

**EMPLOYEES TURNOVER INTENTIONS: EXPERIENCES OF
EMPLOYEES AT A BASIC EDUCATION PUBLIC ENTITY**

by

REFILWE ARGENTINA SELESHO

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Supervisor: Dr M.A Matjie

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DECLARATION

I, **REFILWE ARGENTINA SELESHO**, hereby declare that the dissertation of limited scope entitled, "**Employees turnover intentions: Experiences of employees at a basic education public entity**", is my own work and has not been submitted to any other institution. All the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that ethical clearance and permission to conduct the research was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of South Africa. In addition, the research was conducted in line with the University of South Africa Coronavirus-2019 (Covid-19) guidelines to ensure safety of both the researcher and the research participants and limit the transmission of the coronavirus.



REFILWE SELESHO

31588972

STUDENT NUMBER

14 June 2021

DATE

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My appreciation to the Lord Almighty for blessing me with wisdom to not give up. It was not an easy journey but with his mercy, I have arrived at my destination, which is only at the starting point. Thank you, Lord, for making this journey possible.

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“When the time is right, I the Lord, will make it happen”. Isaiah 60:22.

SUMMARY

EMPLOYEES TURNOVER INTENTIONS: EXPERIENCES OF EMPLOYEES AT A BASIC EDUCATION PUBLIC ENTITY

By

REFILWE ARGENTINA SELESHO

SUPERVISOR: Dr Mokgata Matjie

DEPARTMENT: Industrial and Organisational Psychology

DEGREE: M.Com. (Industrial and Organisational Psychology)

The study was a qualitative research study and was based within the interpretive research paradigm. Participants were selected by means of convenience sampling which was guided by the availability and willingness of participants to participate in the research study. An interview guideline and semi-structured interview questions were compiled to guide the interview process and to ensure consistency during data gathering process. A total of 11 participants were interviewed on an online Zoom platform to ensure compliance with Covid-19 regulations in curbing the spread of coronavirus. Data were collected by way of recording and note-taking and analysed using thematic analysis. Themes and sub-themes were developed and described in detail. Findings reveal that the prestige of the organisation, career growth and working closer to home attract external employees to join the organisation. Employee engagement, teamwork and job security were found to influence the intentions to stay in the public entity. The study further revealed that a toxic work environment, poor remuneration, lack of work-life balance and lack of career growth triggers people to leave the public entity. Support from colleagues, passion for the work that one does and being afforded an opportunity to grow within the public entity were found to be the reasons why the participants still remain in the public entity. It was further revealed that some of the participants view the work environment of the public entity to be good as compared to other organisations.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, turnover intentions, turnover, retention, public entity, public sector

KAKARETŠO

MAIKEMIŠETŠO A GO TŠWA GA BAŠOMI KA MEŠOMONG: MAITEMOGELO A BAŠOMI KA SEHLONGWENG SA SETŠHABA SA THUTO YA MOTHEO

ka

REFILWE ARGENTINA SELESHO

MOHLAHLI WA THUTO: Dr Mokgata Matjie

LEFAPHA: Dithutamahlale tša Diintasteri le tša Dikhamphani

**KGRATA: MCom (Dithutamahlale tša Diintasteri le
Dikhamphani)**

Tše e bile dinyakišišo tša boleng tše di theilwego ka go seemo sa dinyakišišo sa tlhathollo. Bakgathatema ba kgethilwe ka mokgwa wa go dira sampole ka banyakišišwa ba kgauswi, tše di hlahlilwego ke go hwetšagala le go nyaka ga bakgathatema go tšea karolo. Tlhahlo ya dipoledišano le dipotšišo tša dinyakišišo tša go nyaka ge baarabi ba efa mabaka di ile tša ngwalwa go hlahla tshepedišo ya dipoledišano tša dipotšišo le go netefatša gore go ba le go swana ka nakong ya kgoboketšo ya tshedimošo. Palomoka ya bakgathatema ba 11 ba ile ba botšišwa dipotšišo sefaleng sa inthaneteng sa Zoom go netefatša gore go obamelwa melawana ya Covid-19. Tshedimošo e kgobokeditšwe ka mokgwa wa go gatiša mantšu le go ngwala dinoutse le go e sekaseka ka go šomiša tshekatseko ya merero. Merero le mererwana ya ka fasana e ile ya hlangwa le go hlalošwa ka botlalo. Dikutollo di laetša gore maemo a khamphani, go gola ka mošomong le go šoma kgauswi le gae go goketša bašomi bao ba tšwago ka ntle go tla go šoma ka khamphaning. Go rerišana le bašomi, go šoma ka sehlopha le go šireletšega mošomong di hweditšwe gore ke tšona tše di huetšago maikemišetšo a go tšwela pele go šoma ka sehlongweng sa setšhaba. Dinyakišišo di tšwetše pele go utolla gore seemo sa mošomong seo se sa kgahlišego, meputso ya fase, tlhokego ya tekatekano ya mošomo le bophelo le tlhokego ya go gola ka mošomong di hlohleletša batho go tšwa ka sehlongweng sa setšhaba. Thekgo go tšwa go bašomimmogo, lerato la mošomo wo motho a o dirago le go fiwa sebaka sa go gola ka sehlongweng sa setšhaba di hweditšwe gore ke tšona mabaka ao a dirilego gore bakgathatema ba tšwele pele go šoma ka sehlongweng sa setšhaba. Go utollotšwe go tšwela pele gore ba bangwe ba bakgathatema ba bona seemo sa ka mošomong sa sehlongwa sa setšhaba bjalo ka se sekaone ge se bapetšwa le sa ka dikhamphaning tše dingwe.

Mantšu a bohlokwa: Go kgotsofala mošomong, maikemišetšo a go tšwa ga bašomi mešomong, go hwetšagala ga bašomi, go tšwela pele go šoma, sehlongwa sa setšhaba, lekala la setšhaba

OPSOMMING

WERKNEMEROMSETVOORNEMENS: ERVARINGS VAN WERKNEMERS BY 'N BASIESE OPENBARE-ONDERWYSENTITEIT

deur

REFILWE ARGENTINA SELESHO

STUDIELEIER: Dr Mokgata Matjie
DEPARTEMENT: Bedryf- en Organisasiesielkunde
GRAAD: MCom (Bedryf- en Organisasiesielkunde)

Hierdie studie is 'n kwalitatiewe navorsingstudie wat op die vertolkende navorsingsparadigma gegrond is. Die deelnemers is met behulp van geriefsteekproefneming gekies wat gelei is deur die beskikbaarheid en bereidwilligheid van die deelnemers om deel te neem. 'n Onderhoudsriglyn en semigestruktureerde onderhoudsvrae is saamgestel om die onderhoudsproses te lei en om konsekwentheid tydens die data-insamelingsproses te verseker. Onderhoude is met altesaam 11 deelnemers op 'n aanlyn Zoom-platform gehou om die nakoming van Covid-19-regulasies te verseker. Die data is deur middel van opnames en die neem van notas ingesamel en met behulp van tematiese analise ontleed. Temas en subtemas is ontwikkel en in detail beskryf. Die bevindinge het aangetoon dat die aansien van die organisasie, loopbaangroei en om nader aan die huis te werk eksterne werknemers gelok het om hulle by die organisasie aan te sluit. Daar is ook bevind dat werknemerbetrokkenheid, spanwerk en werksekerheid die voorneme om by die openbare entiteit aan te bly, beïnvloed het. Die studie het ook aan die lig gebring dat 'n toksiese werksomgewing, swak vergoeding, 'n gebrek aan werk-lewe-balans en 'n gebrek aan loopbaangroei mense kan aanspoor om die openbare entiteit te verlaat. Redes waarom die deelnemers by die werkplek aangebly het, was die ondersteuning van kollegas, 'n passie vir die werk wat jy doen en die geleentheid om by die openbare entiteit te groei. Dit het ook aan die lig gekom dat sommige deelnemers die werksomgewing van die openbare entiteit as gunstig in vergelyking met ander organisasies, beskou.

Sleutelwoorde: werkbevrediging, omsetvoornemens, omset, behoud, openbare entiteit, openbare sektor

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CHAPTER 1: SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

This study focused on exploring turnover intentions of employees in a public entity within the South African basic education context. This chapter discusses the background and motivation for the research topic; formulates the problem statement and the research questions; and defines the general and specific theoretical and empirical objectives. Further discussed in this chapter is the paradigm perspective that guides the limitations for this study; and the research design and methodology is described. The chapter is concluded with a chapter layout of this dissertation of limited scope, as well as a chapter summary.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO AND MOTIVATION FOR THE SUDY

Employee turnover is one of the biggest challenges faced by organisations as it creates instability due to the constant movement of employees (Ashkanasy, Wilderom & Peterson, 2011; Ngo-Henha, 2017). Low employee retention in the public sector is a global issue across different countries, such as Belgium (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014), Canada (Karsenti & Collin, 2013), Ghana (Bosomtwe & Obeng, 2018; Kumedzro, Otube, Wamunyi & Runo, 2016), Pakistan (Ahmed et al., 2015), Uganda (Mayende & Musenze, 2018) and Zimbabwe (Nyamubarwa, 2013). The public sector institutions in South Africa are not an exception as they are expected to put effective strategies in place to maintain employees who are committed with no intention of leaving the organisation.

Studies in the public sector found that turnover intention can be used as a reasonable alternative for actual turnover (Cho & Lewis, 2012; Hancock et al., 2013; Jung, 2010). Jung (2014) suggests that turnover intention is as an important indicator of organisational health as actual turnover and it warrants its own study.

Turnover can be two-fold: voluntary and involuntary permanent withdrawal from the organisation (Belete, 2018; Carlson, Carlson, Zivnuska, Harris & Harris, 2017; Ngo-Henha, 2017). Voluntary turnover can be referred to as unplanned loss of employees whom the organisation would like to keep and who exit on their own accord and can either be avoidable or unavoidable whereas involuntary turnover refers to the employer's decision to force the employee to leave the organisation (Belete, 2018; Masibigiri, & Nienaber, 2012). Employee turnover is also classified into three categories, namely desirable turnover, undesirable turnover, and unavoidable turnover. Desirable turnover is applicable to incompetent employees where the organisation wishes their exit, undesirable turnover is when the

employees exit the organisation for better career opportunities and unavoidable turnover may occur due to illness, retirement, family matters and layoffs (Belete, 2018; Hom, 2011; Ngo-Henha, 2017). The study explores the category of undesirable turnover to consider the employees' intentions or reasons to leave the organisation now or in future.

Various predictors of employees' turnover intentions might differ from organisation to organisation and country to country. Globally, factors that affect turnover rates among employees, such as job dissatisfaction, non-competitive remuneration and non-conducive work environment, among other factors, result in turnover intentions of employees (Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel & Pierce, 2013). In Pakistan's public sector, employees' intentions to leave are due to not being satisfied with the opportunities of career advancement, working conditions and manager-subordinate relationships (Shahzad, Hussain, Chishti & Nasir, 2011).

In Iran, undesirable working conditions, such as work-life balance, teamwork and administration processes were found to be the primary triggers in turnover (Salarzehi & Amiri, 2010). In Zimbabwe, pay, conditions of service, promotional opportunities are some of the factors shaping turnover intentions (Nyamubarwa, 2013). In South Africa, factors such as organisational culture, leadership styles, demographic variables, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and well-being of employees have been found to lead to turnover intentions (Belete, 2018; Leisanyane & Khaola, 2013).

Some scholars assert that job satisfaction is among the factors that contribute to one's consideration of leaving an organisation (Alshammari, Qaied, Al-Mawali & Matalqa, 2016); Huang & Su, 2016; Yu & Kang, 2016). Researchers argue that job satisfaction is important in various fields such as human resources, strategic human resources, organisational behaviour, and psychology and that highly satisfied employees have lower intentions of leaving the organisation (Alshammari et al., 2016). It is therefore important that organisations focus on implementing strategies to increase employee satisfaction to improve employee retention and reduce turnover intentions (Skelton, Nattress & Dwyer, 2020). Unsatisfactory salaries, unfavourable working conditions and lack of training could lead to high employee turnover.

The influence of the work environment has received wide-ranging research attention in the past in that it has a major impact on employee morale and retention as it is not just about being an employer of choice but about employees being committed to the vision, mission and the strategy of the organisation and must be improved to reduce employee turnover intention (Khaola, 2015; Mafini, 2016). On the contrary, should employees perceive the work

environment as being unfavourable and not satisfying their needs, the likelihood of their turnover intention will be high (Tetteh & Brenyah, 2016).

Leadership of the organisation determine the kind of employees they want to attract, appoint and retain within the organisation and it is therefore crucial that organisations are perceived by the existing and future employees to have favourable working conditions to enhance the attraction and retention of employees with requisite skills (Amofa & Ansah, 2017; Fleming & Guldenmund, 2015). Managers are facing a challenge of not being able to eliminate turnover of employees and they have a responsibility of minimising turnover intentions of employees by creating a favourable work environment where employees are satisfied, motivated, and remain focused on the objectives of the organisation (Meintjes, 2019).

In the current study, turnover intention is referred to as the intention of one to leave their job and the organisation voluntarily due to varying reasons. The study focuses on turnover intentions rather than the actual turnover. The rationale for the study is to research further the experiences of employees on their turnover intentions and establish reasons that attract them to join, make them stay and want to leave the public entity.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Staff turnover has become a burning issue within organisations and employees are moving within the employment market due to their differing requirements (Bashir & Durrani, 2014). Turnover is an employee cycle in a particular industry whereby there is rotation between organisations and occupations (DiPietro & Bafquin, 2018). Turnover is the most researched phenomena in organisational behaviour and for most studies on turnover, the focus was more on employees who are leaving or have already left the organisation rather than the existing employees' intentions to leave (Hom & Griffeth, 1991; Price, 2001; Saleem & Seema, 2013). According to Fasanmi (2018, p. 16), turnover intention implies "the desire or willingness of an employee to quit/leave his/her job in the near future as soon as there are job opportunities". Turnover intentions are the most immediate determinants of the actual turnover behaviour within organisations and are associated with various individual and organisational factors (Bester, Stander & Van Zyl, 2015). High turnover has been and is still one of the most problematic challenges to organisations, both in the private and in the public sector.

Globally, in the private sector, studies found that factors such as remuneration, career growth, organisational culture, job characteristics and job security were found to influence the intention to leave (AlBattat, Som & Helalat, 2014; Basson, & Coetzee; 2006; Döckel, 2003). Whereas, in Africa, studies showed that compensation, employee engagement, job satisfaction, work environment and employee motivation contribute to turnover intentions (AlBattat et al., 2014; Karatepe, Karadas, Azar & Naderiadib, 2013).

In the public sector, global studies found that pay satisfaction, organisational commitment and perceived employment opportunities are important predictors of turnover intention (Kim, Price, Mueller & Watson, 1996; Molodchik, 2013; Saleem & Gul, 2013). Studies found that in Pakistan, employees who are not satisfied with career growth opportunities and the work environment had an intention to leave (Shahzad et al., 2011). Contrarily, in the African public sector, studies showed that leadership style, remuneration, employee benefits, such as study leave and training and development opportunities, were found to be the triggers of turnover intention (Bosomtwe & Obeng, 2018; Kumedzro et al., 2016; Saani, 2013). In the public sector, in South Africa, turnover is mainly due to lack of organisational commitment, training and development opportunities, perceived supervisor support, remuneration, work environment and job satisfaction (Mampane, 2012; Pietersen & Oni, 2014)

Organisations require employees who are psychologically committed to their work currently and in the future (Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter, 2011). Globally, organisations are struggling to retain the talent which results in loss of experienced and qualified employees, loss of organisational memory as well as a difficulty to attract suitably qualified employees (Schlechter, Syce & Bussin, 2016).

The movement of employees impacts negatively on the organisations and has been proven to incur excessive costs due to continuous recruitment processes, induction of newly appointed employees, training costs and hiring of temporary personnel (Bashir & Durrani, 2014; Ihmond & Rjoub, 2019; Nyamubarwa, 2013). Turnover might result in low morale and increased conflict between employees and stakeholders (Ahmed, Hidayat, & Rehman, 2015). High turnover places a burden in the organisation as it creates more administrative work in filling of vacant positions as well as taking a few months before the newly appointed employees become familiar with the working environment. Organisations are striving to establish the triggers of these movements and are willing to support the studies that reveal the employees' turnover intentions (Hom, 2011).

The current study was conducted in the basic education public entity which has experienced high turnover in the recent past years. It is also because the public entities are perceived as being unable to provide competitive salaries as compared to that of the private sector (Park & Kim, 2019), and if this public entity fails to attract and retain talent, it will fail in its mandate to provide basic education services (Madueke & Emerole, 2017). South African public entities continue to experience a high turnover rate due to employees in need for better career prospects such as better pay, promotional opportunities and perceived job characteristics (Madueke & Emerole, 2017; Nyamubarwa, 2013).

A study has shown that retention of employees is paramount to the survival of any organisation (Masango & Mpofu, 2013). Prior to leaving the organisation, employees develop strong negative reactions and attitudes which affect their performance detrimentally as well as affecting the morale of other colleagues (Van Der Vaart, Linde & Cockeran, 2013). The aforementioned citation supports the challenges experienced by the public entity in that morale of the employees remaining behind is affected and low, and many questions are raised concerning the future of the public entity, such as the plans to be put in place in reducing the turnover intentions.

The challenge faced by the public entity is that highly qualified, experienced and long-serving employees in core business are resigning from the entity, thus posing a threat of loss of organisational memory as well as continuous expenditure due to the recruitment process. Besides a lack of competitive salaries, organisations may experience high turnover intentions due to a toxic culture (Belete, 2018; Bussin, 2018). According to Bosomtwe and Obeng (2018), extant studies have reported that a supportive work environment reduces turnover intentions and it is important to identify the factors that would minimise the intentions of employees to quit.

It is for that reason that this study sought to establish the factors that lead to turnover intentions of employees in the basic education public entity and strategies that could be put in place to reduce their intentions to leave. Organisations implement various workplace practices to retain key employees such as the involvement of employees in decision-making, opportunities for growth, offering of competitive pay structures, provision of work-life balance support and the introduction of employee assistance programmes. It is, therefore, critical for organisations to develop appropriate strategies in retaining talented employees (Ihmond & Rjoub, 2019).

The study sought to understand the views of employees in a public entity on the reasons behind their turnover intentions within the South African context. The topic had not yet been explored in the South African context and the industrial and organisational psychology field and contributes to the understanding of the concept of turnover intentions and proposes recommendations or preventive measures to remedy employees' intention to leave the public entity. This study will assist the public entities to manage and curb the intentions of employees to leave and the actual turnover.

In summary, in order to fill the gap as identified in the literature review and to achieve both literature review aims and empirical study aims, the following questions are answered.

1.2.1 General research question

The general research question for this study was formulated as follows:

- What are the factors leading to employees' turnover intentions in the basic education public entity?

Literature review

The two core questions that the literature review endeavoured to answer were formulated as follows:

Research question 1: How is the construct of turnover intentions conceptualised in the research literature and what are the factors leading to or reasons for high turnover intentions?

Research question 2: How is the construct 'employee retention' conceptualised in the literature and what are ways to retain employees?

Research question 3: What are the theoretical implications of the high turnover in the basic education public entity for the motivation theories and for practice?

The problem and the general questions formulated above were addressed by means of specific literature-related and empirical questions:

Empirical study

Research question 1: What are the factors leading to high turnover intentions in the basic education public entity and how can such employees be retained?

Research question 2: Does the reasons or factors leading to turnover intentions differ according to participant's age, gender, race, qualifications or by years of service?

Research question 3: What are the recommendations that can be made for future research on turnover intentions in the public sector and organisational development interventions (practice)?

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aims of the study are split into the general aim and the specific aim (for literature review and for empirical study) as indicated below.

1.3.1 General aim

The general aim of the study is to explore, in-depth, the factors leading to or reasons for turnover intentions of employees at a South African basic education public entity.

1.3.2 Specific aims for literature review

Research aim 1: To, through literature, conceptualise the concepts turnover intentions, employee retention and their dimensions.

Research aim 2: To, using relevant theories and previous studies, identify theoretical relationship between turnover intentions, employee retention as well as biographical factors such as gender, age race, qualifications and years of service.

Research aim 3: To theoretically identify strategies that can be implemented to counter high turnover intentions in the South African basic education public entity.

1.3.3 Specific aims for the empirical study

Research aim 1: To empirically explore in-depth the reasons leading to joining, staying, leaving and remaining in the basic education public entity.

Research aim 2: To ascertain if their turnover intentions differ according to age, gender, race, qualifications or by years of service in the basic education public entity.

Research aim 3: Based on the empirical findings, formulate recommendations regarding the retention of staff within the basic education public entity and for organisational development interventions (practice).

1.4 PARADIGM PERSPECTIVE

1.4.1 The disciplinary context

The study falls under the discipline of Industrial and Organisational Psychology and relates to organisational psychology, personnel psychology and employee well-being sub-disciplines as depicted in Figure 1.1 below.

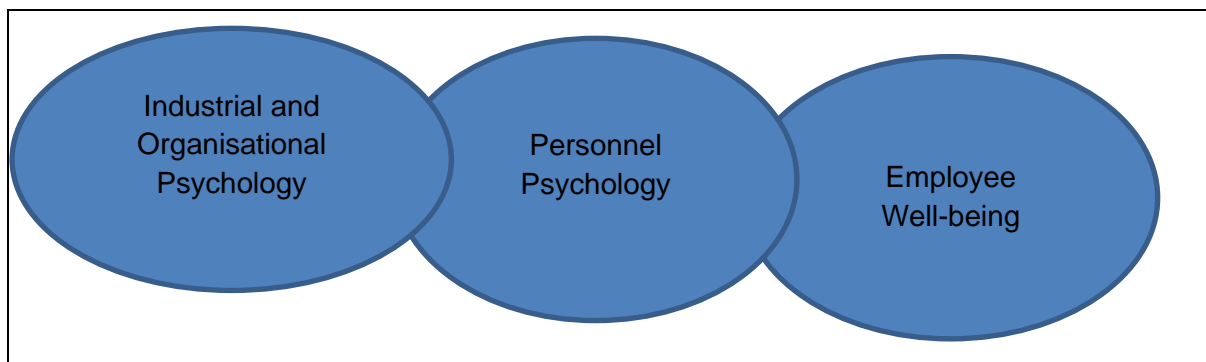


Figure 1.1: Interdisciplinary context

The disciplines are explained in detail below:

1.4.1.1 *Industrial and Organisational Psychology*

Industrial Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour in the workplace or the study of behaviour at work and it emerged as an applied science aimed at assisting organisations

to achieve their economics goals (Van Vuuren, 2010). The study focuses on understanding the behaviour of employees within the public entity to establish their turnover intentions.

Coetzee and Schreuder (2010) refer to Industrial Psychologists as both scientists and practitioners, in what is referred to as scientist-practitioner model, that is, applied science through accumulating and disseminating knowledge and the practitioner model being viewed as the application of knowledge acquired to identify and address workplace challenges. The study included organisational psychology, personnel psychology, and employee well-being as the sub-disciplines of industrial and organisational psychology.

1.4.1.1.1 Organisational Psychology

Organisational psychology focuses on the influence organisations have on the attitudes and behaviour of their employees and aims to study work at the organisational level in order to understand how workers function in an organisation and how the organisation functions as a whole (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2010). Organisational Psychology activities include the promotion of job satisfaction, training and development, organisational design, culture and climate, employee and organisational wellness, organisational commitment and employee engagement, quality of work life, group dynamics and teamwork.

