

Employability capacities and organisational commitment foci of human resource professionals: An exploratory study

Ingrid L. Potgieter^{a,*}, Melinde Coetzee^b and Nadia Ferreira^a

^a*Department of Human Resource Management, University of South Africa, Pretoria*

^b*Department of Industrial & Organisational Psychology, University of South Africa, Pretoria*

**Corresponding author email: visseil@unisa.ac.za*

This study explored the relationship between employees' employability capacities and their organisational commitment foci. A convenience sample of 196 South African human resource professionals participated in the study, consisting of 73% females and 88% black African people, predominantly within their early career stages (aged > 45 years). Data on individuals' employability capacities and organisational commitment were collected via questionnaires. Canonical correlation analysis (CCA) was performed to assess the association between the variables of employability capacities and organisational commitment foci. Participants' lifelong learning capacities (goal-directed behaviour and continuous learning orientation) were positively associated with their career commitment. This finding suggests that a strong lifelong orientation is likely to increase involvement in one's occupation within the organisation, which contributes to organisational commitment. Lifelong learning capacities appear important to human resource professionals' career development within their employer organisation.

Keywords: employability capacities, graduateness, human resource professionals, organisational commitment foci, career foci

In the contemporary world of work, critical assets for work-life success include the perceived employability of graduates by would-be or present employers. Employability capacities refer to a number of soft skills and attributes (for example, personal attributes, knowledge of the business world, people- and team-related skills, conceptual/thinking skills, as well as skills related to innovation and change) that are essential in determining a graduate's work-readiness and success in the new world of work (Rocha, 2012; Kyllonen, 2013; Sung, Loke, & Ramos, 2013; Tran, 2013; Coetzee, 2014a; Daniels & Brooker, 2014). These capacities are generic transferable meta-skills and personal attributes which are non-job-specific skills and important for successful business or professional practice; they also have relevance to job entry and retention in enabling individuals to proactively and creatively manage their career development and adapt to changing market circumstances (Barrie, 2004; Griesel & Parker, 2009; Jackson & Chapman, 2011; Coetzee, 2014b). Employability capacities add value to an organisation's competitiveness (Coetzee, 2012; Kyllonen, 2013; Sung, Ng, Loke, & Ramos, 2013) and the effect would be more pronounced with organisationally committed employees (Döckel, Basson, & Coetzee, 2006).

Organisational commitment is seen as a psychological relationship between an employee and organisation that increases an employee's voluntary intention to stay with the organisation (Colquitt, LePine, & Wesson, 2009).

Although well-developed employability capacities increase the likelihood for professionals of getting and retaining a job (De Cuyper, Van der Heijden, Raeder, & Wittekind, 2012), it is not clear from the research literature how their employability capacities relate to their foci of organisational commitment. A question of interest is how employability capacities relate to organisation commitment in the context of human resource's service role in a rapidly evolving or emerging economy setting such as is the case in South Africa. The present research was therefore interested in exploring the association between professionally employed graduates' employability capacities and their organisational commitment foci in the South African work context. Understanding this association may potentially inform human resource practices aimed at retaining highly employable professional staff members.

Employability capacities: Their nature and importance to career success

Employability capacities span a range of work-related skills: problem-solving and decision-making, critical thinking, communication skills (writing and speaking), proficiency in English, team work, interpersonal skills, research skills, information literacy, lifelong learning and ethical awareness, all important generic graduate employability capacities (Barrie, 2004; Griesel & Parker, 2009; Faber, López, & Prescher, 2012; McNeil, Scicluna, Boyle, Grimm, Gibson, & Jones, 2012; Spencer, Riddle, & Knewstubb, 2012; Steur, Jansen, & Hofman, 2012; Velasco, 2012). These employability capacities are generally categorised in terms of three core attitudinal stances of personal and intellectual development, each of which is underpinned by certain employability capacities that are regarded as essential aspects of individuals' graduateness and employability by employers: (1) scholarship – the attitude or stance towards knowledge and understanding; (2) global/moral citizenship – the attitude or stance towards the world and communities; and (3) lifelong learning – the attitude or stance towards continuous learning (Barrie, 2004; Steur, Jensen, & Hofman, 2012; Coetzee, 2014a; 2016). For instance, workers with a continuous learning orientation have developed a cognitive meta-awareness and openness towards their own learning, a willingness to proactively engage in the process of acquiring new knowledge, skills and abilities throughout their lives and career in reaction to, and in anticipation of, changing technology and performance criteria (Coetzee, 2014a).

