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THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ON PERSON-ORGANISATION-FIT AND TURNOVER INTENTION

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Research report is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Faculty of Humanities at University of the Witwatersrand

SUPERVISOR: SIFISO MLILO

MARCH 2016

DECLARATION

I, Babitsanang Lekhuleng, declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the loving memory of my late Aunt and Granny, Mohlakoditxi and Meeta a Hlabirwa Kgagara for their constant encouragement and most of all for believing in me. Their direction and insights were always invaluable *"...sadly missed along life's way, quietly remembered every day..."*

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ABSTRACT

Past studies revealed that the existence of congruence between employees and their organisation produces more favourable attitudes and behaviours. This study sought to highlight the need for an intermediary link between person organisation fit and turnover intention, and to propose the integration of employee engagement as a potential mediating factor. The sample for this research consisted of 426 employees from diverse military units. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to test the direct and mediating relationships between key variables.

Four hypotheses were tested. Hypothesis 1 stated that there will be a significant negative relationship between P-O fit and turnover intention and it was statistically supported. Hypothesis 2 stated that there will be a significant negative relationship between employee engagement and turnover intention and it was also statistically supported. Hypothesis 3 stated that there will be a significant positive relationship between P-O fit and employee engagement, this hypothesis was also confirmed through a significant statistical result. Lastly, Hypothesis 4 stated that employee engagement will mediate the relationship between P-O fit and turnover intention. This hypothesis was supported through the finding that employee engagement partially mediated the relationship between P-O fit and turnover intention

The results showed that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between the person-organisation fit and turnover intention. This suggests that person-organisation fit (in terms of value and goal congruence) provides greater meaningfulness and psychological attachment, which then leads individuals to a higher level of employee engagement. So, in short, the study showed that individuals with a higher level of employee engagement would be less likely to leave their organisations.

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1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, RATIONALE AND RESEARCH AIM

The current business world is entirely different from the past. Nowadays, human beings experience new and different changes in their lives and work more frequently than ever before (Daraei & Vahidi, 2014; Janson, 2015). In the past centuries, physical assets such as land, farms, buildings and factories were considered as the most important aspects of organisations, but in today's business climate, intangible assets like knowledge, engagement and talent retention provide the competitive advantage and physical assets are not believed to be as crucial as they were before (Daraei & Vahidi, 2014).

Talent retention is currently an international challenge faced by organisations with an increasingly diverse workforce (Coetzee & Gunz, 2012). In South Africa, Human Capital Trend's 2014 survey indicated that both retention and engagement are the third biggest talent retention challenges organisations face (Bersin, 2014). This challenge is salient because organisations aim to be dominant and sustain a lasting competitive advantage in the global economy. However, they continue to be faced with significant challenges in the retention of human capital. According to Bersin (2014) and Mabindisa (2013) this implies that organisations should shift from "holding" to "attracting and engaging".

Human resource management plays an important part in providing employees with knowledge, skills and abilities to enhance employees' performance (Saha & Gregar, 2012). For an organisation to function effectively, it must not rely only on available technical resources such as machines and technology, but also on the human resources component that will help an organisation achieve its goals (Coetzee & Gunz, 2012).

Hassan, Akram and Naz (2012) postulate that to achieve and maintain a competitive edge, organisations should invest more in their human resources. According to Memon, Salleh, Baharom and Harun (2014) organisations that recruit and develop human capital will succeed. For example, The Limited, a large American retail organisation, witnessed a drop in its profits and stock price, in the early 1990s because their talent management practices were not in place. On the contrary companies like First Merit Bank, General Electric and Microsoft, which have adopted the best talent management practices, have shown success and are competitive in the global market (Michaels, Axelrod, Handfield-Jones, 2001).

However, the issue of employee willingness to leave the organisation regardless of employers' actions to retain them, (Finnegan, Frank & Taylor, 2004), still exists in many organisations. Voluntary turnover may be caused by stress, workplace bullying and/or pay and benefits issues amongst other things (Mabindisa, 2013).

Turnover Intention (hereafter referred to as TI) has therefore been a valuable topic for organisational behaviour researchers because of its direct and indirect costs for human resources (Hassan et al., 2012). A direct cost is the actual financial implication linked with the hiring and development of new employees (Staw, 1980; Mabindisa, 2013). According to Dess and Shaw (2001) indirect costs are associated with loss of social capital, work overload and low morale of remaining employees.

Numerous studies have been done to understand the factors that lead to TI (Harrington, 2001; Ncede, 2013; Qureshi, 2014). Perhaps one of the most salient of these was a study conducted by Wheeler (2007) that found that a person-organisation misfit can lead to TI as an individual may look for a better opportunity and a company that will better suit their desired needs. Building on that study's promising findings, this research report wishes to further understand the interaction of Person-Organisation-fit (hereafter referred to as P-O fit) and Employee Engagement (hereafter referred to as EE) and how it relates to TI.

For initial clarity, P-O fit is defined as the congruence between individuals and their organisations (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). Kahn (1990) defined engagement as the harnessing of organisational members' selves to their role at work. He explains more that engaged employees express themselves emotionally, physically and cognitively when conducting their tasks.

Previous studies indicate that P-O fit and EE have negative relationships with employee TI (Hassan et al., 2012). Furthermore, empirical evidence from studies conducted by Schaufeli, and Salanova (2003), Saks (2006), Schaufeli, Bakker and Salanova (2006) has shown that an increased level of EE decreases employee TI. Moreover, research done by O'Reilly III, Chatman and Caldwell, (1991) Posner, (1992) Vancouver and Schmitt, (1991) has indicated that P-O fit has better benefits such as low anxiety thereby increasing employees' dedication.

Although previous research has shown negative relationships between P-O fit along with EE and intention to quit, such relationships were found to be weak (Tepeci, 2001; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005; Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). In an attempt to find this potentially missing intermediary construct, Biswas and Bhatnagar's (2013) study revealed that P-O fit correlated positively with EE (mediator) and organisational commitment (OC) as well as Job Satisfaction (thereafter referred to as JS). Moreover, EE was also found to correlate positively with Organisational Commitment (thereafter referred to as OC) and JS.

These findings suggest that when individuals experience positive organisational alignment and meaningfulness, they are more likely to put extra effort in their work. Furthermore, when workers perceive that their goals and values are similar with those of the organisational, they feel empowered and it leads them to perform optimally.

From the above-mentioned study, one can conclude that organisational outcomes such as commitment and satisfaction correlate highly with EE (indirect indicators). When conducting a literature review it seems that only one study that was conducted by Memon, et al. (2014) investigated the influence of P-O fit on employee TI with EE as a mediator. Their study found that EE was indeed a mediator to these constructs.

This study was, however, conducted within the Malaysian context. Consequently, there exists a gap within the literature to conduct a similar study within the South African context to analyse how these constructs interact with one another. Thus, understanding how these three constructs might interact with one another is important because it could help managers and industrial psychologists develop interventions to encourage valued employees to stay with their organisation.

1.1 Problem statement and rationale

Talent retention is currently an international challenge faced by organisations with an increasingly diverse workforce. In South Africa, this challenge is salient because organisations aim to be dominant and sustain a lasting competitive advantage in the global economy. However, they continue to be faced with significant challenges in the retention of human capital.

This might be because their talent management plans are not sufficiently customised. Understanding the influence of P-O fit when interacting with EE and TI may help inform a more customised approach to talent management that could help improve talent retention.

1.2 Research aims

This research aims to investigate the interaction between P-O fit and TI and to understand the influence EE may have as a mediator. This study postulates that EE should be an important intermediary construct that can help to explain how P-O fit interacts with TI. The basic theoretical argument of the study is that, when a worker's goals and values fit with those of the organisation, they will become more engaged in their organisation, which could lead to high TI (Memon, et al., 2014).

1.3 Structure of research report

This dissertation comprises of five chapters including this introductory chapter. This chapter has outlined the background, rationale and objectives of the present study. The second chapter is a literature review which discusses previous studies in relation to the main concepts of talent management. Chapter three describes the research methodology and explains the research approach, including aspects such as the research design employed, research instruments, and the description of the sample. The fourth chapter presents the study findings. The last, fifth, chapter provides a discussion of the outcomes of the analysis in relation to relevant literature. It also presents limitations and recommendations for future research.

2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will provide a literature review on the constructs being studied. It will start by unpacking the literature on P-O fit, its operationalisation and its empirical studies with other organisational effectiveness constructs. Secondly, it will explore EE, its theoretical elements and empirical studies with other organisational effectiveness constructs. Thirdly, turnover and TI will be defined as well as its theories and empirical studies with other organisational effectiveness constructs. Finally, it will conclude with the theoretical integration of these three constructs.

2.1 Person-Organisation fit

There are multiple operationalisations and conceptualisations of P-O fit. This would imply that P-O fit is a complex construct. Given that, Kristof (1996) described P-O fit as the congruence between people and organisations. Yet, Kristof (1996) noted that congruence can be conceptualized using two different perspectives.

