P 5: HO-HO3).

> *"We do have a certain amount of cashiers that are actually just there for the job, they are kind of in between. So most of our frontline staff are not permanent staff, they are variable time employees, and this is a stepping stone for them. So they coming in, they are earning a certain amount of money, they are looking for permanent jobs, the minute they have got it they leave. It is not a career for them and therefore they don't take it that seriously, so I think, I think a lot of it is their hearts and souls are not in the actual business"* (P4: H–HO2)

> *"Remember, we have goals and achievements that we aim for on the, on a daily basis. However, if those, if those achievements and what, uh, dreams are*

69

not being fulfilled, you know, we, some people always give a pathetic customer service because of, they feel that the company is not doing enough for them" (P18: C-FE14).

In their quest to improve their financial positions and achieve their personal goals, frontline staff will apply for various positions advertised in the organisation. A common theme was a lack of trust in the process and the poor feedback received from the organisation, with no clear reasons given for why the frontline employee was unsuccessful. Service sabotage can result from these situations.

"We are not counted as nothing, we are just like this cashiers, that's it, you get a regret for applying, for being a wage clerk, something that you can do but you get a regret letter. You ask yourself, how stupid I am. And all those things, they add to our frustration and customer and company going down and everything it adds" (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

"Yes, for me, I think sometimes you find that if there are like, vacancies and all those things, and then people apply, already there is somebody on somebody's mind for that position. It is not like it is a just a procedure that we are going through and that is it. And it is somehow demotivating, and if you are demotivated, you can't perform like up to that where you can give it all" (P6: A-FE1).

"You can be rejected for more than 20 times, what is wrong with you, you know. You know, you lose that confidence, you know I think that's most of the things that is frustrating. Those challenges that we are facing at organisation. And, I think as the managers or our seniors, there must be something that they must do about that. Because you can't work in the same position for 11 years, you get bored" (P17: B–FE11; FE12; FE13).

Summary of findings: Career factors

For employees, a frontline position is often viewed as a starting-point for further growth within the organisation. Within the current study, the lack of career opportunities for frontline staff, combined with the poor administration of the recruitment process, leaves staff feeling demotivated and worthless. This, in turn, leads to increased frustration and low morale and further supports the view that a lack of career focus and orientation for frontline employees could become a driver of service sabotage.

70

4.6.5 Union membership

The theme "Union" presented itself as the fifth most frequently-occurring theme. Within the organisation studied, a large proportion of the staff belonged to a Union, which therefore exerted a strong influence. According to one interviewee (P5) about 70% of the company, including management, belonged to a Union. Management's opinion of the Unions was of interest, but only a few frontline employees mentioning the Union during the interview process. However, the Union's influence can extend to influencing employees to perform acts of sabotage.

> *"About 70% of our employees in this company including management belong to the Union* "(P5: HO–HO3).

> *"… shop stewards sort of a Union based corporate environment, and I always use this as an example, if the shop stewards say this happened, they will go on strike within the next five minutes"* (P 1: HO_SM_1).

> *"I think Unions play a big role as well, we have a lot of Union members that I believe are quite negative and, they are here to show their power and that is pretty much all, their hearts are not in the business, their hearts are in the union, really and I think that can have a lot of negativity towards staff, because they meet with staff often and they implant, all the bad things. You know, look for this and they will drive it and drive it until eventually your staff start believing it. Um, so I think some union members, not all, some Union members are not good for the business and not good for our staff, so I think that is another internal factor that creates negativity or creates bad service"* (P2: HO – SM2).

The Union has considerable influence over the behaviour of the staff and the relationship between the organisation and the Union is strained, as is the relationship between the management and union representatives, the shop stewards at the various retail units. Management's view and orientation to the Union play a crucial role in the atmosphere created in various stores.

> *"Ja, I think the most problem is, managers tend to hate the Union. Then that is where again, the Union now retaliates, you understand? So if it was on my choice, I would say managers should be involved and more especially all the issues that the Union has, you have to be involved so that mostly, in our meeting, we have to communicate about it"* (P15: A- FE9).

> *"I think a lot of store managers are afraid to go head to head with Unions. It did*

71

not bother me at all, if I need to fight, I fight" (P1: HO-SM-1).

"You know, sometimes it is not that the staff don't view the manager as a manager but sometimes they view the Union, you know, sort of, here is the manager and the Union is a little bit higher than the manager. But it is just the way you treat the guys, and I think a lot of the internal dynamics of the store drives the output of service" (P3: HO – SM2).

In some cases, management have respect for the role the Union plays in the stores. This manifests itself in management being able to communicate the intended message and recognising the power the Union has over staff, as expressed in these extracts:

"And at least they know where they stand with it, you know what I mean, so no, I never used to agree with everything and, we did box, we had a lot of fights. So, but it was not always rosy but you, you know, when you are needing these guys to understand, when you are needing the staff to understand and there is a problem in the store or the store is performing badly and this is what is going to happen. The shop stewards are the best people to deliver that sometimes as well" (P3: HO-SM2).

"No, you know, I don't know why, and there has been this excuse to say many years ago, a company signed a customer service code with the Union and the issue of discipline was left hanging there to say, both parties will talk about discipline. That is why management is unable to discipline people, and I am saying that doesn't wash for me, because it is issues of behaviour. You have got procedures that you can use to deal with that, so I think, to some extent, we need to up our game in terms of demanding that customer service from employees, that is the internal issue. However, I take note of the fact that, because of the influence of the Union, it has serious influence on the shop floor that me and you will not understand, sometimes maybe our managers are not keen enough to pursue the matter, you know" (P5: HO-HO3).

Summary of findings: Union membership

The current study highlighted the Unions as a driver of service sabotage. Not surprisingly this view was largely held by management, who have a poor relationship in general with Union, supported by the organisation's inability to address key issue

72

with the Union that impact store processes. The Union has considerable influence over staff, as the researcher experienced during the data-collection process (see section 3.3.1). However, where management has acknowledge their existence, mutual respect and tolerance appears to exist, which may, indeed, moderate their influence over frontline employees.

4.6.6 Financial factors

'Financial' occurred fairly low in the data table. Reviewing the transcripts, this could be due to the fact that the interviews were conducted during a week when mainly FTEs (Full-time employees) were employed, as opposed to the VTEs (variable-time employees) who worked for a fixed number of hours a week, usually over weekends. The super-theme 'financial' included themes related to "remuneration" "staff remuneration" and "frontline employee financial" as well as "scheduling". Scheduling of staff is problematic with staff since hours do not cover their living expenses. It was evident from the extract below that that this can lead, not only to anger and frustration, but also to service sabotage.

"Because okay, you find that maybe like, as an employee, uh, you are expecting a certain amount, like this month, I know I will be getting this amount. Then when you see your pay slip, it is way less. At that moment, my body, my mind, everything reacts according to what I see. I am not even thinking whether it can cost my job or whatever" (P6: A-FE1).

"Financial is also a worry, if you don't have money, you can't do anything. Maybe I am thinking that I am going home, my kids haven't got that and that and that so what I must do. So I am in deep thinking, so now here is the customer, you think you can help the customer right, I won't" (P12: A-FE6)**.**

"I didn't know what to say actually but I answered to him, it is according to the needs of the business. No, it is like the contract says, I am 40 hours, I want my 40 hours per week. You know, it is a, guaranteed hours, 40 hours is per month, not per week. And now when we see each other, it i like, now do you understand me. You see, the person is angry. And that is going to manifest itself wherever he is" (P15: A- FE9).

"Like for example, we want an increase. Then, I know very well that I work hard, I serve the stock well, when I ask for an increase then my bosses say

73

there is no money, can you see the whatever, the shop is down. While I know that I push the job then after that I can put the bad service by not ordering as much as I can order. I can decrease my sales, that is the bad service" (P11: A-FE5).

In the retail organisation within which the study is located, financial performance had not been on par with industry peers and cutting of operational expenses was a common practice. The VTE employees were affected the most by these decisions:

"You maybe will be working at certain days, so now even if you have children or you have a breadwinner at home, being a VTE, it's going to be extremely difficult for you to make ends meet" (P18: C-FE14).

"… it was a personal achievement, if I can put it in that way. Personal achievement in a sense that as a VTE, there are so many, what, disadvantages of being a VTE. You will be working, you will not be working throughout the week" (P18: C-FE14).

"That is because we are short of staff, if you ask, they will tell you that it is the Head Office, it is the budget. So it is the budget, the Head Office, blah, blah, blah. What I don't understand is, how can someone that doesn't know what is going on in that store be the one who schedule people?" (P17: B - FE11; FE12; FE13)

"Well, a lot of the anger obviously comes from the fact that, I mean, considering the economic situation, our challenges within the company in terms of turnover and margins and expenses. There is an area of labour cost that is being managed very strictly now. And it applies to VTEs, we call them variable time employees, they don't work every day, they have a different contract with the company. But it is about the hours that is available for them to work and we are managing that area strictly now so that we are cost effective, and there is obviously also a reaction from employees. And then you hear, when you speak to the Union guys, you know, to say, well, they are very good in terms of arguing the point. Because they are not only arguing it terms of the social welfare insofar as those employees are concerned to say, if they work few hours, I mean, how will they be able to support themselves? They get up only working for transport" (P5: HO–HO3).

The vast majority of staff were in financial difficulty and had previously relied on the

74

organisation to assist with financial support. This was provided, but due to regulations and greater control and rigour in the organisation, these loans were not as readily available.

> *"I will make an example; the issue of loans where we are trying to realign them so that we comply with the laws. And people used to get loans, I will not use the word willy-nilly, but because they were decentralised and there was not really a process that is strict and now we put in that process. And when you go to stores and you talk to them here, you can hear the frustrations because people used to have two or three loans at the same time. And we can't afford that and they view that as a change of heart, a change values, they are not understanding that we are becoming a real corporate company. So they won't give the service required and also you will find that maybe they are not happy about their pay also"* (P6: A-FE1).

Summary of findings: Financial factors

Financial issues do drive sabotage. The findings suggest that the cost cutting, as well as scheduling process is not well understood amongst frontline employees with the majority of them voicing disapproval for the initiatives without understanding the context the organisation finds itself in. A number of frontline staff are in extreme debt and are living month to month, a common practise in South Africa largely due to the unsecured lending practices that prevailed from many years.