How these activities are implemented within the organisation might be referred to as the culture of the organisation and the aim of the study is to establish and understand the views of employees on the activities regarding their intentions to leave the organisations.

1.4.1.1.2 Personnel Psychology

Personnel Psychology is concerned with optimising fit among individuals, jobs, teams, and organisations to enhance the well-being of employees and increase productivity, thus minimising turnover intentions of employees (Kennedy & Thorpe, 2006). The study focuses on understanding the alignment between employees and jobs within the public entity and establishes whether there is a need to recommend measures to be put in place in minimising turnover intentions of employees.

1.4.1.1.3 *Employee Well-being*

Employee wellness has become a popular field of the study in Industrial Psychology as a result of topics such as stress, job burnout, violation of psychological contracts, job insecurity and downsizing (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2010), as well as due to the recent worldwide pandemic caused by the Covid-19 virus. Van Der Vaart, Linde and Cockeran (2013) are of the view that employee well-being and intentions to leave are direct outcomes of a psychological contract breach/fulfilment. Covid-19 posed many challenges in the world of work and has affected both the health and psychological elements of employees. Employees are required to work from home in curbing the spread of the coronavirus and immediate family members are lost due to Covid-19 infections which in turn, affect the employees' well-being due to stress and withdrawal behaviours which might result in intention to quit.

The research focuses on the understanding of turnover intentions of employees to leave the public entity by identifying the source that triggers the intentions of employees to leave.

1.4.2 The Research Paradigm

The approach on how the researcher investigates the problem depends on the researcher's thinking about the problem and how it can be studied in such a way that the findings will be credible to the researcher and others involved in the study (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2012). According to Wagner et al. (2012), researchers have their own views of what constitutes truth and knowledge, which guides their thinking, beliefs and assumptions about the society and they frame how the world is being viewed around them, which is what social scientists refer to as a paradigm.

A paradigm is informed by philosophical assumptions about three things, namely, ontology (What is the nature of reality?), epistemology (How can the researcher come to know the reality?) and methodology (What is the nature of the research?) (O'Neil & Koekemoer, 2016). The researcher is of the view that reality can be meaningfully expressed by the participants and interpreted by the researcher to better understand the reasons contributing to turnover intentions of employees in the public entity. The researcher derives meaning based on the views of employees on their intentions to leave the organisation. The study was conducted on or the reality was established through the lenses of interpretive research and constructive paradigm.

1.4.2.1 *Interpretive Research Paradigm*

Interpretivism addresses the understanding of the world as others experience it (Wagner et al., 2012). The study was interpretative and the researcher's aim was to understand the turnover intention of employees in the public entity. Interpretive paradigm is related to the ontological and epistemological assumptions. According to Hesse-Biber (2017), there are three major ontological positions in qualitative research namely, positivism which suggests that the social world is patterned and the causal relationships can be discovered and tested through reliable strategies; an interpretive position which assumes that the social world is constantly being constructed through group interactions and social reality can be understood through the perspective of social actors enmeshed in meaning-making; and lastly, a critical perspective which views social reality as an ongoing construction and further suggests that discourses created in shifting fields of social power shape social reality and the study thereof. Hesse-Biber (2017) further asserts that the three major umbrella categories are applicable under epistemological stances, that is: positivism provides privileges to the researcher as the authority in the research process due to her objective, value-neutral stance and the researcher's use of standardised measurement instruments; an interpretive perspective views the researcher and research participants as co-creators in the knowledge building process and emphasises the perspective of the participants; and a critical approach pays attention to how power is infused in the knowledge-building process.

The researcher is of the view that individuals can build the knowledge, based on their understanding and make their own decisions which relate to the study in that employees gathered their knowledge and information of the public entity according to how they understood it and informed their decision (intentions) to leave or not to leave the organisation. According to Hesse-Biber (2017), interpretive approaches are associated with constructivist approaches which is discussed in detail below.

1.4.2.2 *Constructive Research paradigm*

Constructive paradigms seek deep understanding by interpreting the meaning of connections and actions and posit that the only way of understanding social reality is from the perspective of those involved within it (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hesse-Biber, 2017). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), constructivists believe that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and develop subjective meanings of their experiences. In a constructive approach, the researcher relies largely on the participants' views and the

questions are open-ended and allow the participants to construct the meanings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The intention of the researcher is to understand and interpret the meanings participants have about the world in which they live (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hesse-Biber, 2017). According to Crotty (1998), constructivism posits several assumptions, that is:

- human beings construct meanings as they engage with the world and qualitative researchers make use of open-ended questions to allow participants to share their views;
- human beings engage with the world and make sense of it, based on their social and historical perspectives;
- qualitative researchers gather information personally and seek to understand the setting of the participants;
- qualitative researchers interpret the findings of their own experiences; and
- qualitative research is inductive as the meaning is generated through interaction with human beings and from the collected data.

From a constructive point of view, the researcher sought in-depth understanding of turnover intentions of employees in the public entity and made use of open-ended questions to understand participants' views on their turnover intentions.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.5.1 Conceptual Review: Turnover intentions

Turnover intention is a decision that intervenes with an individual's attitude towards their job and the decision to stay or leave the organisation (Jacobs & Roodt, 2011). According to Fasanmi (2018), turnover intention is a desire or willingness of an employee to quit his or her job in the near future or as soon as there are available job opportunities. Excessive turnover influences the organisation negatively by delaying service delivery, elimination of the organisation's return on investment and decreases innovation due to experienced and qualified employees exiting the organisation (Alatawi, 2017; Naidoo, 2018). Turnover intention is a complex matter that has negative consequences for organisations and requires managerial attention (Alatawi, 2017).

Turnover might be a culture on its own in the sense that within the organisation, it is commonly known that people resign/leave the organisation for various reasons that have not been investigated or dealt with or may be caused by a toxic culture within the organisation (Niguse, 2019). According to Niguse (2019), it is critical to have a good organisational culture as it reduces turnover intentions. An organisation's culture is considered to be the primary determinant of the organisation's failure or success (Schein, 1985). In reducing turnover intention, the organisation's culture should offer a favourable working environment consistent with the employee's personal values and career goals (Niguse, 2019; Schein, 1985).

It is therefore important for organisations to develop and implement retention strategies that will create a conducive working environment and minimise the intention of employees to leave the organisation.

1.5.2 Employee Retention

Employee retention is referred to as a deliberate action by an employer to retain current employees in an organisation (Alhmond & Rjoub, 2019; Bussin 2018; Huang & Su, 2016). It reduces unwanted voluntary turnover by creating a conducive working environment such as having in place policies and practices that address the diverse needs of employees (Masango & Mpofu, 2013).

Allen (2008) cited three main methods that organisations can use to enhance the retention of their employees without employees showing intentions to leave the organisation, that is:

- (i) **Person-Environment (P-E) Fit:** The person-environment theory was initially proposed by French, Rodgers, and Cobb in 1974 which had several properties of theoretical and empirical value in understanding the adjustments within organisations (Caplan, 1987). According to Caplan (1987), the theory was proposed as a method of understanding the process of adjustment between employees and their work environments. There should be a congruence between the personal values of the employee and corporate culture of the organisation. If the P-E congruence is high, the employee will fit well within the organisation and will be able to adhere to the policies and procedures of the organisation. An employee with a low P-E congruence will have a challenge to fit into the organisational culture as the policies and procedures might not be favourable to him.

- (ii) Person-Person (P-P) Fit: Can be diagnosed by measuring the extent of team spirit between all the employees, from the Chief Executive Officer to the Housekeepers in an organisation. A high P-P fit reflects a high sense of teamwork in terms of shared values, assumptions and goals whereas a low P-P fit reflects a high sense of isolation between employees due to the absence of shared values.
- (iii) Fit-Perceptual (PF) Fit: It measures the level of employee's perception on organisational values to that of their co-workers' perception of organisational values. A strong PF reflects a strong correspondence between the employee's perception of organisational values and the values that the co-workers perceive the organisation to have (whether or not the organisation actually does). A weak PF implies that an employee's perception of organisational values differs significantly from their co-workers' perception of organisational values (Allen, 2008).

These methods, when implemented either simultaneously or separately, may assist to strengthen the organisation's abilities to retain its key personnel (Allen, 2008).

To achieve the current study's research questions, objectives and aims, certain scientific strategies, methodologies and methods need to be performed. Research design is one of the strategies that needs to be carefully implemented to achieve the objectives of the study.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is a structure that the researcher follows in answering the research question such as the type of data to be collected and how it will be collected, selection and size of the sample as well as the methods to be used for analysing data (Creswell & Creswell 2018). The study is qualitative and exploratory in nature. The research approach, strategy, and methodology followed are discussed in detail.

1.6.1 Research approach

The research approach used in this study is qualitative in nature and the general purpose of the approach is to examine human behaviour in the social, cultural, and political contexts in which they occur through semi-structured interviews (Salkind, 2018). According to Holliday (2007), the use of qualitative research in both academic and professional fields is increasing as it develops from the aspects of anthropology and sociology and represents a broad view

that in understanding the human affairs, it is insufficient to rely on quantitative surveys and statistics and rather there is a need to delve deeper into the subjective qualities that govern human behaviour.

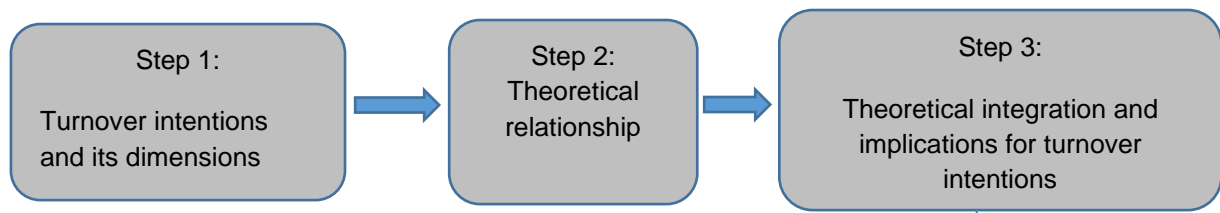
1.6.2 Research Strategy

Due to the qualitative nature of the study, the research strategy followed was a phenomenological research as the goal of the study was to understand the experienced phenomenon of turnover intentions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam, 2002). Phenomenology is a powerful qualitative research strategy and focuses on the study of lived experiences of an individual and involves conducting interviews as a tool to collect data (Giorgi, 2009; Neubauer, Witkop & Varpio, 2019). Neubauer et al. (2019) refer to phenomenology as an approach that seeks to explain the essence of a phenomenon by exploring it from the view of those who have experienced it. The study was based on a particular and unique public entity and its employees and the phenomenological approach provided the researcher with an holistic understanding of what contributes to turnover intentions within the public entity.

1.6.3 Research Method

The research methodology followed for this study, was divided into two phases namely, the literature review and the empirical study as depicted in figure 1.2 below.

PHASE 1: LITERATURE REVIEW



PHASE 2: EMPIRICAL STUDY

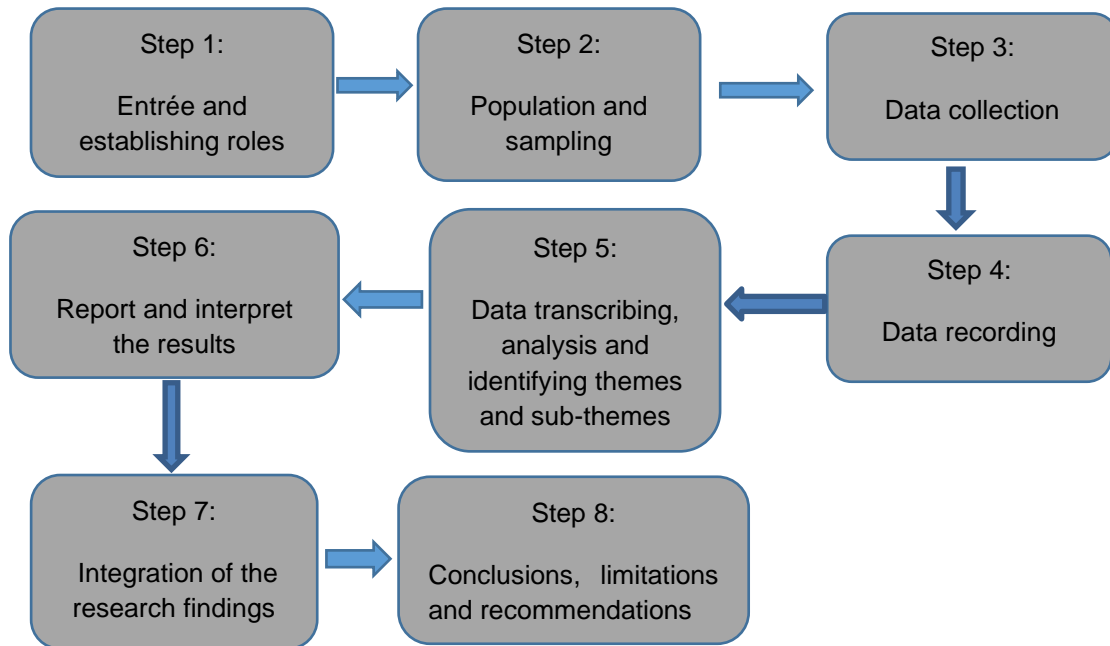


Figure 1.2: Flow diagram of the research method (Adapted from Matjie, M.A.T., 2018)

During the literature review, turnover and turnover intentions are explored; theories of turnover intentions and retention are discussed in detail. Retention strategies are identified and suggested. The empirical investigation which is covered in chapter three (the research article) consisted of details on the selection and description of the research participants such as age, race, gender, qualifications and years of service in the public entity. Strategies employed to ensure quality data and ethical considerations are explained in detail. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data and the process followed is detailed in chapter 3. Data were analysed by making use of a thematic analysis method and themes and sub-themes were identified. Findings were discussed in detail in chapter 3.

1.6.3.1 *Research Setting*

The study was conducted virtually due to Covid-19 social distancing regulations at the time convenient to participants. The public entity has a total staff complement of 130 employees.

1.6.3.2 *Entrée and establishing researcher roles*

According to Creswell (2014), the interpretive approach of qualitative research requires the researcher to be typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants which introduces a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues into the process. The researcher must explicitly identify the participants' biases, values, and personal background, such as gender, history, culture, and socio-economic status that may shape the interpretations during the study (Creswell, 2014).

The researcher's primary role was to collect data and approval was sought from the gatekeepers to conduct research within the public entity indicating reasons for conducting the study, activities that took place during the study, indicated whether the study might be disruptive or not, in which manner the results were to be reported and how the public entity could benefit from the study. The conducted study was sensitive in nature and the masking of information was taken into consideration during the process (Creswell, 2014).

Hesse-Biber (2017) further asserts that researchers wear many hats in the research process as they become teachers, advocates, evaluators, biographers and interpreters and must constantly negotiate these roles.

1.6.3.3 *Sampling*

A sampling frame consisting of a list of all individuals in the population is required before sampling can be done (Wagner et al., 2012). Qualitative research, by its nature, is not prescriptive and there are no rules concerning the most appropriate sample sizes in qualitative research, however, sample sizes should not be so small that it is difficult to achieve data saturation which means that the researcher continued collecting data up to the point at which no new data were forthcoming (Creswell, 2014; Wagner et al., 2012). According to Hesse-Biber (2017), researchers agree that the selection of participants boils down to who are available, who have some specialised knowledge of the subject matter and are willing to serve in that role and that is referred to as a convenience sample.

In this study the researcher aimed to interview employees of the public entity who were available and willing to participate in the study. Participants were of any gender, permanently employed for a period of one (1) year or more, between the ages of twenty-five (25) and fifty-eight (58) and from all other departments excluding the human resources department where the researcher is based.

1.6.3.4 Data Collection

Qualitative research studies generally rely on three basic data-gathering techniques: observations; interviews; and document analyses and each of these data-gathering techniques is seldom used as a stand-alone approach: most qualitative studies employ a combination of observations and interviews (Wagner et al., 2012, p. 132-133). Creswell (2014) asserts that data collection steps include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews and visual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information. In this study, data were, due to the phenomenological approach followed, collected through semi-structured interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) through a Zoom platform due to Covid-19 regulations to ensure social distancing to curb the spread of the coronavirus. The researcher also used observations of verbal and non-verbal cues during the interviews to gather additional data.

1.6.3.5 Recording Data

Qualitative researchers must plan their approach in data recording such as the type of data to be recorded and the procedures for recording data before entering the research field (Creswell, 2014). In this study, demographic information such as gender, age, race, qualifications and years of service in the public entity were recorded and notes on the proceedings were taken. Audio tapes were used to record telephonic and virtual interviews with the participants.

1.6.3.6 Data Analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed, and data analysis commenced. In creating sensitive, insightful, rich, and trustworthy research findings and due to the phenomenological nature of the study, thematic analysis was conducted (Lindberg, Nilson & Palmer, 2019; Nowell Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Nowell et al. (2017) further assert that for qualitative researchers to be accepted as trustworthy, they must demonstrate that data analysis has been

conducted in a precise, consistent and exhaustive manner through a recording system, systematising and disclosing the methods of analysis with enough details to determine the credibility of the process.

According to Nowell et al. (2017), thematic analysis is applied in phases:

- Phase 1: Familiarise oneself with the data: Triangulation of data collection methods such as data gathered from one-on-one interviews.
- Phase 2: Generating initial codes: Peer debriefing and documentation of all the meetings.
- Phase 3: Searching for themes: Researcher triangulation.
- Phase 4: Review themes
- Phase 5: Defining and naming themes
- Phase 6: Produce the report

Braun and Clark (2006) assert that a thematic method is helpful in inspecting the views of various participants, to identify differences and similarities. Although it is advantageous to use thematic analysis, lack of significant literature in comparison to phenomenology and grounded theory, may cause emerging researchers to doubt their ability in conducting thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017).

1.6.3.7 Strategies employed to ensure quality data and ethical consideration

In order to be able to conduct research within the entity, access was sought from the gatekeepers in writing. According to Wagner et al. (2012, p. 64-65), gatekeepers are those people who enable researchers to gain entry into an organisation or community to conduct research. Gatekeepers must be furnished with the details of the intention of the research, the duration, research methodology and a sample of participants required for research. The ethical issues will also be explained as to how the information collected from the organisation will be protected and considered to be private and confidential.

There are much less obvious ways in which research can be unethical, however, it is important for the researcher to examine carefully all the ethical aspects of the research project. Wagner et al. (2012, p. 64) specify four overlapping guidelines that are standard for organisations' codes of ethics: informed consent, deception, privacy and confidentiality and accuracy that should be adhered to during the process of conducting research, as detailed below:

- (a) **Informed consent:** when conducting the research in a public entity, the researcher must ensure that the participants sign the consent forms where it is explained fully regarding the purpose of the research, what the research will be used for, how long will the research take and the methods to be used during the research process. The participants should voluntarily agree to participate and sign the consent forms (Wagner et al., 2012).
- (b) **Deception:** there are instances where it can be argued that to be able to achieve the aims of the research, deception should be employed. Deception is unnecessary and morally unacceptable (Wagner et al., 2012). In the current study, deception was avoided.
- (c) **Privacy and confidentiality:** the research was conducted in the public entity and the research location and details of participants were hidden and no information relating to the research, that is harmful to the participants, was disclosed (Wagner et al., 2012)
- (d) **Accuracy:** for the research project to achieve the desired results, any fabrication of information, omissions and fraudulent materials must be avoided at all costs as they are unethical (Wagner et al., 2012). In the current study, accuracy was prioritised.

1.6.3.8 *Trustworthiness and rigour*

Creswell (2014) states that in order for the researcher to verify the validity and accuracy of a qualitative study, certain procedures must be employed such as using member checking to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific themes back to participants to determine whether these participants feel that they are accurate, which might be more difficult to implement. Creswell (2014) asserts that use of rich, thick description to convey the findings, clarification of bias to the study, presentation of negative or discrepant information, and use of an external auditor to review the entire project can add to the validity of the findings.

In ensuring the trustworthiness of the study, measures such as credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability and authenticity must be put in place and not evaluated at a later stage (Cypress, 2017; Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016).

a. Credibility

Credibility refers to the idea of internal consistency or validity and can be achieved by prolonged engagement with participants (Gunawan, 2015; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The researcher engaged with participants by conducting virtual semi-structured interviews through a Zoom platform as a means of collecting data.

b. Dependability

Dependability refers to a stability and consistency of findings over time (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The interpretation and recommendations of the study are not based on the researcher's preferences but on the data that was collected (Anney, Dar & Salaam, 2014; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In ensuring dependability, the researcher conducted an audit trail by making sure that notes taken and the recordings were available in order to study the transparency of the research process (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

c. Conformability

According to Ghafouri and Ofoghi (2016), conformability refers to having the same findings at various times and how much others confirm the research findings. The researcher allowed the review of the findings by the academic supervisor.

d. Transferability

Transferability refers to having the same findings at various situations. Findings of the study must be the same as the findings in the same study and should be suitable for use in the future (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016). In improving transferability, recording of data, extraction of findings, coding approach and a research audit trial was used in this current study. However, given the usually small sample sizes, qualitative data cannot be said to be generalisable, thus it is important not to imply that the findings can be generalised to other populations or settings (Cypress, 2017). In this study as the sample size is very small and the findings might not be generalised.

e. Authenticity

In establishing authenticity, the researcher must ensure that the findings are credible not only from the participants' experiences but also with larger implications of research (Shannon & Hambacher, 2014). Fairness, as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985), is one of the five dimensions of authenticity to consider during qualitative research. Fairness was exercised during the conducting of the research by encouraging participants to have a voice, participate voluntarily and their permission to participate in the study was sought by signing the consent forms.

1.6.3.9 Triangulation

The inclusion of multiple sources of data collection in research project is likely to increase the reliability of the results/findings (Mouton, 2015). Mouton (2015) is of the view that various methods complement each other and their respective shortcomings can be balanced out. In determining the reliability of information, the researcher may check the transcripts for obvious mistakes that might be made during the transcription or cross-checking codes developed by different researchers and compare results that are independently derived (Creswell, 2014). Observation during interviews also assisted the researcher to corroborate what the participants were saying non-verbally to ascertain their meaning behind their words through their actions.

1.6.3.10 Reporting

Qualitative research is referred to as a naturalistic study and the results are presented in a descriptive, narrative form rather than as a scientific report (Creswell, 2014).

1.7 FINDINGS

Findings are reported upon finalisation of the study.

1.8 DISCUSSION

The main aim of the study is to understand turnover intentions of employees at a South African public entity. The findings are known and reported in Chapter 3.

1.9 CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, conclusions, limitations, and recommendations are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

1.9.1 Conclusions

The purpose of the study is to explore employees' views of turnover intentions in the public entity. The background, motivation, and the aims of the study as well as the relevant paradigm, research methodology and design are detailed in this chapter.

1.9.2 Limitations

The findings of the study have limited generalisability and practical applicability. The limitations are due to the nature of the study and research method. The study was conducted in a unique setting, a public entity, with a relatively small sample. Different results might be established should the study be conducted in a different setting with a larger sample size.

1.9.3 Recommendations

Recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the study are formulated and discussed in detail.

1.10 CHAPTER LAY-OUT

This study contains the following chapters:

Chapter 2: Literature review.

Chapter 3: Research Article.

Chapter 4: Conclusion, limitations, and recommendations.