The difference between complementary fit and supplementary fit constitutes the initial perspective. Complementary fit takes place when employee characteristics add to what is missing in the organisation (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987). Supplementary fit takes place when an individual possesses characteristics which are similar to other employees in the organisation (Beasley, Jason & Miller, 2012).

Most researchers consider Schneider's (1987) Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory as a breakthrough in the early developments of P-O fit research as it provides a basic understanding of P-O fit in the workplace (Farooqui & Nagendra, 2014; Karakurum, 2005; Ruiz-Palomino, Martínez-Cañas & Fontrodona, 2013). Schneider (1987) argued that people are attracted to and search for organisations whose values and goals are similar to theirs. The rationale is that in the long run, employees who fit well with the organisation will remain and others who do not may quit. Other research conducted by Cable and Judge (1994) also concluded that employees may prefer organisations where their values are aligned with those of the organisation.

The demands-abilities and needs-supplies are regarded as the second perspective. The needs-supplies perspective transpires when a person's needs, are satisfied by the organisation (Kristof, 1996). On the other hand, the demands-abilities perspective transpires when employees have those abilities needed to meet organisational demands (Karakurum, 2005). Both perspectives are essential and they give a broader view and understanding of how P-O fit is most often conceptualised within the literature. To further understand this, construct the researcher will, in the following section, explore the different operationalisations of P-O fit.

2.1.1 Operationalisation of Person-Organisation-fit

Based on Kristof's review of P-O fit literature four different operationalisations of P-O fit were identified (Lauver & Kristoff-Brown, 2001; Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005). The first operationalisation is based on the measurement of similarities between fundamental characteristics of employees and their organisation's for example; values. Most researchers view it as the common measure of P-O fit (Chatman, 1989, 1991; Finegan, 2000; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Karakurum, 2005; Posner, 1992).

Goal compatibility with organisational leaders was identified as the second way in which P-O fit can be operationalised (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Vancouver, Millsap & Peters, 1994; Vancouver & Scmitt, 1991; Ruiz-Palomino, et al., 2013). This means for example, if a person's goals fit well with those of the organisational leaders or co-workers' goals, he or she will likely fit well within the organisation.

The third operationalisation focuses on the similarities between employees' needs and organisational structures (Bester, 2012; Cable & Judge, 1994; Turban & Keon, 1993; Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005). The fourth operationalisation of P-O fit focuses on the congruence between an individual's characteristics and organisational climate (Bowen, Ledford & Nathan, 1991; Burke & Deszca, 1982; Ivancevich & Matteson, 1984; Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005). Given the above-mentioned operationalisations, Kristof (1996) proposed, a comprehensive definition of P-O fit which encompasses the compatibility between people and organisations that occurs when at least one entity provides what the other needs, or, when they share similar important characteristic or both (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005).

For the purposes of this study P-O fit is understood as value and goal congruence between employees and the relevant organisation. The reasons for doing so are as follows: Firstly, research showed that values and goals are the most consistent and effective predictor of employee outcomes (Chatman, 1991; Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2001; Westerman & Cyr, 2004). Secondly, values and goals are important and stable with regards to their influence on behaviour and attitudes (Chatman, 1991; Ruiz-Palomino, et al., 2013; Tinsley, 2000). Moreover, they guide and shape the attitudes and behaviours of employees (Karakurum, 2005; Schein, 1992; Tepeci, 2001).

Thirdly, employee and organisational values and goals can be directly compared to ensure that employees share similar values and goals with their organisations (Cherrington & England, 1980; Karakurum, 2005). Lastly, values predict various employee outcomes for example, behavioural intentions (Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991; Boxx, Odom & Dunn, 1991; Tepeci, 2001). Based on the above-mentioned theoretical reasons, in this study, the author will operationalise or interpret P-O fit based on goal and value congruence.

2.1.2 Empirical studies on P-O fit with other organisational effectiveness constructs

P-O fit has been associated with a variety of organisational constructs (Tepeci, 2001). Among which, P-O fit has mostly shown to be a strongest predictor of JS (Kristof-Brown & Guay, 2011). Given this, Kristof-Brown and Guay, (2011) found that poor P-O fit, especially in a form of the complementary fit, leads to stress.

Studying the outcomes of P-O fit, O'Reilly et al. (1991) revealed that P-O fit correlated positively with JS and commitment. However, P-O fit correlated negatively with TI as well as turnover (Liu, Liu & Hu, 2010). Vandenberghe's (1999) study showed that during the probation period, new employees whose values are similar to those of their organisation are less likely to leave. Kristof-Brown, et al., (2005) and Kristof's (1996) summary of the empirical results concur that P-O fit based on value congruence has positive effects on employee satisfaction, organisational commitment, extra-role behaviours, work performance, stress, and employee behavioural intentions and turnover.

Tepeci (2001) cautions that although increased P-O fit leads to high commitment and fewer conflicts, too much P-O fit may cause lack of creativity and high conformity. Despite this, Andrews, Baker and Hunt, (2011) argue that high P-O fit leads to low turnover and high organisational citizenship behaviours.

In summary, P-O fit has empirically been found to correlate with a number of organisational constructs (Chatman, 1991; Liu et at., 2010; Ruiz-Palomino, et al., 2013; Reiche, 2008; Shaw, Gupta & Delery 2005) however, less is known about its correlation with EE. However, EE has been found to correlate highly with constructs like JS and OC (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013), so the signs are that there would be a positive relationship. The following section will expand on the interaction of EE together with P-O fit.

2.2 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

The EE construct has existed for more than 20 years and can be traced back from research done by Kahn (Halbesleben, 2010; Kataria, Rastogi & Garg, 2013; Welch, 2011). There has been an increase in the number of studies conducted on EE lately (Sonnetag, 2011; Rurkkhum & Bartlett, 2012). Employee engagement is found to correlate with organisational outcomes including job performance and employee retention (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Buchanan, 2004; Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; Lockwood, 2007; Sundaray, 2011).

Kahn (1990) defined the harnessing of organisational members' selves to their roles at work. He explains more that engaged employees express themselves emotionally, physically and cognitively when conducting their tasks. Rothmann (2008) refers to EE by emphasising the energetic position whereby individual are dedicated to excellent performance. Simons and Buitendach (2013) also concurs that employees who are engaged tend to be more confident in executing their work tasks.

2.2.1 Theoretical perspectives of employee engagement

Employee engagement can be regarded as a complex construct since it does not have a unique theory. Instead, there exists a variety of theoretical perspectives which cannot be integrated into one comprehensive framework. Although, these theories differ, together they contribute to a deeper understanding of this construct. The Needs-Satisfying approach asserts that EE occurs when the environment is meaningful, safe and there is availability of resources (Sakovska, 2012).

Furthermore, the conservation of resources theory purports that highly engaged employees are less likely to intend or plan to leave (Hobfoll, 2001; Peng, Lee & Tseng, 2014). The only study, the current research could find to empirically examine Kahn's (1990) conceptualisation of engagement was conducted by May, Gilson and Harter (2004). Their study revealed that engagement correlated positively with safety and meaningfulness. Moreover, Job demand resource model could be used as a key input when considering an integrated model that could help explain the three variables (P-O fit, TI & EE). However, it cannot be used alone to understand these constructs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

2.2.2 Empirical studies on employee engagement with other organisational effectiveness constructs

The existence of EE has brought mixed opinions by most researcher merely about its nature. Most notable is the claim that it is merely old wine in new bottles. It is therefore crucial to distinguish it from other organisation effectiveness constructs (Cole, Walter, Bedeian & O'Boyle, 2012). Christian, Garza and Slaughter (2011) indicated that in-role and extra role performance was predicted by EE. Similarly, Rich, Lepine and Crawford's (2010) study revealed that EE contributes more to in-role and extra-role performance than job involvement, satisfaction and intrinsic motivation.

Despite this, it appears to be a unique construct as well as a strong predictor of performance (Newman, Joseph & Hulin, 2010). Whereas constructs supposedly similar to EE have varying results in this respect. Most researchers found that engagement correlates with organisational attitudes, behaviour and intentions to quit (Halbesleben, 2010; Cole et al., 2012) and personality traits (Kim, Shin & Swanger, 2009). Moreover, according to Christian et al. (2011) job demands and resources correlated with engagement in a distinctive manner. Thus, the following section will explore more on TI.

2.3 Turnover intention overview

Turnover intention (intention to quit), is the final sequence of withdrawal cognitions in the turnover process and denotes the probability that employees will quit their job in the foreseeable future (Perez, 2008). Although all TI may not lead to actual turnover behaviour, employees' intention to leave represents an important outcome variable (Chang, Wang & Huang, 2013).

Research has consistently shown that TI is the most powerful predictor of turnover behaviour (Firth, Mellor, Moore & Loquet, 2004; Griffeth, Hom, Gaertner, 2000; Van Breukelen, Van der Vlist & Steensmaet, 2004). Therefore, in order to provide more insight about the construct of TI, the author will first define turnover, followed by TI.

2.3.1 Defining turnover

According to Phillips and Connell (2003) turnover is defined as leaving an organisation for whatever reason. Turnover represents a major organisational phenomenon as it has a direct and indirect impact on the organisation. (Phillips & Connell, 2003). Therefore, translating staff turnover into actual financial values is essential because management needs to understand its true costs (Phillips & Connell, 2003).