4.6.7 Organisational factors

The super theme "organisational" was developed as a result of grouping family themes "culture", "head office", "performance metric", "motivation" and "engagement". According to the analysis of the transcription data, the organisation itself was not a driver of sabotage, but some of the processes, systems and lack of motivation led staff to feel frustrated and unimportant. While not directly linked to acts of sabotage, there is evidence that, combined with other frustrations and anger, these factors decrease the resources of staff and increases their stress and sense of frustration:

> *"And those things, they make us to be frustrated, like somebody who is wearing*

75

the same uniform as you, she comes and gives you the same attitude that other customers give. The head office staff and the managers are undermining the seniors, their seniors and us cashiers and packers, they are undermining us. They undermine, we are nothing to them. So how do you expect the next person, like the customer to appreciate what you doing, and if your manager, if your colleagues, like your senior colleagues don't appreciate you" (P17: B – FE11, FE12, FE13).

"We don't feel comfortable. Last time I was fighting with the other lady from Head Office, that lady came, it was just here before opening. She came here in the morning, I started 06:00 to work. I start she came and stand there, just far look at me like this just walk. When X came, our short manager came in she came in and greet me, she talk to me, X, we were talking about the bunnies or your counter looks up to date. I said, oh, thank you. And then that lady came, just, ja, ja, ja, it's nice today. I said, no, thank you, ma'am, you don't have to talk to me because you came early in the morning, you didn't greet me, you look me, you didn't greet, you didn't say anything. And you, while you want us to greet the customers, although you can't greet me. You know what, the charity begins at home, ooh, that lady was very cross, she just went to the Head Office and tell all the managers. The following two weeks, two days after one of the guy came here. And said, ja, x, what have you done? What? Ja, what did you say to another, ooh, that X, X didn't greet me, he said, ja, but he teach her a lesson because some of us, we don't greet you guys, we just look at you like you are just rubbish. I said, ja, I faced her, said, don't talk to me because you didn't greet me, so just leave me like this, I am working, I will talk to manager. Or you can talk to X and X can come and talk to me" (P12: A-FE6)

Senior management from head office argued that, although the culture had changed considerably, financial remuneration would not be a driver of service sabotage as the salaries paid to employees were the highest in industry:

"You know, people say that because we are no longer a caring company and our employees are not that motivated, and they could, to the extent, show their frustrations in customers, I don't believe in that because if we, again, do these comparisons, we, whether you are talking about benefits, whether you are talking about the compensations in terms of the wages we pay to employees, we are one of the best" (P5: HO-HO3).

76

Although management does not view the changes as significant, it was clear from frontline employees' comments that they had not experienced the change as positive. This could stem from the lack of communication between management and staff, as well as management's staff orientation, discussed earlier in this chapter.

> *"Not happy, it is no longer like, the changes, you know, the changes, it is difficult to be in a change"* (P15: A-FE9).

The organisation had gone through an enormous amount of change and it was clear that the culture of the organisation had changed drastically. Also, linking to the driver of career 4.9 above, the frontline employee's perception and trust in the job application process was in question:

> *"They call us to head office, we didn't even get the regret letters, worse and I did ask our wage lady there. I said, you know what, we have applied for this, no, no, no, you didn't apply. I said, no, we did apply and you, you wrote our names there and told us that we are going to write a test at the head office and then what happens? Oh no, no, no. They don't tell you exactly where you went wrong or whatever, they just brush you off"* (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

Motivated and engaged staff contribute positively to organisations and often expend extra effort and focus on their daily tasks. Within the current study, frontline employees and management recognised and acknowledged the importance and effect of motivated and engaged staff:

> *"Like, besides just talking about stakeholder engagement, I mean, there is a saying that says, happy employees equals happy service, good service, customer service. And in terms of employee engagement, also if employees are engaged and trained, they are skilled, they know what to do, you know they are motivated, they will go an extra mile. So all those issues, you know, they do keep me awake. If we are in dispute with the Union, for instance, they might, to some extent, sabotage your service indirectly, you know, they won't be unfriendly to customers, but there are activities that they employ, especially when they are on strike, stopping to work overtime and things like that, so those things could affect your customer service"* (P5 :HO–HO3).

> *"If you do that for 20 years, 30 years doing same thing one day every day, there is no excitement in that. Because you know how to do it, it can excite someone new coming in because she doesn't know how to do or how to wrap, or how to*

77

do this. But for someone that has been there for a long time, it is like, okay, I know I have to do this and I know I have to do this the amount of time that they have spent in that department and that thing, can also lead to the frustration and bad service because it is one thing the same time" (P7: A–FE2).

"I think it plays a big role when you motivate people because when you start motivating people, they start doing good, they start to come out. Because you know, I remember last when we were still on the other side, I remember we were over budget for 6 months. And the manager decided, you know what, I am going to give each and every one R300.00 at vouchers and believe me, everyone was so happy and the other department, they were feeling jealous. And they were saying, oh, we want also and I said, if you want, just push your sales. If you push the sales, you are going to get the R300.00 and when you come to them and say, you know what guys, we are this and this over, where are the vouchers, you see, they have got something that motivates them, that makes them want to sell and provide good service?" (P 7: A-FE2)

Summary of findings: Organisational factors

The organisation where the current study was sited was identified as a driver of service sabotage. This was due, in part, to the orientation and attitude of head office staff towards frontline employees, and the inability of the organisation to empower store managers to focus on motivation and to drive it among frontline employees. Section 4.6.4 identified the long tenure by frontline employees in the same positions as a challenge, since the failure to create excitement or motivation among the employees reduced their service orientation.

4.6.8 Societal factors

Family codes that were linked under the super-theme "societal" were "frontline employee: personal issues"," transport", "status/class" and "racism". In the current study, the researcher had set out to investigate whether societal factors within South Africa could contribute to drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline employees. A lack of education, particularly among the older frontline employees, was highlighted as an obstacle blocking their progress, while the lack of employment opportunities for educated youth became apparent.

"I don't know what can I say, because that is why I said, because maybe they

78

are well educated, we are old, it is a bantu education or maybe that time we were so strict to us, the old management to us, they just make every week frontline meetings. And every, this now a day, I am asking, I say, since now I don't know how many days or how many weeks you don't do frontline meetings to hear our views, what we want to say, what is wrong to us. We are working but in our heart it is wrong. Things are happening in front but nothing is changing, they are going to change the time, we will make a frontline meeting next month, frontline meeting next month, you see" (P19 : C-FE15).

"So they just using it as a job just to get somewhere else, and they finish about 10 years, most of them they are talking like that, they say, I can see I will do 10 years here. But till now if I can point them, I can say, you see this. Even today, tomorrow they are making permanent, they are still saying with us, but they say they have got degree, what, what, what. They go and stand there, it is small money for organisation but I say we are building for you this organisation" (P19: C–FE15).

Due to the historic unequal development of society, with people of colour being forced to populate specific areas with limited resources, a class distinction existed, based on not only skin-colour but also the types of jobs an individual occupies.

"I wouldn't say it is an over-riding factor, but it's there, I mean, it is always there and probably in each store or some stores will be worse. And probably through our history, we will always have this thing, I mean, people think that because someone is a cashier, they are nothing or even because you are a store manager, you are nothing. Oh, so what are you, the store manager of organisation, so nothing, you didn't want to do anything with your life and people do look at you like that, so it's, those things do affect you. And more so staff, so, so that is another factor, I think" (P3: HO-SM2).

"Really, really. They think they are stupid, that is why they are going to sit here forever as a cashier" (P15: A-FE9)

"So now, to me, when they look at the person, they judge the person that is what I am thinking. They judge a person, they look at a person and think, okay, I know her, you know. And the other problem is even the customers, when they come to buy in the deli, they have the thing of looking at the people serving, that are working in the deli. Like they are, a lower level. So sometimes they come with an attitude, but I always tell them at the end of the day, these people

79

are customers, whether they give you attitude or they don't give you attitude, we need their money, we don't need their attitude" (P7: A-FE2-7:21).

In addition, evidence of the unequal distribution of income in society was evident, with frontline employees identifying the frequency and value of the goods purchased by specific customers.

"I mean, you interact with your customers on a daily basis, you know, you know your customers. When I say you know your customers, they are customers who are, who visit our shops on most, on a daily basis. Buying in the store. And even the products or the stuff that they are buying, it's expensive. Not, it's expensive perhaps for me because of, I can't afford. But they don't see those products as expensive, they just see them as everyday uses. So it's, it could be attitude towards that individual, the jealousy, and so there are so many factors. We can't rule any factor away and say, no, it can't be jealousy, no, it can't be" (P18: C-FE14)*.*

"Financial is also a worry, if you don't have money, you can't do anything. Maybe I am thinking that I am going home, my kids haven't got that and that and that so what I must do. So I am in deep thinking, so now here is the customer, you think you can help the customer right, I won't" (P12: A-FE6).

Due to the historic placement of people of colour on the outskirts of the developing cities and economies, frontline employees face many obstacles and challenges on a personal front. These include increases in transportation costs and other challenges in getting to and from work, as well as the need to support their extended families:

"So let's talk about individual people, you know, many of our staff live out in sort of more rural areas, live out in Townships, etcetera, they don't own their own car. They live in small houses, if they are lucky. In a lot of the houses there are two or three families, okay, so you are looking at, lower LSM people that are struggling through life" (P4: HO-HO2).

"They wake up at 04:00 in the morning, they catch three taxis and a bus to work, by the time they get to work and start at 08:00, they have already been going for 4 hours. You know, while the rest of us are pretty much getting up at 05:00, 06:00.And taking it easy and getting in the car, and that kind of thing. So those are hard things that, you know, they have got to get up every morning and face those kind of challenges" (P4: HO-HO2)

80

Although senior management at the head office concurred with the social challenges of the frontline employees, there was a view that the organisational environment contributed to address the social challenges.

> *"In a South African context, we know that the issue of poverty is a challenge, inequality and high unemployment. So, no, you get, I will make an example; if I come from an informal settlement and I don't have electricity, I don't have hot water and things like that. And I have to wake up at 04:00, 05:00 just to prepare, I will have frustrations that I can experience as a parent and having to go and drop children at schools using public transport and all the frustrations. Those social issues, they do, to some extent, but I will want to balance that with the fact that, uh, we have made the environment at organisation more, we say, if you look at our mission.   It says, we serve with our hearts, we make the place, you know, to be better and I think, uh, without sounding arrogant, but the working environment at organisation is more pleasant and I will not want to ignore the social problems that employees face. But we need to take that into consideration"* (P5: HO-HO3).