1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 comprises the discussion around the scientific orientation to the study. The background and motivation for the study, the research problem, aims, the paradigm perspective, the research design and methodology were discussed. Based on the findings of the study, the public entity might become aware of the factors that lead to the intentions of employees to quit and develop and implement retention strategies and organisational development interventions that might reduce turnover intentions of employees and the turnover rate. This chapter concludes with the chapter layout.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW: TURNOVER INTENTIONS AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Chapter 2 conceptualises the constructs of turnover, turnover intentions, and employee retention. The theoretical relationship between turnover intentions and employee retention are identified in chapter 3. In this chapter, factors affecting turnover intentions of employees and retention strategies are also identified and discussed in detail.

2.1 TURNOVER

Turnover refers to the situation where an employee ceases to be a member of an organisation (Ngo-Henha, 2017). Similar definitions of turnover was provided by various researchers (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Employees' turnover is the rate at which employees leave or enter an organisation and is triggered by various factors such as poor remuneration system, lack of job satisfaction, unethical practices, and workload (Hussain & Hassif, 2012; Oruh et al., 2019). There are several costs related to turnover such as facilitation of exit interviews, induction of new employees, unused accumulated annual leave payout, hiring of temporary employees, paying employees to work overtime due to capacity shortages and both formal and informal training costs paid for the exiting employees (Mitchell et al., 2001). It is important that organisations measure the employee turnover rate and put strategies in place to reduce turnover intentions.

Turnover intentions of employees is becoming an area of concern regardless of the size and nature of business (Belete, 2018). It is a concern because it creates instability and the inability to retain competent employees within organisations (Alatawi, 2017; Belete, 2018). Turnover can be categorised into voluntary and involuntary turnover (Belete, 2018) as reflected in Figure 2.1 below.

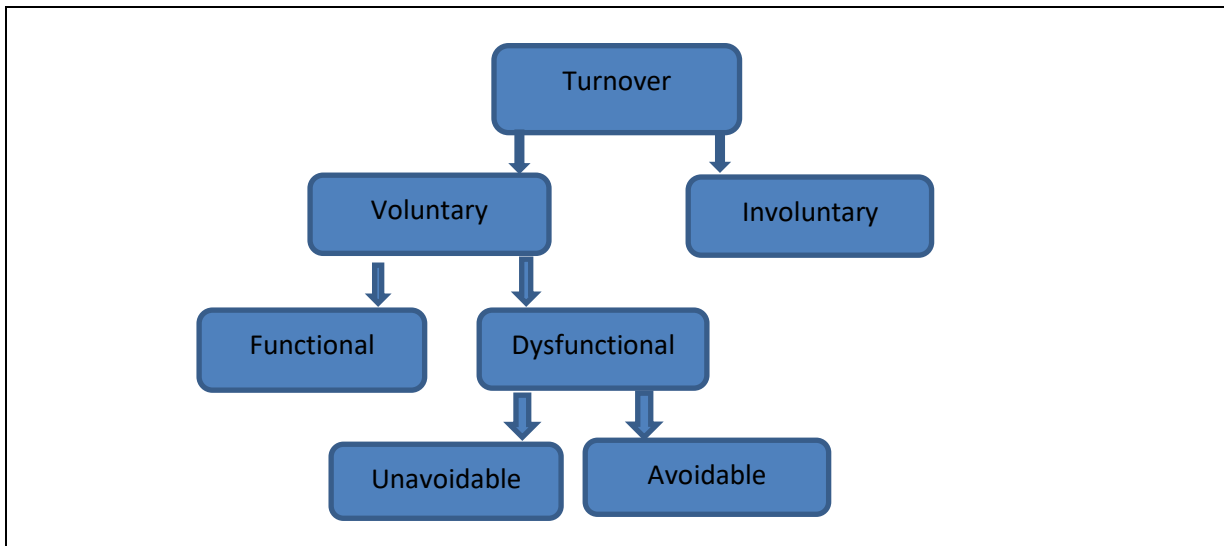


Figure 2.1: Turnover categories (Adapted from Belete, 2018)

Voluntary turnover is when someone decides to leave the organisation on their own accord and is costly and disruptive as they call for recruitment processes such as advertising and filling of the created vacant positions (Belete, 2018; Masibigiri & Nienaber, 2012). Involuntary turnover can be referred to as the organisational management's decision to force an employee to exit the organisation by means of dismissal. Voluntary turnover is classified into two groups, that is, functional turnover which refers to the exiting of non-performers and dysfunctional turnover, which refers to the resignation of outstanding performers (Alatawi, 2017; Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2018; Belete, 2018; Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). Belete (2018) posits that dysfunctional turnover is categorised into avoidable and unavoidable turnover. Organisations experience avoidable turnover as a result of below market remuneration, poor working conditions and leadership style. Unavoidable turnover is a result of family relocations, sudden death or severe illness. Exiting employees often takes with them the experience and skills gained whilst in the organisation (Mitchell, Holtom & Lee, 2001). Due to the close relationship established with clients, employee departure may cost the organisation as the clients might decide not to make use of the services that are being offered by the organisation.

In this study, voluntary turnover is explored as most of the employees exit the public entity on their own accord and most of them are outstanding performers and employees with critical skills. Various causes of voluntary turnover such as workload, remuneration system, job satisfaction, if unattended, create what is known as "turnover intentions" for employees, as discussed below.

2.2 TURNOVER INTENTIONS

Turnover intention is one's willingness and personal perception to leave the organisation due to various reasons such as availability of similar jobs and growth opportunities outside the organisation, which are referred to as external influences (Boamah & Laschinger, 2016; Dermitas & Akdogan, 2015; Fasanmi, 2018; Meintjes, 2019). Dermitas and Akdogan (2015) further assert that turnover intention is caused by internal factors such as remuneration, work environment and individual factors such as one's job performance and satisfaction. Turnover intentions impact negatively on the employee-client relationship as the employee is no longer focusing on their job due to the dissatisfaction they are experiencing and the search for alternative employment (Aliyu & Nyadzayo, 2018).

2.2.1 Theories of turnover intentions

There are several content theories of turnover intentions namely, Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Ngo-Henha, 2017). Grunberg (1979) refers to content theories as theories that identify employees' needs and how they prioritise those needs in achieving job satisfaction. Employers might make use of Herzberg's theory to enhance job satisfaction and weaken factors that influences job dissatisfaction while Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory can be used to balance the work environment with the needs of employees (Maslow, 1954; Skelton et al., 2020). The two content theories are explained in detail below.

2.2.1.1 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

The two-factor theory was published by Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman in 1959 and developed the motivation-hygiene theory that satisfaction and dissatisfaction with a job were affected by two different sets of factors and could not be measured in the same range (Alshmemri, Shahwan-akl, & Maude, 2017; Herzberg, Mauser & Snyderman, 1959).

Herzberg's two-factor theory indicates that there are two groups of factors within organisations, those known as motivation factors and contributing to job satisfaction and those known as hygiene factors and contributing to job dissatisfaction, as illustrated in Figure 2.2 (Ngo-Henha, 2017).

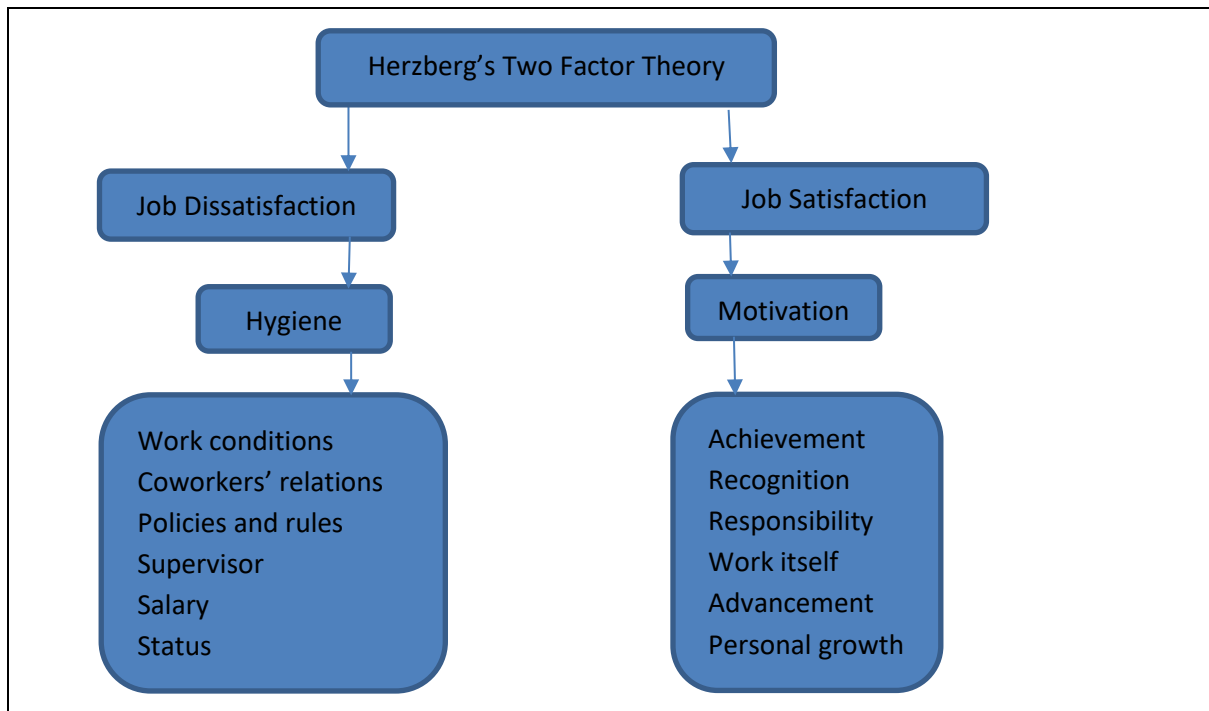


Figure 2.2: Motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, Mauser & Snyderman, 1959)

According to Herzberg et al.'s (1959) motivation-hygiene theory, when basic hygiene needs such as safe working conditions or supervisor-subordinate relationships take place, employees start searching for job satisfaction. Motivation factors are factors that impact positively on employees' approach to work as their self-actualisation needs are satisfied (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018).

The Two-Factor theory posits that an employee's turnover intention starts when the factors that are contributing to his or her satisfaction are becoming negatively affected (Herzberg et al., 1959). When an employee, for example, starts to believe that they are no longer being recognised within the organisation or they are unable to cover their expenses with their current salary, they might start looking for alternative employment.

In order to deter turnover intention, it is therefore important that the retention strategies that are put in place enhance motivation factors (Ngo-Henha, 2017).

2.2.1.2 Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is a motivational theory consisting of five categories in a hierarchical order (Maslow, 1943). Maslow's hierarchy of needs defines growth stages in human beings and the stages of needs function like a ladder in that one cannot move to the higher levels of needs without fulfilling the basic needs (Freitas & Leonard, 2011). Maslow

(1943) is of the view that individuals are motivated to achieve certain needs and some needs take precedence over others.

Maslow (1943) identified five hierarchical needs:

- Psychological: Food, water, shelter.
- Safety: Protection and employment
- Social: Intimacy, close relations with others
- Esteem: Achievement, respect from others
- Self-actualisation: Problem solving, creativity

Employees could be satisfied with their job if the organisation meets their needs. If one perceives that there are major needs that the current employer is unable to meet and could be satisfied by searching an alternative employment, they are more likely to leave and join an organisation that is perceived to meet the required needs (Ghapanchi, Ghapanchi, Talaei-Khoei & Abedin, 2013). Employees in senior positions are likely to be satisfied with their basic needs and their interest is in achieving higher needs whereas employee in junior levels might be motivated by basic needs, such as physical protection and close relations with others (Maslow, 1954).

The theories above explain how turnover and turnover intentions manifest and how they may be mitigated or even prevented. It is, however, important to understand the causes or determinants of turnover intentions, as discussed below.

2.2.2 Determinants of turnover intentions

Turnover intentions have been acknowledged by Mobley (1982) as the best predictor of actual turnover.

Various factors such as job satisfaction, work environment and remuneration lead to thoughts of quitting, job search, comparison of alternatives and intentions to quit or stay (Locke, 1976; Mobley, Horner & Hollingsworth, 1978). Causes of turnover intentions might differ from organisation to organisation (Belete, 2018; Nyamubarwa, 2013). Below is a thorough discussion of turnover intentions causes.

2.2.2.1 *Job Satisfaction*

Hoppock (1935) defines job satisfaction as “a combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that causes a person to say: I am satisfied with my job”. Job satisfaction is an approach that employees have regarding their work and is based on one’s intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and it is an enabler in retaining competent employees within organisations (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018; Naidoo, 2019). It is an important determinant of turnover intentions (Bashir & Durrani, 2014). When employees are satisfied with their current jobs, they become loyal to the organisation and stay longer with fewer intentions to leave their jobs (Alshammari et al., 2016). Job satisfaction leads to retention whereas job dissatisfaction may trigger one to leave the organisation (Umamaheswari & Krishan, 2015).

When employees experience dissatisfaction, they presumably start looking for alternative jobs by conducting a job search which may lead to the discovering of excellent opportunities which are favourable as compared to their current jobs (Mitchell et al., 2001). Low job satisfaction is one of the indicators of one’s intention to exit the organisation (Huang & Su, 2016).

2.2.2.2 *Work environment*

Work environment is a place of work that consists of everything that forms part of the employee’s involvement with the work and physical elements where one performs their daily duties and builds up in a form of an organisational culture (Javed, Balouch & Hassan, 2014; Tadesse, 2018). Organisations that introduce workplace practices such as involving employees in decision making processes, creating conducive work environments and the provision of competitive salaries might be perceived to have a positive work environment and realise a reduction on the intentions of employees to leave the organisation (Tadesse, 2018). Perceived work environment could influence one’s decision to leave or stay (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). Undesirable work environment can increase the stress level of employees which might result in them leaving the organisation (Kokt & Ramarumo, 2015). Horwitz, Heng and Quazi (2003) posit that in order to retain key talent, the work environment should be a “fun” place to work.

2.2.2.3 *Remuneration*

Employees need to feel that they are fairly compensated for their contribution in the achievement of organisational objectives. Perceived lack of fairness in the remuneration

system of the organisation might result in a disagreement between the employees and employers (Kusluvan, 2003). Employees' intention to leave the organisation might be triggered by non-competitive salaries, unfavourable working conditions and a decline in the economy (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). A competitive remuneration packages is the most common tactic utilised by organisations to retain key talented employees and competing for top talent on price only is a no-win proposition as there are various ways to strategically manage compensation that are consistent with employee retention (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

Employees' perception of the poor financial status of the organisation entertain thoughts of possible future retrenchments and seeking of employment somewhere (Kuria, Odingi & Wanderi, 2012). If employees perceive the organisation to be financially unstable, they might start looking for alternative employment at other organisations that are perceived to be financially stable.

It is important for organisation to develop effective strategies and introduce workplace practices that will contribute to the retention of competent and skilled employees and reduce the intentions to quit the organisation. Employee retention is discussed in detail below.

2.3 EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Retention is a process whereby organisations encourage employees to stay longer with no intentions of leaving and the ability of those organisations to retain employees with key talent (Devibala, Anbuoli & Jothimurugan, 2014; Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Other researchers refer to employee retention as a deliberate action to retain existing employees within the organisation (Alhmond & Rjoub, 2019; Bussin 2018; Huang & Su, 2016). According to Sinha and Sinha (2021), employee retention is a complex issue and there is no single strategy for keeping employees. Retention of competent employees is one of the challenges faced by many organisations globally and loss of experienced staff has severe implications on the service delivery and performance of the organisation (Gurmessa & Tefera, 2019; Mayende & Musenze, 2018). Some scholars are of the view that it is critical to keep employees motivated and organisations do not necessarily measure why employees are leaving and why employees are staying as it is not who they hire that counts but who they keep (Baker, 2006; Cutler, 2001).

Khalid and Nawab (2018) refer to employee retention as the core of organisational success and it is an area of concern as the costs related to turnover impact negatively on the achievement of organisational objectives. Effective management of retention requires

continuous diagnosis of the causes and the nature of turnover as well as a strategic approach and targeted retention initiatives (Allen, Bryant & Vardaman, 2010). Retention comprises two main strategies, namely, systematic strategies that are based on general principles and are focused on reducing turnover rate across the organisation whereas targeted strategies are intended to address organisation-specific issues to influence turnover among certain sections of employees (Allen, 2008; Steel, Griffeth & Hom, 2002).

2.3.1 Retention challenges

In today's world of work, there is extensive evidence that organisations are facing retention challenges (Ramlall, 2004; Tadesse, 2018). Globalisation and continuously improving technology have resulted in Human Resource (HR) professionals experiencing an increase in challenges to retain employees, particularly employees with key talent and tertiary qualifications (Khoele & Daya, 2014). Employee-retention programmes require a comprehensive process to be effective, they are expensive, vary across organisations when competing for similar talent, which makes it difficult for organisations to retain key personnel (Mitchell et al., 2001). In the following section, the two employee retention theories are discussed in detail.

2.3.2 Employee retention theories

It is necessary for organisations to motivate their employees in both the private and public sectors (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). There are several process theories of motivation that might assist organisations to develop and implement effective retention practices (Ramlall, 2004) and in this study, the focus is on Equity theory and Expectancy theory.

2.3.2.1 *Equity Theory*

Equity theory is one of the new theories developed by J.S. Adams in 1965 (Adams, 1965). Adams' theory of equity acknowledges that employees are not only concerned with the amount of the rewards they are receiving for their efforts but the relationship of this amount to what others receive (Ramlall, 2004). When employees perceive an imbalance between their inputs and outcomes in relation to others, there is tension created which provides a basis for motivation as employees strive for what is perceived as equity and fairness in the workplace (Robbins, 1993). Equity Theory rests upon three assumptions (Carell & Dittrich, 1978):

- a) that employees develop beliefs about what constitutes a fair and equitable return for their inputs to the job;
- b) that employees tend to compare what they perceive to be the exchange they have with the organisation, and
- c) that when employees believe that their own treatment is not equitable, relative to the exchange they perceive others to be making, they will be motivated to take actions they deem appropriate.

If employees perceive that they are not being treated equally within the organisation, they will have various options to choose from, such as reducing their inputs, negotiating salary increases or quitting the job to seek alternative employment (Ramlall, 2004). It is therefore necessary for organisations to develop reward systems that are deemed fair and equitable and in accordance with the employees' beliefs about their value to the organisation.

2.3.2.2 *Expectancy Theory*

The Expectancy theory of motivation is a process theory of motivation that was developed by Victor Vroom in 1964 (Vroom, 1964). Vroom's Expectancy theory argues that the strength of a tendency to act in a certain way depends on the strength of an expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome and on the attractiveness of that outcome to the individual (Robbins, 1993). Vroom (1964) referred to expectancy as an action-outcome relationship held in the minds of individuals and there are various factors contributing to an individual's expectancy perceptions about various levels of performance. Ramlall (2004) refers to expectancy as the strength of an individual's belief about whether a particular outcome is possible and the level of such strength may influence one's decision to stay in the organisation or leave.

Expectancy theory is complicated as it involves various aspects but is the most acceptable theory of motivation in predicting employee behaviour and assists in understanding psychological processes that cause motivation (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). Expectancy theory acknowledges that employees have personal goals which they want to achieve and they seek employment in order to get rewards that will assist them in achieving those personal goals. The relationship between personal goals, performance and organisational rewards is therefore important (Parijat & Bagga, 2014; Ramlall, 2004).

Some experts are of the view that this theory will not be helpful in predicting the motivation of employees in simpler, routinised, lower level jobs and employees in organisations whereas other experts posit that this theory might work better in some cultures than in others as expectations of one employee will not be similar to other employees (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). It is evident from the two theories discussed above that a combination of employment practices can reduce the employees' intention to leave and in turn, the retention rate. According to Adams' equity theory, employees develop feelings of inequitable treatment when they perceive that they are not being rewarded fairly for their contributions to the organisation (Adams, 1965). Vroom's expectancy theory posits that employees have their own personal desires and act in a certain way, such as performing their duties in expectation of being remunerated to fulfil those personal desires (Vroom, 1964).

Should employees perceive the rewards to be insufficient in fulfilling their personal desires they will seek alternative employment that will offer them better rewards to satisfy their personal desires. The expectancy theory links with Maslow's hierarchy of needs in that if employees perceive that their current employer is unable to meet their desired needs, they start to search for alternative employment and leave the organisation (Ghapanchi, Ghapanchi, Talaei-Khoei & Abedin, 2013). In order for the organisations to retain its employees, it is therefore required that fair and equitable rewards systems are developed (Ramlall, 2004). The equity theory is applied in this study as the author is of the view that perceived equitable rewards are more likely to attract and retain employees (Adams, 1965; Bussin, 2018).

There are various retention factors that should be taken into consideration when developing or reviewing the retention strategy within the organisation, as discussed below.

2.3.3 Retention factors

Retention factors are the factors that facilitate the retention or exit of employees and their decisions to leave or remain, depending on their priorities (Netswera et al., 2005). Das and Baruah (2013) are of the view that retention factors are divided into three categories, namely: social, mental and physical. The mental category comprises flexible tasks to allow creativity, job characteristics and provision of feedback, the social category comprises external and internal stakeholder relationships and lastly, the physical dimension which comprises working conditions and remuneration (Das & Baruah, 2013).

Researchers across the world identified various retention factors, particularly in the public sector as indicated in table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1: Retention factors in the public sector

(Dhanpat, Manakana, Mbacaza, Mokone, Mtongana, 2020); Dhanpat, Mudau, Phokela, MaboJane & Phiri, 2018; Döckel, 2003; Döckel, Basson, & Coetzee, 2006; Netswera et al., 2005; Uitzinger, Chrysler-Fox & Thomas, 2018).

Researcher	Retention factors
Dhanpat, Mudau, Phokela, MaboJane & Phiri (2018).	Supervisor support, work-life balance, career growth, compensation
Dhanpat, Manakana, Mbacaza, Mokone & Mtongana (2020)	Compensation, training and development, supervisor support, job security, career growth, work-life balance.
Döckel (2003); Döckel, Basson, & Coetzee (2006)	Compensation, job characteristics, training and development opportunities, supervisor support, career opportunities, work-life policies.
Netswera, Rankhumise, & Mavundla (2005)	Salaries and benefits, work environment, career growth, the external environment, and discriminatory practices.
Uitzinger, Chrysler-Fox & Thomas (2018)	Setting of achievable targets, rewards for work done, clear reporting lines, Training and Development opportunities, trust-based leadership, managerial support, clear communication channels, employee wellness programmes, diversified workforce and employee engagement.
Van Dyk, Coetzee & Takawira (2012)	Compensation, job characteristics, training and development, supervisor support, career growth, work-life balance

The table above is illustrative of retention factors within the South African context identified by various researchers and which are relevant to this study, that organisations might consider for implementation to retain employees and minimise turnover intentions.

2.3.4 How to retain employees

The shortage of skills worldwide requires industrial psychologists and human resources practitioners to understand the reasons why employees leave the organisations and factors

that trigger turnover and retention (Coetzee, Oosthuizen & Stoltz, 2016). Huang and Su (2016) are of the view that being aware of the reasons why employees exit the organisation will assist industrial psychologists to develop relevant retention strategies and increase employee satisfaction to enhance efficiency and retention of employees.

When employees are given an opportunity to give inputs on the decisions made within the organisation regarding their work, they are more likely to stay longer with no intention to leave the organisation (Khalid & Nawab, 2018). Kerdpitak and Jermsittiparsert (2020) are of the view that understanding factors that trigger turnover will enable the organisation to reduce recruitment and training costs and enhance employees' morale and productivity.

