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Fostering the retention of talented and skilled employees by understanding the motivators of employee turnover intention from a South African SMME perspective

by

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Supervisor: Dr Robert Venter
November 2023

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis, and in its entirety, is my original work. Any publication or duplication thereof will tamper with the intellectual rights of the author, unless if necessary authorisation is sought and granted by the author or a designated official at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Signature: 

Abstract

Current small, micro and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs) are concerned about understanding the preliminary factors that prompt employees to leave their organisation (i.e., labour turnover intention) rather than to wait, only to be left to deal with the disruptive and costly consequences of ***actual*** *employee turnover. The extant literature has widely provided evidence to justify that employee turnover is very destructive and presents many costs for organisations due to its counterproductive nature. South African small and micro businesses constantly endure high rates of employee turnover as other businesses (especially big companies) are frequently poaching highly skilled workers. This burden has made it increasingly challenging for SMMEs to keep, particularly highly skilled and high-performing employees, whose talents are highly sought after and are paramount to their firm's overall success and sustainability. Therefore, this study was conducted from an SMME context so as to equip small and micro business employers with fresh insights on how proactively adjust their employee retention strategies and foster their continued survival and long-term growth. Moreover, the South African labour market has a limited number of high-performing and brilliant employees who eventually become assets to the business once hired, thus creating a need to retain such talented personnel. The shortage of skilled labour coupled with the high costs of attracting, hiring and training new employees proffers a compelling need for scholars to actively direct their research attention to unravelling this phenomenon of labour turnover intention. Research outputs will positively equip SMME practitioners with the relevant and proven information for them to devise well-informed retention strategies before employees' intention to quit the organisation manifests itself into an actual turnover.*

This study sought to achieve a meaningful understanding of the interplay between the complex relationships that exist between the selected variables and to establish how this comprehension can aid SMME practitioners in effectively reducing employee turnover rate to a reasonable proportion. For this study to establish this ultimate goal, an empirical investigation was done amongst employees in selected SMMEs in Gauteng province of South Africa. A conceptual framework that depicted all the relationships was developed and several hypotheses were formulated based on the evidence from the extant literature. This study utilised a cross-sectional research design through a quantitative-based method. A structured questionnaire was formulated and was administered in-person, and additionally distributed via emails. Data was gathered through non-probability convenience sampling, whereby 338 valid responses were received from employees across the selected SMMEs in Gauteng.

Descriptive statistics (e.g., item analysis, Cronbach's alpha computation) and bivariate correlation analysis were analysed using SPSS v 28 and inferential statistics were analysed through Structural Equation Modeling was undertaken using AMOS v 28. While the findings of this study corroborated the outcomes that were submitted by earlier scholars, some fresh and exciting directions in the associations between specific variables were established. This study eventually submitted a unique conceptual model that depicts the validated interactions between the study variables. It is believed that the confirmed associations detailed in the conceptual model will be used as guidelines for small and micro business practitioners to meaningfully and effectively manage employee turnover intentions while simultaneously fostering the retention of talented and high-performing workers. This investigation concluded by recommending that a similar study must be replicated using a mixed-method approach that applies probability sampling and longitudinal research design so as to address the methodological shortcomings that characterised this study.

Keywords: Employee retention, Human talent, Labour turnover intention, SMMEs, South Africa

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KEY ABBREVIATIONS

Study variables

AC	---	Organisational (Affective) Commitment
JS	---	Job Satisfaction
LTI	---	Labour Turnover Intention
OC	---	Organisational Culture
PCS	---	Perceived Company Support
PE	---	Perceived Empowerment
TL	---	Transformational Leadership Style

General

AMOS	---	Analysis of Moment Structures
AVE	---	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	---	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
GDP	---	Gross Domestic Product
NDP	---	National Development Plan
PM	---	Path Modelling
SEDA	---	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SEM	---	Structural Equation Modelling
SMME	---	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SPSS	---	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TPB	---	Theory of Planned Behaviour
TRA	---	Theory of Reasoned Action

Note: Organisation in this study means SMMEs and therefore these words were used interchangeably

Dedication

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for His goodness, mercy, grace, wisdom and strength that He afforded me to be able to conduct this project, from its inception until its successful completion.

To God be all the glory…..!

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW, CONTEXT AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

Voluntarily-motivated withdrawal of employees from any company is an unsustainable behaviour that can have adverse effects on the organisation's profitability and productivity among other outcomes (An, 2019). The consequences are destructive, particularly if employee turnover includes the loss of workers with valuable proficiencies and it becomes challenging for the company to replace them. Lyons & Bandura (2020) suggested that employees who voluntarily leave the organisation are those who possess critical skills and whose services are paramount to the attainment of organisational objectives as well as the overall firm's success. Moreover, employees who are less talented and possess experiences and skills that are not highly demanded by other employers in the job market usually exhibit less intention to leave their organisation (Powell & Pazos, 2017). Over and above, companies incur high attraction, recruitment and training costs linked to newly hired workers, as labour turnover tends to result in reduced morale amongst the employees that are left behind. Labour turnover can also result in the mental and group disruptions that are endured by the co-workers of the individual who would have exited the organisation (Tirelli & Goh 2015). High turnover rates potentially affect the output of the organisation, and the delivery of services to valuable clients and inevitably, the organisation's sustainability and profitability will be negatively impacted. In most cases, employers are left with the problem of handling the consequences of turnover after workers turn their turnover plans to actual turnover. Extant literature emphasises turnover intention as perhaps the most vital stage before an employee finally chooses to leave the company (e.g., Lazzari, Alvarez & Ruggieri, 2022). Therefore, understanding labour turnover intention before it escalates to actual turnover is an important aspect for SMMEs in South African and the general human resource management discourse.

The burgeoning international labour market has intensified employee turnover resulting in the emigration of talented workforces to more affluent countries. The consequence of the shifts in the world of work has further amplified international competition for skilled workers, thus facilitating the easy movement of brilliant workers through the global labour market (Lyons & Bandura, 2020). Another augmenting feature of employee turnover is the implied endorsement concept, where other (big) employers attract or head-hunt employees from their (smaller) competitor organisations (Ekwoaba, Ikeje & Ufoma, 2015) on social media platforms such as Linkedin. Thus, companies throughout the world are constantly focusing their energies and attention on understanding the reasons that prompt employees to leave their current organisation, instead of taking a "hands-off" approach, only to be left to deal with the disruptive

and costly effects of actual turnover. Understanding the antecedents of employees' turnover intentions (i.e., when employees seriously think about quitting their existing jobs) within the small and micro business context can largely aid SMME human resource practitioners in devising well-informed and effective strategies that are more likely to reduce the rate of actual worker turnover to a manageable proportion (Powell & Pazos, 2017).

Evidence in the existing literature suggests that a plethora of studies have been done to comprehend the predictors of labour turnover (for example, Abubakar, Chauhan & Kura 2014; Engelbrecht & Samuel, 2019). Although current literature is awash with studies on labour turnover, this phenomenon remains a dominant problem for contemporary human resource practice, particularly from an SMME perspective (Powell & Pazos, 2017). A key directional change in many inquiries has been the shifting of research attention from real employee turnover to focussing on aspects that drive employees to leave their organisation i.e., employee turnover intention. This notion is consistent with Nadiri and Tanoa (2010) who submitted that labour turnover intention is when workers voluntarily plan to change their jobs in the near future and understanding labour turnover intention is paramount than unravelling actual turnover. Hence, the deliberate thought process where an individual assesses the current job conditions so as to determine the worthwhileness of their continued affiliation with a particular company was deemed suitable for further investigation.

The intense nature of work relationships has transformed employees' willingness to stay in one company for an extended period (Abubakar et al., 2014). Employers, particularly those in the SMME sector, tend to shy away from assuming long-term or permanent employment relationships with employees due to, for example, the trade union-related and legal responsibilities that accompany such life-long arrangements (Huysamen, 2019). This adjustment in the psychological contract between workers and businesses has led to a drop in workers' demonstration of long-term commitment or loyalty to their current employers and this predisposition has further accounted for an upsurge in individual workers' turnover intentions (D'Amato & Herzfeldt, 2008). This lack of loyalty to one employer has thus significantly altered the employer-employee's contractual relationship.

Previous scholars have made numerous attempts at comprehending the connection between labour turnover and its antecedent factors (e.g., Al Mamun & Hassan, 2017), and all these studies have submitted that turnover intention is the key predictor of actual turnover (e.g., Cohen, Blake & Goodman, 2015). Moreover, the meta-analytical findings from a study conducted by Allen, Bryant and Vardaman (2010) submitted that approximately 45% of actual employee turnover is attributable to their turnover intents. Therefore, extant literature has underscored the significance of understanding the variable 'turnover intention' in an endeavour to predict and perhaps evade actual turnover, together with its undesirable effects on businesses. Owing to the destructive and costly consequences attributable to high employee turnover rates on business processes and its continued existence, SMME practitioners must invent proactive instead of reactive measures that are aimed at handling turnover intentions before full manifestation thereof (Rijamampianina, 2015). The effective management of these turnover tendencies can be realised by creating practical measures that seek to augment employee embeddedness (i.e., loyalty), fostering a culture of creating strong work relationships and increasing worker participation in decision-making procedures while ultimately involving everyone in the attainment of the pre-set organisational objectives. The ultimate objective of deliberately involving employees in different aspects of the business is to make them feel empowered and grow their allegiance to the company for them to affiliate themselves with the organisation.