During the conversations with both staff and management, incidents of racism were identified. The effect on both management and staff were profound however the prevalence in certain cases seems to be a fairly common practice which is cause for concern. Due the historic challenge and turbulence in the past these incidents would have profound impact and effect on any member of staff.

> *"And another thing we were talking about, yesterday in training, we still have those customers that are racist actually"* (P15: A-FE9).

> *"So, and not just that, someone will, a certain customer will mention that, but you blacks, or you being black, you can't run or manage a store like it's supposed to be, you understand? So if such things, you will be receiving such things from the customer, I mean"* (P18: C-FE14)

> *"No, I want the manager. You are speaking to one, no, I want a white manager. I want a white manager that has, so meaning, like only whites can be managers, not black"* (P15: A-FE9).

Management in the study that had experienced racist abuse or behaviour dealt with it appropriately; however, management was not involved in every customer interaction.

> *"Look so I have had, um, I have had customers calling some of my staff sort*

81

of the "K" word and I won't tolerate it. I mean, I will happily go to an inquiry for telling a customer to get lost, I will happily go and do it, because I won't allow my staff to be rude to you but I won't allow you to be derogatory to my staff either" (P3: HO-SM2)

"That is why I was a frontline manager, I would tell them that, uh, you don't be in a fight with the customer, I will fight for you. When I don't, it is going to be bad, it is going to be painful, I know, but don't. But as soon as they see I stand up for them, when they start this racism thing then I was like, it stops now. You either get help or you leave our store, unfortunately we cannot accept that. Then in the way they will calm down but then the customer understands, then we are all happy" (P15: A-FE9).

Among frontline staff, there was evidence that they felt that white managers treated frontline staff far better:

"Even the supervisor themselves, they don't, that is why I say to you, if one, she is starting at 11:00, no, that one she never told me. When I am putting a close sign and say, I am going to the loo, who closed for you? No, I am calling the senior, the senior said I must go. Ai, that one, she is controlling too much, the manager she is coming this side, who close for you, I call my supervisor, said I want to go to the loo. No, no, no, look the queues. What must I do, sometimes I ask the customers, I say, ma'am, sir, please, I am pressed, you can give me two minutes, I want to run to the loo. They say, yes, you see, the other customers there, they are talking to us, they are feeling, they are human being, they know. So, this black management, they don't think about us, that is why I am telling them, the white people are much better than you people" (P19: C-FE1).

Summary of findings: Societal factors

The research confirmed that societal factors contribute to the added demands placed on frontline employees. Unequal historic development means that they are forced to cope with increased distances to work, as well as economic challenges. Incidents of racism are still prevalent in the retail environment and have a significant impact on both frontline employees and managers. The findings confirm that societal issues play a role in the drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline employees.

82

Chapter 5: Discussion of Results

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide a comprehensive discussion of the findings from the previous chapter in relation to the literature review conducted in Chapter 2. The findings were obtained by analysing data from seventeen in-depth interviews and a focus group with both senior management and frontline staff from the retail industry in South Africa. The iterative coding and analysis process allowed an in-depth assessment and interpretation of the data, resulting in new perspectives on the drivers of service sabotage among frontline employee within the retail industry. This supported the context-specific focus of Harris and Ogbonna (2012), who argued that employees justify their behaviour is a variety of context-specific ways.

The research results discussed in this chapter represented a contribution to an increased understanding and awareness of the drivers of service sabotage among frontline employees in the retail industry. The findings reported in Chapter 4 highlighted eight drivers of service sabotage among frontline employees. The relevance of each driver of sabotage will be discussed here in relation to the existing literature in the context of the study.

Two over-arching theories were identified in Chapter 2, namely the Job Demands–Resource Model and Counter-Productive Work behaviour, and the relevance of the results will be discussed with reference to these theories. As stated in Chapter 1, service sabotage is the intentional and deliberate performance of acts designed to negatively affect service (Harris & Ogbonna, 2012). The previous chapter highlighted examples that confirmed this definition.

The JD-R model recognises the diversity of every occupation, and states that each will have its own unique factors associated with job stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).The model further deals with the specific job demands associated with each unique occupation, and the resources available to it. Job demands are the physical, psychological or organisational facets of the job that require continuous physical or psychological effort and skill. Job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social or organisational facets that are functional in achieving work goals. Job resources encourage a motivational process leading to improved work engagement.

83

In discussing the various drivers of service sabotage, the relevant job demands and job resources available to frontline employees need to be discussed, as well as the resultant counterproductive work behaviour.

5.2 Management

Management was identified as the most significant driver from the results of the study, as illustrated in Table 4. Management is a broad encompassing term that relates to a number of individual facets, as represented in Table 5.

Store management is the ultimate custodian of the retail operation and "sets the tone" (section 4.6.1.7) in the store. Furthermore, store management is the final point of contact for resolving operational and staff-related issues in the store. In the current study, "problem resolution" was a frequently-occurring code among frontline employees, as seen in Appendix 5 and is highlighted in the extract below as an important driver of service sabotage.

> *"I went to the manager, they were in the office including my senior supervisor, and I get there, they didn't pay attention to me and yet I was crying, only a senior supervisor came to me and I just said, you know what, there is a customer who is looking for a manager there. And then what my manager said after, he said, why did you leave your till? I said, how was I supposed to do, I mean, a big man like you, standing there shouting and everything and I am sitting down and I was, oh, now I am going to get a slap here. Then I had to walk away from him, he didn't say sorry or whatever or I will deal with the customer"* (P17: B-FE11; FE12; FE13).

Frontline employees encountered significant challenges daily, through their interactions with customers, fellow staff members and supervisors, and the need for management support in resolving issues was evident in many interviews. The findings highlighted that frontline employees received poor managerial support and, in addition, were subjected to abuse by management. Through this abusive process, sabotage occurred. This supported Thau, Bennett, Mitchelle and Marr's (2009) argument that when employees experienced abuse by superiors, they engaged in deviant workplace behaviour. Yavas and Babakus (2010) support the argument for increased support to frontline employees to increase favourable and reduce negative affective and performance outcomes.

84

The code "management quality" and "management style" occurred frequently among frontline employees, as seen in Appendix 5, which confirms that there is a need, not only for knowledgeable management, but for management that is consistent in its dealings with staff. Lindblom, Kajalo and Mitronen (2016) established in their study that charismatic leaders behave in a manner which is conducive to frontline employees, providing them with challenging goals which, when accomplished, lead to higher job satisfaction.

The perceived lack of support and staff orientation from management, as well as its limited involvement in addressing staff challenges, supported the findings of Walsh (2014) and Wang et al. (2011), who argued that supervisory support and knowledge enhanced the service environment and reduced the likelihood of deviant service behaviour.

The quality of management was also brought into question in relation to favouritism in the workplace. In the current study, favouritism was prevalent among supervisors and management, as witnessed in the following extract:

"I am not following and checking why it got to that and now you find that managers have got favourite, that is always the case. There is the favourite person and now they can't hide it. Everybody can see there is this favourite person, so it also demotivates and it makes the other staff demotivated to an extent that the service will drop "(P6:A-FE1).

The perception by staff of a lack of organisational fairness, also known as organisational justice, has been found to be a strong predictor of deviant behaviours, including sabotage. Alias et al. (2013) established that the unfairness perceived by the employee may arise from superiors and colleagues, or the organisation itself could be a source of frustration. In the same study, these authors found that a higher perception of organisational justice resulted in lower levels of deviant behaviour. This conclusion can be confirmed by the current study, as well as by Lawrence and Robinson's (2007) research, which concluded that frontline employee frustration increased due to favouritism, which in turn acted as a catalyst for deviant behaviour. Management as a driver of service sabotage was supported by this study, as well as by the JD-R Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Frontline employees also experienced enormous physical demands in their roles, with staff highlighting the physical discomfort they experienced when they are not permitted to use bathroom facilities, as well as the discomfort caused by working with

85

damaged equipment.

The psychological demands imposed on frontline employees through interactions with management as a result of the lack of problem resolution, communication and specific management behaviour, added to the frustrations and stress of frontline employees. Harris and Ogbonna (2012) identified "employee-firm" as a driver concerned with acts by the employee against the organisation, or directly against management. The current study supports their finding of management as a driver of service sabotage.

5.3 Customers

As a driver of service sabotage, customers were the second most frequently-occurring theme, as evidenced in Table 4. Reynolds and Harris (2006) argued that the interpersonal mistreatment by customers is "endemic" in many service organisations. The study conducted by Harris and Ogbonna (2012) identified customer-driven motives as drivers of service sabotage. Skarlicki, Van Jaarsveld and Walker (2008) established a direct link between customer interpersonal injustice and employee sabotage directed towards customers.

Patterson and Baron (2010) argued that the interpersonal relationships that exist between the employee and staff were critical in a service setting. This has been enforced through popular sayings such as "The employee is the service". This customer orientation has been found to have negative outcomes on the service interactions described in the current study: this is supported by the findings of Raman, Sambasivan and Kumar (2016). Senior management's customer orientation emphasised the fact that "the customer is king". However, it was noted that that customers tended to bring their personal issues and frustrations into the retail environment when dealing with frontline employees. Skarlicki, Van Jaarsveld and Walker (2008) argued that authoritative individuals like managers and supervisors have legitimate power to manage employees, but despite the mantra "The customer is always right", employees frequently question the legitimacy of the customer to impose commands and authority over them. Harris and Daunt (2013) supported the evidence by confirming that customers increasingly abuse both employees and organisations. The current study highlighted the significance of customers as a driver of service sabotage. There was evidence of abuse and mistreatment of frontline staff by customers as is evident from the extract below, staff members employ a number

86

of strategies for coping with this:

> *"You know, a cashier will greet a customer and a customer just looks at the cashier or tells the cashier, I am not here to talk to you, don't talk to me, and you know, the cashier sort of, what do I do for the next customer and some people are resilient and they will take it on the chin and they will move on. But other people will sort of take that personally and customers can be insulting, I mean, they can…. a customer can ruin your day"* (P3:HO-SM2).

While some frontline employees are able to cope with persistent customer abuse, others employ the coping strategy of engaging in sabotage. This is supported by the findings of Reynolds and Harris (2006), who identified sabotage as a coping strategy among frontline employees.