Bussin (2018) listed several reasons to retain employees, namely, cost, competition, time lost, an affected client base, effect on work culture, employee adaptability, loyalty and talent. The main aim of employee retention strategies is to motivate employees to stay within the organisation with no intentions to leave for as long as possible and to benefit both the organisation and the employee (Alhmond & Rjoub, 2019; Bussin 2018). Organisations must come to terms with the fact that some employees will want to leave the organisation as they might have their own reasons that are costly for the organisation to afford (Bussin, 2018).

There are various factors that are important when retaining employees within the South African context (Bussin, 2018; Döckel, 2003):

2.3.4.1 Recruit the right people from the start

Hiring suitable candidates will indicate how the organisation must retain them without wasting time on developing an effective retention strategy (Bussin, 2018). By refraining from asking textbook questions during the interview, and focusing on the candidate's motivations, reasons why they applied for the post, their likes and weakness will assist the organisation to understand the candidate better (Bussin, 2018). The mismatch of one's knowledge and skills for a particular job might lead to an increase in work-related stress, frustration and job dissatisfaction due to the inability to deliver on the job demands and increases one's intention to leave the organisation. (Jacobs & Roodt, 2011). Organisations must enhance the retention strategy by appointing candidates with requisite skills and knowledge.

2.3.4.2 *Training and Development opportunities*

Previously conducted research shows that learning and development is a critical retention strategy and beneficial for organisations as it reduces the chances of employees intending to leave the organisation (Govaerts, Knydt, Dochy, & Baert, 2011). In order for organisations to retain employees, development opportunities, such on-the-job training and cross functional growth whereby employees can develop new skills within the organisation that allows them to grow and value themselves are crucial (Bussin, 2018; Patterson, 2019). Armache (2014) asserts that training enhances employees' skills and knowledge that are required to perform their work effectively and increases their level of job satisfaction, thus reducing their intentions to seek alternative employment.

2.3.4.3 *Remuneration*

Organisations must ensure that remuneration policies, salary packages and benefits are competitive and attractive. Researchers found that benefits are related to retention as there is a high possibility of employees staying in the organisation if they are satisfied with the offered benefits (Sinha & Sinha, 2012). Employees have high expectations when it comes to remuneration and the provision of attractive remuneration packages and employees who are extremely happy with their pay levels are highly satisfied with their job and less likely to search for alternative employment (Bussin, 2018; Mendis, 2017; Tadesse, 2018).

2.3.4.4 *Supervisor support*

Constructive feedback on one's performance, acknowledgement and recognition of performance are important. Employees feel satisfied if they are being recognised and rewarded for their performance (Patterson, 2019). Supportive supervisors and opportunities for mentoring are crucial in retaining competent and skilled employees (Khalid & Nawab, 2018). An unhealthy supervisor-subordinate relationship is one common reason employees leave their job (Pitts, Marvel, & Fernandez, 2011). Supervisor support is a source of trust in an employee's willingness to do the best, it creates a sense of belonging and reduces the employees' intentions to leave the organisation (Dhanpat, Mudau, Phokela, & MaboJane, 2018; Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012).

2.3.4.5 *Work-life balance*

Work-life balance refers to the ability to balance one's work and personal life domains. Work-life balance suggests that paid work and the personal life of an employee should be less competing with each other and rather be complementary (Akanji, 2017). Flexi-time is becoming increasingly common as it allows employees to work in the hours that they prefer while allowing them to spend time with family or performing any leisure activities such as exercising (Bussin, 2018). The coronavirus pandemic, known as Covid-19, has resulted in many organisations allowing their employees to work from home to help curb the spread of the virus, which allows employees to work at their own homes while attending to other issues such as looking after loved ones. Organisational work-life policies influence employees' psychological attachment to the organisation as employees might perceive that the organisation cares for them (Dhanpat et al., 2018).

2.3.4.6 *Career growth*

Provision of career progression within the organisation, such as provision of career paths or promotional opportunities based on performance and proven skills might enhance the retention strategies of the organisation (Makhuzeni & Barkhuizen, 2015). Career growth might be internal or external opportunities and internal career growth enhances the employees' commitment to the organisation and moderates their intentions to leave the organisation (Dhanpat et al., 2018; Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012). Employees require new challenges to gain new competencies, aspire for promotions with extra income and if employees perceive that they have an opportunity to grow within the organisation, their intentions to leave the organisation cease (Dhanpat et al., 2018).

2.3.4.7 *Job characteristics*

Job characteristics are more attractive than others and are affected by many factors such as challenge, observed importance, routine, and risks. According to Hackman and Oldham (1975), job characteristics have five core dimensions, namely, skills variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback form the job itself. Job analysis establishes the extent to which characteristics of the position are job related and identifying job-related characteristics is important when organisations are making decisions related to recruitment, training, and promotions (Brannick & Levine, 2002; Shetterly & Krishnamoorthy, 2008). Job characteristics affect employees in many ways and if an employee does not have the

necessary skills and knowledge to perform the job, this might lead to job dissatisfaction and increase the intention to leave the organisation.

2.3.4.8 Job Security

Employees are more likely to stay in the organisation if they perceive their jobs to be secure. Job security is seen as the ability to reduce the fear that employees have of being dismissed from their jobs (Dhanpat, Manakana, Mbacaza & Mtongana, 2018). In the current world of work, downsizing and layoffs are becoming common and organisations that offer job security are thriving (Bussin, 2018). Inability to predict one's future regarding their current job can cause distress for an employee and might trigger their intentions to leave the organisation. Job security can be used to motivate employees to work toward organisational goals, ensure organisational success and reduce turnover intentions (Dhanpat et al., 2018).

2.3.4.9 Organisational culture

Organisational culture is one of the most widely studied concepts in management (Ogbonna, 2019). Culture can be referred to as the way employees perceive the organisation and influences the attitudes and the approach of employees towards their work and plays a vital role in every organisation and its uniqueness is what makes the work environment different from other organisations (Park & Kim, 2019). Giorgi, Lockwood, and Glynn (2015) provide an excellent review which discusses five main ways to conceptualise culture, that is, culture as values, stories, frames toolkits, and categories. An organisation's culture is well thought-out to be a key factor affecting organisational success or failure (Amofa, 2017). Various researchers have defined and linked organisational culture with many different organisational behaviours and recognised the correlation between organisational culture and employee retention (Belete, 2018; Madueke & Emerole, 2017).

In creating a conducive work environment, the study of organisational culture can be approached by identifying certain dimensions, such as management style, locus of authority, employee participation, goal clarity, human resource orientation and reward orientation that shape behaviour and eventually this is regarded as the culture of the organisation (Roodt, 2011). The dominant approach to understanding culture in the late 1970s, was characterised by the work of theorists who largely followed the intellectual leadership of Schein (1985, p.19) and cited contributions which defined culture as a "pattern of shared basic assumptions that

the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration” (Ogbonna, 2019).

Schein (2001) asserts that both research and practical observations of successful companies have established a direct link between strong corporate cultures and high employee commitment and retention. Previous studies have identified different models of culture namely, power culture, role culture, achievement culture and support culture (Handy, 1985) as described below.

- (a) Power culture is characterised by control and power emanating from the central leader and usually operating informally with few rules and procedures. This type of power suits the figurehead and might result in power distance where there is high willingness on the part of less powerful individuals in a group to accept the unequal distribution of power without questioning it and regarding it as normal (Hofstede, 1990).
- (b) Role culture is characterised by bureaucratic leadership as work is being co-ordinated at the top structure and roles are more important than the incumbents occupying the roles (Handy, 1985).
- (c) Achievement culture is characterised by the focus to achieve the strategic objectives of the organisation and getting the work done which engenders a sense of purpose in employees and overriding all other considerations (Handy, 1985).
- (d) Support culture emphasises that individuals must influence each other through examples and assistance and the relationships are characterised by mutuality and trust and the organisation’s primary purpose is to serve the needs of its members (Schein, 2001).

2.3.4.10 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a satisfying emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job values in the work environment (Dunette & Locke, 1976) Similarly, other scholars refer to job satisfaction as an employee’s general attitude towards their job and is considered to be an effective response by an individual regarding their job as a result of the comparison of rewards with those that are expected and perceived to be fair (Glick, 1992; Spector, 1977). According to Meier and Spector (2015), job satisfaction is associated with various job characteristics (e.g., feedback and autonomy), work stressors (e.g., interpersonal conflicts and workload) and resources (e.g., supervisor and colleague support).

Spector (1997) is of the view that job satisfaction has various outcomes some of which might affect employee productivity such as job performance, organisational citizenship behaviour, withdrawal (e.g. absence and turnover) as well as counterproductive work behaviour. Employee health and well-being may be affected by the outcomes of job satisfaction such as life satisfaction, burnout, physical and psychological health (Spector, 1997). Studies have shown that dissatisfied employees are more likely to leave their jobs and look for other opportunities than satisfied employees (Lok & Crawford, 2003; Meier & Spector, 2015; Spector, 1997). It is found that should dissatisfied employees not find alternative employment they may emotionally and mentally withdraw from the organisation which might in turn, affect their job performance (Lok & Crawford, 2003). It is therefore important to observe employees' attitudes towards their jobs in assessing their intention to leave.

2.3.5 Turnover intention and employee retention

Turnover intention is referred to as an individual's desire to leave the organisation as soon as other job opportunities arise and it impacts negatively on the organisation as it creates instability, incurs excessive costs and a possible increase in the turnover rate (Fasanmi, 2018; Jacobs & Roodt, 2011). Employee retention can be referred to as the organisation's deliberate action to retain the existing employees by creating a conducive work environment, thus reducing unwanted voluntary turnover (Alhmond & Rjoub, 2019; Huang & Su, 2016; Masango & Mpofu, 2013).

Studies found that globally in the public sector, pay satisfaction, career growth, work environment and organisational commitment are the most determinants of turnover intentions (Kim et al., 1996, Saleem & Gul, 2013; Shahzad et al., 2011). In Africa, it was found that the triggers of turnover intentions are remuneration, leadership style and employee benefits such as training opportunities and study leave (Bosomtwe & Obeng, 2018; Saani, 2013). In the South African public sector, researchers revealed that lack of training and development opportunities, organisational commitment, perceived supervisor support, job satisfaction, work environment and remuneration are the main triggers of turnover intentions (Coetzee, et al., 2015; Döckel, Basson, & Coetzee (2006); Mampane, 2012; Pietersen & Oni, 2014; Van Dyk, Coetzee & Takawira; 2012). Netswera et al. (2005) concluded that retention factors have a direct relationship with turnover intentions, however, the decision of an employee to leave or stay depends on the individual's perceived direction of priorities. A study by Dhanpat et al. (2018) further revealed that there is a significant relationship between turnover intentions and employee retention. It is therefore important for human resources management policies to be

effective and take into account the retention factors when such policies are developed and reviewed (Gani, Potgieter & Coetzee, 2020; Narayan, Rajithakumar & Menon, 2019). Human resources policies and retention strategies that cater for the retention factors create a conducive work environment and minimise turnover intentions of employees within the organisation.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Employees are the most treasured assets of every organisation and it is important for the employers to be aware of factors that may lead to the intentions of employees to leave the organisation (Belete, 2018). Organisations are facing various retention challenges and paying an employee millions of rand per annum does not stop one from job dissatisfaction and the intention to leave the organisation (Mitchell et al., 2001; Khalid & Nawab, 2018). It is important to investigate both internal and external factors that trigger employees to leave the public entity in order to come up with a well-informed retention strategy. Retaining competent and skilled employees' non-financial rewards such as training and development or work-life balance is not sufficient and organisations will have to offer attractive salary packages to enhance the retention strategies (Turnea, 2018).

2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the concepts turnover, turnover intentions and employee retention were discussed. The concepts were defined and the related theories of turnover intentions and employee retention were detailed. The main content theories of turnover intentions and the process theories of employee retention were outlined in chapter 2. Strategies to retain employees were discussed in detail and the chapter concluded with the discussion on the relationship between factors leading to turnover intentions and employee retention.

The empirical study, which is in the form of a research article, is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH ARTICLE

STAFF TURNOVER INTENTIONS: EXPERIENCES OF EMPLOYEES AT A HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR PUBLIC ENTITY

REFILWE ARGENTINA SELESHO

Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: Dr M.A Matjie

ABSTRACT

Orientation: Turnover intentions of employees is one of the challenges faced by many organisations globally. South African public entities are not an exception and effective strategies must be put in place to retain key talent within organisations and minimise turnover intentions of employees.

Research Purpose: The main purpose of the study is to gain a deeper understanding of reasons that trigger turnover intentions of employees within the South African basic education public entity from an industrial and organisational psychology perspective.

Motivation for the study: Currently, there is a high rate of turnover in the “case” public entity hence a need to explore factors that lead to the turnover intentions of employees and to identify the retention strategies for key talent was necessary.

Research design, approach and method: The study is qualitative and exploratory in nature and conducted within the interpretive and constructivist paradigms, which resulted in a deeper understanding of turnover intentions of employees in the public entity. The convenience sampling method was used, based on participants' availability and willingness to participate. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and a thematic analysis approach was used to analyse data.

Main findings: The study explored in-depth experiences of employees on the reasons that attracted them to join, make them to stay and lastly, want to leave the public entity. The study identified the retention strategies that might be useful to the public entity. The findings indicate that there are various reasons that attracted employees to join, make them stay and want to leave the public entity. Job satisfaction is the primary determinant of turnover intentions as it is a combination of physiological, psychological and environment circumstances that causes employees to be or not be satisfied with their jobs. The findings indicate that satisfied employees are less likely to leave the organisation and leads to increased retention rate whereas dissatisfied employees are more likely to quit which results in a high rate of intention to leave the organisation and the actual turnover.

Practical implications: This study can provide insights to the reasons that trigger turnover intention meanings and talent retention strategies at the public entity, the entire government sector and in the field of industrial and organisational psychology for theory and practice.

Contribution/ Value add: The findings of this study assisted in identifying reasons people joined, stayed, as well as factors that trigger their intentions to leave the organisation. Further, the study helps the whole fraternity and specifically the public sector, to develop and enhance retention strategies within the public entities to minimise turnover intentions.

Keywords: Job satisfaction; turnover intentions; turnover; retention, public entity.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The following section intends to clarify the focus and background of the study, general trends, as well as the objectives of the research.

3.1.1 Key focus of the study

Turnover is increasingly becoming one of the areas of concern not only in South Africa, but across the globe as organisations are struggling to attract and retain key talent (Schlechter et al., 2016). The rate at which employees enter or leave the organisations must be measured to minimise turnover intentions of employees. Turnover intentions create instability within the organisation and it is of vital importance to identify and understand factors that trigger one to leave the organisation and to develop effective retention strategies to minimise the movement of employees within organisations (Alatawi, 2017). This research explored the views of

employees on their turnover intentions in a public entity within the South African context. The retention strategies that are in place could be enhanced and strengthened to retain key talent and minimise the loss of organisational memory.

3.1.2 Background to the study

Employee turnover is one of the challenges in the world of work as employees are moving within organisations and occupations due to their differing requirements (Ashkanasy et al., 2011; Bashir & Durrani, 2014; DiPietro & Bafquin, 2018). Extreme turnover influences the organisation negatively as it eliminates the organisations' return on investment and decreases innovation due to experienced employees leaving the organisation (Naidoo, 2018). Predictors of turnover intentions might differ from organisation to organisation and have a major impact on employee morale (Belete, 2018; Khaola, 2015; Mafini, 2016). Hancock et al. (2013) identified the following internal factors that result in turnover intentions: job dissatisfaction, remuneration and non-conducive work environment.

External influences, such as, growth opportunities outside the organisation as well as internal influences, such as, work environment and remuneration trigger one's intention to leave the organisation (Boamah & Laschinger, 2016; Dermitas & Akdogan, 2015; Fasanmi, 2018; Meintjies, 2019). Organisations in the public sector are facing a challenge of not being able to manage the turnover of employees and have a responsibility to develop retention strategies to minimise turnover intentions (Meintjies, 2019). Retention strategies reduce the intentions of employees to leave the organisation and benefits both the employee and the organisation as key talent is retained, recruitment and training costs are minimised and employees are satisfied with the working conditions and committed to the organisation (Alhmond & Rjoub, 2019; Bussin, 2018). It is therefore crucial that organisations develop retention strategies that create a conducive work environment and reduce the employees' intentions to leave the organisation.

3.1.3 Trends from the literature

Turnover intentions could be described as the best predictor of actual turnover and it is an individual's perception of probability to stay or leave the organisation (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mobley, 1992). Most of the factors that lead to thoughts of quitting the organisation are similar across organisations and employees might intend to leave for different reasons. Intentions of employees to leave the organisation are voluntary as employees intend to leave of their own

accord due to various reasons such as dissatisfaction with their salaries, career growth, work environment and workload (Boamah & Laschinger, 2016; Dermitas & Akdogan, 2015).

As supported by Maslow's theory of needs (Maslow, 1943), if employees perceive that their major needs are not being met by their current employer, they will start searching for alternative employment and are more likely to leave and join the organisation that is perceived to meet their needs.

Employees are likely to stay within the organisation if they perceive the work environment, such as the culture of the organisation to be good and are more likely to be attached to the organisation both emotionally and psychologically and become loyal with fewer intentions to leave the organisation (Sathe, 1983). A work environment that is not conducive leads to the intentions of employees to leave the organisation as employees who perceive the work environment to not be conducive are more likely to leave (Giorgi et al., 2015; Koko & Ramarumo, 2015).

Based on the factors stated above, it is therefore evident that if various factors that lead to turnover intentions are not attended to, the results are actual turnover which impact negatively on the organisation. This in turn, results in higher costs related to the filling of vacant positions, training, and induction of new employees. It is the purpose of this study to explore and understand the turnover intentions of employees at this basic education public entity to assist the public entity formulate better strategies and implement them to minimise the adverse effects of high turnover.

Based on the above trends, the following literature research aims were formulated:

- Research aim 1: To, through literature, conceptualise the concepts turnover intentions, employee retention and their dimensions.
- Research aim 2: To, using relevant theories and previous studies, identify theoretical relationship between turnover intentions, employee retentions as well as biographical factors such as gender, age race, qualifications and years of service.
- Research aim 3: To theoretically identify strategies that can be implemented to counter high turnover intentions in the South African basic education public entity.

The specific aims for the empirical study were formulated as follows:

- Research aim 1: To empirically explore in-depth the reasons leading to joining, staying, leaving and remaining in the basic education public entity.
- Research aim 2: To ascertain if their turnover intentions differ according to their age, gender, race, qualifications or by years of service in the basic education public entity.
- Research aim 3: Based on the empirical findings, to formulate recommendations regarding the retention of staff within the basic education public entity and for organisational development interventions (practice).

3.1.4 Value added by the study

Exploring an in-depth understanding of the experiences of employees on their turnover intentions scientifically could add to the understanding of theories of turnover intentions and employee retention in the work environment. It is evident from the literature and research findings of the current study that work environment, remuneration and career growth opportunities play a vital role in one's decision to leave the organisation. There is a need for the public entity to consider the findings of the study and to develop an effective retention strategy that addresses the key findings, thus reducing the intentions of employees to leave.

3.1.5 What will follow

The following section provide, in detail, the explanation of the research design, the research approach and the research method applied. The findings are presented, followed by the discussion of the findings with the main focus on major findings substantiated by existing literature. Conclusions are drawn from the literature reviews and empirical aims and discussed with inclusion of limitations. Lastly, recommendations for future research are suggested.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a framework or a set of guidelines that provide guidance in conducting research (Creswell, 2014; Mouton 2015). The research design is a qualitative explorative design. The following section details the research method, research approach and research strategy used in the study.

3.2.1 Research approach

The approach followed in the study is qualitative and interpretative.

3.3 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method followed in the study is outlined in this section. The research strategy, the research setting, sampling method, data collection method, data analysis method, strategies employed to ensure quality data, methods to ensure ethical research principles and reporting of findings are also discussed. The conclusions drawn from the study, the limitations and practical implications are deliberated on.

3.3.1 Research strategy

A phenomenological research approach was followed due to the qualitative nature of the study. The research strategy was also interpretive and constructive as the researcher sought a deeper understanding of the individuals' experiences on turnover intentions and construct meaning from their experiences (Wagner et al., 2012). Semi-structured interviews were conducted and used to collect data.

3.3.2 Research setting

The research was conducted within a setting of a public entity with a staff complement of 130 employees. Focus was given to employees with more than one year as employees in the public entity across all position levels and of any race and gender. The participants were all interviewed through an online zoom platform due to Covid-19 regulations to ensure compliance thereto. The responses were recorded and kept safe on a computer with a protected password. The anonymity of participants was maintained (Wagner et al., 2012).

3.3.3 Entrée and establishing researcher roles

The researcher wears many hats in the research process as they become teachers, advocates, evaluators, biographers, and interpreters and must constantly negotiate these roles (Hesse-Biber, 2017). The researcher requested permission from the gatekeepers of the organisation indicating the rationale of the study. Permission was granted by the public entity to conduct research. Permission was also granted by the University of South Africa's Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology Research Ethics Committee (IOP-REC) and approval was granted (ERC Reference:2019_CEMS_IOP_016). The researcher used her experience as an interviewer gained from occupational skills to interview the participants (Alpaslan, 2010). The selected participants were approached by the researcher individually and times and dates convenient to the participants were set and agreed upon. The participants agreed voluntarily to participate in the study and were requested to read and sign the consent form before starting with the interviews (Wagner et al., 2012).

3.3.4 Sampling method

In the current study, a non-probability convenience sampling strategy was used as people were included in the sample because they were available and willing to participate in the study (Hesse-Biber, 2017; Wagner et al., 2012). Convenience sampling is affordable, easy and participants are readily available (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2015).

In the current study, the researcher interviewed eleven (11) employees of the public entity who were available and willing to participate in the study. The criteria used in the selection of the sample were:

- Participants were of any gender;
- Participants were permanently employed for a period of one (1) year or more;
- Participants were between the ages of thirty-one (31) and fifty-eight (58); and
- Participants were from all other departments, excluding the human resources department where the researcher is based.

The researcher found the selected sample size to be adequate as data saturation was reached during the initial stage and no new data were forthcoming (Creswell, 2009; Wagner et al., 2012).

3.3.5 Data collection method

Semi-structured interviews were conducted as a method of collecting data due to the interpretivism paradigm nature of the study in gaining a deeper understanding of individuals' views on their experiences in the public entity (Wagner et al., 2012). The interview guide comprised primary questions which were aligned to the empirical aims of the study and was used as a guideline during the interview. Virtual semi-structured interviews were conducted to ensure compliance with Covid-19 national lockdown regulations and varied from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. Virtual interviews were conducted in English through a Zoom platform and at the time convenient to the participants to avoid any potential distractions during the process.

3.3.6 Recording of data

Informed consent was sought from the participants before the researcher recorded the interviews (Wagner et al., 2012). As agreed with the participants, the researcher made notes and recorded the interview digitally throughout the interview sessions. Recordings were transcribed verbatim by making use of the Otter software transcriber. Digital recording of the interviews served as the primary data (Rabie & Naidoo, 2016). Participants were further informed through the informed consent that the data collected would be used for the purpose of this study and no information would be shared with third parties without the participants' consent.

3.3.7 Data analysis

This section focuses on the primary data that were collected during the research study and the biographical data that provided information regarding the participants in the study. Due to the qualitative phenomenological approach used in the study, data were analysed by making use of thematic analysis.

Thematic analysis is a basic method for identifying, analysing, organising, describing patterns in qualitative data and it is accessible, easily grasped and quick to learn (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Lindberg et al., 2019; Nowell et al., 2017). The researcher became familiar with the data by transcribing the data verbatim, making use of the Otter software transcriber. The information was coded into various themes and sub-themes. The themes and sub-themes were defined and named and conclusions were written up.