If SMME practitioners can detect that their employees are in a process of leaving the organisation, then they become better prepared to apply proactive measures that strive to prevent the damaging effects of actual turnover, for example, by using relevant retention management mechanisms (Mamun & Hasan, 2017). In line with Ajzen and Fishbein (1980)'s theory of reasoned action, intentions are the best predictor of behaviour. Therefore, SMMEs can devise effective measures aimed at limiting turnover if the precursors to employee turnover intention are better understood. Evidence in the literature suggests that tackling the precursors of turnover intention remains a useful way of lowering actual turnover (e.g., Garner & Hunter, 2014). Accordingly, it is expedient for scholars to focus their research attention on labour turnover intention, as this will equip small and micro business practitioners to have a better likelihood of altering negative employee turnover-related behaviours, e.g., by improving the work environment, ensuring that workers are satisfied, thus deterring the manifestation of actual turnover (Cohen et al., 2016; Lambert & Hogan, 2009).

Directing research attention towards intention rather than actual behaviour was also profoundly informed by the difficulties in determining the reasons why employees leave their employer after quitting an organisation. This argument was corroborated by Lwendo and Isaacs (2019) who concluded that unravelling labour turnover intention is more relevant than conducting a post-mortem assessment of actual turnover, as this is a practically impossible task to attain once employees leave their current organisation. Thus, if an employee decides to leave the organisation, then there remains little that the company can do apart from assuming the cost of attracting, hiring and training another individual.

Before delving into an articulation of the research problem that propelled this investigation, a critical review of the current labour turnover models is presented below in light of the submissions from the extant literature.

1.2. A critical review of the existing labour turnover models and relationships

The existing literature suggests that the best models on labour turnover intentions and actual turnover have previously focused on the causal effects of variables like job embeddedness and job satisfaction (e.g., Shah, Csordas, Akram, Yadavn & Rasool, 2020). Conversely, other models were established through the use of on-the-job variables like job enrichment, on-the-job training, empowerment, and delegation among others (e.g., MacIntosh & Doherty, 2010). Contemporary scholars have identified that these on-the-job variables do not sufficiently explain employee turnover intentions (e.g., Lazzari et al., 2022). However, other scholars have variously questioned the precision of existing models in effectively explaining voluntary turnover (Govindaraju, 2018; Weibo, Kaur & Zhi, 2010). Accordingly, this study reasonably deduced that most of the existing turnover intention models were usually conceptualised and drawn from constructs like job embeddedness and job dissatisfaction, while there have been limited conceptualisations from the realms of non-work specific aspects that can meaningfully predict turnover (Singh & Sharma, 2015).

In their examination and conceptual analysis of employee turnover, Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, and Meglino (1979) developed a model that assumed that employees' favourable evaluation of their job tends to increase the usefulness of the work while simultaneously decreasing their turnover intentions. Their assessment concluded that even if an employee wants to quit their current organisation, they first evaluate the inherent utility that can be derived from the replacement job before they strongly contemplate on leaving. Mobley and colleagues' model has been widely criticised for including the 'unnecessary' cognitive variables and consequently

failing to add value to the comprehension of aspects relating to employee turnover intention (e.g., Michaels & Spector, 1982; Paul Weibo et al., 2010). Other scholars further contended that Mobley and colleagues' model fell short of accounting for the impact of constructs like organisational culture, commitment, and empowerment on the overall turnover process.

In an effort to provide insights into why employees decide to stay or leave their current organisation, Lambert (2001) devised a model founded on empirical and theoretical evidence. This model suggested that lower job satisfaction is likely to be experienced by workers with negative sentiments on aspects relating to their work environment, thus creating a very high propensity for them to quit the organisation. Some scholars have submitted empirical evidence to corroborate the idea that individuals' educational level impacts their turnover intentions (e.g., Chen, Tang & Su, 2021; Fine & Nevo, 2008). Evidence in existing literature further suggests that if the work does not fully exploit a person's talents, the employee might feel annoyed, underutilised and end up losing the relevance and the required challenge in their job due to monotonous tasks (Ahmad & Qadir, 2018; Alfes, Shantz, Baalen, 2016; Razeena & Bhasi, 2019). However, it should also be noted that turnover owing to perceived over-qualification is best explained in line with the availability of alternative opportunities that may act as pull factors on employees that perceive themselves as too qualified (Zhao, Zhang, Song, Chen, 2019).

Existing literature suggests that it is logical to assume that younger employees tend to jump from one company to another when compared with their mature counterparts (Jahya, Azlin, Othman & Romaiha, 2020; Thomas & Feldman, 2009). The behavioural tendency of moving from one organisation to another is not common amongst adult employees as the cost associated with quitting is usually higher for them, coupled with low prospects of alternative employment, hence providing a convincing reason for older employees to stay in their current organisation (Choudhury & Gupta, 2011). Moreover, older employees tend to have more long-term financial obligations and seek stability in their jobs than their younger coworkers (Jahya et al., 2020). There is also empirical evidence to support the argument that individuals who have spent several years working in a specific company are unlikely to quit, as they tend to be emotionally attached to the organisation and their co-workers after developing wide-ranging social networks (Choudhury & Gupta, 2011). Accordingly, it has been established that an employee's tenure in a particular organisation is significantly and positively related to their intention to stay in that company (Suji, Lakshmi & Dixit, 2020). However, Meyer and Allen (1997) submitted that, while there appears to be empirical evidence to support a positive

linkage between tenure and employee commitment to the organisation, the operationalisation of this association has remained unclear.

Aside from the job-related factors that predict employee turnover intentions, some environmental aspects have been established to be important determinants of an employee's commitment and satisfaction, which in turn affect the probability of them remaining in the same company. In South Africa, risky jobs like mining, cash-in-transit guarding, security response and policing are linked with less job satisfaction and loyalty (Ngqeza & Dhanpat, 2021). Such employees have a high tendency to constantly search for alternative employment opportunities that they regard as less risky. Empirical evidence exists to support the above claim that there is a negative relationship between job riskiness and employee satisfaction with and loyalty to their jobs (Bakotić & Babić, 2013). Extant literature has also identified that employees who suffer from role conflict (i.e., more accountability as opposed to authority) role ambiguity (i.e., unclear tasks) and role overload (i.e., too many and unmanageable tasks with unrealistic deadlines) usually regard their company as unsupportive and this negative impression adversely affects their satisfaction and commitment levels (Parvaiz, Batool, Khalid, AftabFarooqi, 2015; Yongkang, Weix, Yalin, Yipeng, Liu, 2014). Moreover, workers who do not highly affiliate themselves with the organisation (e.g., when they are excluded from the decision-making process) tend to lack a sense of belongingness and this potentially impacts their embeddedness in the organisation (Alshammari, Al-Qaied, Al-Mawali, Matalqa 2016).

It is logical for one to assume that external job opportunities and factors (e.g., better-paying jobs) are pull factors that can trigger turnover intentions, especially in times of economic prosperity, i.e., when jobs are readily available. This notion was empirically supported by Ramlawatia, Trisnawati, Yasinc and Kurniawat (2021) who reported a positive correlation between the availability of external job alternatives and a higher degree of employee turnover intentions. Therefore, current employee job dissatisfaction would be a push factor that persuades such an individual to actively look for other jobs.

Documented evidence suggests that job satisfaction (i.e., as an expression of one's attitudes and emotions towards the job) is a key variable in predicting employee turnover intentions (e.g., Alam & Asim, 2019; Skeleton, Nattress & Dwyer, 2020). Accordingly, this implies that job dissatisfaction can be seen as a push factor that drives employees out of their current organisation. The available literature further points out the fact that an employee's satisfaction with their current job has a significant and negative influence on their withdrawal behaviours

and ultimately their turnover decision (Chen, Hou, Li, Lovelace, Liu & Wang, 2016). Although other studies established a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover intentions, some scholars (e.g., Lambert, Barton, & Hogan, 1999) found an indirect linkage between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, thus further highlighting the inconclusive nature of the existing findings.

Past scholars have defined organisational commitment as a strong reflection of an employee's identification with and strong belief in the organisation's goals and values coupled with the individual's willingness to stay in the company and exert considerable effort for the business to achieve its predetermined goals (Halimsetiono, 2014; Humayra & Mahendra, 2019). Unlike disloyal employees, committed employees are emotionally attached to the organisation and are less likely to leave it (Humayra & Mahendra, 2019). Therefore, it is anticipated that the strong attachment that SMME employees have towards their organisation will significantly and negatively impact turnover intentions (as argued by Els, Brouwers & Lodewyk, 2021).