Within the context of the JD-R Model, customers represented both a psychological and physical factor that depleted the employee's mental and physical resources. Skarlicki, Van Jaarsveld and Walker (2008) argued that customer service requires adherence to display rules, and maintaining display rules in customer interactions with customer could be an ongoing stressor and source of emotional labour for customer service employees. Harris and Daunt (2013) established that most employees believed that stress was detrimental to their health and that customer mistreatment eroded the emotional strength and negatively affected their immediate mood and temperament after the interaction.

From a physical point of view, the long working day, difficult working conditions and the need to scan and pack customer's groceries, or else standing continually while working in the deli section, depleted the physical resources of the frontline employee. Harris and Daunt (2013) supported the continuous and unremitting nature of customer misbehaviour as an everyday experience for frontline staff. The long tenure of most frontline employees in the same job, which was fairly common, also led to boredom and increased frustration.

When seen from a psychological point of view, the extended emotional interaction with customers does place additional demands on the frontline employee, as confirmed by Bakker Demerouti (2007). These researchers also argued that primary task performance would be reduced by staff adopting several indirect motives for performance decline, which could include increased selectivity and riskier acts, due to fatigue. The findings supported the actions described above of the frontline employees who select the customers with whom they chose to engage. Frontline

87

employees also engage in riskier behaviour, resulting in direct confrontation with customers.

It is important to note that service interactions between customers and frontline employees were not always negative. The current study evidence supported the relationships that developed between customers and frontline staff (section 4.6.2). In some cases, customers served as a motivational tool, going so far as tipping staff for great service, thanking them for great service or waiting to be served by a specific frontline employee. These acts improved the psychological well-being of the frontline employee and, in so doing, helped to increase the motivational process and engagement of the frontline employee, as supported by Balducci et al. (2011). Through these actions, customer can be seen as resources in the JD-R Model.

Resilience amongst frontline staff was evident, with some frontline employees choosing not to engage in retaliatory acts, but rather to dismiss the abuse. Rumination is concerned with an individual's passive assessment of the symptoms of distress, as well as the possible cause of the symptoms. Luo and Bao (2013) confirmed that staff with negative affectivity had a direct effect on rumination. The negative affectivity amongst the frontline staff interviewed was high, with respondents using the word "anger" and "frustration" repeatedly. Luo and Bao (2013) further established that rumination was positively related to sabotage. Within the current study, sabotage was evidenced through the manifestation of both anger and frustration among frontline employees.

Everton et al. (2007) found that incivility could lead to deviant behaviour directed at either individuals or the organisation. Workplace incivility refers to behaviour that is discourteous and insulting, and within the current study, the daily abusive interactions between frontline employees and customers provided further support for customers as a driver of service sabotage.

Harris and Daunt's (2013) study investigated management challenges with customer misbehaviour, establishing that management was aware of the challenges arising from these interactions there was an increased need for counselling and motivation of staff. The earlier discussion alluded to a need for increased management involvement and, in section 5.8, the need for increased motivation is identified and discussed further.

88

5.4 Operations environment

The operations environment was identified as a driver of service sabotage. The operations environment dealt not only with the actual process established and followed in the retail store, but also with the personal factors affecting staff whether internal or external to the organisation.

From an in-store process perspective, the study highlighted numerous examples of process failures such as poor stock availability, poor promotional execution, incorrect or missing pricing and excessive queues. These resulted in increased anger and frustration among both frontline employees and customers.

> *"Yes, because you find out, a customer, it is a one day special for store. Then the customer drives all the way to find nothing on the shelf and then the next thing they find you, like anybody, like the staff. In a uniform, like I need this and why, the customer is already shouting. Or maybe even, even they are talking nice but whether you are working there or not, they will ask you and when you say, let me get somebody to assist. It is more like you are taking their time and there is no stock and, and, and. It is a huge frustration"* (P6: A-FE1).

Everton et al. (2007) explored deviant behaviours resulting from workplace incivility due to three factors. They argued that an employee's disposition was more closely related to the ability of the organisation to create the right climate by reducing frustrations and streamlining processes. This also provided evidence to support the findings of Harris and Ogbonna (2012) that established "firm-employee" motives were directed at the organisation by employees as a motive for service sabotage.

Within the retail environment, staff experienced frequent interactions, not only with customers but with fellow employees. Harris and Ogbonna (2012) identified "group-related" activities as a driver of service sabotage within the hospitality industry. Their study found that frontline employees were encouraged and pressured to compete in acts of service sabotage, while the current study highlights the differences amongst frontline employees as the primary driver. The researcher's study revealed that confrontation between staff does exist, with FTE and VTE employees having different attitudes as well as different work ethics.

> *"Ourselves, I mean, you will find, like I said, there is always, there are VTE's and full timers or permanents, so called permanents. However, so there is still a vast difference, even that factor again, because of now, if you are a full timer,*

89

I'm a VTE, and I happen to be working with you at the very same department, some people will take it to that level that they wouldn't, there will be a disharmony. Between us and surely that is someone who will affect the company, will affect the customers because of, now I always see you as, or you always treat me as a VTE, you are so called, what, permanent or full timer. So, ja, the division among us" (P18: C-FE14).

5.5 Career factors

The current study identified career as a driver of service sabotage. Harris and Ogbonna (2006) discovered the employee's desire to stay within a firm and pursue a career diminished as an antecedent for service sabotage. The current study established that frontline employees were extremely frustrated and cynical in their views of career progression within the organisation. The vast majority of the VTE employees saw the frontline position as a stepping stone to improved positions; however, this was seldom justified, as evidenced in the extract below:

"Because probably they would have thought that I will do this thing for 3 months, 6 months but two years down the line, the person is still there. So those are the people that, because of their anger, end up sabotaging your service unintentionally" (P5: HO-HO3).

Wei and Si (2013) argued that frontline employees' perception of their relative mobility related proportionately to acts of deviant behaviour. Those with a high perception of mobility were less likely to engage in CWB, as alternatives existed for them beyond the organisation. Within the current study, the length of tenure of the FLE employee who was interviewed is outlined in Table 2. The current rate of unemployment in 2015 in South Africa, according to biznews.com, was 25%. However, unemployment among those younger than 25 was 63.1%. Awareness of the current unemployment levels supported the lack of perceived mobility, combined with the frustrations caused by lack of career advancement, would result in the deviant behaviour by staff, and this was confirmed in the findings.

In view of the JD-R model and the depletion of employee resources highlighted previously in this research, Karatepe and Karatepe (2009) stated that employees prefer to use organisational tenure as a resource to cope with job stress and strains. Yavas and Babakus (2010) argued that proactive actions by management to support

90

frontline employees would reduce their turnover goals. Furthermore, as their work experience increases, they learn to adapt to stressful situations and rely less on tenure as a coping mechanism. This was evident in the study with numerous frontline employees demonstrating

5.6 Financial factors

The literature established financial motives as a key driver of service sabotage (Harris & Ogbonna, 2012). Harris and Ogbanna's study (2012), which was situated in the hospitality sector, found that employees attempted to improve their financial position through acts of service sabotage. Within the current study, financial factors drove the acts of service sabotage, rather than acts of sabotage being motivated for reasons of financial improvement.

5.7 Union membership

An unsuspected factor within the current study was the identification of Unions as a driver of service sabotage. The Union was identified as a potential catalyst for deviant behaviours due to their strong influence over staff, as well as their large support base in the organisation. Within the current literature, themes of organisational justice and ethical climate, as well as organisational support as established by Alias et al. (2013), are crucial to improving relations between Unions and store management.

The extent of control that the Union had over the frontline employees could provide further support to the "group – motives" service sabotage driver established by Harris and Ogbonna (2012). Their study focused on the collective pressure for frontline staff to perform acts of sabotage. In the current study, the Union's ability to elicit similar actions by staff is highlighted in the extract below:

> … *"Shop stewards sort of a Union based corporate environment, and I always use this as an example, if the shop stewards say this happened, they will go on strike within the next five minutes"* (P1: HO-SM-1)

Management at both head office and in the store environment generally had a negative view of the Union, while recognising that the relationship was strained and required greater management involvement.

91

5.8 Organisations

The organisation required that frontline staff observed specific service protocols and pre-defined operational processes. As a result, job autonomy in service settings this is largely reduced, with frontline employees following set protocols. Through their daily interactions with customers, combined with the numerous operational factors that impact the customer's shopping experience, frontline employees face new challenges, situations and interactions daily. Yoo and Arnold (2014) stated that the use of unstructured service scripts increased the emotional labour and exhaustion of employees, as well as frustration that leads to increased stress and ultimately to CWB behaviour (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007). Kao et al. (2014) supported the argument for increased documented service norms and goals, to create a service climate that assists in reducing the social stressors and, as a result, service sabotage. Within the current study, frontline employees were well aware of the established service norms; however, operational or customer issues arose sporadically and frontline employees were not equipped to cope with these challenges.

Alias et al. (2013) argued that, in order to reduce an employee's inclination to CWB, a higher level of job autonomy was required. The very nature of frontline positions required the following of set operational procedures: the only difference occurred through interaction with colleagues and customers. The mundane nature of frontline jobs increased frustration and anger, as is evident in the extract below:

> *"If you do that for 20 years, 30 years doing same thing one day every day, there is no excitement in that. Because you know how to do it, it can excite someone new coming in because she doesn't know how to do or how to wrap, or how to do this. But for someone that has been there for a long time, it is like, okay, I know I have to do this and I know I have to do this the amount of time that they have spent in that department and that thing, can also lead to the frustration and bad service because it is one thing the same time"* (P7: A-FE2)*.*

In order to reduce the frustration and improve the frontline employee's disposition towards the job, management needs to improve their motivation, thereby enhancing the job resources available to frontline employees. Bakker and Demerouti (2007) argued that intrinsic motivation, namely the employee's personal growth, learning and development, improved the physical, psychological and social aspects of the job. In terms of growth and learning among frontline employees, in the current study this

92

was shown to be very limited, further supporting the lack of job resources provided to frontline employees.

The frustration experienced by frontline staff has been demonstrated in the results to manifest in acts of service sabotage. The organisation's inability to improve and streamline the operating processes, for example, by improving stock availability, correctly loading promotions and pricing articles accurately is evident in the results. Everton et al. (2007) argued that an employee's disposition was more closely related to the ability of the organisation to create the right climate by reducing frustrations and streamlining processes.