3.4 STRATEGIES EMPLOYED TO ENSURE QUALITY DATA

- (i) It is critical for the researcher to carefully examine ethical aspects of the research study such as credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability, and authenticity in ensuring the trustworthiness of the study (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016; Shenton, 2004). Credibility in this study was achieved by prolonged engagement with the participants and audio recordings were used as a method of collecting data to ensure accurate capturing and recording of participants' experiences (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016; Gunawan, 2015).
- (ii) The researcher ensured dependability by explaining the processes followed during the study such as the research design, data collection and data analysis methods in detail as well as reflective evaluation of the research study by the participants (Anney, Dar & Salaam, 2014; Shenton, 2004). To ensure conformability, the researcher made sure that the findings of the study are the results of the experiences of the participants rather than the preferences of the researcher and acknowledged her personal bias towards the aims of the study, data analysis as well as the reporting process (Shenton, 2004; Thomas & Magivly, 2011).
- (iii) Transferability of the study occurs when the findings of the study will be the same should a similar study be conducted (Ghafouri & Ofoghi, 2016). In this study, the findings cannot be generalised due to the small sample size (Cypress, 2017).
- (iv) Authenticity was achieved by ensuring fairness during the research study (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985). Participants were encouraged to participate in the research study without fear of being victimised and the researcher ensured that participation was voluntary. Shannon and Hambacher (2014) are of the view that in ensuring authenticity, the findings must be credible not only from the participants' experiences but with larger implications of research.

3.5 METHODS TO ENSURE ETHICAL RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

The researcher was granted approval by the gatekeepers of the public entity where the research study was conducted. The researcher submitted the ethical clearance application to the University of South Africa's Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology Research Ethics Committee (IOP-REC) and approval was granted (ERC Rerence:2019_CEMS_IOP_016) on provision that compliance with Covid-19 regulations in

observing social distancing were strictly be adhered to. In ensuring compliance with Covid-19 regulations in terms of social distancing, interviews were held online through a Zoom platform. Consent forms were clarified by the researcher, read, and signed electronically by the participants before commencing with the semi-structured interviews.

The researcher removed any identifiable information and made use of pseudonyms to ensure anonymity of participants (Creswell, 2014). The collected data is kept secured, confidential and stored in a secured location that is password protected and only known by the researcher. The verbatim transcripts, Zoom recordings and handwritten notes will be destroyed after five years of submitting the research study. The researcher made regular contacts with the academic supervisor to assist in areas where challenges were being experienced.

3.6 REPORTING

According to Alpaslan (2010), the findings of the study must be reported to ensure that the empirical aims of the current study are reflected. As asserted by Alpaslan (2010), the themes, sub-themes and sub-sub-themes are discussed in detail and substantiated with verbatim quotes from the semi-structured interviews transcripts.

The findings are presented in the form of a basic framework by indicating the interactive dynamics of themes and sub-themes which emerged in the study.

3.7 FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The findings are presented below in the form of biographical data, frequencies, descriptive statistics as well as themes and sub-themes.

3.7.1 Biographical data

Below is the biographical data presentation of participants in the study:

Table 3.1: *Biographical data of the participants*

No	Participant	Age	Gender	Race	Years in the current position	Highest qualification
1	P1	50	Male	Black	8	Masters
2	P2	37	Male	Black	1.6	Masters
3	P3	31	Male	Black	2.3	Masters
4	P4	52	Female	Black	6	Masters
5	P5	51	Male	Black	7	PhD
6	P6	35	Female	Black	1.4	Honours
7	P7	36	Male	Black	1.7	Honours
8	P8	58	Female	White	7	Undergraduate degree
9	P9	33	Male	Black	5.4	Postgraduate Diploma
10	P10	44	Male	Black	5	National Diploma
11	P11	37	Male	Black	11	Matriculation

As seen in table 3.1 above, the participants' distribution of the study in terms gender, age, race, years in current position and qualifications is as follows:

3.7.2 Frequencies

Findings in terms of biographical differences are explained in detail below.

3.7.2.1 Gender

In understanding the participants' views on their intentions in terms of gender, both male and females were selected to participate in the study. Below is a graphical presentation of participants by gender:

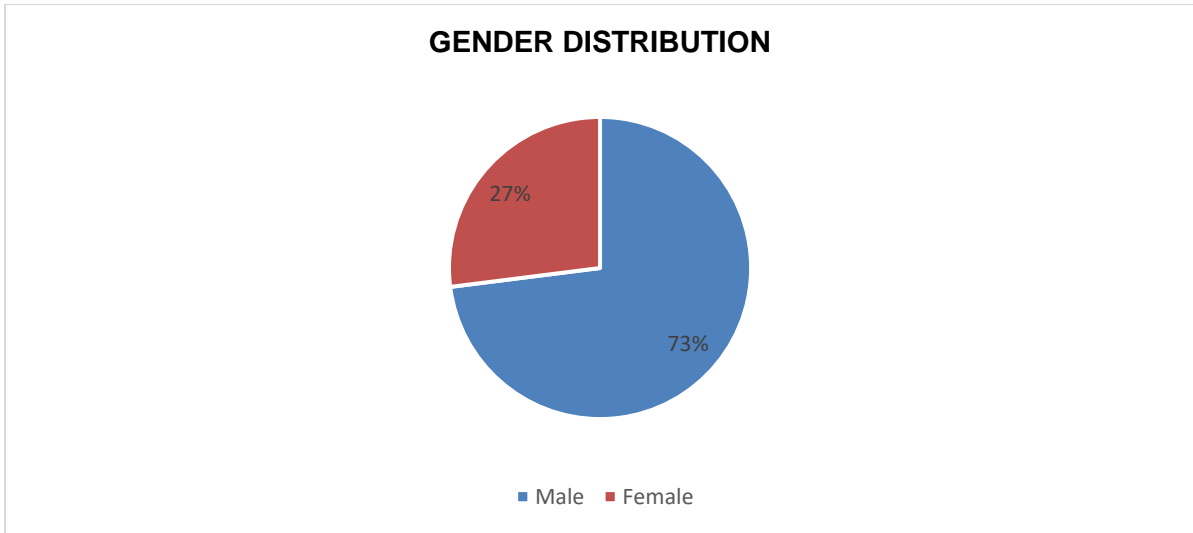


Figure 3.1: Gender distribution

Figure 3.1 depicts that 73% of the participants were males and 27% of participants were females. The results show that there is no fair distribution of participants by gender.

3.7.2.2 Age

In order to understand turnover intentions of participants from various age groups, participants with the age distribution ranging from 31 to 58 years were interviewed. A graphical demonstration of participants by age is as follows:

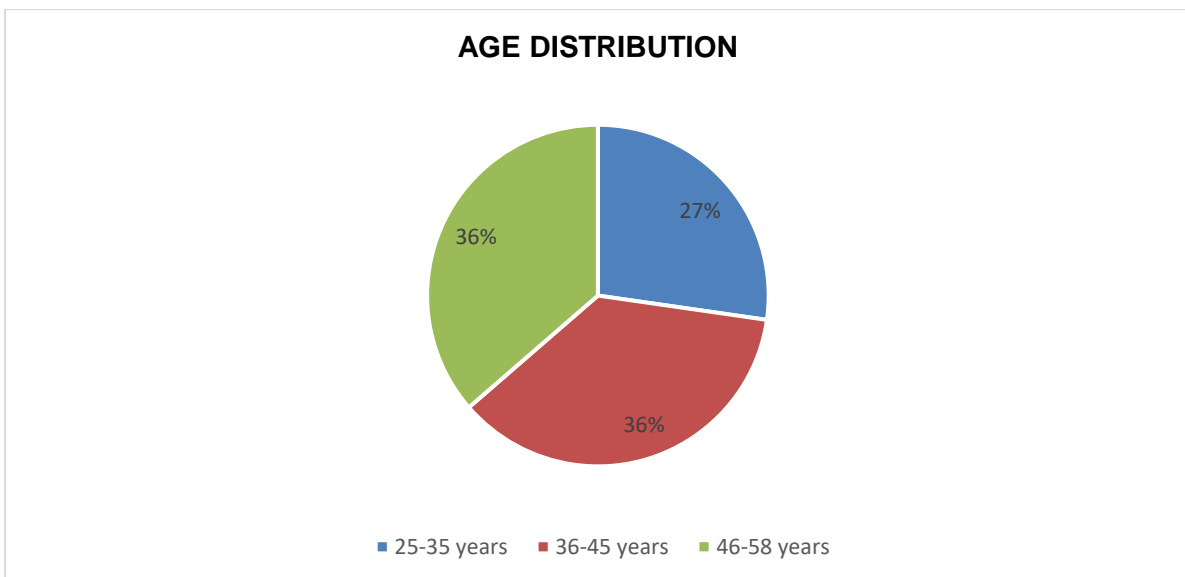


Figure 3.2: Age distribution

The results depicted in Figure 3.2 show that 36% of participants are within the age group of 25-35 years old. The age range of 36-45 years old constitute 36% of the participants. The remaining 27% of the participants are within the age range of 46-58 years old. The results depicts that there is a fair distribution amongst the participants by age.

3.7.2.3 Race

In order to understand turnover intentions of participants from various age groups, participants with the age distribution ranging from 31 to 58 years participated in the study. Below is a graphical demonstration of participants by race:

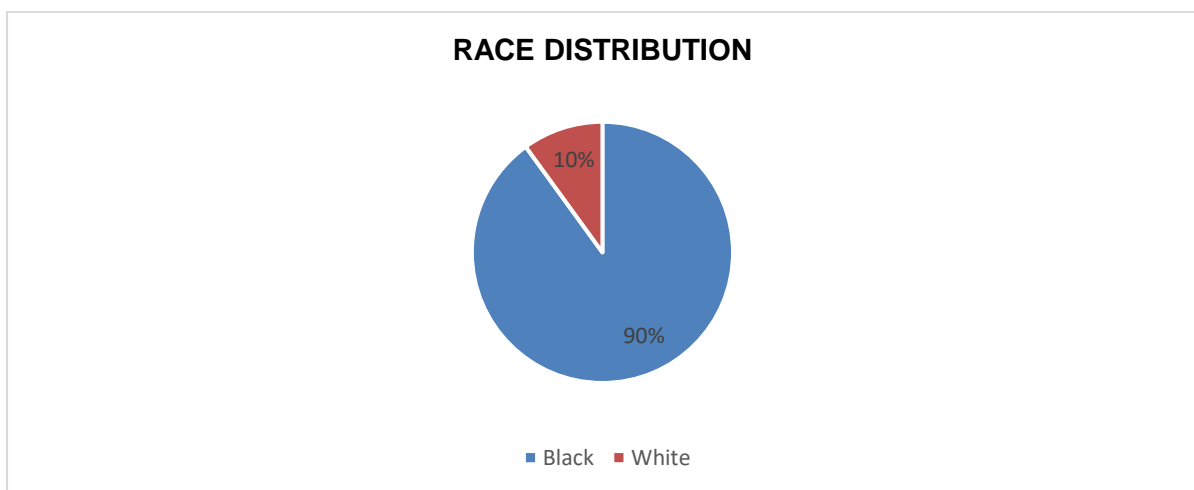


Figure 3.3: Race distribution

The results depicted in figure 3.3 revealed that most of the participants were Black with only one White participant which imply that there is no fair distribution of participants by race.

3.7.2.4 Qualifications

Participants with varying levels of education were interviewed in order to understand their turnover intentions. The qualifications of participants are demonstrated below:

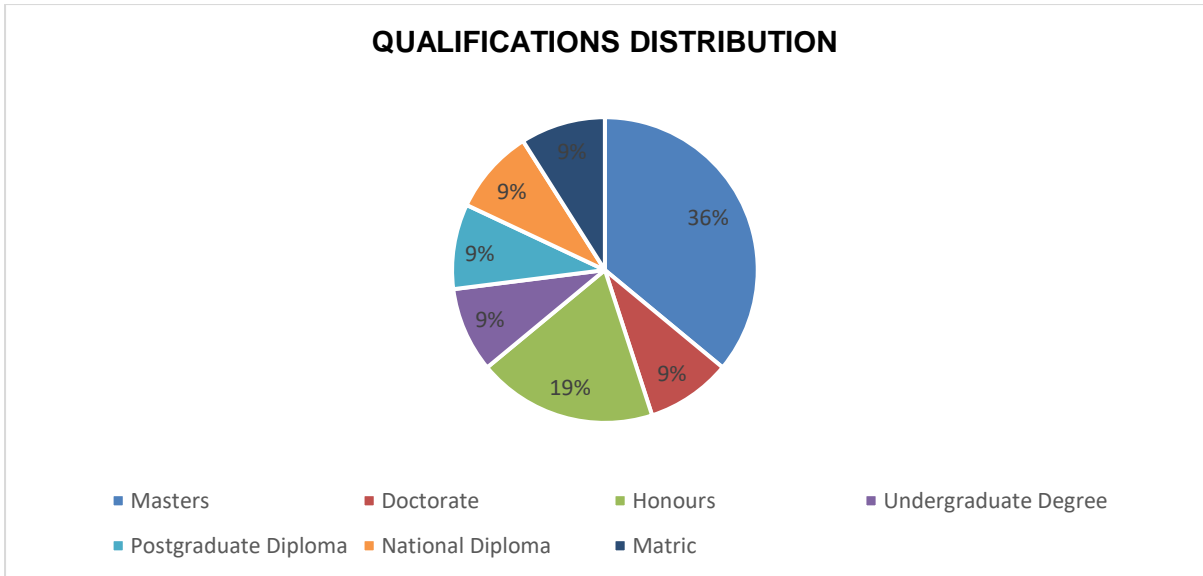


Figure 3.4: Qualifications distribution

The results presented in figure 3.4 show that 72% of the participants are highly educated and in possession of postgraduate qualifications. The 18% of participants are in possession of an undergraduate qualification and 9% of participants are in possession of a matriculation certificate.

3.7.2.5 *Years of service in the public entity*

Participants with different years of service in the public entity participated in the study. The following graph represent the participants' years of service in the public entity:

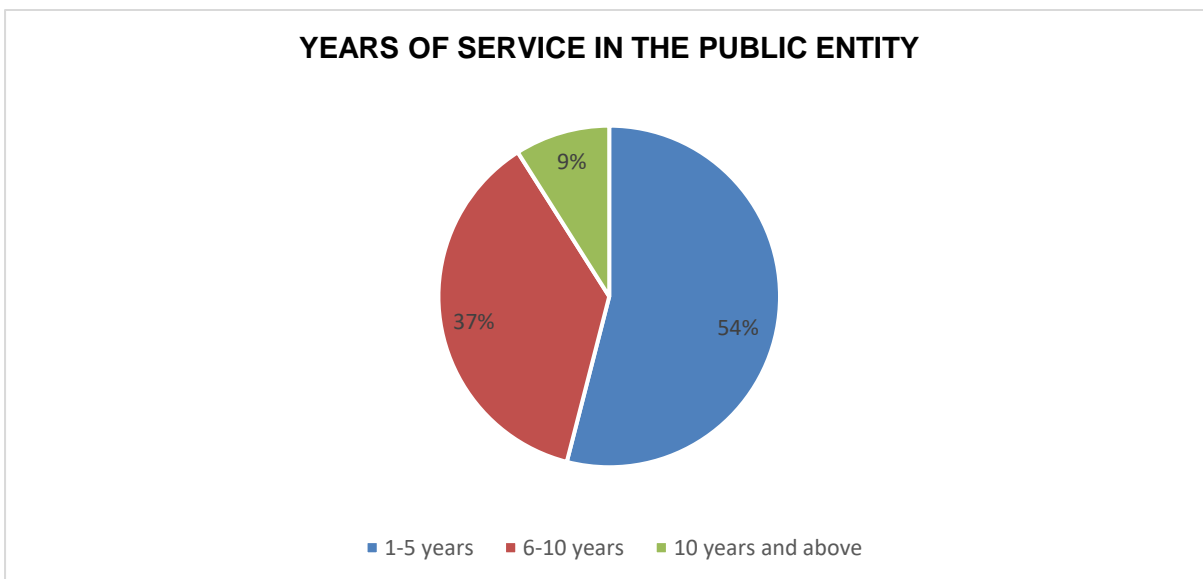


Figure 3.5: Participants' years in public entity

Results presented in Figure 3.5 show that 54% of the participants have been within the public entity for a period ranging from 1-5 years. Participants represented by 37% of the participants have been within the public entity for a period that ranges from 6-10 years and are intending to leave the public entity. The remaining 9% of the participants have been within the public entity for a period of 10 years or more.

3.7.2.6 *Summary of the frequencies results*

It is evident that the majority of the participants were educated (masters) black middle-aged males with less than five years' experience within the entity. These results imply that turnover intentions within the entity is high hence there are more employees with less than five years working experience. These results will further dictate that thematic findings be interpreted and conclusions as well as recommendations be made from the educated, newcomers, middle-aged black males point of view.

3.7.3 **Descriptive statistics**

The statistical technique employed was a descriptive statistical analysis to describe the frequency, central tendency, variation, and the position of the data as depicted in Table 3.2 below. IBM SPSS version 25 (IBM SPSS version 25, 2017) was used to determine the statistics below.

Table 3.2: *Descriptive Statistics by Age*

Mean	41.4
Median	37
Mode	37
Standard Deviation	9.27601447
Range	27
Minimum	31
Maximum	58

The results as depicted in Table 3.7 indicate that the average age of participants in the study is 41.4 years, with most participants being 37 years of age. The age differences dispersion or MD=9.27, meaning that the age dispersion was large (31-58 years=27 years). The youngest participant is 31 years of age and the oldest participant is 58 years of age. The findings revealed that there is a fair distribution of participants in terms of age.

In the following section, the in-depth exploration of the empirical results is formulated through thematic analysis. Themes were developed from different quotations allocated to the data during data analysis.

3.7.4 Thematic results

Themes and sub-themes

As mentioned in the previous sections, the study used thematic analysis to analyse the transcribed interviews. The following themes and sub-themes emerged as seen in table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: *Summary of the themes and sub-themes emerged during the data analysis*

Themes	Sub themes
1. <i>Reasons to join</i>	Sub-theme 1: Prestige of the organisation Sub-theme 2: Career growth Sub-theme 3: Home proximity
2. <i>Reasons to stay</i>	Sub-theme 1: Employee engagement Sub-theme 2: Teamwork Sub-theme 3: Job security
3. <i>Reasons to leave</i>	Sub-theme 1: Work environment Sub-theme 2: Remuneration Sub-theme 3: Work-life balance Sub-theme 4: Career growth opportunities
4. <i>Reasons to remain</i>	Sub-theme 1: Conducive work environment Sub-theme 2: Support from colleagues and management Sub-theme 3: Passion for the work of the public entity Sub-theme 4: Career growth
5. <i>Biographical differences</i>	Sub-theme 1: Age Sub-theme 2: Gender Sub-theme 3: Race Sub-theme 4: Qualifications Sub-theme 5: Years of experience

The researcher firstly indicated the theme and sub-themes as identified, followed by the presentation of the sub-themes, starting with the conclusions reached by the participants, and substantiated by the direct quotes from the transcriptions.

3.7.4.1 Theme 1: Reasons to join

The findings related to the different sub-themes on the participants' views about the attraction strategy of the public entity are discussed in detail below.

The following sub-themes were identified as seen in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4: *Reasons to join*

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
Reasons to join	Prestige of the organisation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Well, the reason is that the organisation had always been a respected organisation. So, I had this perception about the organisation as a reputable organisation, an organisation that I could work for (P1).</i> 2. <i>So, what attracted me to the organisation was to be part of the core mandate of the organisation, the education system, yes (P4)</i>
	Career growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>I'm just going to be honest, that's the position itself, the position itself. The position was a promotional post because from the previous employment, I was at junior level position. And then also, I needed to change I had been with the previous employer for more than four years. And I felt like stagnant and there was no growth from where I was working before. And so I saw it as a growth opportunity to join the organisation" (P7).</i> 2. <i>I have been in the classroom and in management of the school and college sector, specifically for many years. And I thought to, to extend my scope of expertise, I was always interested in quality assurance, and assessment of tasks of, the whole education system (P 8).</i>

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
	Home proximity	<i>I wanted to move closer to home, because I was working a bit further from where I live. So, it was not a cost effective as well as the quality of life was also affected because I will spend about one and a half hour to two hours on the road. And then just single trip and the other trip coming back. So, I could say that is what motivated me to join the organisation. My move was not about growth or anything. It was just a lateral movement because it was the same type of level kind of move (P2).</i>

3.7.4.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Prestige of the organisation

In order to understand the public entity's attraction strategy, participants were asked about the reasons that attracted them to the organisation. The majority of participants (seven (7)) different participants, 64% of the participants indicated that they were attracted by the reputation of the public entity and its unique mandate in the South African context.

3.7.4.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Career growth

A few participants (three (3)) different participants, 27% of the participants indicated that they joined the public entity as a result of being offered promotional positions and their intentions of learning about the services that are being rendered by the public entity and due to their passion in the education sector.

3.7.4.1.3 Sub-theme 3: Home proximity

One (1) participant, 9% of the participants mentioned that home proximity was the reason that attracted him to the public entity as travelling a long distance on a daily basis affected his quality of life. The participant indicated that the move was lateral with no increase in remuneration as the main aim was to move closer to home. Home proximity in this study was found to trigger the voluntary lateral move of an employee to leave one organisation and join the other organisation due to its close vicinity to home without changing jobs and an increase in remuneration.

Figure 3.6 below depicts various reasons that attracted the participants to join the public entity.

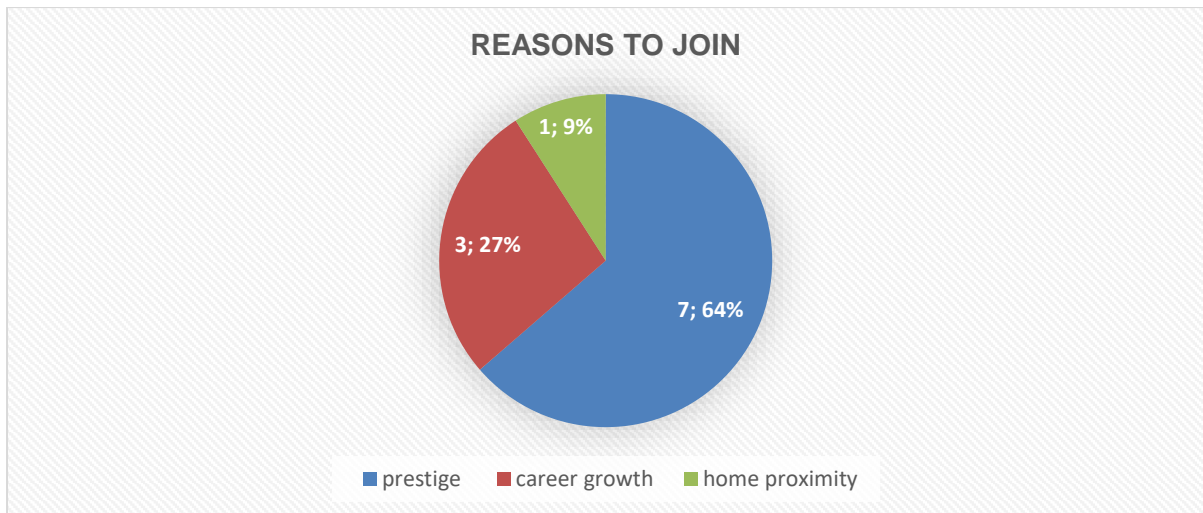


Figure 3.6: Reasons to join the public entity

The results presented in Figure 3.6 shows that 64% percent of participants joined the organisation because of its prestige. Fewer participants, represented by 27%, indicate that they joined the organisation as they were offered growth opportunities. The 9% of participants joined the organisation as a result of their willingness to work closer to home. The results presented indicate that the majority of the participants were attracted by the prestige of the organisation rather than that of growth and learning and home proximity.