The relationship between employability capacities and individuals' attitudes toward the organisation is complex. On the one hand, highly employable individuals are less committed to an organisation because they engage in job hopping in search of more satisfying and financially rewarding opportunities (Pearce & Randel, 2004; De Cuyper & De Witte, 2011). Such employees may share the view that a career is not a lifetime commitment to one employer, but rather a recurrent selling of innovative services and updated skills to a series of employers seeking a business competitiveness advantage (Savickas, 2013). Roodt (1997) noted that employees generally have various foci of organisational commitment (for example, commitment

towards their jobs, careers and occupation as these unfold within the organisation) that ultimately influence their decision to stay in or leave the organisation. On the other hand, workers with a predominantly career focus may not necessarily feel committed toward the organisation per se, but could also perceive their career as more important than being loyal towards the organisation because of their need for further growth and development, either within or external to the organisation. However, strong involvement in the career as it unfolds within the organisation may also contribute to greater commitment to the organisation (Roodt, 1997). This is because employability capacities enhance the ability to gain and maintain employment, and manage employment transitions, such as moving between jobs and roles within the same organisation or with different organisations (Hillage & Pollard, 1999; Wickramasinghe & Perera, 2010).

Organisational commitment foci

A committed workforce is a requirement for optimal organisational performance in the long term (Luchak & Gellatly, 2007; Mensah, 2013; Abdul-Nasiru, Mensah, Amponsah-Tawiah, Simpeh, & Kumasey, 2014). Employees that are committed engage in extra-role behaviours such as innovativeness or creativeness (Muma, Iravo, & Omondi, 2014). Ng'ethe (2014) maintained that if there is a decline in the commitment of an employee, their intention to leave the organisation increases.

Organisational commitment denotes an employee's wish to remain a productive role player within an organisation. An employee's decision to remain a member of a specific organisation or to seek alternative employment is influenced by their organisational commitment (Colquitt, LePine, & Wesson, 2009). According to Meyer and Allen (1991), organisational commitment is of a multidimensional nature and can be defined in various ways. They suggest that employees' commitment is viewed from the perspective of normative commitment (an individual's obligation binding them to remain with the organisation), continuance commitment (a need to remain with the organisation and results from the recognition of costs associated with leaving), or affective commitment (a desire to remain a role player in an organisation due to work experiences that create feelings of comfort and personal competence).

Organisational commitment has been associated with several important career-related outcomes such job satisfaction and turnover intention (Supeli & Creed, 2016). Roodt (1997) identified five commitment foci-related categories (work, career, job, occupation, organisation):

- *Work foci* refer to the loyalty of an employee towards the work itself. Employees who are highly loyal to their organisation put an effort into making sure that they add value to the organisation;
- *Career foci* refer to the identification and involvement of an employee in his or her occupation;
- *Job foci* refer to an employee's dedication to a moderately temporary set of objective task requirements. An employee with high job foci will typically be dedicated to tasks that come with the roles of the job;

- *Occupational foci* refer to the commitment an employee has towards an identifiable and specific line of work in which he or she engages in order to earn a living; and
- *Organisational foci* refer to an employee's willingness to remain with the organisation by putting more effort into the attainments of the organisational goals. An employee with high organisational foci will typically accept the values and goals of the organisation as his or her own which would increase the likelihood of retaining same employer.

What employees value to advance their careers is important to their organisation commitment. For instance, Benson (2006) believed that employees will feel more committed and remain with the organisation if the organisation reduces the employee's uncertainty of finding another job.