Existing literature also suggests that transformational leadership conceivably reduces a follower's intention to quit the organisation as the leader empowers their followers to identify with them and the organisation that such a leader represents (Tafesse & Irbo, 2020). Furthermore, transformational leaders tend to build individuals' emotional attachment to their work goals as well as their organisation. More importantly, transformational leadership exhibits an individualised consideration toward followers (e.g., Jiatong, Wang, Alam, Murad, Gul & Gill, 2022), with more focus being directed toward bringing valuable change to employees' work and personal lives. Several studies established that effective transformational leadership has a significantly negative effect on turnover intention (Baum, Yuan, Kong, Yining, Liu, Bu, Wang, Yin, 2021; Sabir, Sohail & Khan, 2011). However, most studies (e.g., Gathungu, Iravo, Namusonge, 2015) suggest that transformational leadership has an indirect relationship with employee turnover and it is mediated by organisational commitment. Hence, this study also found it expedient to unravel both the direct and indirect effects of transformational leadership on labour turnover intention from an SMME perspective.

The above discussion has underscored the fact that previous scholars have combined both attitudinal and behavioural variables to forge an empirically justified understanding of the aspects that predict employees' turnover decisions. Dominant constructs like organisational commitment, transformational leadership, organisational culture, job embeddedness, and job satisfaction have been previously tested in the quest to understand the phenomenon in question.

Moreover, environmental factors like job opportunity and on-the-job training have also been investigated to provide a nuanced understanding of the precursors to labour turnover intentions. Although extant literature is awash with submissions from different scholars, the prevailing inconclusive results suggest that the foregoing literature has failed to adequately and meaningfully explain the predictors of employees' turnover intentions (Els et al., 2021). These inadequacies in the extant literature have highlighted the necessity to provide fresh insights that seek to bridge the gap in the existing knowledge, thus creating a requisite for this study.

SMMEs are vital for the growth and development of any economy and nation; although, sustaining their long-term performance continues to be a huge challenge (Bhorat, Asmal, Lilenstein & van der Zee, 2018). SMMEs are increasingly becoming an important source of wealth and employment creation alongside the advancement of innovation in many countries (Dabic, Stojcic, Simic, Potocan, Slavkovic & Nedelko, 2021). SMMEs are known to occupy a strategic role in uplifting a country's economy (Matekenya & Moyo, 2022) and their contribution is more pronounced, particularly in emerging economies like South Africa where they function as tools to eradicate poverty through income generation as well as equitable distribution of that income. Thus, SMMEs are a strong driver to the realisation of better welfare and quality of life that can be enjoyed by citizens. Furthermore, SMMEs have proven to be key instruments for industrialisation, modernisation and urbanisation (Bhorat et al., 2018). In line with Bankseta (2018), it is estimated that the total economic output of South African SMMEs is approximately 50% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while providing almost 60% of employment opportunities for the country's labour force (Tshikhudoa, Aigbavboa & Thwala, 2015). This further underscores the centrality of SMMEs to the country's overall economic growth development thereof.

Since the apartheid era and post-1994, South Africa has been inundated by socio-economic challenges like poverty, inequality, and a significantly high unemployment rate when compared to the rest of the world (World Bank, 2018). These challenges have been exacerbated by the sluggish economic growth over the past decade, particularly because of the slow recovery from the 2008 / 2009 worldwide financial crisis that resulted in the country's economy plummeting (Thikhudoa et al., 2015). Despite all these mishaps that the country has been confronted with, SMMEs have continuously stirred the country's economy in the right direction, and thus they have been earmarked as the important drivers for the realisation of the socio-economic objectives and innovation – as detailed in the country's National Development Plan (Matekenya & Moyo, 2022). Therefore, the above section has accentuated the contribution

SMMEs have to the country's GDP. Accordingly, it was because of the sterling contribution and strategic role that SMMEs play in uplifting the country's economy and positively changing people's lives and livelihoods that made them the ideal research setting or context.

This study employed a quantitative methodology which is congruous with objective ontology and the positivist paradigm. Data was collected from a non-probability and conveniently sampled 338 respondents across the selected SMMEs in Gauteng province of South Africa (i.e., only in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Germiston). The researcher personally administered a standardised or structured questionnaire while raw data was also gathered through the use of online platforms (i.e., emailing the questionnaire). The hypothesised relationships were empirically analysed using relevant statistical techniques, e.g., SPSS 28 (for descriptive statistics – mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha, and bivariate correlation analysis) and Amos 28 {for inferential statistics – testing the data-to-model fit and analysing the postulated relationships between the variables through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) i.e., Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Path Modeling respectively}. The key finding of this study was that employees' perceptions about the company's support structures that are designed to uplift their well-being play a strong, significant and positive role in determining their intentions to remain committed to their current organisation. Therefore, practitioners must show that they are concerned about their employees' well-being in a bid to increase their workers' commitment to the organisation while simultaneously dissuading their plans to eventually quit the organisation. Overall, the findings of this study provide an incremental and important contribution to the extant literature on employee retention and labour turnover intentions by providing fresh insights into the nature of the relationships between these selected variables. Practical implications were also provided and are expected to aid practitioners in formulating and adopting effective as well as informed strategies that are highly likely to enhance employee retention and possibly deter employee labour turnover.

1.3. Problem statement

The extant literature provides evidence to prove that voluntary employee turnover is costly (i.e., has both direct and indirect costs), is time-consuming, counter-productive and destructive, particularly when high-performing and talented workforces are involved (e.g., Ongori, 2007; Wöcke & Heymann, 2012). The direct costs of labour turnover include loss of skilled or talented employees, the cost of attracting, recruiting and training newly hired personnel as well as lost productivity (Self & Dewald, 2011) and ultimately, this results in an organisation's

failure to satisfy its customers' and clients' needs. This makes the company eventually fail to meet its pre-determined goals, and fail to supply its products or services, thus leading to lost profitability, market share, and competitive advantage – which also has a bearing on the firm's sustainability. Other direct costs may include payment of overtime to existing employees for them to cover work resulting from vacant positions and lost administrative time when trying to re-adjust work schedules, among others (Akinyomi, 2016). Indirect costs of labour turnover encompass the breaking up of teams i.e., the loss of social networks as well as an amplified use of inexperienced and/or 'worn-out' workers, which may invariably lead to diminished employee morale (Akinyomi, 2016). Documented evidence also submits that the talented and highly skilled employees are the ones who voluntarily leave the company instead of those with skills and experience that are less demanded in the job market, thus further depreciating the current human talent in the company (An, 2019).

There is also numerical evidence to show that, over time, there has been a high rate of labour turnover in South Africa. According to Khoele and Daya (2014), the employee turnover rate in South Africa averaged approximately 22% per year between 2007 and 2010. This is in line with the findings of Shoprite holdings annual report (as cited in Warden, Han & Nzawou, 2018) that in 2010, South Africa's retail business sector recorded an average staff turnover rate of between 20% and 25%. According to Stats SA (2021), 90% of the South African businesses reported reduced turnover during the second wave of Covid 19. However, the problem of high labour turnover rates has not subsided and is not only unique to South Africa, but it is global dilemma. For example, the AmCham White Paper reported that in 2011 China recorded a turnover rate that peaked at 26.3% (as quoted in Wong & Tong, 2014). Furthermore, the USA Bureau of Labour Statistics stated that an aggregate of approximately 2.2% of the private sector employees had left their jobs in January 2015 (Trussell, 2015). This is in line with the Great Resignation trend that highlighted that, globally, one in five (i.e., 20%) employees are more likely to quit their jobs in 2022. Previous scholars also estimated that businesses lose up to $100 000 (nearly R1.8 million) for every executive that leaves their jobs (Abubakar, Chauhan & Kura, 2014; Trussell, 2015). According to Larsen (1993), the financial implications linked with labour turnover are undeniable and further depict that it costs a company a projected 60% and 150% salary equivalent respectively to replace skilled workers who quit the organisation with casual workers. This finding is consistent with similar research conclusions in South Africa reported by Sherman, Alper and Wolfson (2006), who projected that the replacement costs of voluntary turnover with non-tenure and professional workers are equivalent to 6- and

18-months' salary. The USA Bureau of Labour Statistics also indicated labour turnover rates of between 50% in 2003 to 61% in 2006, but such rates witnessed a downward trend in 2008, i.e., they were reported at 56% (Guchait & Cho, 2010). India's Annual Sectoral Turnover rate reported a turnover rate of between 30% and 50% in 2005 (Batt, Doellgast & Kwon, 2005). Therefore, the above indicators firmly establish the universality of labour turnover as a worldwide phenomenon.

Research further suggests that when there is an outflow of workers or when employees depart from an organisation, they take out with them valuable information about the company - its clients, trade secrets, current and future projects and history, and very often bring such information at competitors' disposal (Abassi & Hollman, 2000; de Winne, Marescaux, Sels, van Beveren & Vanormelingen, 2019). Thus, if SMMEs fail to take note of aspects relating to the retention of skilled employees could prove fatal as far as the sustainability and survival aspects of the organisation are concerned (Ongori, 2007).