3.7.4.2 Theme 2: Reasons to stay

The findings related to the different sub-themes on the participants' views on reasons to stay or what will make or will make them stay in the public entity are discussed in detail below.

The sub-themes as depicted in Table 3.5 below were identified:

Table 3.5: Reasons to stay

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
Reasons to stay	Employee engagement	1. <i>Listen to the employees. And not only listening, but also implementing what the employees would recommend, so listening and taking action, because it's one thing to listen it's another to just leave the matter and do nothing about it. My recommendation would be more on management to really listen to employees. They have an open door policy. I don't think it's enough, you know, because having an open door policy and listening, but nothing after that. It's just a futile exercise (P4).</i>
	Teamwork	1. <i>Well, maybe another thing that the organisation can, of course, still work on is that when you look at the various units, sometimes we tend to work in silos in terms of the work that we do to find that one unit is doing something, and other units may not necessarily be aware of what the other units are doing. So, I think we can improve on working together within the organisation (P1).</i>
	Job security	1. <i>People should feel that they belong in anything that is happening in the organisation, whether it's affecting an individual or all the staff, people should feel free, that they are actually belonging to the organisation, and they should know that their job is secure. Job security is the key (P3).</i>

3.7.4.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Employee engagement

In order to enhance the retention strategy, participants were asked about the reasons that would make them stay in the public entity. The majority of participants (six (6)) different participants, 67% of the participants indicated that if management could continuously engage them on various aspects and listen to what is being recommended by the employees, they will have no intentions of leaving as they will be well informed of the challenges faced by the public entity as well as being able to give inputs on the decisions taken by management.

Some employees indicated that management should allow employees to excel in their work and consider the recommendations given by the employees regarding the decisions taken by the public entity.

3.7.4.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Teamwork

One (1) participant, 9% of the participants indicated that teamwork is one of the reasons that would make one stay in the public entity. Team refers to “a group of people who need one another in order to achieve a specific purpose and involves activities that serve to strengthen the quality of functional interactions, communication and operations-related activities to achieve the strategic objectives of the organisation” (Hunter, Bailey & Taylor, 1998).

3.7.4.2.3 Sub-theme 3: Job security

A fewer participants (two (2)) different participants, 22% of the participants, mentioned that there must be the assurance that their jobs are secure and have a sense of belonging as this will encourage employees to stay in the public entity. Participants are of the view that they feel insecure, do not feel like they are part of the public entity and as a result, they are not sure of the security of their jobs.

Figure 3.7 below represent the participants' views on reasons to stay in the public entity.

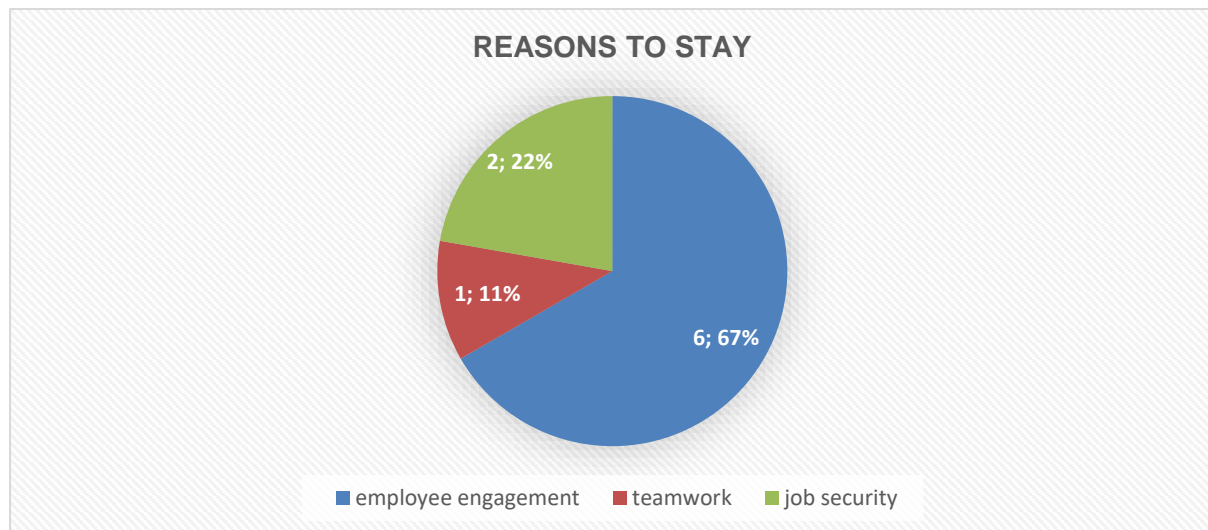


Figure 3.7: Reasons to stay in the public entity

The results presented in Figure 3.7 shows that 67% of participants would stay if they perceive the organisation and its management to be more engaging, listen and implement their

concerns in making the public entity a better place to work for. Fewer participants, represented by 22% indicate that they will stay in the public entity if they can be assured that their jobs are secured, not being threatened and can feel a sense of belonging. The 11% of participants indicate that if employees can refrain from working in silos and work as a team to achieve the objectives of the organisation they would stay in the public entity.

3.7.4.3 Theme 3: Reasons to leave

The participants' views on what would make them leave the public entity and the findings related to the different sub-themes are discussed in detail below.

The following sub-themes as indicated in Table 3.6 were identified.

Table 3.6: *Reasons to leave*

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
Reasons to leave	Work environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I feel that there's too much micro managing, where I'm coming from, I used to manage myself, and maybe it's because also of my personality, I know that I'm a very responsible person, very accountable. The organisation does not acknowledge that, you know, it doesn't acknowledge that there's too much micro-management and is something that really doesn't sit well with me in this organisation (P4).</i> <i>When I'm not trusted on the job that I was appointed to do. Because my understanding is, when you appoint someone, you have seen something in them, you have seen the potential in that person. But if you are not acknowledging, or not having trust into the work that you have given that particular person, it's discouraging. That's the reason why I would leave the organisation (P3).</i>

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
		3. <i>The lack of trust from management and believing in you and what you do gives me second thoughts on why I am still working for this organisation (P4).</i>
		4. <i>So, communication is not just about telling people what to do. But it is also about hearing from them and getting some advice from them about how best we can do things. And so that, to me remains a gap. And I think that that is something that an organisation needs to work on (P1).</i>
		5. <i>During my first year of appointment, the performance assessment instrument or agreement that I was using was far better than the one I'm using now. So, the one I'm using now was just revised in 2018. It doesn't work in our favour. I was getting performance bonus. Yes. Then after it was revised, I'm not getting any performance bonus. This is disadvantaging employees. (P5).</i>
		6. <i>One of those challenges is that because of the growing mandate of the organisation, and sometimes we feel a bit stretched in the work that we do. So sometimes I feel like the people who work under me, have to do double the work now and work long hours because the work and the mandate, and the scope of the work done by the organisation has increased over the years. And so that that is a challenge for us (P1).</i>

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
		<p>7. <i>Everybody's just expected to do everything. And they would say, well, there's nobody else to do it. But you will be required to do it, because there's nobody else to do some functions within the organisation. For example, there is no project office, there is no legal office. So, you would be expected to do things that you wouldn't normally do. And it's because of the size of the organisation like I am just going to be generic, there's no internal audit, or there's no risk office so somebody else has to play that role who might not be able to due to lack of knowledge and experience in that specific role (P7).</i></p> <p>8. <i>Another thing is, people should have to not work with their consciousness, people should not work with fear of making a mistake, or if I happen to make a little mistake. It's like that will be my exit and affects how I deliver on my tasks (P3).</i></p>
	Remuneration	<p>1. <i>The issue of salaries. So, we tend to compare ourselves with other organisations, but our salaries still do not match with those organisations that we are comparing with (P5).</i></p> <p>2. <i>I remember in government, I'm not sure if they're still doing it, the more you accumulate qualifications, they acknowledge that you've done something and add something on your pay, but it's not the same with us. You obtain a Master's degree, you still remain at the very same level as the person with an undergraduate degree. It doesn't encourage people to seek more knowledge and qualifications, because when you graduate, you are bringing more change and new skills into your area of work. And here, the managers are not on the same level of pay, in the same organisation, yet others are having lesser qualifications. It's also problematic to some of us who have studied.</i></p>

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
		<p><i>We just feel like you're being insulted. It's like your Master's degree does not mean anything compared to a teacher's diploma (P3).</i></p>
		<p>3. <i>I mean, for the type of work that I do now and competitively out there I would get more benefits than what the organisation offers. So, that will be in terms of the basic salary and then as well as other perks. In terms of the salary, one at a particular department are at a certain salary level whereas what we get here tends to be a bit less. So those are some of the things that and maybe also for me, in one way or the other, would make me to leave the organisation (P2).</i></p>
	Work-life balance	<p>1. <i>Well, I mean, the work must be done, you see, and requires lot hours and hours more than I can perhaps do what I want to do, but I mean, you need to have a balanced life. You need to have family time, you need to have work time. You need to have leisure time. You know, you need to have reading time and doing household chores, which is impossible under the current environment (P8).</i></p>
	Career growth opportunities	<p>1. <i>And of course, another reason that could make me to leave and is that, obviously, one is always looking for other opportunities to grow, and to get better in what one is doing. So, that is always a possibility. I mean, if I get other opportunities out there, and I feel like you know, I have fulfilled my role within the organisation, yes, of course, that will be reason enough for me to leave (P2).</i></p>

3.7.4.3.1 *Sub-theme 1: Work environment*

Workplace environment refers to the place of work that comprises the employee's involvement with the work and performance of their daily duties (Jayed, Balouch & Hassan, 2014). In identifying the factors that might lead to turnover intentions of employees, participants were asked about the reasons that might make them leave the public entity.

Eleven (11) participants, 100% of the participants are concerned about the work environment and how things are done in the public entity. Participants shared their views on what might make them leave the public entity and it was revealed that work environment factors such as micro-management, lack of trust, lack of communication, subjective performance management system, workload and working in fear trigger their intentions to leave the public entity, as discussed in detail below.

Two (2) participants indicated that micro-management is one of the challenges they are facing within the public entity. These participants are of the view that management is not giving them enough space to exercise their discretion and is too involved at operational level.

Three (3) participants mentioned that lack of trust triggers their intentions to leave the public entity. Participants indicated that there is a lot of interference from management and it is discouraging, as it seems as if their efforts are not being acknowledged.

Three (3) participants raised that they are not satisfied with the flow of communication within the public entity. It was mentioned by the participants that there should be a two-way communication as most of the time communication is from management to employees. Participants indicated that management must allow the employees to share their experiences on what they are experiencing on the ground and consider recommendations made by the employees. Communication satisfaction refers to the degree to which employees are satisfied with different aspects of organisational communication at personal, group and organisational level (Hecht, 1978; Mueller & Lee, 2002).

Participants indicated that they are concerned with the manner in which performance management is being implemented within the public entity. Performance management satisfaction is concerned with how employees reacts to performance appraisals and the degree to which employees perceive their performance ratings (Giles & Mossholder, 1990; Ismail & Gali, 2016). Three (3) different participants stated that the performance management

system within the organisation is subjective as the tool that is being used makes it difficult for one to receive a performance bonus.

Participants further revealed that workload was found to be a major concern in the public entity. Workload can be described as the amount of work allocated to employees for the purpose of completion. Mahlasela and Chimyamurindi (2019) refers to workload as giving more assignments to employees than their abilities to handle the requirements. Participants indicated that the growing mandate of the public entity is one of the challenges as they are stretched and having a lot of work that they are expected to do. According to Carstens, Keyser and Surujilal (2015), workload can be avoided when employees are provided with resources that are needed for the job.

Two (2) participants indicated that they often work in fear and are afraid of making a mistake as they might be fired at any point in time and this affects their performance. According to Bandura (1983), when individuals experience fear, they expect harmful consequences which in turn, affects their coping capabilities.

3.7.4.3.2 *Sub-theme 2: Remuneration*

Most participants (six (6) participants), 54 % of the participants mentioned that they are not satisfied with the remuneration system within the public entity as compared to what is being offered by government departments. Employees seek to improve their pay level and benefits if they obtain salary increments or better benefits within their current organisations or by joining other organisations that offer them better salaries and benefits (Belete, 2018). Participants indicated that the public entity benchmarks salaries and benefits with the government departments and is selective on benefits that they prefer to implement, and that plays an important role on the intentions to leave the public entity.

Participants further indicated that there are disparities with the salaries of managers and assistant managers within the public entity. It was mentioned that some of the managers and assistant managers as classified as CS Educators with lower qualifications and responsibilities whereas others who are highly qualified are being underpaid.

3.7.4.3.3 *Sub-theme 3: Work-life balance*

One (1) participant, 9% of the participants, indicated that work-life balance is one of the areas of concern within the public entity. Work-life balance refers to one's ability to balance work and life obligations and suggests that one's personal life and paid work should be complementary and less competitive (Akanji, 2017). Kerdpitak and Jermstiparsert (2020) define work-life balance as the balance that an individual needs to maintain the time for work and other aspects of life such as personal interest, social, leisure activities and family. If one's personal life and paid work become competitive, the likelihood of intention to quit the job increases. Bussin (2018) is of the view that working flexible hours, such as working from home, is becoming common and organisations should allow employees to work flexible schedules, thus being able to spend time with the loved ones whilst performing their job responsibilities.

This finding is supported by the existing research by Suifan, Abdallah and Diab (2016) who concluded that the more employees experience a struggle with work-life balance, the more they think of quitting their jobs. It can thus be concluded that employees who are experiencing work-life imbalances are more likely to quit the public entity and this partially contributes to the empirical research objective 1 of exploring in-depth experiences of employees to understand their turnover intentions, thus reasons they may leave the public entity.

3.7.4.3.4 *Sub-theme 4: Career growth opportunities*

Six (6) participants, 54% of the participants mentioned that lack of career growth opportunities is one of the reasons that might lead to trigger them to leave the public entity.

Figure 3.8 below represents the participants' views on their reasons they might leave the public entity.

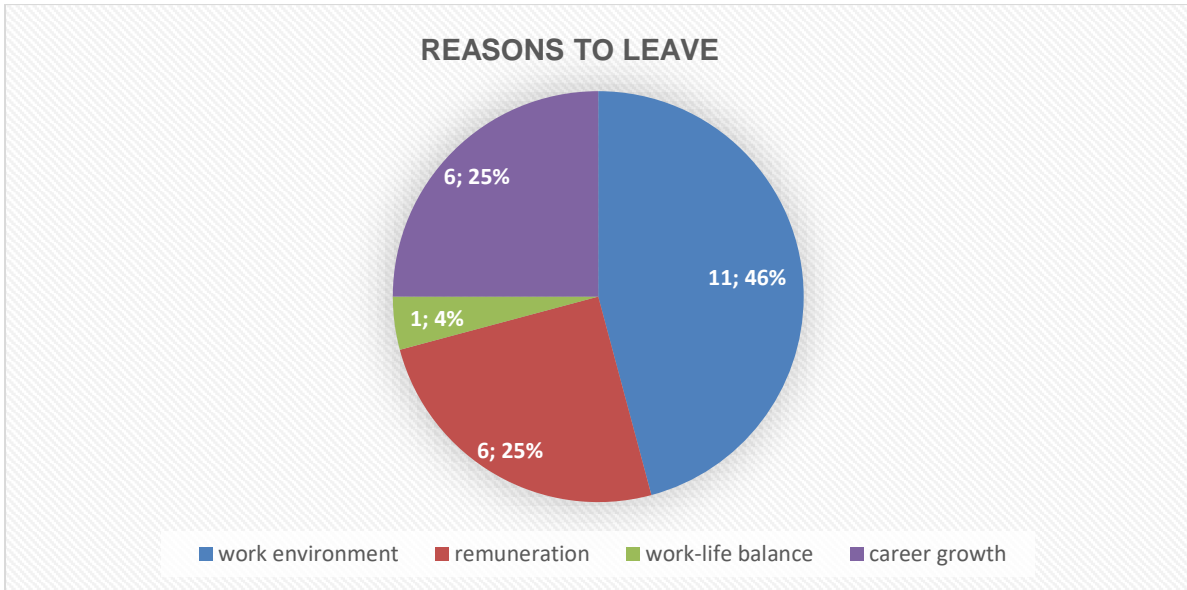


Figure 3.8: Reasons to leave the public entity

The results depicted in figure 3.8 show that 46% percent of participants might leave the public entity because of its work environment. Fewer participants, represented by 6% on both career growth and remuneration respectively, indicate that they may want to leave the public entity due to lack of career growth and its remuneration system. The 4% of participants might leave the organisation as a result of an inability to maintain work-life balance.

3.7.4.4 *Theme 4: Reasons to remain*

As seen above, there are numerous reasons based on which the participants can leave the public entity, however they chose to remain within the entity as seen in this theme. The participants' views on why they still remain in the public entity despite the challenges they are experiencing, and the findings related to the different sub-themes are discussed in detail below.

The following sub-themes were identified as shown in Table 3.7 below.

Table 3.7: *Reasons to remain*

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
Reasons to remain	Conducive work environment	<p>1. <i>That is another thing about the organisation. There is a positive and collegial work environment in the organisation, and that has contributed to me staying for longer than five years because prior to my current employer, I never stayed in any position for longer than five years (P1).</i></p> <p>2. <i>I love my work, honestly. I go to work every day with joy in my heart, although we can sometimes be under severe pressure. And, um, you know what, not only the work, but also the family within the organisation, the humanistic family, they are wonderful people. We are really a wonderful team and is really positive and encouraging and good to be around such good people” (P8).</i></p>
	Support from colleagues and management	<p><i>Maybe I don't know, it's my supervisor, the supervisor that I work with, is able to give me the space to excel and to expose myself to the fullest. And the issue of the support that I get from the supervisor is something that keeps me motivated to remain in the organisation and the relationship that has been developed between me and my colleagues and the supervisor” (P9).</i></p>

Theme	Subtheme	Verbatim Quotes
	Passion for the work of the public entity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>To be honest with you, the organisation is one of the places where really having worked at different places in the past I find myself still enjoying what I do (P1).</i> 2. <i>I love the work that I do, I feel that I make a difference out there in terms of my interaction with the stakeholders in the education system (P4).</i>
	Career growth opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>The organisation unlike the previous employers has given me enough room to show my ability in the work that I do and has also given me opportunities to also grow in terms of my professional growth (P2).</i> 2. <i>Personally, what's making me stay despite the workload is the environment itself. Except the workload, you get to learn more because of the additional tasks that are allocated to you. That's a big plus for me. You get exposed in all these platforms that one normally would not be had I been in my previous employer. So exposure, I might say with exposure comes experience, it's a learning curve as well. So that is the reason I would stay in this organisation (P6).</i>

3.7.4.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Conducive work environment

In order to explore further and understand the public entity's existing retention strategy and identify organisational development interventions, participants were asked about the reasons that make them remain in the public entity, despite the challenges experienced. The majority of participants (seven (7) participants), 44% of the participants indicated that the work environment is good compared to the organisations that they have worked for before joining the public entity. According to Dawis and Lofquist's (1984) model of satisfaction, if there is a mismatch between the employee and the working environment, the employee might try to

change the working environment, adjust the behaviour to match the environment or when the adjustment becomes impossible, the employee might leave the job.

Another participant mentioned that the work environment is conducive and they are looking forward to coming to work due to the wonderful team and colleagues with whom they are working and the level of respect they are being given within the public entity. In this study, the majority of participants matched with the working environment and found the working environment to be conducive as they are still within the public entity.

3.7.4.4.2 Sub-theme 2: Support from colleagues and management

A few participants (four (4) participants), 25% of the participants mentioned that they are receiving a lot of support from their supervisors and colleagues and that motivates them to remain in the public entity. Employees who are being supported by their colleagues and managers experience more satisfaction and will stay longer than those who experience loneliness (Lobburi, 2012).

3.7.4.4.3 Sub-theme 3: Passion for the work of the public entity

Some participants (three (3) participants), 19% of the participants mentioned that the reason why they are still within the public entity is because of their passion for the work they do and are making a difference in the education fraternity. Passion can be classified into two categories namely: harmonious passion and obsessive passion (Vallerand, Blanchard, Mageau, Koestner, Ratelle, Leonard, Gagne & Marsolais, 2003). For the purpose of this study, harmonious passion was explored. Employees who are harmoniously passionate about their job do it because they choose to and not because of any pressures from external forces (Vallerand et al., 2003).

3.7.4.4.4 Sub-theme 4: Career growth opportunities

A few participants (two (2) participants), 12% of the participants mentioned that the organisation afforded them the opportunity to grow, learn and expand their horizons within the public entity and that is why they remain in the public entity. Career growth refers to one's career growth within one's current organisation and could be captured by four factors, namely, the degree to which one's present job is relevant and provides opportunities to realise one's career goals; the extent to which one's job enables them to acquire new skills and knowledge;

an employee's perception of the rate and probability of being promoted and the employee's perception of the speed, amount, and likelihood of increases in compensation (Weng, 2010). Jans (1989) defines career growth as an individual's perceptions of the chances of development and advancement in one's career.

Figure 3.9 below represents the existing retention strategies that the public entity might enhance.

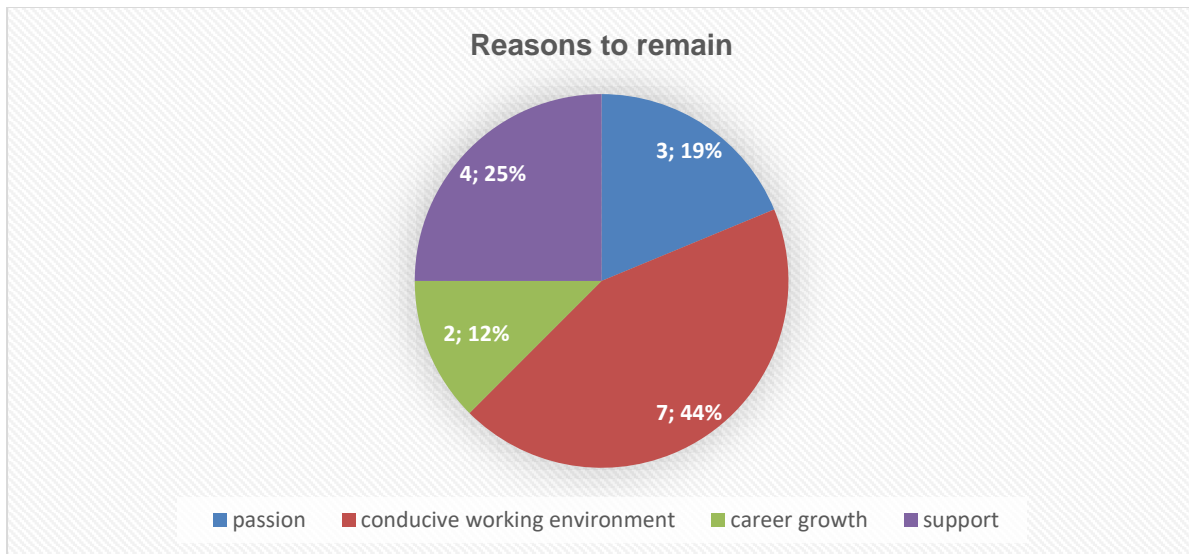


Figure 3.9: Reasons to remain

The results depicted in Figure 3.9 shows that 44% of participants remain in the organisation because of the conducive work environment. Fewer participants, represented by 25%, mentioned remaining in the public entity as they are receiving adequate support from management and colleagues. The 19% of participants are still in the public entity as a result of their passion on the work that they do, whereas 12% of the participants indicate that career growth is what keeps them in the public entity.