5.9 Societal factors

The country context of the current study, South Africa, provided support for societal factors as drives of service sabotage. South Africa has a relatively young democracy and is recovering from tremendous injustices and unequal development due to the policy regimes of previous governments. This unequal development of society has placed considerable pressure on frontline employees. The current study highlighted a perceived class difference, with frontline employees feeling that they were not on an equal footing with other citizens, as evidenced in the quote below.

> *"I wouldn't say it is an overriding factor, but it's there, I mean, it is always there and probably in each store or some stores will be worse. And probably through our history, we will always have this thing, I mean, people think that because someone is a cashier, they are nothing or even because you are a store manager, you are nothing. Oh, so what are you, the store manager of organisation, so nothing, you didn't want to do anything with your life and people do look at you like that, so it's, those things do affect you. And more so staff, so, so that is another factor, I think"* (P3: HO-SM2).

While Hofstede's "power-distance" refers to the tolerance by the culture of the large inequalities of both power and wealth, the researcher was unable to find any conclusive data on this dimension that was representative of the entire population. Kim and Aggarwal's (2016) argument for the importance of understanding roles and cultural settings as possible explanations for incivility, based on perceived cultural power differences is society, is pertinent in the context of this study.

The daily pressures faced by frontline staff include reliance on public transport,

93

travelling vast distances to get to work, as well as supporting large households, often as sole bread-winners.

The prevalence of racism within society was confirmed in the current study. The troubled history of the country, as well as the lack of respect of the dignity for the individuals being abused, certainly has a profoundly negative effect on the disposition of staff.

The South Africa government has recently opened the new "Hate Speech Bill" for public comment, with Justice Minster Michael Masutha stating "We are clear that this Bill itself will not end racism and other intolerances, but it will create an instrument that will hold those guilty of committing acts accountable before the law" (Herman, 2016). The above demonstrates and further supports the fact that societal injustice, including racism, is still prevalent within South Africa.

94

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Principal findings

The primary objective of this research was to establish the drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline employees within a retail context. Harris and Ogbonna 2012 study had already established the motives of service sabotage amongst frontline employees in a hospitality context in Malaysia. This has been accomplished with the identification of eight drivers in a retail context.

Chapter 1 identified the need for the study within a service context in South Africa due to the fact that 68.1% of GDP in 2014 (World Bank Data, 2016) was obtained from service industry with the global average at 80%. The recognition that South Africa has a competitive advantage in services as well as the economic importance is supported by Maswanganyi (2015) and Schwab et al. (2015) supported the need for the study.

The literature review in Chapter 2 established two theory bases for the study: the Job Demand Resource model and Counterproductive Work Behaviour within which the findings of Chapter 4 were discussed in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 concluded by identifying eights drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline retail staff. Each of the factors will be discussed briefly below.

Management was the most occurring theme, and the study identified a number of individual traits relating to it that reduced the frontline employee's demands and resources, ultimately leading to sabotage. Customers were identified as the next most significant driver, as demonstrated in frequent and often highly-charged interactions. The above two factors relate to the interactions among individuals and emphasise the importance of ensuring that management are well-trained and properly resourced, and that the staff who are recruited have sufficient emotional control and locus of control to interact with customers for extended periods of time.

The operations environment was identified as a driver through which poor execution of the retail service to customers increased the frustration and anger of both staff and customers alike. The perceived inability of frontline employees to progress within the organisation, combined with the inadequate feedback on applications, supported the view of lack of career opportunities as a potential driver of service sabotage.

Within the organisation researched, the extent of Union membership, as well as its

95

significant control over its members, was evident. Both the organisation's and management's disposition towards the Union was unfavourable, resulting in increased tension and mistrust. Through their widespread control and influence, the Union's ability to instruct staff to engage in acts of service sabotage was confirmed.

Financial factors resulted largely as a result of the organisations part-time employment policy, and to the lack of hours afforded to these employees, which often resulted in frontline employees working for just transport money. This together with the staff debt burden created challenges for staff that resulted in sabotage behaviour.

Organisational factors related to the ability of the organisation to streamline the process to ensure improved operations at the retail site. Furthermore the need to increase job autonomy and motivation for frontline employees, many of which have considerable lengths of service, was identified as factor that if not addressed could lead to service sabotage.

Within the South African context societal factors presented themselves as a less frequently occurring driver but an important one nonetheless. Issues pertaining to education and distance from work as well as the prevalence of racism in the retail environment were highlighted and the effect on frontline employees established.

6.2 Contributions to the literature

A number of primary contributions to the literature on the drivers of service sabotage have been identified.

- The "group-motive" identified by Harris and Ogbonna (2012) differed from the "Union" motive in the current study where due to social and peer pressure staff engaged in acts versus the instruction by the Union as an act of solidarity and defiance towards the organisation.
- "Financial" motives, in Harris and Ogbonna's (2012) study referred to actions by frontline employees to improve their financial status. In the current study, "financial" motives refer to acts of sabotage against the organisation due to employment structures and working schedules.
- "Societal" factors, within the current study, have been found to be drivers of service sabotage that not been previously identified in any earlier studies.

96

6.3 Implications for management

The study identified a number of implications for management within the retail industry. The drivers of service sabotage are relevant in a retail setting and have a significant financial importance to management with Chen et al. (2015) arguing that improving customer service is important for repeat business. Martinelli and Balboni (2012) support the focus on improving customer service levels as it is a key component to a retailer's winning strategy.

- Management of the organisation need to be cognisant of the role they play in setting the tone and driving the behaviour at store level. The findings established in chapter 4 should be discussed with management and the identified areas addressed. Management also need to ensure a smooth and seamless operating environment to ensure that retail customer's frustrations are reduced to assist in alleviating the retaliation directed at frontline employees.
- The effect customers had on frontline employees was significant, and management should employ a mechanism at store level for frontline employees to constructively discuss how to handle difficult customers but, at the same time update the service training to include greater focus on difficult customers and suggest coping mechanisms for frontline employees.
- Customer orientation involved specific personality traits such as caring, enjoyment of serving others and emotional stability (Yavas & Barbakus, 2010). Management should recruit frontline employees who possess these customer orientation qualities.
- Whilst the recruitment of frontline employees will require attention focused on people with higher customer orientation and higher emotional resilience, greater effort is required to employ the correct store management. The role of management is crucial and ensuring the correct leadership styles are recruited or trained is essential to reduce sabotage on the frontline.

6.4 Limitations of the research

6.4.1 Research bias

The exploratory research method chosen for this study is by nature subjective and will be influenced by the researcher's own perspective. Saunders and Lewis (2012) support the acknowledgement by the researcher of any potential biases as their

97

context will have an influence on how they interpret the findings of the research. As such, it must be stated that the researcher has extensive experience working in the retail industry at a senior level and as such has been exposed to challenges at retail sites. In addition the researcher is employed by the organisation in which research was conducted. This may have biased the answers given by some of the respondents or resulted in too much emphasis on a particular theme.

6.4.2 Sampling bias

The use of purposive sampling within the current study primarily due to the time constraint resulted in all the respondents being from a single organisation. This may limit the transferability of the findings to other industries. Triangulation in the current study however attempted to mitigate this phenomenon.

Furthermore, the unit of analysis of the study was the individual frontline employee and there was no differentiation made between retail outlets of varying size. Management style and psychological climate related to the size of the retail outlet may have impacted findings.

6.4.3 Time and location constraints

The research focused on a single region, namely, Gauteng due to the proximity of the researcher as well as the time constraint of six months to complete the research.

6.5 Recommendations for future research

Having established the drivers of service sabotage amongst frontline retail staff, future research could verify the drivers amongst a larger population of retail organisations. Exploring the frequency of sabotage as a result of each specific driver could provide useful focus points for organisations to address the relevant driver of service sabotage in more detail.

Due to the prevalence of management as the main driver of sabotage, research should also be undertaken to establish the most effective and adaptive leadership style for retail operations.

98

References

Alias, M., Rasdi, M., R., Ismail, M., & Samah, A., B. (2013). Influences of Individual-elated Factors and Job Satisfaction on Workplace Deviant Behaviour Among Support Personnel in Malaysian Public Service Organisations. *Human Resource Development International*, *16*(5), 538–557.

Alias, M., Rasdi, R. M., Ismail, M., & Samah, B. A. (2013). Predictors of Workplace Deviant Behaviour: HRD Agenda for Malaysian Support Personnel. *European Journal of Training and Development*, *37*(2), 161–182.

Appelbaum, S. H., Iaconi, G. D., & Matousek, A. (2007). Positive and Negative Workplace Behaviours: Causes, Impacts, and Solutions. *Corporate Governance*, 6–598.

Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands Resources Model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology.* 22

Balducci, C. Schaufeli, W. B., & Fraccaroli, F. (2011). The job demands resource model and counterproductive work behaviour: The role of job-realted affect. *European Journal of work and Organisational Psychology, 20*(4), 467-496.

Barbour, R.S. (2007). Introducing Focus Groups: In Qualitative Research Kit : Doing Focus Groups. Sage Publications

Behaviour, S., & Central, P. (2012). Counterproductive Work Behaviours , Confucian Values , and Production ..., *40* (July 2011), 1045–1056.

Bowling, N. A., & Burns, G. N,. & Stewart, S. M., & Gruys, M. L. (2011). Conscientiousness and Agreeableness as moderators of the relationship between neuroticism and counterproductive work behaviours: A constructive replication. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 19*(3), 320-330

Bryman, A., & Bell, E. (2003). *Business research methods.* Lodon: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2004). *Social ScienceResearch Methods.* Oxford, England : Oxford University Press.

99

Chen, C., Lei, J., & Hao, J. (2015). Hotel Staff Service Sabotage Behaviour: Classification and Impact on Consumer Willingness to Pay. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, *7* (4), 136–144.

Chi, N.-W., Chang, H.-T., & Huang, H.-L. (2015). Can personality traits and daily positive mood buffer the harmful effects of daily negative mood on task performance and service sabotage? A self-control perspective. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *131*, 1–15.

Chi, N. W., & Tsai, C. W., & Tseng, M. S. (2013). Customer Negative Events and Employee Service Sabotage: The Roles of Employee Hostility, Personality and Group Affect Tone. *Work and Stress Journal, 27*(3), 298 - 317.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). Basics of Qualitative Research. Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory. (4th Ed). California, United States of America: Sage Publications Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Approaches. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches.