In order for management to understand and then counteract the problem of turnover it is imperative for them to understand and know the reasons as to why an employee has left. According to Cole (2014) if the reasons for wanting to leave an organisation are known, something can be done before the employee actually quits.

2.3.2 Defining Turnover intention

Turnover Intention is also termed intention to quit (Shields & Ward, 2001; Sousa-Poza & Henneberger, 2002). March and Simon (1958) and Bigliardi, Petroni and Dormio (2005) defined TI as the leaving of one's firm to move to another in order to get better prospects such as higher remuneration or better benefits. They state that this intention is common for young people who tend to have fewer responsibilities and therefore find it easier to quit a job and look for another.

According to Frimousse, Swalhi and Wahidi (2012), TI can be regarded as a process consisting of consecutive steps occurring over a period of time. Its starts from searching for available jobs in the market to the final decision to stay or leave. To analyse this decision making process ones needs to define employees' possibility to look for jobs outside their current organisation (Bluedorn, 1982; Frimousse et al., 2012).

Turnover Intention can therefore be broadly defined as an individual having designs of voluntarily leaving the organisation. Therefore, intention of quitting can be utilized as a reliable predictor of turnover (Lacity, Lyer & Rudramuniyaiah, 2008; Visser & Rothman, 2009). Moreover, from a practical perspective, it is very hard to conduct the current study using actual turnover because one cannot sample from people who are no longer employees working in an organisation the study been conducted. For these reasons intention to quit will be explored in this study as opposed to actual turnover.

2.3.3 Theoretical perspective of turnover intention

Many prominent models (e.g. involuntary turnover model) of the turnover process implicitly or explicitly use elements of Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) Theory of Reasoned Action. This theory and its evolution into the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) suggests that intentions to perform behaviour are the more immediate precursors to actual behaviour. Intentions are a function of attitudes to perform certain behaviour, which are in turn a function of beliefs concerning the consequences and desirability of them in performing the behaviour.

Additionally, intentions are the subjective norms concerning the behaviour, which function as beliefs concerning what important referents think about the behaviour. A good deal of empirical research has supported this model, especially the critical role of intentions (Kim & Hunter, 1993; Fife-Schaw, Sheeran & Norman, 2007; Horn, Griffeth & Sellaro, 1984; Van Breukelen, et al.,).

Thus, in the context of turnover, TIs may only lead to turnover when individuals perceive that they have control over the decision to quit. There are a number of reasons that individuals might perceive less control over this decision. Family or financial constraints could restrict mobility. Over time, individuals become increasingly invested in an organisation, making it more difficult to leave (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Lam, Lo, & Chan, 2002). Perceptions of the availability and quality of alternatives may affect perceived control (Chan & Morrison, 2000). Given that the above is the theoretical perspective, in order to provide deeper understanding, the following section will explore the empirical perspectives of TI in relation to other psychological constructs.

2.3.4 Empirical studies on turnover intention with other organisational effectiveness constructs

March and Simon's (1958) theory of voluntary employee turnover specifies that an individual's decision to leave a job is influenced by the evaluation of available alternatives and their perception for the desire to leave the organisation (March & Simon, 1958). Morrell, Loan-Clarke and Wilkinson (2001) found that in order to reduce TI, organisation should increase their incentives and vice versa.

March and Simon (1958) found that improved JS reduced a worker's intention to quit. Like March and Simon's (1958) model, Steers and Mowday determined that JS had a greater effect on the workers' intent to leave but only if the employee was a poor performer (Oliver, 2007).

The theory of turnover purports that intention to quit is a strong predictor of whether a worker leaves the firm or not (Lambert, 2006). According to Lambert (2006) intention to quit is the mental process of planning to leave the organisation. Empirical studies of TI show that working conditions such as too much work and a lack of social support from organisational leaders are factors that affect intention to quit (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2003). Empirical testing of TI also indicated that intention to quit is affected by individual traits such as age, occupation and income received (Cregon & Johnson, 1993). According to Zeytinoglu, Denton, Davies and Plenderleith (2009) younger workers in occupations that are in demand and who receive lower earnings are less likely to stay long in the organisation.

McWilliams (2011) states that intention to quit is costly for organisations both directly and indirectly. It is costly directly by losing staff whereby the organisation has to spend money to replace them through recruitment, selection and training of those new employees and developing them and the indirect costs include the loss of tacit knowledge and intellectual property to competitors (Milkovich & Newman, 2002; Wong, Chun & Law, 1995; Farrell, 2001; Khatri et al., 2001).

2.4 Integration of P-O fit, turnover intention and employee engagement

This section attempts to integrate the interaction between P-O fit, EE and TI. It further discusses theories and empirical links associated with these three constructs.

2.4.1 P-O fit and turnover intention

Employees are more likely to remain in the organisation if they perceive that their goals and values are similar to that of their organisation (Broue & Ferris, 2005; Wheeler, Buckley, Halbesleben; Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). Research studies on TI revealed that employees tend to leave the organisation if they experience a conflict between workers and organisational goals (Fox & Fallon, 2003; Lee, Mitchell, Wise & Fireman, 1996).

Most researchers found P-O fit correlates positively with JS but negatively with intention to quit (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Harris & Mossholder, 1996; Moynihan & Pandey, 2008). The rationale is that increased P-O fit will increase employee motivation in performing their functions, thereby resulting in increased EE and staying longer in the organisation (Ballout, 2007). In addition, most researchers have consistently found similar results (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Jung and Yoon, 2013; Verquer et al., 2003).

2.4.2 P-O fit and employee engagement

Lewins (1951) proposed that the interaction between the person and work environment will lead to certain behaviour. This theory proposes that when employees experience a fit with their organisation, they perform to their optimum by engaging towards their roles. Despite that, some employees still decide to leave the organisation at some point in time (Baysinger & Mobley, 1983; Khanolkar, 2013; Shaw, 2005).

This might be due to stressors associated with compatibility between them and their organisation (Mobley, 1982; Silverthorne, 2004). According to Bindl and Parker (2011) internalization of organisational values and goals are argued to contribute to EE towards their organisations. This was supported by a research done by Juhdi, Pa'wan, and Hansaram (2013) which found that P-O fit correlated with EE at $r=.406$ ($p<.01$).

Bono and Judge (2003) focused on employees who were engaged in their work. They suggested that employees who perceived that their personal values are consistent with those of the organisation are more likely to be engaged.

Additionally, according to Bindl and Parker (2011) as well as Memon, Salleh and Baharom (2014), organisational applications that include values of the organisation that are applied to employees' leads to the engagement of employees. Thus, it is expected that these employees' will not only perform effectively but go the extra mile by exerting extra effort.

2.4.3 Turnover intention and employee engagement

Researchers of EE have found significant relationships with TI (Corporate Leadership Council, 2004; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Kuller, Mark, Rees, Soane & Truss, 2008). Research on EE revealed a strong correlation between TI and EE (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008).

Towers (2003) report indicated that 66% of employees who are engaged reported that they had no plans to leaving their current organisation, while only 3% of them were actively searching for jobs. Additionally, Shuck and Wollard (2010) also found that employees who experience engagement are more likely to remain with their company.

These findings are similar the research done by Corporate Leadership Council (2004) which found that workers who are engaged were 87% less likely to leave the organisation as compared to those who are not engaged. Thus, according to Elangoven (2001) EE is an immediate antecedent of intention to quit. Therefore, organisations must ensure that they have an engaged workforce in order to retain valuable employees.

2.4.4 Employee engagement as a mediator between P-O fit and Turnover intention

Employees and organisational environment can have an impact on organisational outcomes as well as how individuals behave in the workplace (Chatman, 1989; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). The findings indicated that EE mediated the correlation between intention to quit and P-O fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Moreover, Lewins (1951) field theory also argues that when employees perceive a good fit with their organisation, they are more likely to be engaged in their job.

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) explains that in a reciprocal relationship, when an individual finds a fit between his norms and values with that of his organisation, he will become more engaged with his job and organisation (Cook, Cheshire, Rice & Nakagawa, 2013; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Homans, 1961; Kim, Aryee, Loi & Kim, 2013; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Most researchers have consistently found similar results (Juhdi, et al., 2013; Saks, 2006; Memon et al., 2014; Takawira, Coetzee & Schreuder, 2014). Biswas and Bhatnagar (2013) studies showed that EE mediates the interactions between P-O fit and TI.

2.4.5 Implications on talent management

A study conducted by Hoogervorst (2009) examined talent retention, by investigating whether talent management influences talented employees' willingness to leave the organisation. Although the findings show that talent management aims to reduce TI, regression analyses point out that a direct effect between these variables does not exist (Lockwood, 2006; Probst, Raub & Romhardt (2000).

The report completed by MacLeod and Clarke (2009) after surveying 201 organisations, for example, proved to be one of the most significant in its findings about EE. It demonstrated significant organisational benefits from effectively engaging a workforce including higher customer advocacy and productivity; and concluded that high levels of EE were important because they correlated with performance (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009).