3.7.4.5 Theme 5: Biographical Differences

As mentioned above the study was dominated by males, black, older, postgraduate (masters/doctorate) as well as the newly appointed employees, the findings of this study are attributed mostly to these groups.

3.7.4.5.1 *Sub-theme 1: Age*

Based on the findings revealed by the biographical data of participants, it was revealed that participants within the age range of 36-58 years are more likely to quit as compared to the participants within the age range of 31-35 years. The previous studies could not support this finding as it was found that younger employees have increased intentions to quit than their older counterparts (Cheng & Chan, 2008). Lambert et al. (2001) concluded that as the age of the employee increases the more the intentions to stay. The results of this study might have been influenced by the fact that most of the participants with intentions to leave are within the age range of 36-58 years.

3.7.4.5.2 *Sub-theme 2: Gender*

It was found that, although there was no fair distribution by gender as most participants were males, female employees were having higher intentions to exit the public entity than their male counterparts. This finding is in line with the existing research by Huffman and Olson (2016) as well as Marsh and Mannari (1977), who concluded that women are more likely to have intentions to leave their jobs than their male counterparts. Some researchers found no significant relationship between gender and turnover intentions (Lambert, Hogan & Barton, 2001).

3.7.4.5.3 *Sub-theme 3: Race*

The difference between both the previously disadvantaged ethnic group (Black) and Whites on the intentions to leave was found to be insignificant and therefore all employees irrespective of race were found to have intentions to quit should they experience job dissatisfaction. The finding is not supported by the existing research that the previously disadvantaged ethnic group (Black) employees continue to be slightly more dissatisfied with their job and their intentions to exit the organisation are high as compared to their White counterparts (Naidoo, 2018). Lambert et al. (2001) posit that race is a poor predictor of turnover intentions. It can therefore be concluded that all employees, regardless of race might experience job dissatisfaction with increased intentions to quit the public entity.

3.7.4.5.4 *Sub-theme 4: Qualifications*

It was further revealed that highly qualified employees are more likely to quit due to higher expectations such as career growth as compared to those employees with lower qualifications (Emiroğlu, Akova & Tanriverdi, 2015). This finding is supported by the existing research of Emiroğlu, Akova & Tanriverdi (2015) who concluded that employees with high education levels have more expectations such as new challenges, financial rights and benefits which might lead to high turnover intentions if their current organisation is unable to meet their expectations as compared to those with lower education levels.

3.7.4.5.5 *Sub-theme 5: Years of experience*

It was found in this study that recently appointed employees with less than 10 years in the public entity have stronger intentions to leave as compared to the employees with longer tenure. Employees with longer tenure are less likely to quit as they are committed to the organisation (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Emiroğlu et al., 2015). In summary, mostly highly educated males and females regardless of age, race and years of service are more likely to quit should they not be satisfied with their jobs.

3.8 DISCUSSIONS

3.8.1 Reasons to join

In terms of the theme 1: reasons to join, the findings indicate that organisational prestige is the main attraction. Yildiz (2018) defines organisational prestige as the attractive impression which an organisation has on outsiders. These findings are in line with existing research by Akgunduz and Bardakoglu (2015) as well as Yildiz (2018) who concluded that organisational prestige reduces turnover intentions of employees as employees prefer to work in highly prestigious organisations with values and targets that comply with their own. The participants further indicated that they joined the public entity due to perceived career growth within the entity. These findings are in line with existing studies that found that if employees perceive an opportunity to grow within the organisation, they are more likely to join such an organisation should an opportunity arise (Dhanpat et al., 2018; Van Dyk & Coetzee, 2012). The participants further showed that employees joined the entity due to its proximity to their homes, thus enhancing their work-family well-being. It can therefore be concluded that employees who

perceive the prestige of the organisation to be attractive, to have career growth opportunities and to contribute positively to their well-being are more likely to join the organisation.

3.8.2 Reasons to stay

When answering the question: why you stayed with the organisations amidst the challenges, the participants revealed that employee engagement is found to be a critical factor that might influence one to stay within the public entity. According to Saks (2006) as well as Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), when organisations engage with employees on issues such as clarity in communication, the expectations of the employer from the employees, the confidence that the organisation has in employees as well as allowing employees to excel in their jobs, employees will be committed to the organisation with few intentions to leave thus resulting in higher retention rate. These findings are in line with the existing research by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), who concluded that engaged employees are likely to be more attached to the organisation with no intention to leave. It was further found that teamwork is important as it motivates employees to stay within the organisation. This finding is supported by the existing literature from studies by Osman, Noordin, Daud and Othman (2016) and Park, Henkin and Egley (2005). They concluded that lack of teamwork leads to failure to achieve the strategic objectives of the organisation and workers who rely on teamwork to generate ideas, are open to innovation, sustain a group morale and are committed with few intentions of leaving the organisation. Job security was found to be one of the retention strategies as it reduces one's intentions of exiting the organisation. Heryanda (2019) is of the view that job security is important as employees who feel insecure in the work environment will experience job dissatisfaction. This finding is in line with the existing research by Heryanda (2019), who concluded that if employees feel insecure and threatened at work they are more likely to wish to change jobs. Based on the findings of this study, it can therefore be concluded that employees who perceive the public entity to be engaging, encouraging teamwork and feel a sense of belonging are more likely to stay with few intentions to quit.

3.8.3 Reasons to leave

The analysis indicated that in terms of theme 3: reasons to leave, work environment was found to be a major trigger of one's intentions to leave. A positive work environment motivates employees and reduces their intentions to leave the organisation (Harrison & Gordon, 2014). It was found that micro-management, lack of trust, lack of proper communication, subjective

performance management, workload, and working in fear, influenced the work environment to not be conducive and triggers employees' thoughts of leaving the public entity.

The participants indicated that micro-management is one of the triggers of one's intention to leave. Micro-management refers to a process of managing things with excessive control which is similar to autocratic leadership and has a negative impact on employees (Sidhu, 2012). These findings are confirmed by Mishra, Rajkumar and Mishra (2019) as they are of the view that micro-management, in the long term, can have a huge impact as it might result in decreased productivity, employee dissatisfaction, low employee morale and high turnover. It can therefore be concluded that micro-management may influence the intentions of employees to leave the organisation. Lack of trust was found to influence one's intentions to leave. The current literature of Tansley (2011) concluded that when employees perceive that they are being trusted and valued by their leaders, they are less likely to consider leaving the organisation, thus confirming the findings of this study. It can therefore be concluded that lack of trust by management of the organisation may lead to employees leaving the public entity.

The participants indicated that they are intending to leave as there is a lack of proper communication in the public entity. This finding is in line with the existing research by Timm (1978), who concluded that employees who perceive inequity in the supervisory communication, both upward and downward, tend to respond with withdrawal behaviours, such as turnover intentions. Mustamil, Sze Syeh, and Asri Mohd Ali (2014) further assert that proper communication in the organisation can reduce the undesirable turnover intentions. It can thus be concluded that employees who perceive a lack of two-way communication are more likely to quit the public entity. It was revealed that the participants perceive the performance management system to be subjective. The success or failure of performance management systems of any organisation depends on the philosophy that it is connected to strategic objectives, attitudes and skills of those responsible for its implementation (Long, Perumal & Ajagbe, 2012). This finding is supported by the existing literature which concludes that employees' positive perceptions regarding performance evaluation significantly influence their attitudes and behaviours towards the organisation and reduce their intentions to leave (Choi, Moon, Naez, & Koy, 2013; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng; 2001). It can therefore be concluded that employees who have negative perceptions of the performance evaluations within the public entity are more likely to quit the organisation.

The findings further revealed that workload is the main factor that influences employees to leave the public entity. This finding is supported by existing research by Qureshi et al. (2013)

that employees who are experiencing workload are more likely to quit the organisation with an expectation of finding a better job that will not require them to do a lot of work and work extreme hours. It can thus be concluded that employees who are experiencing workload are intending to quit the public entity. The participants indicated that they feel that they are not protected by the employer and as a result, are working in fear most of the time which increases their intentions to leave the public entity. This finding is supported by the existing literature of Mueller and Tschan (2011), who concluded that if the employer neglects the need to protect employees, employees might start looking for alternative jobs with less perceived fear of losing their jobs. It can therefore be concluded that employees who are afraid of making mistakes in fear of being victimised or losing their jobs are intending to leave the public entity.

It was further found that in terms of theme 3: reasons to leave, remuneration plays an important role in one's decision to quit. The finding is in line with existing research by Belete (2018), who concluded that salary and benefits have a potentially direct influence on turnover intentions of employees. It can therefore be concluded that employees are more likely to leave if they are not satisfied with the remuneration system within the public entity. Work-life balance was found to influence one's decision to leave. This finding is supported by the existing research by Suifan, Abdallah and Diab (2016) who concluded that the more employees experience a struggle with work-life balance, the more they think of quitting their jobs. It can thus be concluded that employees who are experiencing work-life imbalance are more likely to quit the public entity.

The participants indicated that career growth opportunities are as equally influential as remuneration in one's decision to leave. This finding is supported by the existing research that employees who seek career growth have higher expectations within their organisation and failure to meet these expectations might lead these employees to seek employment opportunities elsewhere and trigger their intentions to leave the organisation (Chang, 1999). It can thus be concluded that employees who experience lack of career growth are more inclined to leave the public entity should a career growth opportunity arise outside the public entity.

The findings revealed that employees who perceive the work environment not to be conducive, employees who experience dissatisfaction with the remuneration systems, employees who are having difficulties in balancing their work and personal life and employees who perceive the organisation to lack career growth opportunities are more likely to quit the public entity.

3.8.4 Reasons to remain

Despite the challenges that nearly made them leave in the above section, employees at the public entity remain within the employee because of the following reasons. In terms of the theme 4: reasons to stay, the findings indicated that the perceived conducive working environment might influence the participants to remain/stay in the public entity. The finding is supported by the existing research that the workplace must be a “fun place to work” as employees who experience the work environment to not be conducive and not matching with their perceptions might intend leaving the organisation (Horwitz et al., 2003; Kock & Ramarumo, 2015). It can therefore be concluded that employees in this public entity who perceive the working environment to be conducive and in line with their perceptions are more likely to stay in the public entity. The participants indicated that support from colleagues and management is one of the reasons why they are still in the public entity. This finding is supported by the existing research that perceived supervisor support plays a vital role in enhancing intentions and reducing turnover (Alkhatiri, Abuelhassan, Khalifa, Nusari & Ameen, 2018; Kalidass, & Bahron, 2016; Tews, Michel & Ellingson, 2013). It can therefore be concluded that employees who perceive management and colleagues to be supportive will remain in the public entity with few intentions of leaving. It was indicated by the participants that they are still in the public entity as a result of their passion for the work that they do. The finding is in line with the existing research that passion is a motivational force leading employees to choose to engage in an activity and view their job as important and significant and this reduces turnover intentions (Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand, Paquet, Philippe & Charest, 2010). It can therefore be concluded that employees remain in the public entity because of their passion for the work that they do. It was further revealed that participants who remain perceive the public entity to have career growth opportunities. This finding is supported by the existing research of Lee, Kim, Chae and Lee (2019) who concluded that employees who perceive the organisation to have career growth opportunities would have few intentions of leaving. It can therefore be concluded that employees who perceive the public entity to have prospects of career growth will remain in the public entity and reduce the rate of employees with intentions to leave.

This study revealed that if employees perceive the working environment to be conducive, if employees perceive that they are being supported by both their colleagues and managers, if employees have passion for the work that they do and if employees perceive the organisation to have career growth opportunities, they are more likely to stay in the public entity.

3.8.5 Biographical differences

In terms of theme 5: biographical differences theme and sub-themes, the results further show that highly educated, black males who were recently appointed are more likely to leave the public entity. These findings are not in line with existing research by Naidoo (2018), who concluded that regardless of race and gender, employees who are not satisfied with their jobs are more likely to leave. It was further found that most participants who are intending to leave the public entity are the recently appointed with five or fewer years and those who have been in the public entity for a period not exceeding 10 years. Fewer participants represented by 9% of the participants with 10 or more years in the public entity have intentions to leave. These results are not supported by the existing research where conclusions were drawn that employees with longer tenure are more committed to their organisations with less intentions of leaving than employees with shorter tenure (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Emiroğlu et al., 2015). It can therefore be concluded that all employees regardless of age, gender, race, length of service are more likely to quit if they are not satisfied with their jobs (Naidoo, 2018). However, the study revealed that highly educated participants are more likely to quit the public entity as compared to their lower educated colleagues. This finding is supported by the existing research by Karatepe et al. (2013) who concluded that employees with higher levels of education have more intentions of leaving as compared to those with lower education levels.

3.9 LIMITATIONS

The research was conducted in a public entity, resulting in a small sample size, as a result it might be difficult to generalize the findings to other public entities, public sectors department or private institutions in the country and globally. The study was not representative in terms of gender and race as most participants were black males and this might have limited the views of females and other races on the topic in the public entity.

3.10 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and limitations above, the following recommendations are made for the public entity:

- The findings of the study must be communicated to the executive management of the public entity to make them aware of the views of employees on their intentions to leave the organisation.

- Review the retention strategy to reduce the turnover intentions of employees in the public entity.
- Implement the reviewed retention strategy and conduct a follow-up study to determine the effectiveness of the strategy.

3.11 FINDINGS

When factors that contribute to the satisfaction of employees, such as remuneration, work environment, career growth and organisational culture become negatively affected, the likelihood of employees intending to leave the organisation will increase. The findings reveal that job satisfaction results in high retention rate whereas job dissatisfaction triggers the intention of employees to exit the organisation.

3.12 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to continuous change and the 'new normal' way of doing things in the world of work as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is suggested that continuous research be conducted to further explore the views of employees on their intentions to leave the public entity.

Similar studies should be conducted by other researchers to determine triggers of turnover intentions and recommend retention strategies to reduce the turnover rate within the public entity with a balanced gender and race.

Follow-up studies should be conducted after the implementation to determine the effectiveness of the recommended retention strategies at the entity. The study also only focused on employees within the public entity by conducting virtual semi-structured interviews and future research can be done by doing document analysis such as exit interviews documents and policies. It is further suggested that employees who already exited the organisation be interviewed to establish if their turnover intentions and the actual turnover benefited them in achieving their job satisfaction.

3.13 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the aspects of the literature and the empirical studies were discussed in detail with the focus being on the reasons that lead to turnover intentions, thus reasons why they joined, reasons why they stay, reasons why they might leave and retention strategies to counter turnover intentions and for organisational development interventions. The research process and methods used in this research study were discussed. The data were analysed, the results were interpreted and the conclusions were drawn with the recommendations and possible limitations highlighted. A summary of the conclusions, the limitations of the study and the practical implementation of the recommendations is provided for in chapter 4.

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CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses the conclusions of the research study and follows the research methodology mentioned in chapter 1. The literature and the empirical conclusions are first highlighted. The limitations of both literature review and empirical results are discussed. Recommendations are discussed as derived from the findings to assist the public entity implement strategies to retain its employees and for organisational development interventions (practice). Lastly, recommendations are made for future research in the field of personnel psychology in Industrial and Organisational Psychology.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

This section focuses on the formulation of research conclusions relating to the literature review and empirical findings from the study.

4.1.1 Conclusions drawn from the literature review

The main aim of the research was to explore and gain deeper understanding on the experiences of employees on turnover intentions within the basic education public entity in the South African context.

The main aim was achieved through the following specific aims:

4.1.1.1 Research aim 1: To, through literature, conceptualise the concept turnover intentions, employee retention and their dimensions

The first aim was achieved in chapter 2. A literature review was conducted whereby the conceptual foundations of turnover intentions was studied. Various researchers shared different definitions of turnover intentions. Jacobs and Roodt (2011) define turnover intentions as one's decision to stay or leave the organisation. Fasanmi (2018) described turnover intentions as a desire of an employee to quit the job in the near future. Turnover intentions is the best predictor of actual turnover and is becoming an area of concern as organisations are experiencing negative consequences relating to the costs of replacing employees such as recruitment expenses, training, and development of newly appointed employees as well as the costs incurred when conducting exit interviews (Alatawi, 2017; Mobley, 1992; Naidoo, 2018).

There are various forms of turnover, such as voluntary and involuntary turnover. Voluntary turnover takes place when someone leaves the organisation on their own accord and it can be functional or dysfunctional (Belete, 2018). According to Belete (2018), turnover becomes functional when non-performing employees exit the organisation and dysfunctional when high-performing employees leave the organisation. Involuntary turnover is defined as the management's decision to dismiss the employee.

Employees leave organisations for various reasons that are similar across organisations (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Job satisfaction, work environment and remuneration were revealed as some of the influences of turnover intentions (Bryant & Allen, 2013; Hoppock, 1935; Javed et al., 2014). It was concluded that if employees do not perceive the three dimensions to be satisfactory, their intentions to leave the organisations are more likely to increase (Hoppock, 1935; Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018; Schein, 2001). This study is further supported by Dermidas and Akdogan (2015) who concluded that remuneration, work environment and job satisfaction lead to turnover intentions.

The literature revealed that it is therefore critical for organisations to retain employees with key talent as loss of experienced employees has serious implications such as a negative impact on the achievement of the organisational objectives, delays in the service delivery and is costly (Gurmessa & Tefera, 2019; Khalid & Nawab, 2018; Mayende & Musenze, 2018). Based on the literature review conducted, the specific literature review aim to conceptualise the concept turnover intentions and its dimensions was achieved.

4.1.1.2 Research aim 2: To, using relevant theories and previous studies, identify theoretical relationship between turnover intentions, employee retentions as well as biographical factors such as gender, age race, qualifications and years of service.

From the literature review, it was concluded that the three dimensions (job satisfaction, remuneration and work environment) lead to turnover intentions. This study found that a theoretical relationship existed between each of the dimensions and turnover intentions. A theoretical relationship existed between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. A theoretical relationship existed between remuneration and turnover intentions. Lastly, a theoretical relationship existed between work environment and turnover intentions.

When determining the relationship that exists between the dimensions and turnover intentions, the findings of the study were consistent.

Literature review covered content theories associated with turnover intentions, namely Herzberg's two-factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Herzberg's two-factor theory suggests that turnover intentions start when employees believe that both hygiene (work conditions, co-worker relations policies and rules, supervisor, salary, status) and motivation factors (achievement, recognition, responsibility, work itself, advancement, personal growth) that contribute to their satisfaction are becoming negatively affected (Herzberg et al., 1959). Maslow's theory posits that if the employer is unable to meet the needs of employees such as psychological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation, the employees start looking for alternative employment. The two theories reveal how the dimensions relate to turnover intentions and actual turnover and how they can be mitigated to enhance retention strategies.

Motivation of employees was found to be necessary to retain employees within organisations (Parijat & Bagga, 2014). Motivation process theories, namely, Equity theory and Expectancy theory, were studied during the literature review and were found to be helpful in assisting organisations to develop effective retention strategies (Ramlall, 2004). Equity theory posits that if employees perceive that there is an imbalance between their inputs and what they receive in return as compared to those of others, if the employees perceive the exchange they have with the organisation to be unequal and unjust, and if employees perceive that they are not being treated equally, they will seek alternative employment and quit the organisation (Carell & Dittrich, 1978).

Expectancy theory posits that employees want to achieve personal goals by seeking employment and be rewarded when achieving those personal goals. If employees are unable to achieve those personal goals, they start looking for jobs that will allow them to achieve those goals (Parijat & Bagga, 2014; Ramlall, 2004). Studies on Expectancy theory have conflicting conclusions as some researchers are of the view that the theory will assist in prediction motivation of employees in simple, routine lower level jobs and other researchers argue that the theory might work better in some cultures than in other cultures as expectations of employees differ (Parijat & Bagga, 2014).

Literature review concluded that all employees regardless of age, gender, race, length of service are more likely to quit if they are not satisfied with their jobs (Naidoo, 2018). It was found that highly educated participants are more likely to quit the public entity as compared to their lower educated colleagues (Karatepe et al., 2013).

It is therefore important for organisations to identify those factors that lead to turnover intentions and enhance the retention strategies and minimise the rate at which employees are intending to exit the organisation.

In summary, if employees are not satisfied with their jobs, remuneration and work environment, they might start looking for alternative jobs and intent leaving the organisation. Based on the literature review conducted, the specific literature review aim to identify theoretical relationship between factors leading to turnover intentions was achieved, it can thus be concluded that there is a theoretical relationship between factors that lead to turnover intentions.

4.1.1.3 Research aim 3: To theoretically identify strategies that can be implemented to counter high turnover intentions in the South African basic education public entity.

The literature review discussed the relationship between turnover intentions and its dimensions. It was found that if employees are dissatisfied with the dimensions, they start looking for jobs outside the organisation (Belete, 2018). It is therefore important to consider factors that lead to turnover intentions when developing and reviewing retention strategies. It was found that there are various reasons for retaining employees such as time lost and costs of recruiting new employees, loyalty of employees and loss of talent (Bussin, 2018). Retention strategy is important in that if employees are motivated, they stay longer in the organisation with no intention to quit. Researchers concluded that recruiting the right talent, offering employees training and development opportunities, adequate supervisor support, paying employee sufficient salaries, giving employees career growth opportunities, affording employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance and the characteristics of the work itself, such as challenging tasks, were found to be some of the important retention factors (Bussin, 2018; Coetzee et al, 2015; Döckel, 2003).

The literature review discovered that recruiters must ensure that they employ candidates with the required skills as appointment of unsuitable candidates might lead to staff being unable to deliver and eventually leaving the organisation (Jacobs & Roodt, 2011). Developing employees by offering them training opportunities within the organisation enhance their skills and knowledge, motivate and increase the likelihood of them remaining employed in the organisation.

If organisations are aware of the relationship between job satisfaction, remuneration and work environment, they might be able to build more effective retention and talent management policies. It can therefore be concluded that organisations can enhance retention strategies and motivate employees by ensuring the provision of a conducive work environment and competitive remuneration, and thus resulting in job satisfaction within the organisation and lower turnover intentions.

4.1.2 Conclusions drawn from the empirical study

To explore in-depth the experiences of employees on their turnover intentions in the public entity, the study endeavoured to achieve the following three empirical aims:

1. To empirically explore in-depth the reasons leading to joining, staying, leaving and remaining in the basic education public entity.
2. To ascertain if their turnover intentions differ according to their age, gender, race, qualifications or by years of service in the basic education public entity.
3. Based on the empirical findings, formulate recommendations regarding the retention of staff within the basic education public entity and for organisational development interventions (practice).

The empirical conclusions are discussed below:

4.1.2.1 Research aim 1: To empirically explore in-depth the reasons leading to joining, staying, leaving and remaining in the basic education public entity.

In exploring turnover intentions of employees, the researcher wanted to establish what attracted the participants to join the entity. It was found during the study that participants were attracted by the prestige of the public entity, available career growth opportunities and the location of the public entity (Dhanpat et al., 2018; Eby & Dematteo, 2000; Van Dyk & Coetzee,

2012; Yildiz, 2018). The researcher therefore concluded that if the prestige of the organisation is not appealing, if there are no available career growth opportunities and if the location of the organisation is not closer to the residential places of suitable candidates, it will be difficult for the organisation to attract and retain suitable candidates.