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. (2001). The job demands resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 86*(3)*, 499 -512.

Englander, M. (2012). The Interviewer: Data Collection in Descriptive Phenomenological Human Scientific Research. *Journal of PhenomenologicalPsychology, 43*(1), 13-35.

Everton, W. J., Jolton, J. A., & Mastrangelo, P. M. (2007). Be Nice and Fair or Else: Understanding Reasons for Employees' Deviant Behaviours. *Journal of Management Development*, *26*(2), 117–131.

Ezzy, D. (2001). Are qualitative methids understood. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health.* 25(*4*), 294-297.

Fatima, A., & Atif, Q, M., & Saqib, A., & Haider, A. (2012). A path model examining the relations among organisational injustice, counterporductive work behaviour and job satisfaction. *International Journal of Innovation*, Management and Technology, 3(6), 697-701.

Fida, R., Paciello, M., Tramontano, C., Fontaine, R. G., Barbaranelli, C., & Farnese, M. L. (2015). An integrative approach to understanding counterproductive work behaviour:The roles of stressors, negative emotions, and moral disengagement. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *130*(1), 131–144.

Friese, S. (2016). *Adding documents inot the hermeneutic unit (project).* Retrieved from www.atlasti.com/video-tutorials

Gauteng Province - Economic Analysis Unit of SRM, (April-June, 2012). The Retail Industry on the Rise in South Africa. Retrieved from

Griffin, R. W., O'Leary-Kelly, A., & Collins, J. M. (1998). *Dysfunctional Behaviour in Organizations : Violent and Deviant Behaviour.*Covent Garden : London, Jai Press Inc.

Gustaffson, A., & Aksoy, L., & Brady, M. K., & McColl-Kennedy, J. R., & Sirianni, N. J., & Wittel, L., & Wuenderlich, N. V. (2015). Conducting Service Research that matters. *Journal of Services Maketing, 29*(6/7), 425 - 429.

Harper, D. (1990). Spotlight Abuse -Save Profits. *Industrial Distribution, p 79* (10), 47-51.

Harris, L, C. (2013). Service Employees and Cusotomer Phone Rage: Empirical Analysis. *European Journal of Marketing 47(3/4),* 463-484.

Harris, L. C., & Daunt, K. (2013). Managing customer misbehavior: challenges and strategies. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *27*(4), 281–292.

Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (2002). Exploring Service Sabotage: The Antecedents, Types and Consequences of Frontline, Deviant, Antiservice Behaviours. *Journal of Service Research*, *4*(3), 163–183.

Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (2006). Service Sabotage: A Study of Antecedents and Consequences. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*,*34*(4), 543.

Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (2009). Service sabotage: The Dark Side of Service

Dynamics. *Business Horizons*, *52*(4), 325–335.

Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (2012). Motives for Service Sabotage : An Empirical Study of Frontline Workers, *32*(13), 2027–2046.

Herman, P. (2016, October, 24). New hate speech bill opened for public comment *News 24.* Retrieved from http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News?new-

hate-speech-bill-opened-for-public-comment-20161024

Hofstede, G. *Why South Africa.* retrieved from htttps://geert-hofstede.com/south-africa.html

Hout, M. C., Goldinger, S. D., & Brady, K. J. (2014). MM-MDS: A Multidimensional Scaling Database with Similarity Ratings for 240 Object Categories from the Massive Memory Picture Database. *PLoS ONE. 9*(11).

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, *15*(9), 1277–1288.

Hunter, E. M., & Penney, L. M. (2014). The Waiter Spit in My Soup! Antecedents of Customer-Directed Counterproductive Work Behaviour *Human Performance*, *27*(3), 262–281.

Karatepe, O. M., & Karatepe, T. (2009). Role Stress, Emotional Exhaustion, and Turnover Intentions: Does Organizational Tenure in Hotels Matter? *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, *9*(1), 1–16.

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing.* (2nd Ed). Los Angeles, California : Sage.

Kim, C. S., & Aggarwal, P. (2016). The Customer is King "Culture-based Unintended Consequences of Moderm Marketing. *Journal of Consumer Marketing, 33 (*3*).*

Klotz, A. C., & Buckley, M. R. (2013). A Historical Perspective of Counterproductive Work Behaviour Targeting the Organisation. *Journal of Management History*, *19*(1), 114–132.

Kao, F. H., Cheng, B. S., Kuo, C. C., & Huang, M. P. (2014). Stressors, Withdrawal, and Sabotage in Frontline Employees: The Moderating Effects of Caring and Service Climates. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*, *87*(4), 755–780.

Lacey, A., & Luff, D. (2007). Qualitative data analysis. *The NIHR RDS for the East/Midlands/Yorkshire & the Humber*

Lawrence, T. B., & Robinson, S. L. (2007). Ain't Misbehavin: Workplace Deviance as Organisational Resistance. *Journal of Management*, *3*(3), 378–394.

Lindblom, A., Kajalo, S., & Mitronen, L. (2016). Does a retailer's charisma matter? A study of frontline employee perceptions of charisma in the retail setting. *Journal of Services Marketing, 30*, 266–276.

Lings, K. (2015, July, 29). In SA 1 in 4 still unemployed - youth crisis as 63.1% remain jobless. *BizNews.com.* Retrieved from News http://www.biznews.com/thought-leaders/2015/07/29/sa-q2-unemployment-eases-to-25-but-63-1-of-youth-remain-jobless/

Luo, P., & Bao, Z. (2013). Affectivity, Emtoional exhaustion, and service sabotage behaviour: The mediation role of rumination. *Social Behaviour and Personality, 41*(4), 651-662.

Mangione, T. W., & Quinn, R. P. (1974). Job Statisfaction, Counterproductive Work Behaviour, and Drug use at Work. *Journal of applied Psychology, 60*(1), 114-116.

Martinelli, E., & Balboni, B. (2012). Retail Service Quality as a key Activator of Grocery Store Loyalty. *The Services Industries Journal. 32*(14), 2233-2247

Maswanganyi, N. (2015, October, 15). Service sector offers growth opportunies for SA. *BusinessDay BDlive.* Retrieved from http://www.bdlive.co.za/business/financial/2015/10/15/services-sector-offers-growth-opportunities-for-sa

Mount, M., Ilies, R., & Johnson, E. (2006) Relationship of personality traits and counterproductive work behaviours: the mediating effects of job satisfaction. *Journal of Personnel Psychology, 59*(3), 591-622

Multidimensional Scaling. Retrieved from http://www.analyitech.com/networks/mds.htm

Myers, M. D. (2009). *Qualitative research in business & management.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Myers, M. D. (2013). *Qualitative research in business & management.* (K Smy,Ed) (2nd ed.). London

103

Nguyen, H., Growth, M., Walsh, G., & Hennig-Thurua, T. (2010). The Impact of Service Scripts on Customer Citizenship Behaviour and the Moderating role of Employee Customer Orientation. *Psychology and Marketing, 31*(12), 1096-1109

Ostrom, A. L., Parasuraman, A., Bowen, D. E., Patrício, L., & Voss, C. A. (2015). Service Research Priorities in a Rapidly Changing Context. *Journal of Service Research*, *18*(2), 127–159.

Patterson, A., & Baron, S. (2010). Deviant Employees and Dreadful Service Encounters: Customer Tales of Discord and Distrust. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *24*(6), 438–445.

Phobias. (n.d.) Retireved from http://www.data.oecd.org/south-Africa.htm

Raman, P., & Sambasivan, M., & Kumar, N. (2016). Counterproductive Work Behaviour Among Frontline Governemnt Employees: Role of Personality, Emotional Intelligence, Affectivty, Emotional Labour, and Emotional Exhaustion. *Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology*, *31*, 21–2

Reynolds, K. L., & Harris, L. C. (2006). Deviant Customer Behaviour: An Explanation of Frontline Employee Tactics. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 14,* 95-111.

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, A. T. (2013) *Organisational Behaviour (15th ed.*). Edinburgh Gate, England : Pearson Education Limited.

Robinson, S. L., & Bennett, R. J. (1995). a Typology of Deviant Workplace Behaviours: a Multidimensional Scaling Study. *Academy of Management Journal*, *38*(2), 555–572.

Roy, L. (2012). Interactional Justice and Counterproductive Work Behaviours: the Media, *40*(8), 1341–1356.

Saunders, M. & Lweis, P. (2012). *Doing research in business & management. An essential guide to planning your project.* Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited.

Schwab, K., Sala-i-Martin, X., & Brende, B. (2015). *The Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016* (Vol. 5).

104

Shenton, A.K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research
projects. *Education for Information,22,* 63-75

Skarlicki, D. P., van Jaarsveld, D. D., & Walker, D. D. (2008). Getting even
for customer   mistreatment: the role of moral identity in the
relationship between customer   interpersonal injustice and
employee sabotage. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*,
93(6), 1335–47.

Slora, K. B., Joy, D. S., & Terris, W. (1991). Personnel Selection to Control Employee
Violence. *Journal of Business and Psychology 5*(3)

Spector, P. E., & Fox, S. (2005). A model of of counterproductive work behaviour. In
S. Fox & P.E. Spector (Eds.), *Counterproductive work behaviour:Investigation
of actors and targets (pp.151 - 174).*   Washington, DC: American
Psychological Association

Thau, S., Bennett, J.R., Mitchell, M.S., & Marrs, M.B. (2009). How management style
moderates the relationship between abusive supervision and workplace
deviance " An uncertainity management theory perspective. *Organisational
Behaviour and Human Decision Processes, 108*(1), 79-92

Van der Berg, S. (Oct ,2010). Current Poverty and Income distribution in the context
of South African history. Universoty of Stellenbosch Economic working Papers
22/10. Retrieved from www.ekon.sun.ac.za/wpapers/2010/wp222010/wp-22-
2010.pdf

Walsh, G. (2014). Extra- and intra-organizational drivers of workplace deviance. *The
Service Industries Journal*, *34*(14), 1134–1153.