The literature further suggests that an effective and pragmatic approach to reducing the high rate of labour turnover is necessary and this can be achieved by ascertaining the reasons that trigger or stimulate individuals to leave their current employer (Carmeli, Gilat & Weisberg, 2006). Even though there have been several studies that have attempted to address the problem of labour turnover by highlighting the drivers of actual turnover (i.e., the antecedents of turnover intention) (e.g., Allen et al., 2010; Balogun et al., 2013; Jablin, 1987; Mobley et al., 1995), there is still a paucity of related studies in South Africa – particularly from an SMME perspective. Interestingly, although South Africa has significantly more SMMEs than large enterprises, there is relatively little research has been carried out on SMMEs' labour turnover rate (Matekenya & Moyo, 2022; Gialuisi, 2012). Previous scholars have submitted that there has been a high spike in turnover rates of skilled professions, particularly in SMMEs in emerging markets, however, it is disconcerting that there have not been concerted efforts aimed at meaningfully understanding this trend (Effiong, Usoro, Ekpenyong, 2021). Therefore, this study needed to be conducted within the SMME setting in an endeavour to aid practitioners in this sector to gain a fresh understanding of the factors that inculcate turnover intentions amongst their employees. When practitioners are equipped with the verified information, they will be in a better position to take suitable remedial and proactive action to avoid the exhibition of actual employee turnover.

1.4. Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine how the selected variables of transformational leadership, perceived empowerment, job satisfaction and perceived company support predicted employees' propensity to leave the SMMEs in South Africa. Thus, the drive of this study rested primarily on understanding what prompts talented employees to voluntarily leave their SMME organisation. This information was deemed necessary as it was bound to help contemporary SMME practitioners in devising proper strategies that are more likely to discourage the manifestation of actual turnover in their companies.

1.5. Objectives

SMMEs are constantly faced with the challenge of employees exiting their organisation, mainly because such employees continue to search for greener pastures (Effiong et al., 2021). This challenge highlights that one of the fundamental objectives of human resource practitioners in small and micro businesses is to retain talented, skilled, high-performing and valuable employees by creating an environment where such employees are satisfied, happy and empowered (Effiong et al., 2021). Therefore, the retention of talented workers has become an increasingly crucial aspect of modern-day human resource practice within the SMME environment, owing to high labour turnover rates and high costs associated with such employee withdrawals. At the same time, it has, however, become a great challenge for SMMEs to understand employees' turnover intentions before they exit the organisation and even more challenging (i.e., after they leave) to understand what made them leave. In order to bridge the knowledge gap and address the issues identified in the extant literature, this study intended to accomplish the following objectives:

1.5.1. Primary objectives

In an endeavour to tackle the research problems presented above and also deliver answers to the questions that instigated this research, the ensuing primary objectives were identified:

- To determine the extent to which the selected predictor variables predicts employee's intentions to leave SMME employers.

1.5.2. Secondary objectives

To achieve the purpose of the study, while simultaneously addressing the gaps identified at the problem statement phase, the specific objective of this study were detailed as follows:

1. To determine whether transformational leadership style significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.
2. To explore whether perceived empowerment significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.
3. To ascertain whether perceived company support mechanisms significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.
4. To investigate whether job satisfaction positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.
5. To establish whether transformational leadership style significantly and negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.
6. To find out whether perceived empowerment negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.
7. To investigate whether perceived company support mechanisms significantly and negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.
8. To understand whether job satisfaction negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.
9. To establish whether organisational commitment negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.
10. To determine whether organisational culture moderates the relationship between:
    - transformational leadership style and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs
    - perceived company support and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs

1.6. Research questions

The study questions were derived from the review of the extant literature, and they sought to address the research problem, and fulfil the purpose and objectives of this study while concurrently guiding the decisions regarding the suitable research design to be adopted, the type of data to be collected, the analysis procedure to be employed and how the results were to be interpreted (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

1.6.1. Primary research question

Based on the research problem, and in line with the purpose and primary research objectives, the research question for this study was:

- To what extent do the selected predictor variables predicts an employee's intentions to leave SMME employers?

1.6.2. Secondary research questions

The following research questions were designed to specifically charter a way towards addressing the identified problem while keeping within the purpose and objectives of this study, and they are detailed below:

1. Does transformational leadership style significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?
2. Does perceived empowerment significantly and positively influence organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?
3. Does perceived company support significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?
4. Does job satisfaction positively predicts employees organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?
5. Does leadership style significantly and negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?
6. Does perceived empowerment negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?
7. Do perceived company support significantly and negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?
8. Does job satisfaction negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?

9. Does organisational commitment negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?
10. Does organisational culture moderate the relationship between:
    - transformational leadership style and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?
    - perceived company support and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?

It is likely that by providing answers to these research questions, this study will deliver a nuanced understanding of the intricacy that surrounds the selected variables, coupled with their verified influence on labour turnover intention from a South African SMME perspective.

1.7. The rationale of the study

Empirical evidence exists in the extant literature to support the notion that it is expedient to ascertain the variables that meaningfully and accurately predict employee turnover intentions owing to the adverse effects that actual turnover has on businesses and employees alike. Based on the inconclusive findings that have been submitted by earlier scholars, this study (in Chapter 2) identified that the following predictor variables must be further examined: transformational leadership style, perceived empowerment, and perceived company support and job satisfaction. Furthermore, this relationship will be mediated by organisational commitment (although the tests of mediation effects fell outside the scope of this study) and also moderated by organisational culture.

One of the reasons why this study was conducted and possibly its most salient contribution was the formulation and validation of a unique conceptual model that was distinguished from other studies that similarly used quantitative models to reflect the effects of turnover. As a key part that informed the research design, the uniqueness of the conceptual framework depicted a new way of how the variables were related to this study. Thus, the main motivation for conducting this study, both from a theoretical and practical perspective, was that it sought to meaningfully advance our understanding of labour turnover intention and its antecedent factors while highlighting its novel contribution to the broader organisational psychology.

1.7.1. Theoretical justification

This study unravelled the important and challenging aspect of labour turnover intention from the lens of the SMMEs in Gauteng province of South Africa. By so doing, it is powerfully contributed to existing theory within the field of organisational psychology by underlying relevant factors that motivate the manifestation of labour turnover from an SMME setting. As this study highlighted the lack of studies that seek to understand labour turnover intention in SMMEs, this study endeavoured to close this lacuna that exists within the extant literature by extending research and theory in this regard. This was done by bringing fresh insights that seek to aid contemporary SMME practitioners in proactively dealing with the dilemma of labour turnover. Although current literature is awash with inquiries that sought to understand the key predictors of labour turnover intention, much research focus has been skewed toward large firms, particularly from industrialised countries. By drilling down to SMMEs, the contribution of this study lay in its expansion of the current knowledge, particularly in light of the above stated problem.

The gaps in labour turnover literature are apparent, predominantly in developing countries like South Africa (Matekenya & Moyo, 2022). Importantly, the literature-based and unique conceptual framework that was devised for this study and supported by the findings provided a distinctive way of understanding the contexts within which the selected variables are interrelated. Understanding these relationship was deemed necessary for SMME practitioners in their quest of taming the recurrent problem of labour turnover. Therefore, the theoretical rationale and probably the salient contribution of this research rested primarily on the study's ability to devise, present, and justify a unique conceptual framework alongside validating how the conceptual model (i.e., after hypothesis testing) was bound to add or advance the existing knowledge base. By so doing, it served as a useful guideline for future research endeavours on aspects relating to employee turnover.

1.7.2. Practical justification

An understanding of the linkage between labour turnover intention and its antecedent factors was deemed necessary as it sought to provide concrete guidelines for SMME practitioners to confidently manage employees who contemplate leaving the organisation. Understanding this challenging aspect of employee behaviour is indispensable for human resource practitioners in an SMME setting as labour turnover intention is a conduct that precedes the actual step of leaving the organisation. When employee turnover intention is fully understood, human practitioners in small and micro businesses can devise an effective company-wide talent retention strategy that meaningfully combats the occurrence of future employee turnover. Likewise, the findings of this study will afford SMME human resource managers a nuanced understanding of how the selected variables either directly or indirectly (through the mediating variable) predict employee turnover intention. Furthermore, human resource managers in SMMEs will have a solid understanding of how to use organisational culture to foster employee retention. Therefore, there is merit in conducting this study as it proffers valuable insights to SMME practitioners on how to confidently tackle the challenge of voluntary labour turnover by taking relevant steps before its actual manifestation.

1.8. Outline of the study

- Chapter 1 was reserved for introducing this study and creating a strong contextual background. In so doing, this chapter pondered on the major models and theories of labour turnover and reviewed their relevance and shortcomings in light of the existing literature. Thereafter, the research problem was stated, and then the study purpose, objectives and questions were detailed to provide this project with the required focus and direction. Finally, this chapter justified the usefulness of conducting this study by underscoring its empirical value from both theoretical and practical contexts – from an SMME perspective.