Additional evidence from the CIPD, the US Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) (2012) shows the case for investing in talent and the potential for improvements in EE (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Lockwood, 2006).

Although it is acknowledged that other research on TI argues that just increasing the amount of talent management practices does not lead to less TI of talented employees (Hoogervorst, 2009). By combining research from EE and P-O fit and TI areas it is possible to highlight strategies and approaches to talent management that becomes self-reinforcing.

These are concerned with selecting the right individuals who fit well with the organisation, creating a culture in which both talent and engagement can emerge and leaders and managers, who understand, can articulate and put in place talent management practices, which ensure the development of a workforce that is both talented and engaged. Based on the above-mentioned integration of constructs under study and implications of talent management the following model is proposed.

2.4.6 Proposed conceptual model and overview of mediation

Based on the previous research done by Kristof-Brown et al. (1996) regarding P-O fit, the proposed model focuses on P-O fit in terms of value and goal congruence, were used. The proposed conceptual model was derived from SET and Lewin's field theory. Figure 1 shows the proposed model.

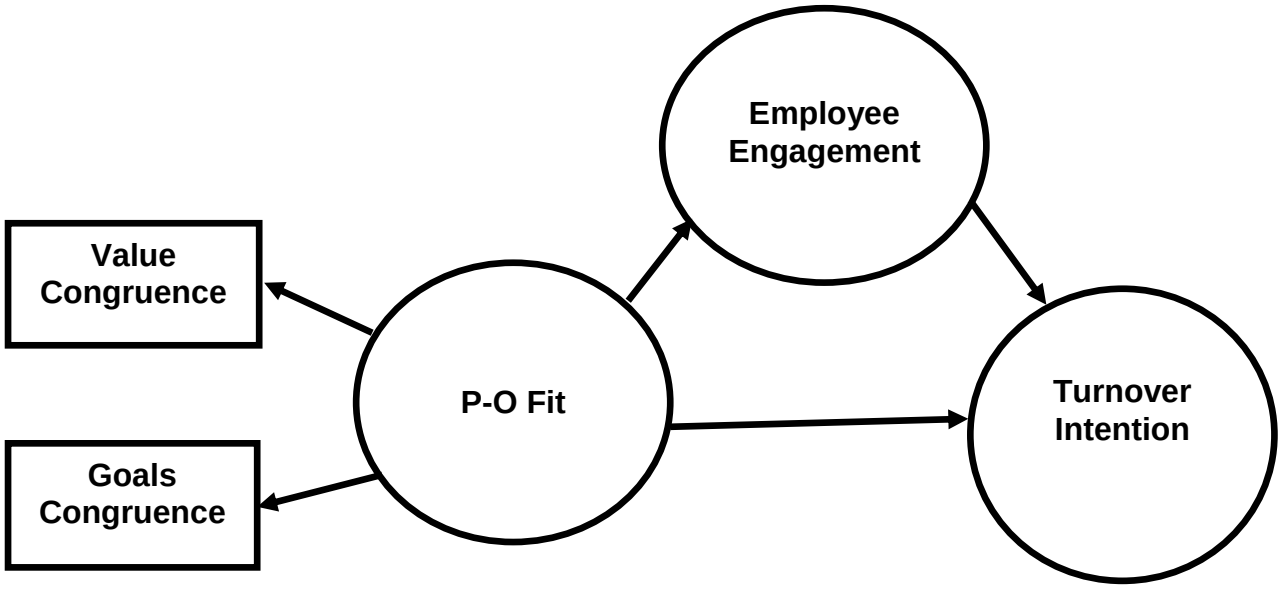


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

Talent retention is currently an international challenge faced by organisations with an increasingly diverse workforce. Therefore, in order for an organisation to be dominant and sustain a long lasting competitive advantage in the global economy, it needs to customise its approach to talent management so as to retain human capital. This research aims to explore the interaction between P-O fit and TI and to understand the influence of EE as a mediator.

In order to test for mediation, the following steps, as outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) were followed; firstly, the independent and mediating variables must be significantly related; secondly, there must be a significant relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable; thirdly, the effect of the independent variable on the dependant variable will significantly decrease when the mediator is introduced. In order to achieve this purpose, the following research hypotheses are proposed;

2.5 Research hypotheses

H1: There will be a significant negative correlation between P-O fit and TI.

H2: There will be a significant negative correlation between EE and TI.

H3: There will be a significant positive correlation between person-organisation-fit and EE.

H4: EE will mediate the relationship between person-organisation-fit and TI

3. CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The chapter outlines the research methods techniques applied in this research. It outlines the research design of the current study, the sample and sampling techniques applied, procedure followed to obtain the data, psychometric instruments used during the data collection phase, and statistical methods applied.

3.1 Research design

The researcher applied a non-experimental, quantitative, and correlational, cross sectional design. Correlational research involves quantitatively studying the relations between and among variables. While this type of study can help determine if two variables have a relationship, it does not allow researchers to determine if one variable causes changes in another variable (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2010).

Cross-sectional studies are usually relatively inexpensive and allow researchers to collect a great deal of information from a huge pool of participants within a short period of time (Bernard, 2013). While cross-sectional studies cannot be used to determine causal relationships they can provide a useful foundation to further research. Researchers might utilise a cross-sectional study to look for clues that will serve as a useful tool to guide further studies (Hennekens & Buring, 1987; Bernard, 2013).

3.2 Sample and sampling

The sample for this study consisted of 426 participants from various military units within the SANDF who volunteered to participate in the study. These units are Northern Military Police and Military Academy. The sample as indicated on table 1 (below) was diverse in race with Africans constituting the majority of the respondents with 77.7% followed by coloureds 10.8% and whites 8.5%. Majority were single/not married accounting 67.8% as compared to their married counterparts with 27.9%.

The sample consisted of mostly males. They accounted for 63.6% of the sample and 36.4% were females. The sample's age ranged between 18 and 59 years (M=30.75, SD=7.48). When it comes to years of service most participants worked on average 9.85 years (SD=6.73) with the least experienced participants having one (1) year and most experienced having 39 years. Regarding level of education, 85.2% finished matric and or a diploma while 5.2% held a degree. According to Aiken and West (1991) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) in order to conduct a mediation analysis a sample size of 104 is sufficient.

This study used non probability convenience sampling. Tongco (2007) defines convenience sampling as a method that relies on data collection from population members who are conveniently available to participate in a study. The researcher opted for convenience sampling because it is very easy to carry out or to collect data with (Babbie & Mouton, 2012; Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004). In addition, convenience sampling can be conducted within a short period of time. (Tongco, 2007). This means it is easy to obtain the sample size one requires in a cost effective manner. Kidder, Charles and Smith (1991) concur that although this sampling procedure is highly vulnerable to selection bias, data collection can be facilitated in a short duration of time.

Most importantly, although it can lead to under or over representation, it enables the researcher to gather useful information that would not have been possible using probability sampling techniques (Bernard, 2013; Creswell, 2009; Tongco, 2007). Given these reasons, because the sampling frame is not known, Coetzee and Schreuder (2010) emphasise that the researcher must also take caution not to use results from a convenience sample to generalize to a wider population.

Table: 1 Biographical Data

Variables			Percentage	N
1.	Gender	Male	63.6%	271
		Female	36.4%	155
2.	Race	African	77.7%	331
		White	8.5%.	36
		Coloured	10.8%	46
		Other	3.1%	13
3.	Home Language	Non English	89.2%	380
		English	9.4%	40
		Other	1.4%	6
4.	Qualifications	bachelor's/associate degree	11.5%	49
		Matric and or diploma	85.2%	363
		Under Matric	3.3%	14
5.	Marital status	Single	67.8%	289
		Married	27.9%	119
		Divorced/separated	3.5%	15
		Widowed	0.7%	3

N=426

3.3 Procedure

The researcher applied for and was granted ethical clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC Non-Medical). Permission to conduct the research was obtained from Witwatersrand University. Access to the military organisations was granted by the respective commanding officers (see Appendix E). Conditions of access were agreed to between the researcher and the respective unit commanders.

The units were afforded the option to distribute questionnaires online (e.g. survey monkey) or physically through the researcher or relevant department contact. Although both options were given, all participants completed paper based questionnaires. Thus, partakers were asked to complete research questionnaires and a participant information sheet which outlined all ethical considerations for the research. Five hundred questionnaires were distributed, of which 74 were spoiled questionnaires.

All willing participants received the questionnaires which included the covering letter, participant information sheet and consent form (see Appendix G and H). The questionnaires took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. On completion, the researcher collected all completed questionnaires. While capturing the data, the researcher then conducted a thorough procedure to clean the data and ensure it was complete and analysable.

3.4 Instruments

An instrument is a tool a researcher uses to measure the variables being studied (Hassan et. al., 2012). The researcher used instruments which were scientifically proven to be valid and reliable. Below is a brief description of each of the instruments used and their psychometric properties.

3.4.1 Work engagement scale

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-short version) is the instrument utilised to assess EE (Schaufeli et al., 2006). The nine item scale is designed to assess engagement into three constitute components (i.e. absorption, vigour, dedication).