Participants further mentioned reasons that will make them leave the public entity and factors that lead to turnover intentions were identified and understood. The study found that participants are not satisfied with the work environment of the organisation such as micro-management by their superiors and not being trusted in what they do. It was found that the flow of information within the organisation is usually one way, top-down communication as most of the time communication is from management to employees. It was revealed that participants perceive the performance management system within the public entity to be inconsistent and subjective.

As with other studies, remuneration was found to be a contributing factor to the intention to leave the public entity. Employees who perceive the remuneration system to be not comparable with other organisations are more likely to quit and join the organisations that offer better salary and benefits (Belete, 2018; Bussin, 2018). Participants perceive the remuneration system of the public entity to have disparities and not comparable with those of other organisations.

Workload was found to be one of the main contributors on employees' intentions to quit the public entity. Employees are expected to work long hours as the mandate of the public entity is increasing with no additional capacity. It was revealed that employees are working in fear of making a mistake, as they might be victimised for making such a mistake. The research found that work-life balance partially contributed to the participants' intentions to quit as they are unable to balance their personal and work life due to the time required to do their work. Participants perceive the public entity to have limited career growth opportunities and intend leaving should they find career growth opportunities outside the public entity.

The study revealed that highly qualified and black, older males and females are more likely to quit in comparison with those who are less educated.

In summary, if employees are experiencing a huge workload and work extended hours, if employees are working in fear of being victimised should they make a mistake, if employees perceive that they are being micro-managed in the work that they do and not being given an opportunity to work independently, their intentions to leave the public entity will be triggered and they will start looking for alternative employment. Furthermore, if employees perceive that they are not trusted in what they do, if the remuneration system is perceived not to be comparable with those of other organisations, if employees are unable to balance their personal and work life due to work demands and if employees perceive the public entity to have limited career growth opportunities, their intentions to quit will increase. The first empirical aim of exploring in-depth the experiences of employees and understanding their turnover intentions was therefore achieved.

4.1.2.2 *Research aim 2: To ascertain if their turnover intentions differ according to their age, gender, race, qualifications or by years of service in the basic education public entity.*

(i) *Age*

Based on the findings revealed by the biographical data of participants, the second empirical aim to ascertain if turnover intentions differs according to age, gender, race, qualifications or by years of service in the public entity was achieved. It was revealed that participants within the age range of 36-58 years are more likely to quit as compared to the participants within the age range of 31-35 years. The previous studies could not support this finding as it was found that younger employees have increased intentions to quit compared to their older counterparts (Cheng & Chan, 2008). Lambert et al. (2001) concluded that as the age of the employee increases the more the intentions to stay. The results might have been influenced by the fact that most of the participants with intentions to leave are within the age range of 36-58 years. The finding contributes partially to the empirical research aim 2 of ascertaining if turnover intentions differs according to age.

(ii) *Gender*

It was found that, although there was no fair distribution by gender as most participants were males, female employees were having higher intentions to exit the public entity than their male counterparts. This finding is in line with the existing research by Huffman and Olson (2016) as well as Marsh and Mannari (1977), who concluded that women are more likely to have

intentions to leave their jobs than their male counterparts. Some researchers found no significant relationship between gender and turnover intentions (Lambert, Hogan & Barton, 2001). The finding contributes partially to the empirical research aim 2 of ascertaining if turnover intentions differs according to gender.

(iii) Race

The difference between both the previously disadvantaged ethnic group (Black) and Whites on the intentions to leave was found to be insignificant and therefore all employees regardless of race were found to have intentions to quit should they experience job dissatisfaction. The finding is in line with the existing research by Naidoo (2018) who concluded that previously disadvantaged ethnic group (Black) employees continue to be slightly more dissatisfied with their job and their intentions to exit the organisation are high as compared to their White counterparts. Lambert et al. (2001) posit that race is a poor predictor of turnover intentions. It can therefore be concluded that all employees regardless of race might experience job dissatisfaction with increased intentions to quit the public entity thus contributes to the empirical research aim 2 to ascertain if turnover intentions differ according to race.

a. Qualifications

It was further revealed that highly qualified employees are more likely to quit due to higher expectations such as career growth as compared to those employees with lower qualifications (Emiroğlu, Akova & Tanriverdi, 2015). This finding is supported by the existing research of Emiroğlu, Akova and Tanriverdi (2015) who concluded that employees with high education levels have more expectations, such as new challenges, financial rights and benefits which might lead to high turnover intentions if their current organisation is unable to meet their expectations as compared to those with low education levels. The finding contributes partially to the empirical research aim 2 of ascertaining if turnover intentions differ according to qualifications.

b. Years of service in the public entity

Lastly, in terms of biographical data of participants, it was found in this study that recently appointed employees with less than 10 years in the public entity have stronger intentions to leave as compared to the employees with longer tenure. Employees with longer tenure are

less likely to quit as they are committed to the organisation (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Emiroğlu et al., 2015).

In summary, mostly highly educated males and females regardless of age, race and years of service are more likely to quit as compared to employees with lower qualifications. It can therefore be concluded that the researcher achieved the second empirical aim to ascertain if turnover intentions differ according to age, gender, race, qualifications or by years of service in the public entity.

4.1.2.3 *Research aim 3: Based on the empirical findings, formulate recommendations regarding the retention of staff within the basic education public entity and for organisational development interventions (practice).*

The researcher achieved the third empirical aim of formulating recommendations by including participants' views on "what will make them stay" and "why they still remain" in the public entity in the research. The study revealed that employees perceive the public entity not to be consultative in that they want to be part of the decisions that are being taken and that they be listened to and their inputs be taken into consideration when decisions are made. Employee engagement is important as employees who perceive management to be engaging and considering their inputs feel valued and get attached to the organisation (Saks, 2006). Participants feel that the public entity maintains it has an open door policy and allows employees to view their concerns but nothing is being done to address those concerns, which deems the entire exercise ineffective.

It was found that teamwork is necessary within the public entity. Working in silos leads to employees not being aware of the work that is being done by other units and might lead to repetitive or similar work being done by different employees and units within the public entity which impacts on their work and may result in unnecessary pressure. Teamwork strengthens operations-related activities and is beneficial to the organisation due to the collaborative achievement of organisational objectives (Hunter, Bailey & Taylor, 1998).

Participants perceive that their jobs are not secure and are of the view that if they can be given an assurance that their jobs are secure, be made part of the public entity and have a feeling of belonging, they will commit to the public entity with no intention of quitting. Participants were further requested to indicate the reasons "why they still remain in the public entity" despite the challenges they are experiencing. Some of the participants perceive the public entity to be a

good working environment as compared to where they have been working before joining the public entity. They perceive the work environment to be positive, collegial, and look forward to coming to work every day. Employees perceive the support from managers and colleagues to be adequate and helpful in encouraging them to stay within the public entity.

The study revealed that some of the participants are still in the public entity as a result of the passion they have for their work (Vallerand et al., 2003) whereas other participants perceive the public entity to have career growth opportunities as they were afforded an opportunity to acquire new skills and knowledge (Lee et al., 2019).

In summary, employee engagement, teamwork, job security, work environment, support from colleagues and management and career growth opportunities are some of the factors that might be considered to enhance the retention strategy of the public entity. It can thus be concluded that the researcher achieved the third empirical aim to formulate recommendations regarding the retention of staff in the public entity.

4.2 LIMITATIONS

Numerous limitations were identified in the literature and the empirical study and are discussed below:

4.2.1 Limitations of the literature review

There were few research studies found on turnover intentions of employees in the public entity within the South Africa context, as a result there was limited literature review the topic from previous studies to support some of the findings of the study.

4.2.2 Limitations of the empirical study

- The research was conducted in a unique setting and made it difficult to refer to other studies.
- The selection process of participants was biased as only participants who were available and with specialised knowledge of the topic were selected to participate in the study.

- The study was not representative in terms of gender and race as most participants were black males and this might have limited the views of females and other races on the topic in the public entity.
- Most of the participants were highly qualified and therefore there was no fair distribution of participants in terms of qualifications.
- Honesty and bias of participants as valuable information might have been withheld due to the researcher being an employee of the same public entity.
- The results of the study may not be generalisable to other public entities due to the small sample size.

Regardless of the abovementioned limitations, the results of this study highlighted the theoretical relationship between various factors that lead to turnover intentions. The results also revealed that turnover intentions differ in terms of age, gender, race, qualification, years of service within the public entity and the department in which one is based. This study could therefore be used as a basis for understanding factors that lead to turnover intentions of employees in the public entity and to develop the retention strategies that can be implemented to counter turnover intentions and for organisational development interventions.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study explored experiences and factors that trigger employees on turnover intentions in the public entity and the recommendations are only specific to the public entity.

4.3.1 Recommendations for the retention of employees and for organisational development interventions

- Employee engagement is important in motivating and increasing employee morale in the organisation. Management should consider listening to employees and make provision for autonomy. Management should implement a two-way communication strategy whereby employees are allowed to give inputs into the decisions taken. Management to provide feedback if the inputs of employees are not considered.

- Inter-departmental meetings should be considered to encourage collaboration between departments. The meetings will assist employees to share information and understand the work done by different units and come up with strategies to support each other and eliminate duplication of work. This might assist in reducing the workload pressure experienced by the employees.
- Management should consider mitigating the feelings of insecurity and have regular meetings with employees where the information about policies and procedures of the public entity is shared. Employees should be educated on what constitutes a contravention of policies and the procedures that are followed before an employee is dismissed from the public entity. Management to develop a policy on how employees should handle victimisation.
- The remuneration system must be reviewed on an annual basis by benchmarking with other organisations, particularly organisations that are deemed to be competing with the public entity in terms of core skills and experience of required employees. Competitive benefits such as medical aid subsidy, risk cover and recognition for long service should be considered. Salary disparities within the public entity should be investigated and corrected where possible. Rewarding employees for long service is desirable.
- Conducive work environment increases job satisfaction and productivity thus resulting in reduced turnover intentions. Organisations must provide a motivating and good working environment as a remedial measure to reduce employees' intentions to quit. Re-engineering of work processes to work smarter and not harder by introducing electronic systems such as on-line processing of work rather than working with physical documents, conducting of work study investigations to identify jobs that are not adding value to the public entity as well as jobs that might be needed and equal distribution of work to relieve the workload experienced by the employees in the public entity.

- The study revealed that colleagues and management support is critical in the organisation. Coaching and mentoring would play a vital role as employees need to be guided on a daily basis, and it is therefore important that management and colleagues support each other in achieving the organisational objectives. Check with the colleagues and sub-ordinates regarding both their work and personal life, offer support where necessary and give constructive feedback as employees who perceive themselves to be supported and cared for are more likely to stay in the organisation with few intentions to leave.
- Work-life balance contributes to turnover intentions of employees and the employees should be allowed to have flexible working hours and work from home where possible provided that their productivity is not negatively impacted. Flexible working hours will allow employees to come either early or later during the day depending on their respective schedules. Employees who are able to work from home should be provided with the necessary information and technology infrastructure such as laptops and data in order to enable them to communicate with other employees and attend meetings while at home. Employees should further be provided with lessons through health and wellness programmes on how to maintain a work-life balance. The public entity must develop a policy to regulate work-life balance.
- The public entity must introduce career growth opportunities, such as allowing employees opportunities to develop and demonstrate their potential and act in senior positions to acquire skills, knowledge and experience required for that particular position. Internal employees should be given priority should an internal position become vacant.
- Human Resources must conduct regular surveys to determine employee satisfaction, compile a report on the findings and make recommendations for consideration by management.

4.3.2 Future research

Based on the limitations and recommendations above, the following should be considered for future research on this topic:

- The main objective of this research was to explore and understand factors contributing to turnover intentions in the public entity. This research was conducted in a single and unique public entity, a research study on turnover intentions of employees with larger populations in the broader public entities to improve generalisability of the results is needed.
- Researchers in the field of Industrial Psychology must further investigate turnover intentions in other public entities in the South African context.
- A similar study should be conducted in the public entity after the implementation of the recommendations or some of them to determine developments.

4.4 INTEGRATION OF THE STUDY

This study found various factors that lead to turnover intentions of employees in the public entity, most of which are voluntary. Work environment (micro-management, lack of trust, lack of communication, subjective performance management system, workload and working in fear), remuneration, work-life balance and career growth opportunities were found to be the main causes of turnover intentions in the public entity. The study further revealed that turnover intentions of employees differ with regard to age, gender, race, qualifications, years of experience in the public entity and the department in which one is based.

Based on the challenges experienced by employees which result in loss of organisational memory and the instability of the public entity, the proposed recommendations should be taken into consideration to develop and enhance the retention strategy in the public entity. Human Capital Management must be tasked to conduct surveys on a regular basis to determine the level of employee satisfaction and compile a report with recommendations for consideration by management. Early detection of issues of concern raised by the employees will assist the public entity to address the challenges and curb turnover intentions of employees and eventually, the turnover rate.

It can therefore be concluded that the findings of this study could encourage future research on turnover intentions of employees in public entities within a South African context. This study should make a contribution to the field of industrial and organisational psychology as well as the Human Capital strategy to retain employees in the public entities.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This research provides a clear understanding of the challenges experienced by the public entity and its employees and provides recommendations on how to enhance the retention strategy and reduce turnover intentions. A thorough literature review on turnover intentions and retention strategy was conducted during this study. It was found, during the study, that there is a positive relationship between turnover intentions and the dimensions identified in this study. It is therefore important that employers keep their employees motivated and satisfied. If employees are satisfied with their jobs, a conducive work environment is created, productivity increases, the organisation achieves its objectives with minimal challenges on turnover intentions.

4.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 4 discussed the conclusions based on both the literature and the empirical study. The limitations emanating from the literature review and empirical study were detailed. Lastly, recommendations were formulated for the development and enhancement of the retention strategy and for organisational development interventions in the public entity. Suggestions for possible future research on factors that lead to turnover intentions were made. Chapter 4 concludes the study.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL LETTER WITH REFERENCE NUMBER



UNISA IOP ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

03 August 2020

Dear Ms. Refilwe Argentina Selesho

NHREC Registration # : (if applicable)
ERC Reference : **2019_CEMS_IOP_016**
Name : Ms. Refilwe Argentina Selesho
Student #: 31588972
Staff #: NA

**Decision: Ethics Approval from
03 August 2020 to 03 August
2023**

Researcher(s): Name: Ms. Refilwe Argentina Selesho
Address: 36 Alkanet Street, Doornpoort, Pretoria, 0017
E-mail address, telephone: Refilwe.Selesho@umalusi.org.za, 0716793998

Supervisor (s): Name: Mr. Tshupo M Matjie
E-mail address, telephone: matjima@unisa.ac.za, 0124293476

Staff turnover intentions: Experiences of employees at a public entity.

Qualification: Masters (Mcom) – Postgraduate degree

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance to the Unisa IOP Ethics Review Committee for the above-mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for a period of **Three (3) years**.

The low risk application was reviewed by the IOP Research Ethics Review Committee on 28th July 2020 in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment. The amendment to your original Ethics Application was approved on 28th July 2020.

You are reminded of the following:

- The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to the relevant guidelines set out in the Unisa COVID-19 Position Statement on research ethics dated 26 June 2020 which is attached.***



University of South Africa
Pretter Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

2. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics.
3. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the Unisa CEMS/IOP Research Ethics Review Committee.
4. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
5. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.
6. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.

Note:

The reference number **SeleshoRA_2019_CEMS_IOP_016** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Signature
Acting Chair of IOP ERC
E-mail: olivibh@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429-8801



Signature
Executive Dean : CEMS
E-mail: mogalmt@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429-4805

APPENDIX B: GATEKEEPER LETTER 2



Council for Quality Assurance in
General and Further Education and Training

Enquiries : Mzingeli Nomveliso (Ms)
Tel : (012) 030-0701
Ref. no : **3/1/4/R-Feb 2020**

FROM: Umalusi

37 General Van Ryneveld Street
Persequor Technopark
Brummeria
PRETORIA
0012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: CONFIRMATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

This letter serves as a confirmation to permit Ms Refilwe Selesho to conduct research within the organisation. The organisation is aware that Ms Selesho is studying for a Master degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology and it is required of her to conduct research for the completion of her studies.

The research title is "Staff turnover intentions: Experiences of current employees at a public entity".

I trust you find the above in order.

Yours sincerely

Dr Mafu S Rakometsi
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tel: +27 (12) 349 1510 Fax: +27 (12) 349 1511 Email: info@umalusi.org.za Website: www.umalusi.org.za UmalusiSA @UmalusiSA
37 General van Ryneveld Street, Persequor Technopark, Pretoria, South Africa, 0020, PO Box 151 Persequor Technopark, Pretoria, South Africa, 0020

Disclaimer: Whilst all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the information contained herein, Umalusi accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever if the information is, for whatsoever reason, incorrect and Umalusi reserves its right to amend any incorrect information.

APPENDX C: GATEKEEPER LETTER 1

Dr Mafu Rakometsi

Umalusi

37 General Van Ryneveld Street

Persequor Technopark

Brummeria

PRETORIA

0012

14 February 2020

Request to conduct research at Umalusi

Dear Dr Rakometsi,

My name is Refilwe Selesho, and I am currently enrolled for a Masters Degree in Industrial and Organisational Psychology at the University of South Africa. I would like to request permission to conduct research in your organisation. The topic of the research is Staff turnover intentions: Experiences of employees at a public entity.

The rationale for the study is to establish reasons that trigger turnover intentions of employees within the public entity perspective in the field of industrial and organisational psychology.

The study will comprise of semi-structured interviews with the participants, which will take approximately ninety (90) minutes with each participant. The study will be conducted over a maximum period of eight (8) months.

I further request permission to peruse exit interview reports for the employees who already exited the organisation as part of the study in establishing reasons that triggered their exit from the organisation.

UNISA's Ethics Review Committee will review the study for approval. There will be no incentives for participants on the study. The study will benefit the organisation in that a deeper understanding of factors that trigger turnover intentions will assist the organisation to put a proper retention strategy in place.

My contact details are as follows:

Refilwe.Selesho25@gmail.com or Refilwe.Selesho@umalusi.org.za

012 0300712 or 071 679 3998

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Refilwe Selesho'. The signature is written in a cursive style with some overlapping loops.

Yours sincerely

Refilwe Selesho

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE (QUESTIONS)

Interview guiding questions

Participant:

Place:

Date and time:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for availing yourself for today's meeting. I believe that you are aware of the high turnover rate that is experienced. Our topic is with regard to turnover intentions of employees within the public entity.

The interview session will take approximately thirty (30) minutes and your permission is hereby requested to record and take notes of the conversation, as it is important that everything is recorded accurately without any alterations.

Before the commencement of the interview session, I would like you to familiarise yourself with the content of the consent form as I am going to request your signature thereafter. Here is a copy and I will allow you to go through the document. Feel free to ask questions should you need clarity in relation to the consent form.

All the information and conversation held will be kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with my academic supervisor, Mr M Matjie. Should it be required that a follow up session be held with you, I will set up a meeting of which the logistics will be communicated with you accordingly for your consideration.

Participation in this interview is voluntary and you will not be forced to respond to the questions that you do not feel comfortable responding to. You are also allowed to stop this interview at any time should you want to do so.

Is there any clarity that you require or any questions regarding what I have mentioned above before we proceed with the interview? Did I explain everything clearly? Are you ready and willing to participate in this interview? 2

The following are the interview questions to the participant (tick the appropriate):

Gender	Male	Highest qualification	
	Female	Date joined the organisation	
Race	Asian	Department	Core business
	Black		Support services
	Coloured	Position	
	White	Position level	Semi-skilled and discretionary decision making
			Skilled technical and academically qualified workers, junior Management, supervisors, foreman and superintendents
			Professionally qualified, experienced specialists and Middle Management
			Top Management, Senior Management
Age		Number of years with the organisation	

1. Why did you join this organisation?
 2. What challenges you are experiencing within the organisation?
 3. What makes you stay within the organisation despite challenges mentioned in the previous question?
 4. What will make you leave the organisation at any time and why?
 5. Do you have anything to add that you think it is important to this research topic?
- We are almost at the end of the interview (in closing)
Should there be a need for a follow-up interview, I will communicate with you and we can meet at a time convenient to you.
Thanks once again for availing yourself for the interview.

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT AND PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

This agreement serves to confirm that the below mentioned research participant gave her/his consent to participate in the Masters study regarding “Staff turnover intentions: Experiences of employees at a public entity”. The research participant agrees to provide the researcher with his/her views and experiences to the best of his/her ability.

The undersigned participant understands the purpose and nature of the study and understands that his/her participation is voluntary and that he/she may withdraw from the study at any time. The research participant further gives permission for the data collected to be used for the fulfilment of the requirements for the master’s degree. The data collected will be used for research purpose only.

The researcher undertakes neither to disclose the identity of any research participants, nor the origin of any statements made by any of them. The undersigned participant understands that the nature and principles of this study’s research methodology applies in that the researcher is expected to make use of verbatim statements from the transcribe taped interviews and/or excerpts from solicited essays in order to demonstrate everyday experiences of the research participants and their views.

The participant is hereby undertakes to give a true representation of her/his experiences and views and allows for this interview to be audio-recorded.

I,the undersigned participant, agree to meet at mutually agreeable times and duration(s) or to other means of communication, e.g. by e-mail or telephone, as reasonably necessary to enable the researcher to complete the study. I further acknowledge that I received a copy of this agreement and that I may contact any one of the under mentioned if I have any subsequent queries.

Name and surname of research participant:_____

Signature of research participant :_____

Researcher:

Title, initials & surname: Ms. R.A Selesho

Date :_____ 2020

Place :_____

Participant Information Sheet

Researcher: Refilwe Argentina Selesho

Supervisor: Dr Mokgata Matjie

University of South Africa

Research title: Staff turnover intentions: Experiences of employees at a public entity

Dear Participant

My name is Refilwe Selesho. I am a Master' student at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Mr Matjie Mokgata. As a requirement to complete my studies, I will have to conduct research and compile a mini dissertation in line with the title indicated above. It is therefore for these reasons that your participation in the study is of utmost importance.

The purpose of the study is to explore the turnover intentions of staff members at a public entity and understand the reasons behind their intentions to resign.

The reason for selecting you as a participant is as follows:

- You have been within the employ of the organisation on a permanent basis for more than a year and I believe that you will be able to provide the researcher with valuable information.

The study comprises of one on one semi-structured interviews for a maximum of thirty (30) minutes. The interviews will be voice recorded and transcribed.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your participation from the study without giving reasons for your withdrawal. You will be requested to sign the consent form, before proceeding with our one on one session.

The study will benefit both the public entity and its staff members in coming up with recommendations such as the retention strategy as well as motivated workforce.

Your name will not be mentioned anywhere in the documents and you will not be linked to any information that you have provided during the one on one session held with you.

The information collected will be kept in a locked cupboard in a locked office at the public entity and will be stored for a minimum duration of five (5) years of which after such time hard copies will be permanently destroyed by a way of shredding. The electronic version will be stored on the H-drive and will be password protected on the computer.

The findings of the study will be shared with executive management of the public entity. No compensation or gifts will be issued as a result of participating in this study.

The study will be taking place within the public entity and no reimbursement and costs will be incurred by the participants.

Permission was granted by the public entity to conduct research as per the attached gatekeeper's letter.

Should you wish to be furnished with the findings of the study, feel free to contact me at refilwe.selesho25@gmail.com or 071 679 3998 or my supervisor at matjima@unisa.ac.za or 012 429 3476.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking your time to familiarise yourself with the information sheet of the study and I look forward to interview.