- Chapter 2 provides a detailed account of how the research variables were conceptualised in light of the existing literature. Therefore, it is in Chapter 2 that the study constructs were reviewed from what is already known – i.e., as per the previously submitted research findings. This chapter concentrated on (i) the theoretical underpinning of this study (i.e., highlighted the theories and models that grounded this study) and (ii) empirical underpinning which essentially provided a review of the study variables in line with the empirical evidence from the current literature.

- Chapter 3 introduces the conceptual framework that encapsulated all the relationships (i.e., hypotheses) that were later subjected to significance testing. Hypotheses development (i.e., justifying the relationships between the variables in light of the existing literature) was the initial step before the formulation and presentation of the conceptual framework. It was also from the hypotheses development that the study hypotheses were drawn and at this stage, these suppositions were only stated while reserved for further empirical tests at the hypotheses testing time.

- Chapter 4 explained the methodology that was used when conducting this study by explicating how the research problem was methodically unravelled. The research philosophy highlighted that this study followed an objective ontology while guided by positivist epistemological ideals. Furthermore, the research design that befitted this study was discussed in this chapter. The design further elaborated on the research strategy, sampling approach, and questionnaire design alongside the technique that was utilised for data collection.

- Chapter 5 expounds on the analysis of data collected for this study. This includes aspects like data processing (editing of raw data, coding for the non-precoded data, classification and tabulation). This chapter also details how the edited and cleaned data was analysed, either descriptively (i.e., through SPSS 28 for computation of the mean, standard deviation, Cronbach alpha values and the bivariate Pearson's inter-construct correlation) or inferential analysis (i.e., through Amos 28 utilising Structural Equation Modelling which involved Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Path Modelling). Finally, this chapter touches on how the moderation analyses were conducted using SPSS extension of PROCESS Procedure 4.0.

- The results from the data analysis section were presented in Chapter 6. At this stage, the findings were only reported, and interpretation of these results was reserved for the next chapter (i.e., Chapter 7).

- Chapter 7 was kept for providing a discussion of the findings of this study. In this manner, the results were evaluated, explained and contextualised within the submissions from previous scholars, thus painting a broader picture in light of the study

findings and those from current literature. The interpretation of the results sought to attach meaning to what the results from the data analysis section were implying while simultaneously drawing the main findings and directing considerable attention to them. Moreover, much emphasis was also placed on highlighting whether the results were supported or rejected. This chapter ends by presenting the final best-fit model that was supported by the findings of this study.

- Chapter 8 delivers a discussion of the study's contributions in light of its rationale that was presented in Chapter 1. Managerial implications were also highlighted in this chapter and these 'take away' suggestions for practitioners were done in light of the findings of this study. This chapter also noted the limitations that specifically made this study fall short in terms of both internal and external validity. It was from these restraints that guidelines for future research endeavours were drawn. Finally, the conclusion of this study was used to synthesise all the key aspects that stood out and accordingly deserved outright attention.

1.9. Chapter summary

This chapter delivered a broad overview of labour turnover intention and its predictors in a way that lay a foundation upon which the latter parts of this research were grounded on. The major models and theories underlying labour turnover were critically reviewed to provide a strong historical context to this study. The research problem was set out by identifying the gaps that exist in the current literature. Furthermore, in order to provide the necessary focus and direction that this study deserved, the research purpose, objectives and questions were specified. Finally, the rationale of this study was provided – from an SMME perspective, thus highlighting its empirical importance from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

The next chapter provides a review of the current literature by explaining the theoretical grounding of this study alongside the empirical grounding on how the variables were conceptualised by earlier scholars.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a critical review of the major writings from previous scholars relative to the selected variables for this study. The discussion and analysis of the published information on the subject at hand were necessary as they synthesised and critiqued the existing literature regarding the phenomenon in question while broadening our understanding of the study topic. It was through the literature review that the direction of this study was designed, and this later facilitated the creation of the study purpose, objectives, and questions which were linked to the hypotheses. Additionally, the literature review helped in revealing the current theories and in identifying the variables relevant for further examination. Therefore, the review of literature facilitated the formulation of the theoretical framework while concurrently shedding light on the empirical aspects that underpinned this study.

Before exploring the theoretical review, this study provided a brief outline of the key concepts that were used in this investigation. The next section provides a brief account of SMMEs, with greater emphasis being placed on the South African small and micro business environment.

2.2. Overview of SMMEs

According to the South African National Small Business Act, Act No. 102 of 1996, SMME means small, medium, and micro-enterprises. Also termed small businesses, SMMEs are positioned to be vehicles that can be used to generate new jobs and contribute approximately 34% to innovation and economic growth (i.e., Gross Domestic Product) (Bhorat et al., 2018). As indicated by the National Development Plan (NDP), it is envisioned that SMMEs will generate 90% of the 11 million jobs in South Africa and it is also envisioned that this sector will contribute between 60% to 80% of the country's overall GDP by 2030 (Lukhele & Soumonni, 2020). In South Africa, the SMME sector provides very lucrative and largely untapped market opportunities for the achievement of socio-economic goals (Lukhele & Soumonni, 2020). In 2014, a new Ministry of Small Business Development was established in an attempt to put programmes, strategies and policies in place to foster their sustainability and create an enabling environment for small and micro businesses (Matekenya & Moyo, 2022).

Despite the government putting support mechanisms for SMMEs to thrive, this sector has performed poorly as shown by the high failure rate due to primarily a lack of entrepreneurial expertise in business growth and development (Bowmaker-Falconer & Herrington, 2020). High SMME failure rates have also been attributable to a lack of sufficient innovation owing to their inability to secure sufficient funding for research and development costs (Furawo &

Scheepers, 2018). The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor shows that the worldwide business discontinuance rate ranged around 4.9% in 2021/2021 compared to a 3.5% start-up rate within the same period. Therefore, this indicates that high business failure rates outweigh the rate at which new start-ups are created. According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor for 2021/2022, which measured the worldwide entrepreneurial landscape for new business start-ups and expansion, South Africa ranked 49th out of 54 participating countries (Bowmaker-Falconer & Herrington, 2022).

2.2.1. Shortage of the right skill sets

Evidence in the literature suggests that the South African SMMEs currently encounter difficulties in securing talented employees as highly skilled individuals are employed by large private sector companies or the public sector (Matekenya & Moyo, 2022). As a result, SMMEs face challenges of employee-skills shortage as they usually cannot afford to pay high salaries due to their restricted financial access and means (Furawo & Scheepers, 2018). As the demand for some skills far outstrips the supply, SMMEs usually fail to compete with bigger corporations in this regard. This has been exacerbated by the fact that South Africa suffers from an overabundance of under-skilled people, which has been evident in a high number of underskilled people, despite, in some instances, the economy creating several job opportunities (Furawo & Scheepers, 2018). Therefore, the superfluity of unemployable people has intensified the pressures that SMMEs face in securing the right talent for their businesses. Here, the South African entrepreneurial ecosystem has a significant role to play through training, coaching and mentoring efforts. Nonetheless, the skills scarcity remains a huge impediment to having an employee base with the right skills (Bvuma & Marnewick, 2020).

The next section provides a theoretical review by concretely examining the theory that has accumulated in light of the phenomenon at hand.

2.3. THEORETICAL REVIEW

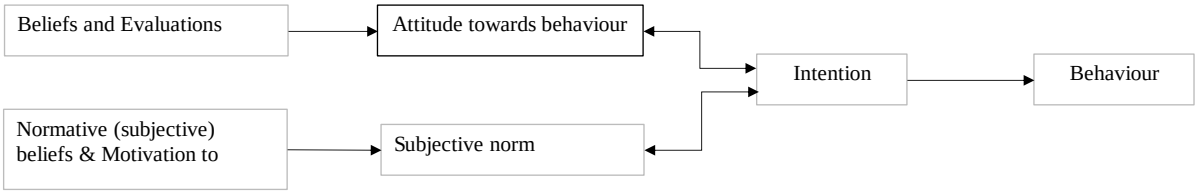
The goal of the theoretical review was to reveal the current theoretical perspectives relevant to the problem that further propelled this study. Therefore, the applicability of these theories or models will be presented and how insights from them guided this study in the right direction.