The South African human resource employment setting

Retention and employability research in the South African context emphasise the need for professionally qualified human resource practitioners (SABPP, 2014; Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). The human resource management field has been professionalised by the South African Board for People Practices (SABPP) through a formalised human resource competency framework and a set of national human resource standards. These strategic endeavours of the professional body (SABPP) emphasise the employability of human resource graduates in order to help South African organisations remain competitive in highly globalised markets (SABPP, 2014; Coetzee & Schreuder, 2016). Retaining highly talented and employable human resource professionals who are committed to the organisation has therefore become important in the South African context in view of the competition for the same skills in a globalised job market. This study therefore aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on the employability and job retention of human resource professionals in the South African setting, findings of which would assist organisations to proactively address employer education needs for their job retention.

Goals of the study

This study sought to explore the magnitude and direction of the association between individuals' employability capacities and their organisational commitment foci and to identify the variables that contributed the most to this relationship in the context of South African human resource employment. The following two research questions guided the study:

- What is the magnitude and direction of the association between individuals' employability capacities and their organisational commitment foci?
- Which of the employment capability variables contribute the most to explaining employer organisation foci?

Method

Participants

A purposive sample of one hundred and ninety-six ($N = 169$) human resource employees participated in the study. The employees were enrolled for further studies in the human resource management field at a higher education distance-learning institution. They were employed in professional positions in the human resource field and comprised predominantly black people (88%) and females (73%) in their early career stage (80% = < 45 years).

Measuring instruments

The human resource employees completed the following measures: the Graduates Skills and Attributes Scale (GSAS: Coetzee et al., 2014 and the Organisational Commitment Foci (FOCI: Roodt, 1997). They also self-reported their demographics.

The GSAS is a multi-factorial self-rating scale consisting of 64 items and eight subscales to measure the following employability capacities: *problem-solving/decision-making skills* (eight items); *enterprising skills* (nine items) *analytical thinking skills* (four items); *interactive skills* (16 items); *presenting/applying information skills* (five items); *ethical/responsible behaviour* (five items); *goal-directed behaviour* (ten items); and *continuous learning orientation* (seven items). A six-point Likert-type scale (1= 'never true for me'; 6 = 'always true for me') is used for subjects' responses to each of the 64 items. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses by Coetzee (2014a) confirmed the construct and structural validity, and internal consistency reliability of the GSAS in the South African context. Scores from the GSAS scale obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.97 in the present study. The internal consistency reliability coefficients for scores from the eight subscales ranged between 0.76 (ethical/responsible behaviour) and 0.91 (interactive skills).

The FOCI scale is also a multifactorial self-rating scale consisting of 38 items and five subscales (*work foci*, *job foci*, *occupational foci*, *career foci* and *organisational foci*). A five-point Likert-type scale is used for subjects' responses to each of the 38 items. Acceptable construct validity and internal consistency reliability were reported by Roodt (1997), Storm and Roodt (2002), as well as Pretorius and Roodt (2004). In the present study, scores from the FOCI scale obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.91. The internal consistency reliability coefficients for scores from the five subscales ranged between 0.36 (work foci) and 0.87 (organisational foci).

Procedure and data analysis

The survey was conducted during a study school programme that was attended by the participants. The participants were invited to voluntarily participate and signed an informed consent form. The privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of all the participants were ensured and honoured. Ethical clearance and permission to conduct the research were obtained from the management of the University of South Africa.