Wang, M., Liao, H., Zhan, Y., & Shi, J. (2011). Daily Customer Mistreatment and
Employee Sabotage Against Customers: Examining Emotion and Resource
Perspectives. *Academy of Management Journal*, *54*(2), 312 – 334

Wei, F., & Si, S. (2013). Tit for tat? Abusive supervision and counterproductive work
bhaviours: The moderating effects of locus of control and percevied mobility.
Asia Pacfific Journal of Management, 30(1), 281-296

105

Welman, C., Kruger, F., & Mitchell, B. (2005). *3rd Edition, Research Methodology.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press

World Bank. *Services, etc, Value Added.* Retrieved from http://www.data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.SRV.TETC.ZS

Yang, L. Q., Johnson, R. E., Zhang, X., Spector, P. E., & Xu, S. (2013). Relations of Interpersonal Unfairness with Counterproductive Work Behavior: The Moderating Role of Employee Self-Identity. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *28*(2), 189–202.

Yavas, U. & Babakus, E. 2010. Relationships between organizational support, customer orientation, and work outcomes. *The International Journal of Bank Marketing 28(3)* pp. 222-238.

Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitative research from start to finish.* New York : Guilford Publications, Inc.

Yoo, J. J., & Arnold, T. J. (2014). Customer orientation, engagement, and developing positive emotional labor. *The Service Industries Journal*, *34*(16), 1272–1288.

Zablah, A. R., Franke, G. R., Brown, T. J., & Bartholomew, D. E. (2012). How and When Does Customer Orientation Influence Frontline Employee Job Outcomes? A Meta-Analytic Evaluation. *Journal of Marketing*, *76*(3), 21–40.

Zhang, Y., & Wildemouth, B. M. (2009). Qualitative analysis of content. Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information

106

Annexure 1 – Senior Manager Interview Guide

Interview guide - Managers

Introduction and Preliminaries

1. Welcome, introductions, thank person for attending
2. Explain purpose of the study. Highlight the fact that the drivers and not the acts are important.
3. Ask permission to record session
4. Participant to sign consent form

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- What is your current position?
- Who do you report to?
- Who are your direct reports?
- How long have you been in this position?

Questions

1. By way of introduction, please describe what your job entails, including what you regard as good customer service, or bad customer service.

2. What are the things that keep you awake at night with regard to customer satisfaction?

3. What challenges are you aware of that affect customer service?

4. How would you describe the general level of front line customer service in your stores?

5. In your opinion, what internal and external organisational factors drive the level of front line customer service?

6. Please describe other store specific variables, which, in your opinion, have an effect on customer service.

7. How are customer service levels measured?

    a. Do these include customers? If no, what role do you think customers can play in the service delivery provided by frontline staff?
    b. What support does your organisation provide frontline staff with regards to customer service?

8. What, in your opinion, drives frontline staff to provide
    o good customer service?
    o bad customer service?

In closing, is there anything else you want to share which we may not have covered in our discussion?

107

Annexure 2 – Frontline Staff Interview Guide

Interview guide - Frontline Employees

Introduction and Preliminaries

1. Welcome, introductions, thank person for attending
2. Explain purpose of the study. Highlight the fact that the drivers and not the acts are important.
3. Ask permission to record session
4. Participant to sign consent form
5. Stress the guarantee of confidentiality.

Questions

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- What is your current position?
- What function does the position report into?
- How long have you been in this position?

1. By way of introduction, please describe what your job entails, and provide me with examples to support your answers:
   a. What, in your view, constitutes good service? ...and bad service?
2. What are some of the challenges you face in your daily life as a frontline employee?
3. What factors in your current role do you consider to affect how you, and your colleagues provide service to customers?
   a. What support do you require from your organisation to perform your job well?
   b. What support does your organisation provide?
4. What, in your opinion, drives you and your colleagues to provide
   a. good customer service?
   b. bad customer service?
5. How is your performance evaluated?
6. Please describe a time when you felt good about the service you provided to customers.
   a. What happened exactly?
   b. Who was involved?
   c. What was the outcome?
7. Please describe a time when you did not feel good about the service you provided to customers.
   a. What happened exactly?
   b. Who was involved?
   c. What was the outcome?
8. What do your superiors think about the service in your store?
9. In closing, is there anything else you want to share that I might not have asked?

108

Annexure 3 : Ethics Approval

Dear Mr William Nunes

Protocol Number: **Temp2016-01696**

Title: **The Drivers of Service Sabotage amongst Frontline Employees**

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been APPROVED.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards,

Adele Bekker

109

Annexure 4 : Primary Codes List

Code-Filter: All

_____

HU: Drivers of service sabotage

File: [C:\Users\wnunes\Documents\Scientific   Software\ATLASti\TextBank\Drivers   of   service sabotage.hpr7]

Edited by: Super

Date/Time: 2016-10-22 11:41:58

_____

Acknowledgement

customer : bad service

Customer : Communication

customer : favourtism

Customer : Frustrations

customer : great service

customer : heirarchy/status

Customer : in store events

customer : level of management

customer : personal issues

customer : PnP employee assistance

Customer : racism

Customer : resolving queries

customer complaint : metric

Customer Complaints - process for handling

customer complaints : issue resolution

customer complaints : training

customer complaints: organisation attitude

customer: Staff lower class

Customer: Staff relationships

Customers: Behaviour/Attitude

Customers: Financial importance

110

driver : customer

driver : lack of assitance to customer

driver : pricing

driver : remuneration

driver : supervisors

Driver: economic situation

Driver: Store Management

Drivers : Availability

drivers : discipline

frontline employee : discuss issues

frontline employee : attitude

frontline employee : career progression

frontline employee : engagement

frontline employee : good story

Frontline employee : interpersonal relationships

Frontline employee : Last contact Point

Frontline Employee : tenure

Frontline employee : work environment

Frontline Employee Challenges: Transport

frontline employee: Bad service

frontline employee: coping mechanism

Frontline Employee: Customer Abuse

Frontline employee: customer interaction

frontline employee: customer issue resolution

Frontline Employee: customer Relationships

frontline employee: employment opportunities

frontline employee: external environment

frontline employee: financial

frontline employee: general challenges

Frontline employee: good service

frontline employee: hygiene

frontline employee: incorrect processes

frontline employee: individual accountability

frontline employee: isolation

111

frontline Employee: Lack of Knowledge

frontline employee: personal issues

Frontline employee: personal story

Frontline employee: resilience

frontline employee: retaliation

frontline employee: temperament

frontline employee: training

frontline employee: vacancy transparency

frontline employee:lack of recognition

Frontline Employees : hours of work

frontline Employees: availability

frontline employement : challenging job

frontlne employee: intenal staff conflict

head office : disconnet store environment

head office : finacial assitance/intervention

Head Office : Humanness

head office : management training

head office : motivation

Head Office : pricing

Head office : stock availability

Head Office : training

Head Office : view of union

HEad Office: Corporate Culture

Head Office: performance management

Head Office: Regulations and Policy : Transport

HEAD OFFICE: responsiveness

Head Office: Staff classification

head office: staff engagement

Head Office: support staff

management : Complaint frequency

management awake at night

management: nature of complaints

Management: service view

negative

112

poor equipment

Positive

postiive

Product quality

Queues

Queues : responsiveness

Sabotage: examples

scheduling

social standing : economic

Staff Turnover

store excitement

store management : frontline staff relationships

store management : customer orientation

store management : involvement in department

store management : leading by example

store management : quality of training

Store Management : remuneration

store management : resilience

store management : staff issue resolvement

store management : staff problem invovlement

store management : support staff

store management : teamwork

Store Management : work load

store management: accountability

Store management: approachability

Store management: availability

Store management: career progression

store management: consistency

store management: continuos training

Store Management: customer abuse

store management: favourtism

store management: head office Factors

store management: issue resolution

store management: management style

113

store management: motivation

store management: performance metric

store management: recognition

Store Management: Recrutiment FLE

store management: staff acknowledgment

store management: staff communication

Store management: staff deployment

store management: staff engagement

Store management: staff intimidation

Store management: staff remuneration

store management: staff respect

Store Management: staff satisfaction

Store Management: Staff scheduling

Store Management: staff training

store management: staff view

Store Management: store culture

store manager : personal story

store manager : power

store manager : tenure

store managers : customer query resolution

Store manangement : Frontline discipline

store process

store revamp

strore process : price

swearing

Union : staff evaluation

Union: Influence over staff

Union: Relationship

Union: Store manager attitude

Union: Transparency

114

Annexure 5: Family Codes List

Code Families

Code Family: *Operational SCODE

Codes (7):   [customer : PnP employee assistance] [driver : lack of assitance to customer] [frontline employee : attitude] [frontline employee: individual accountability] [Frontline employee: resilience] [frontline employee: retaliation] [frontline employee: temperament]

Quotation(s): 61

_____

Code Family: Acknowledgement

Codes (4):   [Acknowledgement] [frontline employee:lack of recognition] [store management: recognition] [store management: staff acknowledgment]

Quotation(s): 35

_____

Code Family: Availability

Codes (2):   [Head office : stock availability] [Store management: availability]

Quotation(s): 8

_____

Code Family: Behaviour /Action

Codes (7):   [customer : PnP employee assistance] [driver : lack of assitance to customer] [frontline employee : attitude] [frontline employee: individual accountability] [Frontline employee: resilience] [frontline employee: retaliation] [frontline employee: temperament]

Quotation(s): 61

_____

Code Family: Career

Codes (7):   [frontline employee : career progression] [Frontline Employee : tenure] [frontline employee: employment opportunities] [frontline employee: vacancy transparency] [Store Management : work load] [Store management: career progression] [Store Management: Recrutiment FLE]

Quotation(s): 55

_____

Code Family: Career Challenges

115

Codes (7): [frontline employee : career progression] [Frontline Employee : tenure] [frontline employee: employment opportunities] [frontline employee: vacancy transparency] [Store Management : work load] [Store management: career progression] [Store Management: Recrutiment FLE]

Quotation(s): 55

_____

Code Family: communication

Codes (2): [Customer : Communication] [store management: staff communication]

Quotation(s): 65

_____

Code Family: Complaints

Codes (9): [Customer : resolving queries] [customer complaint : metric] [Customer Complaints - process for handling] [customer complaints : issue resolution] [customer complaints: organisation attitude] [management : Complaint frequency] [management: nature of complaints] [Store Management: customer abuse] [store managers : customer query resolution]

Quotation(s): 38

_____

Code Family: Culture

Codes (2): [HEad Office: Corporate Culture] [Store Management: store culture]

Quotation(s): 18

_____

Code Family: Customer

Codes (10): [Customer : Frustrations] [customer : personal issues] [Customer: Staff relationships] [Customers: Financial importance] [driver : customer] [Frontline Employee: Customer Abuse] [Frontline employee: customer interaction] [Frontline Employee: customer Relationships] [store management : customer orientation] [swearing]