2.3.1. The Theory of Reasoned Action

By 1990, Ajzen and Fishbein had conceptualised the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and its fundamentals were rooted in the field of social psychology. The formulation of the TRA was done as a way of trying to predict the discrepancy between attitude and behaviour, i.e., how and why people's beliefs alter the way they act (Otieno, Liyayla & Odongo, 2015). It was rooted in the assumption that people generally behave sensibly, i.e., they consider available information to effectively weigh the repercussions of their actions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980). Therefore, the theory assumes that, *ceteris paribus,* (i.e., other things equal), individuals are likely to act in line with their intentions. Literature suggests that behaviour can either be vocally expressed or can also be non-verbal, for example, body language. The TRA assumes that intentions are immediate aspects that accurately predict voluntary action or behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010), although the motives behind these intentions remain vague largely due to the psychological nature that surrounds the individuals when taking the relevant action (Otieno et al., 2015). Within the TRA framework, behavioural intention, which mainly predicts behaviour, is a function of two variables, which include (i) attitudes (i.e., positive or negative evaluation of executing a specific behaviour), and (ii) subjective norms (i.e., the perceived impacts that other people may have) (Fishbein, 2008). Thus, an individual's intention to behave in a particular way lies in their 'attitude' toward the behaviour in question together with their perceptions of the 'social pressures' around them (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980). Consistent with Fishbein and Ajzen (1980), an increase in an individual's attitude and subjective norms or social factors that surrounds such a person generally results in a stronger intention to perform a particular behaviour.

Due to its highly predictive nature and applicability to varying disciplines, the TRA is now viewed as one of the most prominent theories that predict volitional human behaviour (Nguyen, Hens, MacAlister, Johnson, Lebel, Tan, Nguyen, Nguyen, Lebel, 2018). Figure 2.1 below depicts the TRA, as conceptualised by Fishbein and Ajzen.

Figure 2.2: Theory of Reasoned Action

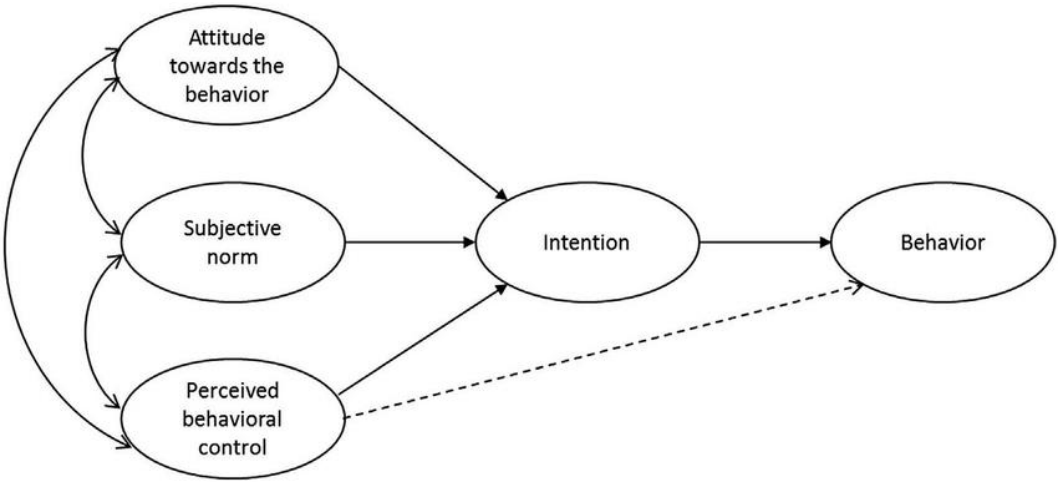


Source: Fishbein, & Ajzen (2010)

2.3.2. The Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was conceptualised by Ajzen (1985) as an extension of the TRA. This theory has been the leading theoretical framework in guiding research across various fields for the past three decades (Hagger, Cheung, Ajzen & Hamilton, 2022). The TPB is widely known by scholars, students, practitioners and policymakers owing to its professed usefulness. The TPB submits that volitional human behaviour is determined by the intention to perform that behaviour alongside attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Specifically, the intention variable was theorised to be a function of attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Figure 2.2 below depicts the TPB, as hypothesised by Ajzen (1985).

Figure 2.3: The Theory of Planned Behaviour



Source: (Ajzen, 1991)

2.3.3. Critique of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

Despite its high predictive power and proven usefulness, there has been no lack of criticism directed towards the TPB. Some scholars (e.g., Sniehotta, Presseau & Araújo-Soares, 2014) have questioned the balance between the parsimony fit and validity of this theory. Others have questioned the assumption that this theory that was conceptualised to be for all volitional behaviours is only based on the four explanatory concepts (Tommasetti, Singer, Troisi & Maione, 2018). Consistent with Sheeran, Gollwitzer and Bargh (2013), the TPB has been critiqued for its exclusive concentration on rational reasoning, while ignoring the inert influences on behaviour as well as the role emotions play beyond the estimated emotional results (Conner, Gaston, Sheeran, & Germain, 2013). Other scholars (e.g., Ogden, 2003) have questioned if the model hypotheses are open to empirical misrepresentation, or whether they are common-sense arguments that cannot be misrepresented. Some scholars have questioned the findings from this theory that suggested that people are more prone to participate in activities they feel incapable of doing or enjoy less as this appears farfetched and would cast more scepticism on the data rather than the underlying theory (Orbell & Sheeran, 1998).

The focal point of the criticisms of the TPB has been regarding its limited predictive validity (Tommasetti et al., 2018). Reviews (e.g., Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020) depict that the TPB does not account for much of the variability in behaviour. In particular, the issue of 'inclined abstainers' (i.e., people who form an intention but then fail to act) has been described as one of the key shortcomings of the TPB that continues to be unaddressed by the literature (Nguyen, Nham, & Hoang, 2019; Orbell & Sheeran, 1998). The other two additional concerns about the TPB relate to its application, that is, validity and utility.

2.3.4. Concerns about the validity of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

The key issue surrounding the TPB is that some of its assumptions are evidently false (Zalabardo, 2019). In particular, the mediation effects in this theory conflict with empirical evidence, for instance, earlier scholars have variously demonstrated that beliefs usually predict behaviour better than intentions (e.g., AraújoSoares, Rodrigues, Presseau & Sniehotta, 2013; Zalabardo, 2019). Another falsified and theoretically indefensible hypothesis is the assumption that all theory-external effects on behaviour are mediated through the TPB as there is evidence that socioeconomic status, age and characteristics of the environment objectively predicted physical action when TPB antecedents were controlled for (e.g., Sniehotta et al., 2013). Gardner, De Bruijn and Lally (2011) have demonstrated the assertion that the TPB is a fully specified, explicit and statistically testable model for describing behaviour is misleading and

have thus recommended several alternative approaches. Other scholars, e.g., Marteau, Ogilvie, Roland, Suhrcke and Kelly (2011) as well as Rhodes and Dickau (2013) have identified several moderators on the relationship between behaviour. The researcher is also not aware of any thorough factorial experimental analyses that support the TPB, which thus raises questions as to why there have not been rigorous (or few) experimental tests done on this theory before. This question is in line with Weinstein (2007) who further warned that using correlations between measures over decades is not an adequately acceptable way of testing a theory, especially if there are other avenues for using more robust designs. Perhaps the reason for this lack of rigorous tests can be attributable to the fact that, unlike Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), the TPB does not hypothesise how people's intuitions change, thus raising further questions on whether this model is really a theory of behavioural change at all.

It has been difficult for previous scholars to formulate replicable interventions to alter people's subjective norms, attitudes and perceived behavioural control due to this lack of a clear-cut theory of change, thereby inhibiting separate and further meaningful tests (Sniehotta et al., 2013). This lack of lucidity allows proponents to reject analyses that provide evidence in disagreement with the TPB. They attribute this damning evidence to an unsatisfactory operationalisation of the theory and infer that the evidence is deficient, instead of welcoming the statistical evidence falsifying the assumptions of the TPB (e.g., Chatzisarantis & Hagger, 2005; Sniehotta et al., 2013).

2.3.5. Concerns about the utility of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

There have been several attempts by previous scholars to determine the usefulness of the TPB as an extended model of the TRA (e.g., Head & Noar, 2014; Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). During the 1970s, the TRA presented remarkable utility by indicating that behaviour was not, as indicated in earlier theories, a mere expression of individual attitudes (Guo, Johnson, Unger, Lee, Xie, Chou, Palmer, Sun, Gallaher & Pentz, 2007). It was thus anticipated that the new explanatory ways (i.e., intention and subjective norm) contributed to the advancement of knowledge (Guo et al, 2007). Three decades later, the extension of the TRA (i.e., the TPB) appears to have lost its utility. This is because recent scholars have claimed that it does not aid practitioners in developing valuable interventions (Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). This implies that the TPB no longer creates realistic experimental tests and no longer provides explanatory hypotheses that meaningfully differ from other existing theories (Sutton, 2002; Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020). Therefore, other scholars have argued that the TPB has turned out to be an empty bucket to tick the box that empirical studies must be theory-based (Ulker-Demirel &

Ciftci, 2020). For example, recently it has become highly unlikely to learn something new on TPB-related studies, and accordingly, in practice, this field has already taken a different direction.

Nowadays scholars and other scientists have resorted to using the 'extended' versions of this theory, by adding variables that self-regulate behavioural change strategies while elaborating around the TPB (Sniehotta et al., 2014). By doing so, scholars and scientists essentially indicate that they doubt that the TPB (i.e., in its original form) offers a satisfactory explanation for individual behaviour and thus it must be altered or extended. However, Sniehotta et al., (2014) further opined that 'extended-TPB' models will do a disservice to the original model, as such model deliver superfluous support for the model that would have expanded beyond recognition. Even Ajzen (2011) also acknowledged that although the TPB has made considerable progress since it was introduced, times have changed, and so has research. Abandoning this 'outdated' theory may thus be a step in the right direction as the TPB is no longer a credible theory of behaviour or behavioural change and thus must be granted its well-merited retirement.