Canonical correlation analysis (CCA) was performed to determine the magnitude of the association between individuals' employability capacities as represented by their scholarship (problem-solving and decision-making skills, analytical thinking skills and enterprising skills), global/moral citizenship (ethical and responsible behaviour, presenting and applying information

skills and interactive skills) and lifelong learning capacity (goal-directed behaviour and continuous learning orientation) and their foci of commitment (work, career, job, occupation, organisation). CCA is a useful multivariate statistical procedure in human behaviour research because it assesses the association between multiple sets of variables and allows one to explore multiple interaction effects among psychological variables. Examining only singular effects may distort the complexity of human behaviour and cognition. CCA also minimises the risk of committing a type I error (Sherry & Henson, 2005). The cut-off criteria for canonical factorial loadings (≥ 0.30) were used to interpret the relative importance of the canonical loadings. The r^2 type effect size ($1 - 0.\lambda$) was also considered for assessing the magnitude of the overall correlational relationships between the two variates of a canonical function and the practical significance of the predictive ability of the canonical relationship (Hair et al., 2010).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations

The reliability coefficients reported in Table 1 show acceptable internal consistency reliability of the two scales and subscales. The overall scale reliability coefficient of the GSAS scale was very high ($\alpha = 0.97$), as was the reliability coefficient of the overall FOCI scale ($\alpha = 0.91$). These coefficients indicated strong overall internal consistency for the two scales.

As can be seen from Table 1, the significant inter-correlations between the GSAS and FOCI variables were also small to moderate in practical effect ($r \geq 0.17 \leq 0.42$; $p \leq 0.05$), suggesting no multi-collinearity ($r < 0.80$). No associations between age, gender and race and the GSAS and FOCI variables were detected and the influence of these biographical variables was therefore regarded as negligible.

Table 1 also shows that all eight of the employability capacities had significant positive associations with the career foci, organisational foci and overall FOCI variables ($r \geq 0.15$ to $r \leq 0.42$; $p \leq 0.05$; small to moderate practical effect). Problem-solving/decision-making ($r \geq 0.17$ to $r \leq 0.20$; $p \leq 0.05$; small practical effect) and analytical thinking skills ($r \geq 0.16$ to $r \leq 0.18$; $p \leq 0.05$; small practical effect) also had significant and positive association with job foci and occupational foci. The global/moral citizenship capacities (interactive skills and presenting/applying information skills) also had significant and positive associations with work foci, job foci and occupational foci ($r \geq 0.17$ to $r \leq 0.26$; $p \leq 0.05$; small practical effect). Goal-directed behaviour ($r = 0.17$; $p \leq 0.05$; small practical effect) also had a positive and significant association with job foci, while continuous learning also had a positive and significant association with work foci, job foci and occupational foci ($r \geq 0.18$ to $r \leq 0.24$; $p \leq 0.05$; small practical effect). The overall gradueness scale had a positive and significant association with all the FOCI variables ($r \geq 0.19$ to $r \leq 0.39$; $p \leq 0.05$; small to moderate practical effect).

<Insert Table 1 approximately here>

Magnitude and direction of the employment capacities and organisation commitment foci

Canonical correlation analysis was used to study the multivariate relationships between the eight GSAS scores (problem-solving/decision-making skills, enterprising skills, analytical thinking skills, interactive skills, presenting/applying information skills, ethical/responsible behaviour, goal-directed behaviour and continuous learning orientation) and the five FOCI scores (work foci, job foci, occupational foci, career foci and organisational foci).

Table 2 shows that the full model was significant using Wilks's multivariate test criterion. Wilks's lambda (λ) = 0.565, function 1: $Fp = 2.03$ ($p = 0.0001$). Only the first function of the model was significant and contributed to 31% of the overall explained variation relative to the function. The full model r^2 type effect size (yielded by $1 - 0.\lambda$) was 0.44 (large practical effect), indicating that the full model explains an adequate proportion, about 44% of the variance shared between the two variable sets. The redundancy index results summarised in Table 2 show that the employability capacities explained 7% ($Rc^2 = 0.07$; small practical effect) of the variance in the organisational commitment foci canonical construct variate and was able to predict 63% (large practical effect) of the proportion of variance in the individual original organisational commitment foci variables.