Quotation(s): 140

_____

Code Family: Engagement

Codes (3): [frontline employee : engagement] [head office: staff engagement] [store management: staff engagement]

Quotation(s): 17

_____

Code Family: Financial\

116

Quotation(s): 49

_____

Code Family: Financial*

Codes (2):   [scheduling] [Store Management: Staff scheduling]

Quotation(s): 26

_____

Code Family: Frontline Employee Personal

Codes (5):   [frontline employee : discuss issues] [Frontline employee : interpersonal relationships] [frontline employee: external environment] [frontline employee: isolation] [frontline employee: personal issues]

Quotation(s): 43

_____

Code Family: Head Office Focus

Codes (4):   [head office : disconnet store environment] [HEAD OFFICE: responsiveness] [Head Office: support staff] [store management: head office Factors]

Quotation(s): 14

_____

Code Family: Management Power

Codes (5):   [frontline employee: external environment] [frontline employee: isolation] [frontline employee: personal issues] [Store management: staff intimidation] [store manager : power]

Quotation(s): 35

_____

Code Family: Management Quality

Codes (5):   [customer : level of management] [Driver: Store Management] [store management : resilience] [store management: accountability] [store management: consistency]

Quotation(s): 33

_____

Code Family: Management Staff Orientation

Codes (3):   [store management : staff issue resolvement] [store management : teamwork] [Store Management: staff satisfaction]

Quotation(s): 21

117

_____

Code Family: Management Style

Codes (6):   [drivers : discipline] [store management : involvement in department] [store management : leading by example] [Store management: approachability] [store management: management style] [Store manangement : Frontline discipline]

Quotation(s): 50

_____

Code Family: Motivation

Codes (3):   [head office : motivation] [store excitement] [store management: motivation]

Quotation(s): 28

_____

Code Family: Organisation *

Codes (2):   [Head Office: performance management] [store management: performance metric]

Quotation(s): 23

_____

Code Family: Performance Management

Codes (2):   [Head Office: performance management] [store management: performance metric]

Quotation(s): 23

_____

Code Family: Pricing

Codes (3):   [driver : pricing] [Head Office : pricing] [strore process : price]

Quotation(s): 9

_____

Code Family: Problem Resolution

Codes (3):   [frontline employee: coping mechanism] [frontline employee: customer issue resolution] [store management: issue resolution]

Quotation(s): 70

_____

Code Family: Queues

118

Codes (2):   [Queues] [Queues : responsiveness]

Quotation(s): 9

_____

Code Family: Sabotage

Codes (3):   [customer : bad service] [frontline employee: Bad service] [Sabotage: examples]

Quotation(s): 37

_____

Code Family: SC- Operational

Codes (7):   [customer : PnP employee assistance] [driver : lack of assitance to customer] [frontline employee : attitude] [frontline employee: individual accountability] [Frontline employee: resilience] [frontline employee: retaliation] [frontline employee: temperament]

Quotation(s): 61

_____

Code Family: SC Managament*

Codes (3):   [frontline employee: coping mechanism] [frontline employee: customer issue resolution] [store management: issue resolution]

Quotation(s): 70

_____

Code Family: Scheduling

Codes (2):   [scheduling] [Store Management: Staff scheduling]

Quotation(s): 26

_____

Code Family: Service

codes (5):   [customer : bad service] [customer : great service] [frontline employee: Bad service] [Frontline employee: good service] [Management: service view]

Quotation(s): 58

_____

Code Family: Societal*

Codes (2):   [Frontline Employee Challenges: Transport] [Head Office: Regulations and Policy : Transport]

Quotation(s): 12

_____

119

Code Family: Status / Class

Codes (5): [customer : heirarchy/status] [customer: Staff lower class] [Head Office: Staff classification] [social standing : economic] [store management: staff view]

Quotation(s): 42

_____

Code Family: Tenure

Codes (2): [Frontline Employee : tenure] [store manager : tenure]

Quotation(s): 36

_____

Code Family: Training

Codes (7): [customer complaints : training] [frontline employee: training] [head office : management training] [Head Office : training] [store management : quality of training] [store management: continuos training] [Store Management: staff training]

Quotation(s): 57

_____

Code Family: Transport

Codes (2): [Frontline Employee Challenges: Transport] [Head Office: Regulations and Policy : Transport]

Quotation(s): 12

_____

Code Family: Union

Codes (6): [Head Office : view of union] [Union : staff evaluation] [Union: Influence over staff] [Union: Relationship] [Union: Store manager attitude] [Union: Transparency]

Quotation(s): 55

_____

Code Family: Work environement/ Processes

Codes (9): [Customer : in store events] [Frontline employee : Last contact Point] [Frontline employee : work environment] [frontline employee: hygiene] [frontline employee: incorrect processes] [Frontline Employees : hours of work] [frontline Employees: availability] [frontline employement : challenging job] [frontlne employee: intenal staff conflict]

Quotation(s): 61

120

Annexure 6 : Turnitin Report

Turnitin Originality Report

Nunes W Drivers of Service Sabotage by William Nunes

From Test your originality (GIBS Information Centre _99_1)

Processed on 03-Nov-2016 20:03 SAST
ID: 670334403
Word Count: 37173

Similarity Index

12%

Similarity by Source

Internet Sources: 10%
Publications: 6%
Student Papers: 7%

sources:

1 < 1% match (Internet from 18-May-2015)
http://eprints.utar.edu.my/721/1/BIN-0906208-0906409-0908068-0909040-1.pdf

2 < 1% match (Internet from 22-Jan-2016)
http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijms/article/download/48168/27704

3 < 1% match (student papers from 08-Nov-2011)
Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2011-11-08

4 < 1% match (publications)
European Journal of Training and Development, Volume 37, Issue 2 (2013-05-27)

5 < 1% match (student papers from 11-Nov-2014)
Submitted to EDMC on 2014-11-11

6 < 1% match (publications)
Daniel P. Skarlicki. "Getting even for customer mistreatment: The role of moral identity in the relationship between customer interpersonal injustice and employee sabotage.", Journal of Applied Psychology, 2008

7 < 1% match (publications)
Hannah Snyder. "Health Care Customer Creativity", Linkoping University Electronic Press, 2016

121

8   < 1% match (student papers from 23-May-2016)
Submitted to University of Newcastle on 2016-05-23

9   < 1% match (student papers from 02-Oct-2013)
Submitted to University of Auckland on 2013-10-02

10 < 1% match (student papers from 30-Oct-2016)
Submitted to University of Cape Town on 2016-10-30

11 < 1% match (student papers from 04-Oct-2016)
Submitted to University of Queensland on 2016-10-04

12 < 1% match (student papers from 02-Jun-2014)
Submitted to Victoria University of Wellington on 2014-06-02

13 < 1% match (student papers from 05-Oct-2015)
Submitted to University of Queensland on 2015-10-05

14 < 1% match (student papers from 16-Sep-2015)
Submitted to Massey University on 2015-09-16

15 < 1% match (Internet from 16-Jan-2015)
http://www.apaexcellence.org/resources/research/detail/5811

16 < 1% match (Internet from 08-Apr-2016)
http://www.palgraveconnect.com/pc/doifinder/10.1057/9781137524317.0001

17 < 1% match (student papers from 03-May-2016)
Submitted to Central Queensland University on 2016-05-03

18 < 1% match (student papers from 12-Nov-2014)
Submitted to University of Johannsburg on 2014-11-12

19 < 1% match (student papers from 08-May-2011)
Submitted to Walden University on 2011-05-08

122

20	< 1% match (student papers from 23-Dec-2015)
	Submitted to Coventry University on 2015-12-23

21	< 1% match (Internet from 23-May-2012)
	http://scholar.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.1/5383/vandernest_exploring_2010.pdf.txt?sequence=3

22	< 1% match (Internet from 26-Mar-2015)
	http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1492&context=etd

23	< 1% match (publications)
	Yıldız, Bora, and Lütfihak Alpkan. "A Theoretical Model on the Proposed Predictors of Destructive Deviant Workplace Behaviors and the Mediator Role of Alienation", Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 2015.

24	< 1% match (student papers from 18-Apr-2014)
	Submitted to Texas A&M University - Commerce on 2014-04-18

25	< 1% match (Internet from 23-Dec-2015)
	http://etd.uum.edu.my/4366/7/s93562_abstract.pdf

26	< 1% match (Internet from 01-Dec-2015)
	http://search.bwh.harvard.edu/new/pubs/PrevalenceHoutEtAlJEPHPP2015.pdf

27	< 1% match (student papers from 01-Nov-2012)
	Submitted to University of Pretoria on 2012-11-01

28	< 1% match (student papers from 21-Sep-2016)
	Submitted to Queensland University of Technology on 2016-09-21

29	< 1% match (Internet from 05-May-2016)
	http://eprint.ncl.ac.uk/file_store/production/214357/AD9D9D95-198A-49F8-A2F0-C0E1CD7F624A.pdf

123

124

40 < 1% match (student papers from 19-Mar-2013)
Submitted to University of Northumbria at Newcastle on 2013-03-19

41 < 1% match (Internet from 23-Apr-2016)
http://oro.open.ac.uk/42769/1/S_Amos_EdD%20Thesis.pdf

42 < 1% match (Internet from 07-Sep-2015)
http://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/45010/Luxomo_Emerging_2014.pdf?seq

43 < 1% match (Internet from 03-Apr-2012)
http://www.workandsociety.com/downloads/work1.pdf

44 < 1% match (Internet from 25-May-2016)
http://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/9739/thesis_fulltext.pdf?
isAllowed=y&sequence=1

45 < 1% match (Internet from 01-Aug-2016)

https://www.scribd.com/document/319706773/AnExploratoryStudyOnCounterproductiveWorkBehaviorsOfNurses-685-692

46 < 1% match (student papers from 15-Apr-2015)
Submitted to University of Queensland on 2015-04-15

47 < 1% match (student papers from 28-Sep-2016)
Submitted to University of Birmingham on 2016-09-28

48 < 1% match (student papers from 01-Jun-2013)
Submitted to Deakin University on 2013-06-01

49 < 1% match (Internet from 15-Apr-2015)
http://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2563&context=utk_graddiss

50 < 1% match (Internet from 17-Aug-2013)
http://www.wilmarschaufeli.nl/publications/Schaufeli/357.pdf

125