Based on the above discussion, contemporary behavioural research needs the development of a new theory for testing modern-day and falsifiable hypotheses. This will aid scholars, practitioners and relevant stakeholders alike in effectively explaining the behavioural phenomena while helping in the formulation of appropriate interventions. These theories must also define their range, i.e., in terms of their projected applications, which must be empirically validated, instead of obliquely making untenable assertions, for example, claiming that a particular theory can explain all human-related behaviours. As suggested by Presseau, Tait, Johnston, Francis and Sniehotta (2013), the more we postpone the retirement of the TPB, the longer we delay the breakthrough of a better alternative to this theory.

The next section provides an empirical grounding of the variables that were selected in this study. By so doing, literature will be reviewed on aspects relating to the variables of this study to demonstrate existing knowledge and understanding of these constructs.

2.4. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

This section provides an empirical review of the seven variables that were selected to address the gaps that exist in the extant literature. Labour turnover intention was identified as the dependent variable, while the independent variables were transformational leadership style, perceived empowerment, perceived company support and job satisfaction. The relationship between labour turnover intention and its predictors was found to be indirect, thus mediated by organisational commitment. To effectively determine the strength of causality between the studied relationships, the moderation effect of organisational culture was tested. An understanding of the selected variables sought to set the scene for the hypotheses development section in the next chapter. Therefore, this section provides an understanding of the selected variables in light of the existing knowledge submitted by previous scholars.

2.4.1. Transformational leadership style

The available literature on leadership has conceptualised this variable as a multi-dimensional construct (e.g., transformational, charismatic, authoritative, servant, and laissez-faire among others) (Batista-Foguet, Esteve & van Witteloostuijn, 2021). However, in today's everchanging business environment, greater emphasis has recently been placed upon the transformational style of leadership, as it is viewed to be effective in delivering the fundamental catalyst for augmenting the company's competitive edge through effective change management styles (Lewa, Mburu & Murigi, 2022). A transformational leadership style is an approach that gravitates around creating valuable or positive change in followers' work experiences while inspiring them to execute their tasks beyond expectations (i.e., makes followers end up exhibiting organisational citizenship behaviours) (Elmi, Ali, Ridwan & Pratiwi, 2020). For the sake of this study, transformational leadership will be regarded as a leadership approach that is visionary, exclusively considerate, intelligently stimulating and inspirationally motivational (Avolio & Yammarino, 2002). Therefore, a key feature of transformational leadership entails the ability of the leader to influence his or her followers to transcend their performance beyond work behaviours that the company originally expects of them (Podsakoff, Mackenzie & Bommer, 1996; Nasra, 2019).

By highlighting the prominence of the organisation's values, and goals and sharing a collective vision, the end goal of a transformational leader is to make followers see beyond their self-interests, while simultaneously being developed to become future leaders (Nurjanah, Pebianti & Handaru, 2020). In line with Polychroniou (2009), transformational leaders employ a

strategy that strives to inculcate an emotional attachment between a leader and his or her followers (i.e., transformational leaders are emotionally intelligent) to ultimately restructure the followers' aspirations, goals values, and priorities and make them consistent with that of the organisation. The effect of this approach is that followers end up identifying with the organisation (Moriano, Molero, Topa & Mangin, 2014) and are positively influenced by their leader to attain higher productivity levels to the extent of performing duties outside their formal job description (Nasra, 2019). A transformational leader is also able to infuse lasting bonds with followers, and foster relationships that are predicated on trust, mutual respect and emotional attachment (Ghasabeh & Provitera, 2017). Establishing such unique bonds elevates employees' attachment to the leader and subsequently the organisation; thus, negatively influencing their desire to leave the organisation (Gyensare, Kumedzro, Sanda & Boso, 2017). Therefore, in line with Ribeiro, Yücel and Gomes (2018), the concept of transformational leadership is about injecting good ethical standards, building trust in employees, developing and nurturing positive values, instilling favourable opinions, and ensuring that followers achieve their self-actualisation goals (e.g., climbing the corporate ladder) and realising the long-term organisational objectives (e.g., high productivity).

Transformational leadership has been conceptualised as a four-dimensional construct. In line with Bass (1985), the four components of transformational leadership include, i.e., intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, inspirational motivation and idealised influence. Available research suggests that transformational leaders adopt the method of intellectual stimulation through the use of activities that motivate followers to become more innovative and creative while simultaneously challenging their values and beliefs – including those of the leader and the company at large (Bass, 1985; Ribeiro et al., 2018). Transformational leaders equip followers with relevant skills for them to effectively apply insight and intuition when evaluating problems so that such individuals can intelligently resolve organisational problems (Ribeiro et al., 2018). This implies that intellectual stimulation inspires followers to engage in independent thinking and espouse new ways of doing their tasks while enabling them to become more proactive and take the initiative to resolve complex enterprise problems (Rad, Shahi & Fazeli, 2021). Due to intellectual stimulation, followers develop into becoming more creative and imaginative, and this helps them to continuously devise new and relevant ways of dealing with organisational problems, instead of using outdated ways for solving new problems (Rad et al., 2021). Intellectual stimulation, therefore, gives followers an intellectual capacity to

challenge existing organisational ways of doing things and assumptions and paves way for fresh insights and solutions.

Individualised consideration entails a leader actively listening and providing tailored attention to specific followers within the group, as well as formulating a supportive atmosphere for them (Khalil & Sahibzadah, 2017). This feature allows the leader to pay specific or specialised attention to each member's actual needs, instead of applying a generic-type approach to addressing all the followers' needs. If need be, the leader can identify individuals who require special coaching needs for them to realise their self-actualisation goals (as per Maslow 1943's hierarchy of needs). Such a leader also makes concerted efforts to offer his or her followers the much-needed attention, direction, advice, and ultimately feedback about their personal needs and level of self-development. In achieving this, transformational leaders elevate their expectation levels while simultaneously increasing the amount of confidence in their followers so as for them to assume greater levels of responsibility (Hasib, Eliyana, Arief & Pratiwi, 2020).

As conceptualised by Bass (1985), inspirational motivation is when a transformational leader stimulates his or her members to know and embrace the company's vision, mission values, and goals while ensuring that followers are committed to them. To achieve this, a transformational leader communicates high hopes to members, in a way that stirs followers into becoming more involved in and devoted to the efforts targeted at accomplishing a shared organisational vision (Chebon, Aruasa & Chirchir, 2019). Moreover, transformational leadership style rejuvenates team spirit and subsequently results in positive behaviour, greater motivation and increased productivity amongst followers (Hasib et al., 2020). Generally, this type of leadership behaviour can be practically applied through the use of emotional charms in conjunction with stimulating strategies that direct the group members' efforts towards acting beyond the expected level, in the interest of the company (Bass, 1985; Elmi et al., 2020).

Previous scholars have identified the concept of idealised influence as a behavioural characteristic and/or attribute that confers respect, trust and pride in a leader to a point of making him or her exemplary to the followers (e.g., Ogola, Sikalieh & Linge, 2017). Research further posits that transformational leaders can garner trust for their leader-subordinate relationship through the aspect of idealised influence, which can develop into full emotional identification with the company and its culture, and goals, among others (Raman, Peng & Chi, 2021). Hence, the principle behind an idealised influence lies in the leader's ability to promote

high ideals by changing followers' realities, e.g., transforming their needs, values, beliefs goals and aspirations (Huang, Cheng & Chou, 2005). Followers are more likely to be inspired to pursue challenging tasks particularly if they believe the tasks are achievable and rewarding (i.e., no role conflict) as they were set by their role model.

The effects of a leader motivating followers to become more innovative and creative, actively listening, transforming their work and personal lives while providing individualised attention, and rejuvenating team spirit is indispensable in making followers become emotionally attached to the organisation and performing beyond expectations.

2.4.2. Perceived empowerment

The quest for answers on what characterises the concept of empowerment has resulted in several explanations by many scholars in an endeavour to fully understand this construct. For example, the contribution by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) and the model created by Spreitzer (1995). Martínez, Jiménez-Morales, Masó and Bernet (2017) claimed that the notion of empowerment is multifaceted and thus cannot be completely explained by a one-dimensional construct. Extant literature further suggests that two distinct dimensions can be used to measure empowerment i.e., psychological and structural (Eljaaidi, 2016; Gkorezis & Petridou, 2008). As initially conceptualised by Conger and Kanungo (1988), the psychological approach describes empowerment both as a mental state and a mentally enabling feature. Empowered workers are known to accept challenging tasks, and through their persistence, they strive until a certain task is completed (Gkorezis & Petridou, 2008). The structural approach puts more emphasis on organisational practices that seek to grant more authority or delegated responsibility and decision-making power to workers (although managers retain ultimate responsibility), to boost their enthusiasm while simultaneously facilitating workers' participation in the company-wide processes and outcomes. The psychological concept varies from structural empowerment in that it concentrates on intrinsic motivation instead of the managerial practices that can be utilised to augment an individual's levels of authority (Eljaaidi, 2016).