The seven (7) point response scale ranges from never to always/every day. Sample items include: "At my work, I feel bursting with energy", "I am enthusiastic about my job," and "I feel happy when I'm working intensely" (Schaufeli et al., 2006).

This scale has been used a number of times in SA and the Cronbach alpha has typicall fallen between 0.68 and 0.91 (Barkhuizen & Rothmann, 2006; Jackson & Rothmann, 2004; Naudé & Rothmann, 2004). More recently, Bell and Barkhuizen (2011) investigated the scale and found the Cronbach's alpha coefficients yielded were between .87 and .91. Furthermore, previous confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) on UWES have, in general, supported the three-factor structure of UWES-9 in South Africa (Storm & Rothmann, 2003), indicating a well-established and strong construct validity.

3.4.2 Person-Organisation fit scale

Person-Organisation fit is assessed with the three item scale developed by Cable and Judge (1996). A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (completely) was used. A representative item is "my values match those of the current employees in this organisation.'' The coefficient alpha for a P-O fit scale is .79 (Hassan et. al., 2012). This instrument is shown to be relevant and applicable to the South African context with the reported Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .95 (De Braine, 2011). Beasley, Jason and Miller's (2012) study on confirmatory factor analysis and convergent construct validity showed that the scale is a valid measure of P-O fit. Given this evidence, it is concluded that P-O fit scale is a reliable and valid measure of P-O fit.

3.4.3 Turnover intention questionnaire

The TI questionnaire measures an individual's intention to quit. This study used a TI questionnaire developed by Roodt (2004). The questionnaire "consists of 14 items measured on a 7-point intensity response scale anchored by extreme poles from 1(never)-7(always)" (Roodt, 2004, p. 243). Representative items in this questionnaire (Roodt, 2004) include: "How often have you recently considered leaving your job?" and "How frequently have you been scanning newspapers for new job opportunities?" Studies conducted within the South African context by Bothma and Roodt (2013), Martin and Roodt (2007) established that this instrument is reliable and valid and does not discriminate across races. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients yielded .91 and .89 respectively (Martin & Roodt, 2007).

Bothma and Roodt's (2013) study confirmed the predictive validity of the TI scale and found a significant mean score difference with a large effect size. Additionally, they also confirmed the discriminant validity and the results show a significant mean score difference with an effect size ranging between small and moderate (Bothma & Roodt, 2013).

3.5 Data analysis

Regression and correlations analyse techniques were used to determine the interaction between the constructs under study.

3.5.1 Correlation analysis

Correlation is a "statistical technique which determines if two variables are related and the nature of that relationship" (Keinbaum, Kupper, Nizam & Rosenberg, 2013, p.116). In correlational studies the researcher measures variables as they exist naturally for a set of individual cases (e.g. people) and then tests the strength of the relationship between them (Draper & Smith, 2014; Keinbaum, et. al., 2013).

The relationships investigated during a correlational study are measured statistically by calculating a correlation coefficient (symbolized by an italicized, lowercase r), which measures two aspects of the relationship between variables: the direction of the relationship and the strength of the relationship. It is important to note that a correlation does not imply causation between the two variables. Simply put, a researcher is not permitted to conclude, simply because two variables are related, that one variable causes the other (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2013).

3.5.2 Regression analysis

Regression analysis "is statistical technique which identifies the relationship between two or more independent variables and a dependent variable" (Keinbaum, et. al., 2013, p. 119)". Importantly, Keinbaum, et al. (2013) emphasised that the main use for regression is to see whether two variables are related, without establishing a cause-and-effect association but to draw inferences on the variations that exists between the studied variables. Ramsey (1969) and Cohen, et al. (2013) concurs that no cause-effect relationship should be drawn, it can only specify the extent of association amongst these variables.

3.5.3 Testing for mediation

To test for mediation, the researcher will conduct a hierarchical regression together with a Sobel test for mediation. Hierarchical regression, is a "variant of the basic multiple regression procedure that allows for the specification of a fixed order of entry for variables in order to control for the effects of covariates or to test the effects of certain predictors independent of the influence of others" (Hoffmann, 2010, p.12). In short, hierarchical regression is the practice of building successive linear regression models, each adding more predictors.

The Sobel test is a "specialized test that provides a method to determine whether the reduction in the effect of the independent variable, after including the mediator in the model, is a significant reduction and therefore whether the mediation effect is statistically significant" (Sobel, 1982, p. 290). Put simply, Sobel test explains whether a mediator variable significantly carries the influence of an independent variable to a dependent variable.

Mediation is a described causal chain in which one variable affects a second variable that, in turn, affects a third variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Judd, Kenny & McClelland, 2001). Mediation can be either complete or partial. Complete mediation means that "the entire (or total) effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable is transmitted through one or more mediator variables" (Hayes, 2009, p. 321). Partial mediation means "that an independent variable has both direct and indirect effects on a dependent variable" (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Hayes, 2009). The intervening variable, in this case EE (M), is the proposed mediator in this study. It is hypothesised that it will partially mediate the association between a predictor, P-O fit (X), and TI (outcome).

3.6 Ethical considerations

There were various ethical considerations taken during execution of the study. Firstly, no foreseeable risk or harm should come to an individual as a result of participation. Secondly, the participants were told about the consequences of their participation and this is referred to as informed consent (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2010).

In order for participants to give proper informed consent, they were informed of the aim of the study and what the whole study entails before they voluntarily participated. They were also made aware of all the tasks that they needed to do in order to successfully participate in the research. Moreover, all possible participants who agreed to participate in the research were given a participant information sheet and consent form sheet (see Appendix F and G).

Thirdly, participants were informed that their participation is strictly on a voluntary basis. Therefore, participants were asked to give their permission to be involved and participate in the research and they were given the option, to withdraw for whatever reason, without prejudice (Evans, 2007). Fourthly, anonymity and confidentiality of the participants were maintained throughout the course of the research (Coetzee & Schreuder, 2010).

Evans (2007) concurs that researchers must value the privacy of participants as well as the confidentiality of any personal information. In this study, the researcher did not ask for names or ID numbers. Furthermore, although the researcher is part of the government organisation, there is no direct relationship with or oversight of the units that were approached and no coercion was utilised.

Lastly, is debriefing; after data is collected, analysed and interpreted, participants were debriefed and made aware of the results found (Evans, 2007). In this study, a detailed summary report of the study was made available to each organisation that participated upon request. Furthermore, particulars of the researcher were provided to participants who required any additional information regarding the study. After the survey was disseminated, data was collected and analysed.

The proceeding chapter presents the results of the administered survey and discusses them in light of previous work done. Statistical methods used were explained in terms of their strength and weakness based on the literature. Lastly, the ethical considerations taken into account during the execution of the research was discussed.

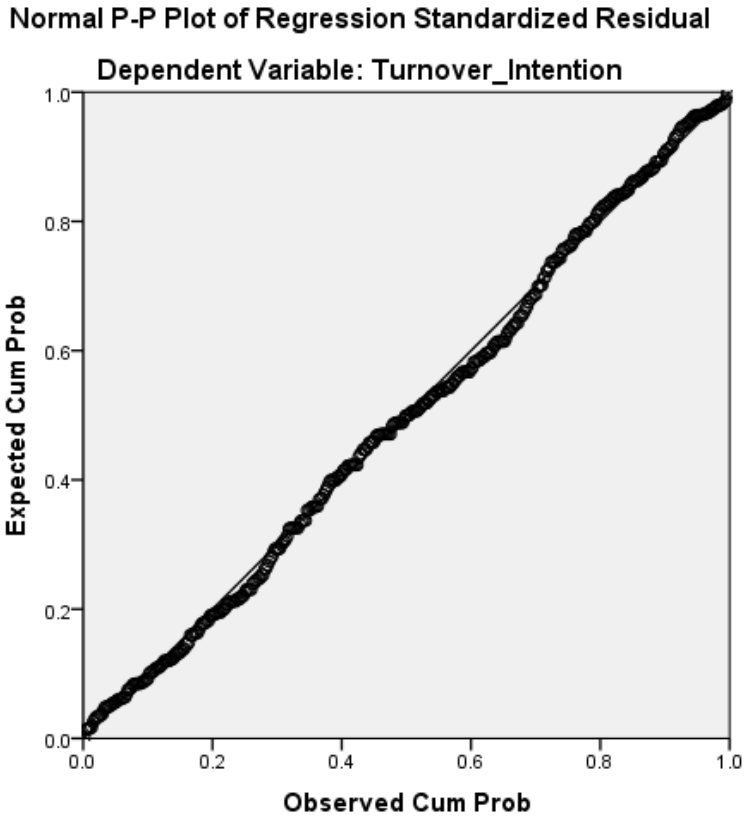
4. CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The following chapter discusses the results obtained from the data analysis conducted for the study. The current research sought to investigate the effect of P-O fit on employee TI with EE as a mediator. Correlation, regression techniques methods were used as well as inferential statistics.