The CCA assessed the association between the set of employability capacities and the set of organisational commitment foci, with both sets being multiple sets of variables. The CCA allowed the researchers to explore the multiple interaction effects among these psychological variables. Using $Rc = 0.35$ as the cut-off criterion, the canonical cross-loading Rc coefficients shown in Table 2 indicated that all the employability capacities (except for ethical/responsible behaviour) contributed significantly in explaining the variance in the employability capacities canonical construct variate ($Rc \geq 0.37$ to $Rc \leq 0.83$). As shown in Table 2, using the $Rc = 0.35$ cut-off criterion in terms of the canonical cross-loadings, only the two lifelong learning capacities (continuous learning orientation: $Rc = 0.46$; 21%; and goal-directed behaviour: $Rc = 0.37$; 13%) contributed significantly to explaining the variance in the organisational commitment foci variables by all these variables showing cross-loading effects of $Rc > 0.35$. The career foci variable contributed 20% ($Rc = 0.45$) in explaining the variance in the employability capacities by also showing a cross-loading effect of $Rc > 0.35$. Career foci also contributed the most (apart from organisational foci: $Rc = 0.53$) in explaining the variance in the organisational commitment foci canonical variate ($Rc = 0.81$) with a structure coefficient of $Rc > 0.35$.

<Insert Table 2 approximately here>

Discussion

Overall, the results showed positive associations between the employability capacities and organisational commitment foci constructs. Participants' lifelong learning capacities (goal-directed behaviour and continuous learning orientation) were strongly and positively associated with their career as a focus of commitment.

Long-term learning and goal-directed behaviour accounted for a significant proportion of an employee's career commitment (involvement in the occupation as it unfolds with the

organisation) rather than commitment to the organisation per se. This finding is likely explained by the fact that taking responsibility for one's career management through goal-setting behaviour aimed at acquiring new knowledge and skills in changing contexts is more likely to be associated with a commitment to one's career rather than the organisation. Goal-directed behaviour and a continuous learning orientation are associated with the protean career orientation which has been linked to low levels of loyalty and commitment to a particular organisation, but a commitment to career self-management behaviours (Supeli & Creed, 2016).

The findings of the study corroborate research showing a trend toward careerism whereby individuals generally put their self-interest (sustaining their employability through proactive lifelong-learning endeavours) ahead of those of the organisation (Kim, Kang, Lee, & McLean, 2016). The findings are in line with Benson (2006), who found that employability capacities provide security to employees so that they will be able to obtain new employment if required, which enhances their long-term job security, allowing them to develop a sense of commitment toward their careers and occupations (their professional careers) rather than the organisation per se. However, the results also showed that the career foci contributed the most to explaining the overall construct of organisational commitment, implying that the individual's perception of and involvement in the career as it unfolds within the organisation contributed positively to overall feelings of attachment to the organisation. This finding suggests that organisational career development support and clear career pathways that enhance individuals' involvement in their occupations within the organisation may contribute to their overall organisational commitment.

Implications for human resources development practice

The findings are in support of human resource practices to promote a lifelong learning orientation among early career employees. Employers' requirement for employable graduates along with commitment and loyalty toward the organisation may be thwarted if retention practices do not support the lifelong learning with formalised career development and training (Döckel et al., 2006). This study's findings also suggest career commitment to be important to human resource employees. Career development support initiatives such as visible career path routes within the organisation and career discussions may potentially have positive benefits in encouraging professional staff to engage in lifelong learning and training while pursuing their careers within the organisation.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

While interpreting the results, several limitations should be emphasised. As canonical correlation analysis is a maximisation technique, researchers may be prone to overestimate the findings due to the amplification of linear composites (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). In addition, the sample size of this study was relatively small and only included continuing education human resource management employees. As a result, the interpretations of the findings are limited to this specific group of individuals and not to populations in different occupations or study fields. Studies are needed on the replicability of the findings with employees in other work roles.

Lastly, the cross-sectional nature of this study limits the nature of the data obtained to a specific point in time. As the career self-concept evolves over time, it would be beneficial to conduct longitudinal research analysis in the shift of the levels of employability capacities and organisational commitment foci among human resource professionals.