4.1 Test for normality

Normality (figure 2), and homoscedasticity also known as homogeneity of variance (figure 3), were considered (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2006). A Normality plot below (figure 2), indicates that the standardised residuals fit in a normality line. The figure shows that the assumption of Normality is met.

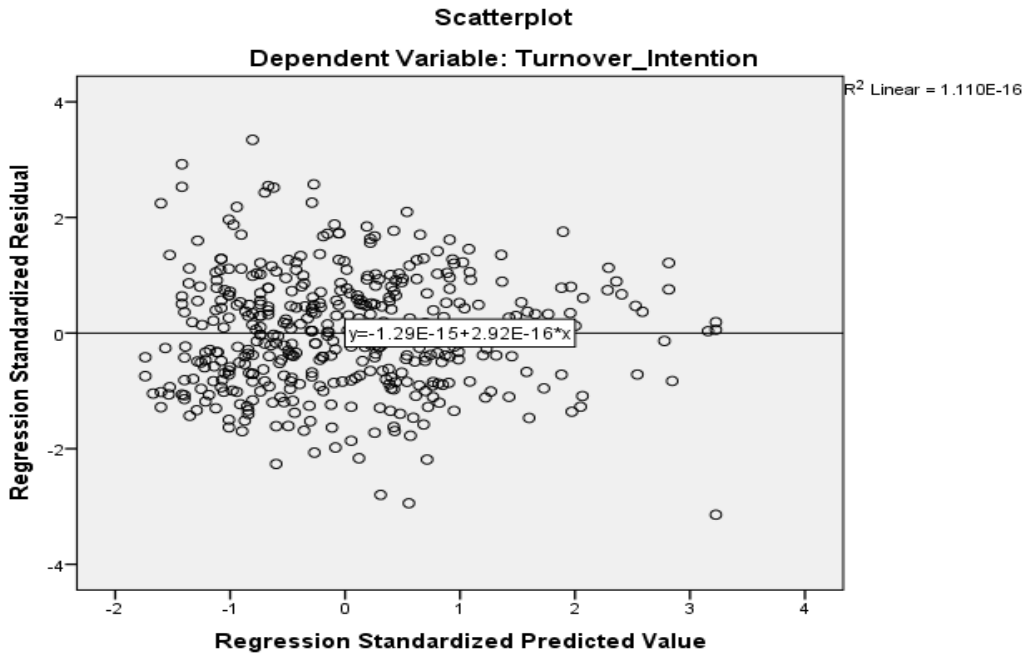
Figure 2: Normality scatter plot



4.2 Test for homoscedasticity

A residual scatterplot "is a figure that shows one axis for predicted scores and one axis for errors of prediction which provides a visual examination of the assumption homoscedasticity" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p.198). The figure 3 below indicates residual scores "a random displacement of scores that take on a rectangular shape" Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p.198). The figure indicates that the assumption of homoscedasticity is met. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) this assumption needs to be met in order to reduce type I and II errors thereby improving the accuracy of the research findings. This permitted the researcher to continue with the application of parametric statistics.

Figure 3: Homoscedasticity scatter plot



4.3 Reliability analysis

Table 2 shows the reliability analysis of P-O fit, TI and EE. The items of each scale were subjected to an item analysis to determine the reliability of each scale. An inter-item reliability was conducted first before the actual analysis can be run. The reliability analysis for person organisation fit scale yielded Cronbach alpha 0.847.

The TI scale Cronbach alpha is 0.870. The EE scale yielded Cronbach alpha 0.907. The reliability of these scales is above the guideline of 0.70 which is acceptable according to Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010). This permitted the researcher to continue with the analysis with a high degree of confidence.

Table 2: Internal reliability analysis of scales

Variables		Cronbach Alpha
1.	Person Organisation Fit	.847
2.	Turnover Intention	.870
3.	Employee Engagement	.907

Note: N=426

4.4 Correlation analysis

Table 3 below show the Pearson correlation matrix, mean values and standard deviations for the key variables.

4.4.1 P-O fit and Turnover Intention

In order to test for hypothesis 1, Pearson correlation analysis was used and the findings in table 3 below show that there is a significant negative correlation between person organisation-fit and TI ($r=-.364$, $P<.05$) with medium effect size between these variables. Therefore, hypotheses 1 was supported.

4.4.2 Employee engagement and Turnover Intention

To test for hypothesis 2, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted and the result in table 3 shows a negative significant correlation ($r=-.490$, $P<.05$) between these variables and with a medium effect size. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was well supported.

4.4.3 Employee engagement and P-O fit

To test for hypothesis 3, the Pearson correlation analysis was conducted and the result below on table 3 shows a positive significant correlation (r=.509, P<.05) with large effect size between these variables. Therefore, hypothesis 3 was well supported.

Table: 3 Summary of Pearson Correlation matrixes

Variables	P-O Fit	TI
P-O Fit	1	-.364**
TI	-.364**	1
EE	.509**	-.490**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Note: N=426

4.5 Regression analysis

In this study, the researcher has applied the Baron and Kenny (1986) framework to analyse the mediation.

4.5.1 Linear regression model

Simple linear regression is a technique in parametric statistics that is commonly used for analysing the mean response of a variable Y which changes according to the magnitude of an intervention variable X (Hoffmann, 2010; Salkind, 2007). Table 4 below, indicates that the linear regression model explained a medium ($R2 \geq .13 \leq .25$) percentage of variance in the dependent variable (Cohen, 1992). The regression model in table 4 shows that person organisation fit explains 13% (R^2= .132 medium practical effect) of the variance in total TI.

Table 4: Model summary: TI

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.364	.132	.130

Predictors: (Constant), Person Organisation-fit

As depicted by Baron and Kenny (1986), before one can test for mediation, the relationships between the independent variable and dependent variable must be individually tested for significance.

Hence, P-O fit and TI were tested within the model and the results in table 5 show that P-O fit is negatively significant with TI (β =-.364, $p<.05$) (25.762, $p<.05$) and F value (64.748, $p<.05$). The regression model for TI is TI= 5.525- (-.364).

Table 5: Standard linear Regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta		
POF	-.485	.060	-.364	-8.047	.001**

Dependent variable: TI

4.5.2 Hierarchical multiple regression

Table 6 below shows the model summary of TI. Therefore, the results in table 6 show that an, adjusted R^2=.254 which shows that 25% of variance is accounted for by both EE and P-O fit on TI. Other researchers also found similar results (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2006; Roothman, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003).

Table 6: Model summary: TI

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.508	.258	.254

a. Predictors: (Constant), EE, P-O fit it

Table 7 below shows the hierarchical regression model when EE is introduced the model of P-O fit and TI. The results in table 7 indicate that P-O fit has decreased in magnitude but is still significant (β=-.154, p<.05). This confirms step 3 (mentioned-above) as depicted by Baron and Kenny (1986). Employee engagement was also significant (β=-.412, p<.05).

Therefore, this means that EE is a partial mediator between P-O fit and TI. Partial mediation maintains that EE (Mediator) accounts for some, but not all, of the interaction between P-O Fit (IV) and TI (DV). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was well supported.

Table 7: Hierarchical Regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta		
Step 1					
POF	-.485	.060	-.364	-8.047	.001**
Step 2					
POF	-.205	065	-.154	-3.170	.002**
EE	-.395	.047	-.412	-8.459	.001**

Dependant variable: TI Predictor: Person organisation-Fit

A Sobel test was conducted to strengthen the validity of the mediation model (Sobel, 1982). Results of the Sobel test suggest that the association between P-O fit and TI is significantly mediated by EE (p<.05)

Table 8: Employee engagement

Model	Beta	T	Sig	Partial correlation
EE	-.412[b]	-8.459	.001[**]	-.380

Dependent Variable: TI b. Predictors (Constant), P-O fit

5. CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter five focuses on discussion and draws conclusions from the findings of the current research. It further provides for the limitations as well as the empirical results. It closes by making recommendations for future research.

5.1 Discussion

A number of hypothesis were proposed to help understand the interaction between P-O fit and TI and further propose EE as a mediator between these constructs. The researcher will explore and discuss each hypothesis below.

5.1.1 H1 confirmed: There is a significant negative relationship between P-O fit and TI

First, with regards to hypothesis 1 the empirical analysis demonstrated the interaction between P-O fit and TI. In the present study the results of the correlation analysis revealed that as an employee's level of P-O fit increases, TI decreases. The results were similar with the research conducted within the military which found that 67.7% of those soldiers indicated a high P-O Fit between their individuals and those of the army, also indicated high probability to remain in the army compared to the 12.2% of those who scored low (Carter, 2015).

The results were also similar with prior research conducted within the civilian sector by Ballout, (2007), Moynihan and Pandey (2008) Elfenbein and O'Reilly (2007) and Wheeler, Buckley, Halbesleben, Broue and Ferris (2005), which found that employees who find a better fit with their organisation are less likely to leave.

Similarly, Hoffman and Woehr (2006) also revealed that the P-O fit correlated negatively with intention to quit. Alniaçik, Alniaçik, Erat, and Akçin (2013), Jung and Yoon (2013), Meyer, Hecht, Gill, and Toplonytsky (2010) found similar results. In other words, as employee P-O fit increased, TI decreased. The aforementioned studies were conducted in Turkey, South Korea, and Canada respectively.

Despite strategies to facilitate a better fit, employees who fit well with the organisation may still leave due to other reasons. For example, a study by Gallup revealed that only 20.2% of employees said they lacked job fit while the majority (32%) of individuals are most likely to leave based on career advancement or promotional opportunities (Robison, 2008). The military research conducted by Carter (2015) found that perception of job alternatives has less impact on TI than for P-O fit as compared to civilian research. Perhaps the difference lies in the mandatory service obligation nature of the military employment contract. That is for example, military retention decisions are not as immediately executed as they can be in a civilian employment. This suggests that EE alone might not be sufficient enough to prevent employees from having intention to quit. In the current study, participants who fit well may still have the intention to leave the organisation.

Furthermore, Giffen (2015) revealed that the coefficient of determination (*r2*) revealed P-O fit statistically explained 57.6% of the variability in TI. However, the nature of the relationship cannot be established. In other words, a possibility that other variables influenced the results may exist. For example, perhaps employees in one division are paid higher salaries than employees from a different division and thus have lower TIs. Thus, suggesting an external variable such as low pay may increase TI. Birdir's (2002) study found that low pay increased employees' TI.

Bretz and Judge (1994), Baumruk (2004) and Richman (2006) contended that for organisations to succeed, a good fit between employees and the organisation must occur. Although company representatives may define the term "success" differently, generally an acceptable measurement of success is profitability although this is not true in the military. Tracey and Hinkin (2006) in their research on turnover costs in the lodging sector of the hospitality industry reported that the cost of turnover ranged from $5,700 (low-complexity jobs) to $9,932 (high-complexity jobs) per employee.

The present study provides further understanding of the interaction between P-O fit and employee TI. Costs associated with employees quitting may be reduced if employees are a better fit for organisations. The military organisation/units could reduce the probability of an employee leaving by ensuring that job candidates are the right fit for their organisation prior to hire and therefore, reduce the costs associated with employees' quitting.

5.1.2 H2 confirmed: There is a significant negative relationship between EE and TI

March and Simon (1958) and Bigliardi, Petroni and Dormio (2005) defined TI as the leaving of one's firm to move to another in order to get better prospects. Although some employees may intend for personal reasons, productive employees intend to leave due to better benefits and remuneration (Carmeli & Weisberg, 2006).

The findings revealed that EE and TI are also significantly negatively correlated. This results supports the previous empirical research done by Corporate Leadership Council (2004); Halbesleben and Wheeler (2008); Kuller et al., (2008); and Shuck and Wollard (2010) which implies that the employees who experience engagement at work are more likely to stay longer the organisation. Similarly, Lyons, Alarcon and Nelson's (2009) study conducted in the military also found that more than 80% of the sample reported that they had no intention to leave the Air Force; however, approximately 16% of the participants reported intentions to leave the Air Force within the next few years.

Importantly, however, these findings could have been influenced by the fact that the research was conducted during peace time as opposed to war time. This could mean most employees are happy, energetic and are less likely to leave the organisation. Hence, the increased levels of EE and less TI. Furthermore, this is consistent with the research conducted within a civilian sector by Towers Perrin European Talent Survey (2004), which showed that 66 percent of employees who are engaged were not planning to quit their jobs, compared to 12 percent of those who were not. However, despite strategies to keep employees engaged with the aim of retaining them, this study also found that three percent of engaged employees were actively seeking alternative employment, in contrast to 31 percent of disengaged employees.

According to literature, intention to quit, has been conceptualised using Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action which suggests that intention mediates the relationship between behaviour and attitudes. Consequently, factors such as attitudes, management as well as available job opportunities may play a part in encouraging a person whether to leave or remain within the organisation (Gubman, 2004). For example, the current study was conducted in military units; employees may not have intention to quit because they are loyal to the organisation which in turn leads to high engagement. Additionally, because of few available job alternatives of the military, they may be less thoughts of intention to quit.

Moreover, the Segal Group, Inc. (2006b & 2006d) study revealed that employees who reported low levels of engagement were 38% more likely to leave compared to 1% of those with high engagement. Supporting this is Ellis and Sorensen's (2007) research which reported that highly engaged employees reported that they had no intention to leave their jobs. Although, this current study reflects a similar degree of turnover intention as those found in a large sample of commercial sector employees, it is still an area of concern given the shrinking workforce pool.

5.1.3 H3 confirmed: There is a significant positive relationship between P-O fit and EE

This study empirically tested the interaction between P-O fit and EE. P-O fit refers to the congruence between the attributes of the employees and the organisation (Naami, 2011). In P-O fit research, value congruence has garnered most attention (Chatman, 1989; Naami, 2011). The social psychological theories about similarity of attitude also confirm that individuals tend to interact more with "similar others" to reinforce their own values, goals, beliefs, and affects. This would result in a shared understanding and perception about events and reduced uncertainty (kristof, 1996).

The findings revealed that P-O fit and EE are also significantly positively correlated. This finding is in accordance with the previous research by (Hassan et al., 2012; Memon et al., 2014) which implies that employees who perceive their organisation as consistent with their personal values and goals will be more engaged in their workplace. Juhdi et al's. (2013) study also found that P-O fit correlated with EE at $r=.406$ ($p<.01$). Moreover, the results are consistent with Bono and Judge (2003) who focused on employees that were engaged in their work.

Lewins' (1951) emphasis that the interaction between employees and their organisational environment determines how individuals will behave in the workplace. For instance, P-O fit theories explain that when employees work in an environment best suited to them, they tend to show positive behaviours (Kristof- Brown et al., 2002). For example, a soldier may identify with the military unit in terms of goals and values and this may increase his/her levels of engagement.

Theory of Planned behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007, 2008) further outlines the manner in which one's intentions translate into behaviour. Work attitudes are effective in nature; they are feelings that an employee has about a given job, organisation, and work situation (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007). In this manner, P-O fit perceptions become the cognitive evaluation of how well employee attitudes are reflected in the work environment. The evaluation made or perceptions held by employees directly affects their behaviours in the workplace (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2008)

Although high levels of P-O fit among employees may lead to increased engagement, Tepeci, (2001) cautions that too much P-O fit may cause lack of creativity and conformity. Similarly, a study conducted both in the private and public sector by Alfes, Truss, Soane, Rees, and Gatenby (2010) found that although employees who fit well with the organisation are more engaged in the workplace, excessive high-level of engagement may lead to ill-health and burnout.

Alfes et al., (2010) explains that competitive pressures associated with private sector working environments creates a psychological burden on employees. Therefore, most employees experienced an emotional pressure because of excessive workloads and the competitive culture of the organisation (Alfes et al., 2010). Consequently, this may affect the general well-being of organisational members who are engaged within the workplace.

5.1.4 H4 confirmed: EE mediates the relationship between P-O fit and TI

The study tested the mediating relationship of EE between P-O fit, and TI. The findings revealed that EE partially mediated the relationship between P-O fit, and TI. This result is consistent and supports the previous research done by Memon et al. (2014) within the Malaysian context.

This implies that when an employee's goals and values fit with the values and goals of the organisation, he or she will become more engaged in their organisation, which, ultimately, increases their intention to stay in the organisation. Thus, such an employee will be more likely to remain in the organisation.

Additionally, Lewin's (1951) field theory emphasises that an interaction between an employee and their organisational environment can lead to different behaviours. For example, when employees' experience a positive environment, they will in return portray a positive behaviour. For example, the current study shows that majority of the participants (67.8%) are single, this means they are able to adapt to constant relocation and deployment of the military. This could have influenced their response because they perceive that organisational values fit well with theirs, which increases their level of engagement and reduced intention to leave.

The SET also describes that in a give-and-take relationship, where "employees' norms and values fit with those of the organisation" (Pervin, 1989, p. 221), this encourages them to be more engaged within the workplace (Peng et al., 2014). This means that employees' who perceive a fit with their organisation will be more engaged and less likely to leave. Supporting this, most researchers have found similar results (Arthur, Bell, Villado & Doverspike, 2006; Juhdi, et al., 2013; Saks, 2006; Society for Human Resource Management, 2006).

A key predictor of TI and turnover is the employees' attitudes in their organisation (Robison, 2008). However, it is possible for employees to report high levels of engagement and better fit and still have intentions to leave. For example, according to Robison (2008, p.119), "the Gallup polls conducted in 2006 found that 75% of the reasons for voluntary turnover can be influenced by managers".

Pay and benefits (22.4%) was the second most common reason why people leave an organisation. Additionally, 16.5% said they were leaving because of management or the general work environment. Much smaller percentages quit because of flexibility or scheduling (7.7%) or job security (1.7%) (Robison, 2008). Gardner (2008) found that salary and perks was not amongst the key influences of JS. Instead his findings revealed that employee appreciation and respect were more likely to lead to JS.