Conclusion

Significant relationships exist between employees' employability capacities and their organisational commitment foci. The relationships are stronger for long-term learning, goal-directed behaviour and career foci than for other employment capability attributes. The findings suggests that a strong lifelong orientation is likely to increase involvement in one's occupation within the organisation, which contributes to organisational commitment. Lifelong learning capacities are important to human resource professionals' career development within the organisations.

References

- Abdul-Nasiru, I., Mensah, R., Amponsah-Tawiah, K., Simpeh, K. N., & Kumasey, A. S. (2014). Organisational commitment in the public service of Ghana: An empirical study. *Developing Country Studies*, 4(1), 49–55.
- Barrie, S. C. (2004). A research-based approach to generic graduate attributes policy. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 23(3), 261–275. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0729436042000235391>.
- Benson, G. S. (2006). Employee development, commitment and intention to turnover: A test of 'employability' policies in action. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 16(2), 173–192. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2006.00011.x>.
- Coetsee, M. (2012). Distance learning students' graduateness as predictors of their job satisfaction and optimism about future career prospects. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 33(3), 305–313.
- Coetsee, M. (2014a). Measuring student graduateness: Reliability and construct validity of the Graduate Skills and Attributes Scale. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 33(5), 887–902. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2014.890572>.
- Coetsee, M. (2014b). Exploring the mediating role of graduate attributes in relation to academic self-directedness in open distance learning. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 33(6), 1085–1098. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2014.911260>.
- Coetsee, M. (2016). Psycho-social career preoccupations and employability capacities in the work context. In M. Tomlinson & L. Holmes (eds), *Graduate employability in context: research, theory and debate* (in press) Palgrave.
- Coetsee, M., & Schreuder, A. M. G. (2016). *Personnel psychology: An applied perspective*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Colquitt, J., LePine, J., & Wesson, M. (2009). *Organizational behavior*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Daniels, J., & Brooker, J. (2014). Student identity development in higher education: Implications for graduate attributes and work-readiness. *Educational Research*, 56(1), 65–76. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00131881.2013.874157>.
- De Cuyper, N., & De Witte, H. (2011). The management paradox: Employability and organizational commitment and performance. *Personnel Review*, 40(2), 152–172. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/004834811111106057>
- De Cuyper, N., Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., Raeder, S., & Wittekind, A. (2012). The association between workers' employability and burnout in a reorganization context: Longitudinal evidence building upon conservation of resources theory. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17(2), 162–174. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0027348>.
- Döckel, A., Basson, J. S., & Coetzee, M. (2006). The effect of retention factors on organisational commitment: An investigation of high technology employees. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 4(2), 20–28. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v4i2.91>.
- Faber, K., López, V., & Prescher, T. (2012). 'i-learn': Developing a new approach in higher education for lifelong learning. *European Journal of Higher Education*, August, 1–16. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2012.709382>
- Griesel, H., & Parker, B. (2009). *Graduate attributes: A baseline study on South African graduates from the perspective of employers*. Pretoria: Higher Education South Africa and South African Qualifications Authority.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th edn). London: Pearson Prentice-Hall.
- Hillage, J., & Pollard, E. (1999). *Employability: Developing a framework for policy analysis*. London: Department for Education and Employment.
- Jackson, D., & Chapman, E. (2011). Non-technical skill gaps in Australian business graduates. *Education + Training*, 54(2/3), 95–113. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00400911211210224>.
- Kim, H., Kang, D., Lee, S., & McLean, G. (2016). Career commitment as a mediator between organization-related variables and motivation for training and turnover intentions. *Journal of Career Development*, 43(2), 130–144. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0894845315584160>.
- Kyllonen, P. C. (2013). Soft skills for the workplace. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 45(6), 16–23. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2013.841516>.
- Luchak, A., & Gellatly, I. (2007). A comparison of linear and nonlinear relations between organisational commitment and work outcomes. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(3), 786–793. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.786>.
- McNeil, H.P., Scicluna, H.A., Boyle, P., Grimm, M.C., Gibson, K.A., & Jones, P.D. (2012). Successful development of generic capabilities in an undergraduate medical education program. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 31. 325-539.[Reference added]
- Mensah, G. T. (2013). *Relationship between perceived organizational politics, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior among some selected public sector organizations in Accra* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana.

- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1), 61–89.
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822\(91\)90011-Z](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822(91)90011-Z).
- Muma, M., Iravo, A., & Omondi, M. (2014). Effect of training needs assessment on employee commitment in public universities: A case study of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 4(9), 233–250. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v4-i9/1153>.
- Ng'ethe, J. M. (2014). *Determinants of academic staff retention in public universities in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation). [Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology]
- Pearce, J. L., & Randel, A. E. (2004). Expectations of organizational mobility, workplace social inclusion, and employee job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(1), 81–98. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/job.232>.
- Pretorius, A. A. S., & Roodt, G. (2004). Die verband tussen werknemertevredenheid en organisasieverbondenheid. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 30(3), 65–74.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v30i3.162>.
- Rocha, M. (2012). Transferable skills representations in a Portuguese college sample: Gender, age, adaptability and vocational development. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 27(1), 77–90. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10212-011-0067-4>.
- Roodt, G. (1997). Theoretical and empirical linkages between work-related commitment foci. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 23(2), 6–13. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v23i2.624>.
- SABPP. (2014). HR management standards for South Africa. Parktown: South African Board for People Practices.
- Savickas, M. L. (2013). Career construction theory and practice. In R. W. Lent & S. D. Brown (eds), *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work* (2nd edn, pp. 147–183). Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
- Sherry, A., & Henson, R. K. (2005). Conducting and interpreting canonical correlation analysis in personality research: A user-friendly primer. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 84(1), 37–48. http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa8401_09.
- Spencer, D., Riddle, M., & Knewstubb, B. (2012). Curriculum mapping to embed graduate capabilities. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 31(2), 217–231.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2011.554387>.
- Steur, J. M., Jansen, E. P. W. A., & Hofman, W. H. A. (2012). Graduateness: An empirical examination of the formative function of university education. *Higher Education*, 64(6), 861–874. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10734-012-9533-4>.
- Storm, L., & Roodt, G. (2002). Die verband tussen organisasiesosialisering en organisasieverbondenheid. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 28(1), 14–21.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajip.v28i1.34>.
- Sung, J., Ng, M. C. M., Loke, F., & Ramos, C. (2013). The nature of employability skills: Empirical evidence from Singapore. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 17(3), 176–193. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/ijtd.12008>.

- Supeli, A., & Creed, P. A. (2016). The longitudinal relationship between protean career orientation and job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intention-to-quit. *Journal of Career Development, 43*(1), 66–80. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0894845315581686>.
- Tran, T. T. (2013). Limitation on the development of skills in higher education in Vietnam. *Higher Education, 65*(5), 631–644. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10734-012-9567-7>.
- Velasco, M. S. (2012). More than just good grades: Candidates' perceptions about the skills and attributes employers seek in new graduates. *Journal of Business Economics and Management, 13*(3), 499–517. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3846/16111699.2011.620150>.
- Wickramasinghe, V., & Perera, L. (2010). Graduates', university lecturers' and employers' perceptions towards employability skills. *Education + Training, 52*(3), 226–244. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00400911011037355>.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics, zero-order correlations and internal consistency reliability