Therefore, this provides evidence that despite ways to recruit employees who fit well and keeping them engaged, they can still have intention to leave due to other factors. Thus, it is imperative for the organisation to take into account other factors such as pay and benefits which has a huge influence on employee prospects to leave the organisation.

5.2 Limitations and recommendations for future studies

This study does have a number of limitations. Importantly, these limitations do not detract significantly from the research findings discussed in Chapter 4. However, these limitations and recommendations for future research endeavours are outlined to ensure that further fruitful research is conducted in field of industrial psychology in South Africa.

Firstly, one cannot determine the cause-effect relationships because of the correlational nature of the study. Secondly, questionnaire limits the participants to only what is being asked by the items to them (Sulsky & Smith, 2005). Additionally, P-O fit instrument used had three items, therefore, this makes it difficult to know if it is measuring what it intends to measure. Thirdly, the possibility exists that individual participants may have responded to questions in a way that would create a more favourable impression of themselves (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). As a result, the reported levels of variables investigated in this study may not have been reflected accurately in the reported research findings.

Lastly, the current study used quantitative research techniques to investigate the mediating effect of EE in a hypothetical model. Qualitative methods can also be used to explore the EE. For instance, interviews can be conducted with employees who are voluntarily leaving the organisation (Patton, 2002). Such studies may give a deeper understanding and insights about the use of EE as an organisational-outcome variable. The combination of such research techniques are needed in order to increase the external validity of this research.

Furthermore, it is recommended that future studies should validate the proposed model by using advanced statistical methods, compared to other conventional statistical methods. This study intended to investigate contemporary concepts. No extensive research has been conducted regarding P-O fit, TI and EE in the South African context. Consequently, scholarly research pertaining to this subject matter was scarce.

While theoretically sound justifications support the hypothesised relationships between the latent variables included in this study, future research endeavours need to investigate similar relationships within the South African context. Replicating the reported research findings may increase scholars' confidence in their reliability and validity

5.3 Conclusion

The proposed framework integrating P-O fit, TI and EE into one model was derived from the two main theories (Lewin and SET) as well as previous studies. The SET and Lewin's field theory, proposed that the fit (in terms of value and goal congruence) between an employee and their organisation may create a feeling of a meaningful workplace. Therefore, encouraging employees to be engaged in the workplace.

A meta-analysis of the P-O fit and TI has revealed a weaker relationship between the two constructs. Nonetheless, there are fewer studies that explain how P-O fit affects the TI. This confirms the need for a variable that will help explain how these variables interact with each other. It was established in this study that EE partially mediates the relationship between P-O fit and TI.

The proposed model may provide new insight into understanding the influence of EE on the interaction between P-O fit and TI. This may aid in informing a more customised approach to talent management, hence improving talent retention. It is therefore recommended that future studies should investigate the proposed framework, by replicating it in different sectors and regions.

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APPENDIX A: EMPLOYEE CHARACTERISTICS SURVEY

Please read all questions carefully and respond from your own viewpoint and experience. Demographic questions asked on this page will be used only for statistical analyses purposes.

1. Age:

2. How long have you worked for your present organisation?

3. What is your job title?

4. On average how many hours do you work per week?

5. Gender

Male		Female	

6. Race

African		White		Coloured		Other	

7. Home Language.

English		Sepedi		Sesotho		SiSwati	
IsiZulu		IsiNdebele		Tshivenda		Afrikaans	
Tsonga		Xhosa		Setswana		other	

8. What is your marital status?

Single		Divorced/Separated		Married		Widowed	

9. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Less than high school		High school diploma		Associate's degree		Bachelor's degree		Master's degree or more	

APPENDIX B: PERSON-ORGANISATION FIT SCALE

This scale measures how well you do you fit with your organisation in terms of goals and values.

	Items	Not at all	Not all that much	Neutral	Well	Completely
1	To what degree do you feel your values 'match' or fit this organisation and the current employees in this organisation?					
2	My values match those of the current employees in this organisation					

3	Do you think the values and goals of this organisation reflect your own values and goals?					

APPENDIX C: TURNOVER INTENTIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

*The following questionnaire measures your intentions to quit. Please put a **circle** on the number that best represent your answer.*

	ITEMS			
1	How often have you considered leaving your current job?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Most of the times
2	How frequently do you scan newspapers for job opportunities?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Most of the times
3	To what extent is your current job not addressing your important personal needs?	To no extent	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	To a large extent
4	How often are opportunities to achieve your most important goals at work jeopardised?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always
5	How often are your most important personal values at work compromised?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always
6	How frequently are you daydreaming about a different job that will suit your personal needs?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always
7	What is the probability that you will leave your job, if you get another suitable offer?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	High
8	How frequently do you look forward to another day at work?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always
9	How often do you think about starting your own business?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Most of the times
10	How often do only family responsibilities prevent you from quitting?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always
11	How often do only vested personal interest (pension fund, unemployment fund, etc.) prevent you from quitting?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always
12	How frequently are you	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always

	emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?			
13	How often is your current job affecting on your personal wellbeing?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always
14	How often do the troubles associated with relocating, prevent you from quitting?	Never	**1----2----3----4----5----6----7**	Always

APPENDIX D: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross the "0" (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

Never	**Almost never**	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Very often**	**Always**
0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
	A few times a year or	Once a month or	A few times a month	Once a week	Few times a week	Everyday

	less	less				

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1. _____**At my work, I feel bursting with energy**

2. _____ **At my job, I feel strong and vigorous**

3. _____**I am enthusiastic about my job**

4. _____**My job inspires me**

5. _____**When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work**

6. _____**I feel happy when I am working intensely**

7. _____ **I am proud of the work that I do**

8. _____ **I am immersed in my work**

9. _____ **I get carried away when I'm working**

APPENDIX E

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 083 8566 875 Fax: 011 717 4559

Enquiries: Capt. B. A. Lekhuleng

REQUEST TO UTILISE NORTHERN MILITARY POLICE REGION PERSONNEL FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES

General

I, 05000872MC Capt. B.A. Lekhuleng am currently a post graduate student at the University of Witwatersrand. I am completing my master's degree in Organisational Psychology.

The title of my research report is “The mediating effect of employee engagement on person-organisation fit and turnover intention.” The primary purpose of my study, under the research supervision of Sifiso Mlilo, is to investigate the relationship between person-organisation fit and turnover intention and to understand the influence employee engagement may have as a potential mediating factor. The outcome of the study may help inform unit commanders of the military police as well as South African organisations in general, on the manner in which these constructs interact so interventions can be developed to encourage valued employees to stay within the organisation. I therefore, kindly request permission to utilise members of military police as my sample. All participants who will volunteer to participate in the research will be guaranteed anonymity and that their responses will remain confidential. The research will be done in accordance with the ethical guidelines prescribed by the Ethics Committee of University of Witwatersrand.

I therefore request permission to invite willing personnel of the Northern Military Police to participate in my study. Your positive response in this regard would be highly appreciated.

(B.A. LEKHULENG)

STUDENT AT SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: CAPT

APPENDIX F

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 450 Fax: 011 717 4559

Dear Sir / Madam

Good day, I am an Organisational Psychology student currently completing my Master's degree at the University of the Witwatersrand and I am conducting research in partial completion of this degree which is titled "The mediating effect of employee engagement on person-organisation fit and turnover intention." This research kindly requests your participation to fill in the questionnaires, which should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. I understand that this is a substantial investment of your time; however, your response is valuable as it will contribute towards a broader understanding of these constructs. I therefore would like to invite you to participate in this research.

Participation is voluntary, and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any form. Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous. Confidentiality will be maintained by not disclosing any information that is of personal nature in the report. I will assign a pseudonym to your information in the report if necessary, for example, Participant A or Respondent B. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time up until submitting the questionnaires. You also have the right to refrain from answering any question should you wish to do so.

Therefore, participation and submission of the questionnaires will be regarded as informed consent. Should you choose not to participate, this will not be held against you in any way. You may email the researcher for general feedback or debriefing on the results of this study. If you have any further questions or require feedback on the progress of the research, please

feel free to contact the researcher and her supervisor mentioned below. Please detach and keep this participant sheet for future reference. Thank you for considering taking part in the research.

Kind Regards

Babitsanang Lekhuleng Email: babyakaposh@gmail.com

Sifiso Mlilo Email: sifiso.mlilo@gmail.com

APPENDIX G

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

CONSENT FORM

I, _____ give consent to take part, in the research which titled "the mediating effect of employee engagement on person-organisation fit and turnover intention". This research is partial fulfilment of master's degree in organisational psychology at Witwatersrand University.

- Participation in this study is voluntary.

- I may refrain from answering any questions.

- I may withdraw my participation and/or my responses from the study at any time.

- There are no risks or benefits associated with this study.

- All information provided will remain confidential (if requested), although I may be quoted in the research report.

- If I am quoted, a pseudonym (Respondent A, Respondent B etc.) will be used.

- None of my identifiable information will be included in the research report (if requested).

- I am aware that the results of the study will be reported in the form of a research report for the partial completion of the degree, Masters in Organisational Psychology.

- The research may also be presented at a local/international conference and published in a journal and/or book chapter.

Signed: _____ Date: _____