	M	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Age	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gender	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Race	3	-	-	-	0.06	0.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Work foci	4	3.83	0.66	0.36	0.04	-0.02	0.02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Job foci	5	3.89	0.54	0.65	0.06	-0.10	-0.08	0.45***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Occupational foci	6	3.91	0.61	0.74	0.17	-0.08	0.01	0.43***	0.69***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Career foci	7	3.89	0.55	0.75	0.08	-0.07	-0.10	0.26***	0.43***	0.55***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Organisational foci	8	3.49	0.56	0.87	0.13	-0.07	0.09	0.34***	0.42***	0.50***	0.41***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Organisational commitment: Total	9	4.26	0.43	0.91	0.17	-0.10	0.03	0.55***	0.72***	0.79***	0.66***	0.88***	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Problem-solving/decision-making	10	4.43	0.68	0.83	0.001	-0.03	-0.02	0.12	0.20**	0.17*	0.35***	0.19*	0.27**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enterprising skills	11	4.24	0.70	0.81	0.02	-0.06	-0.03	0.14	0.14	0.15	0.29***	0.24**	0.26**	0.73***	-	-	-	-	-
Analytical thinking skills	12	4.23	0.83	0.83	-0.06	-0.13	0.04	0.07	0.16*	0.18*	0.27***	0.23**	0.26**	0.57***	0.54***	-	-	-	-
Interactive skills	13	4.67	0.64	0.91	-0.01	0.04	-0.01	0.26**	0.19*	0.17*	0.28***	0.18*	0.25**	0.67***	0.65***	0.40***	-	-	-
Presenting/applying information skills	14	4.34	0.76	0.77	-0.01	-0.12	-0.07	0.15*	0.17*	0.17*	0.31***	0.15	0.22**	0.81***	0.67***	0.57***	0.64***	-	-
Ethical/responsible behaviour	15	4.84	0.74	0.76	0.05	-0.10	0.07	0.11	0.14	0.13	0.24***	0.17*	0.22**	0.64***	0.49***	0.37***	0.50***	0.52***	-
Goal-directed behaviour	16	4.47	0.67	0.82	-0.07	0.01	-0.01	0.10	0.17*	0.13	0.34***	0.18*	0.29**	0.75***	0.63***	0.49***	0.70***	0.75***	0.48***
Continuous learning	17	4.61	0.72	0.84	-0.06	0.03	-0.07	0.18*	0.24**	0.21**	0.42***	0.28***	0.34***	0.71***	0.65***	0.46***	0.80***	0.67***	0.46***
Graduateness: total	18	4.48	0.58	0.97	-0.04	-0.01	-0.01	0.19*	0.21*	0.22**	0.39***	0.25**	0.33***	0.90***	0.83***	0.65***	0.88***	0.84***	0.67***

Notes: $N = 196$ *** $p \leq 0.001$ – statistically significant. ** $p \leq 0.01$ – statistically significant. * $p \leq 0.05$ – statistically significant. $r \leq 0.30$ (small practical effect size), $r \geq 0.30 \leq 0.49$ (medium practical effect size)

Table 2: Results of the standardised canonical correlation analysis for the first canonical function

Variate/variables	Canonical coefficients	Structure coefficient (Rc)	Canonical cross-loadings (Rc)	Squared canonical loadings (Rc²)
Employability capacities canonical variate variables				
Problem-solving/decision-making skills	0.19	0.59	0.33	0.11
Enterprising skills	-0.11	0.42	0.23	0.05
Analytical thinking skills	0.12	0.44	0.25	0.06
Interactive skills	-0.73	0.37	0.20	0.04
Presenting/applying information skills	-0.21	0.44	0.24	0.06
Ethical/responsible behaviour	-0.27	0.29	0.16	0.03
Goal-directed behaviour	0.21	0.66	0.37	0.13
Continuous learning orientation	1.41	0.83	0.46	0.21
Organisational commitment foci canonical variate variables				
Work foci	-0.38	-0.10	-0.06	0.00
Job foci	0.49	0.37	0.21	0.04
Occupational foci	-0.62	0.22	0.12	0.01
Career foci	0.85	0.81	0.45	0.20
Organisational foci	0.42	0.53	0.29	0.09
Overall model fit measures (function 1):				
Overall $Rc^2 = 0.31$				
$F(p) = 2.03$ ($p < .0001$); $df = 40;578.17$				
Overall proportion: 0.63				
Wilks' lambda (λ) = 0.565**				
r^2 type effect size: $1 - 0.\lambda = 0.435$ (large practical effect)				
Redundancy Index (standardised variance of organisational commitment foci explained by employability capacities): Proportion = 0.07				

Notes: $N = 196$