There have been several conceptualisations of the concept of empowerment, for example, Bowen and Lawler (1995) submitted four different dimensions, i.e., giving feedback on performance; performance-induced rewards; effective training that enables workers to contribute to overall productivity; and involvement in decision making so that workers can influence employment procedures and company direction. In line with Kanter (1979),

empowerment is derived from decentralisation, flat hierarchies – i.e., from reduced levels of authority, and workers' involvement in decision-making processes. This implies that if employees are empowered, they are in a better position to influence work procedures and make effective decisions when accomplishing their tasks without necessarily using complicated bureaucratic processes. Although Kanter's (1979) arguments seem sensible, they, however, do not highlight the mental state of the empowered individual (Gkorezis & Petridou, 2008), i.e., it disregards the biased perceptions of employees.

In addition to the above, the seminal work on empowerment also brought forth some contextual factors and approaches that managers can utilise when trying to stimulate and support employee empowerment. For example, Burke (1986) suggested that employees feel empowered if the company sets high but attainable goals, while simultaneously expressing confidence in employees' aptitude to successfully achieve those tasks. In formulating high-performance tasks, managers must also provide an opportunity for employees to participate in the decision-making process, and ultimately offer them the autonomy to perform their tasks, through the removal of bureaucratic barriers that can impinge on their overall freedom to execute allotted tasks (e.g., the seminal work of Bennis & Nanus, 1985). While it is inspiring to set stimulating tasks that support employee autonomy, this activity should be accompanied by a performance-based reward structure that endorses meaningful work engagement and career advancement – i.e., recognising high-performing workers and making it possible for such individuals to climb the corporate ladder (Ugboro, 2006).

This study recognises employee empowerment, as a structural feature that involves sharing knowledge, enables employees to understand the business functions and also aids them to contribute meaningfully to the overall productivity (Mukwakungu, Mankazana & Mbohwa, 2018). Empowerment must thus be treated as an organisation's strategy capable of eradicating rigid control of employees (i.e., tall hierarchical structures that lead to too many bureaucracies) and a tool that encourages ingenuity and reward innovation. As discussed below, this study describes empowerment as a highly intrinsic task-related enthusiasm that is conceptualised on four dimensions: training and development, delegation and employee involvement in decision making.

2.4.2.1. Training: Developing employees' capabilities

Training and development programs (as a source of employee empowerment) are vital aspects of promoting employee embeddedness in the organisation while shunning away any thoughts of quitting (Nguyen, 2019). Extant literature suggests that if companies want to retain key human capital, they must pay solemn attention to investments in the training (on-the-job, off-the-job and career path training) and development (e.g., rotation, coaching, promotion) of employees (e.g., Dewi & Nurhayati, 2021). Accordingly, a successful retention strategy must include effective training schemes. Training helps in creating a desire amongst employees to stay in the company for an elongated period (Dietz & Zwick, 2022). Trained employees exert much of their efforts in upholding organisational growth-oriented strategies like promotion which draws them closer to reaching their self-actualisation goals. Therefore, for SMMEs to achieve their strategic objectives, it is paramount that they invest in employees through effective training programs. This is because this study views training as a process whereby individuals acquire relevant competencies and develop their skills and knowledge or abilities to aid them in meeting their role expectations (Mehale, Govender & Mabaso, 2021). Training can be split between on-the-job and off-the-job training (Bafaneli & Setibi, 2015), as discussed below:

(i) **On-the-job training –** On-the-job training involves imparting job-relevant competencies, skills and knowledge that is necessary for workers to perform a specific job *within* the workplace environment (Bafaneli & Setibi, 2015). According to Bocodol (2008), on-the-job training is a hands-on approach to bridging the skills gap and is aimed at modifying a specific employee's skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour patterns about performing a given task or reaching particular organisational goals. On-the-job training takes various forms, including, but not limited to, job rotations, transfers, apprenticeships and self-directed on-the-job learning programmes.

(ii) **Off-the-job training –** This is about training that takes place in an environment other than the normal or actual workplace. Off-the-job training is frequently designed to meet the collective learning needs of a group rather than a specific individual and acts as a supplement for workplace learning (Pastore & Pompili, 2020). It includes aspects like role-playing, conference activities, and team building among others.

2.4.2.2. Delegation of authority

The literature on psychological empowerment is entrenched in the management theory of delegation of authority and power (Ugoani, 2020). This is an aspect of management that seeks to give employees the right to control and use company resources to realise predetermined organisational goals (Nkeobuna & Ugoani, 2020; Ugboro, 2006). Delegating authority is a type of psychological empowerment that can effectively enhance employee satisfaction, performance and willingness to stay in their current organisation (Ugboro, 2006). This is in line with Nkeobuna and Ugoani's (2020) finding that effective delegation boosts employees' psychological empowerment and their self-esteem, making them believe that they are capable of successfully and autonomously executing tasks. This highlights that delegation is tightly related to empowerment. Lastly, it is worth noting that delegation of responsibility also means that managers retain ultimate responsibility, and thus they remain accountable for their subordinates' actions.

2.4.2.3. Employee involvement/participation in decision making

Employee involvement is the cornerstone of empowerment (Huq, 2017). According to Huq's (2017) model, participative decision-making is one of the seven dimensions of employee empowerment. There is high consensus in extant literature to suggest that involving employees in the planning of their work and organisational outcomes creates a sense of ownership, which ultimately translate into high employee engagement levels, job satisfaction and ultimately growing their willingness to remain embedded in the organisation (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Ndikumana, Tubey & Kwonyike, 2019). According to Khan, Malik and Saleem (2020), a participative climate is vital to promoting a sense of psychological empowerment. The key argument behind empowering workers is that they can quickly decide, without always having to wait for the manager's approval (Huq, 2017). Therefore, the literature suggests that allowing employees to participate in decision-making augments their feelings of self-esteem and improves the process of managing employees, while also creating an overall efficiency of the organisation.

The next section unravels the notion of employees' perceptions of the degree to which their organisation cares about their wellbeing and values their contributions.

2.4.3. Perceived company support mechanisms (PCS)

Perceived company support (also known as perceived organisational support) has been identified in the literature as one of the important elements for connecting employees and their organisations. In 1986, Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson and Sowa conceptualised the notion of perceived organisational support, and they defined it as workers' opinions and views about whether their employer pays attention to their interests and contributions. These perceptions regarding the value that the organisation should attach to employees' contributions include the provision of training, equipment to complete the work or simply, work apparel, moral support and the recognition of the value that employees bring. Consistent with Xu, Che, Lin and Zhang (2005), there are two aspects to organisational support, that is, (i) an employee's view of whether their company sees and values their contributions, and (ii) whether the firm cares about the welfare of its employees. While perceived company support has been extensively studied, most scholars explored its mediating role (e.g., Cheng & Yi 2018; Palmer, Komarraju, Carter & Karau, 2017), and only a few researchers (e.g., Wang, Liu & Wang, 2011) have measured it as a predictor variable.

Evidence from existing literature suggests that employees feel obliged to reciprocate the support they get from their employer by exhibiting a higher level of commitment to the organisation (Satardien, Jano & Mahembe, 2019). Therefore, the concept of perceived company support is assumed within the principle of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) and the context of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). Gouldner (1960) explained the principle of reciprocity as the tendency of human nature to feel obligated or compelled to do something when something good is received, i.e.., returning the favour. In line with the social exchange standpoint, reciprocity happens when workers develop a reasonable expectation to receive a favourable effect from their employer in exchange for adequate services (Blau, 1964). Therefore, the principle of reciprocity alongside the social exchange expectation between workers and businesses created the concept of perceived company support, which entails the dedication of the firm to support the attainment of individual goals.

Although businesses cannot act like humans, the company's roles are implemented by the company's representatives or those appointed, whose personal actions or inactions are considered to be the behaviour of the organisations that they represent (Christopher & Krishna, 2019). This is consistent with the organisational support theory that alleges that the organisation can exhibit human-like attributes if its managers or representatives devise measures to support the company's employees (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Since managers

symbolise the face of the company, their treatment of employees or ill-treatment thereof, is explained through employees' perception of the company's support schemes. Social exchange theorists contend that voluntary behaviours are more valuable than mandatory actions (e.g., Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). In agreement with the costs linked with negative perceptions about the company's support mechanisms, it is paramount that managers should assign the company's resources towards the enhancement of the well-being and welfare of its employees, in an effort to realise the objectives and goals of the organisation. Therefore, companies usually acknowledge positive contributions to the organisation and reward voluntary behaviours through, for example, job enrichment, promotions, pay increases and, in particular, by demonstrating concern for their workers' socio-economic needs. This may foster employees' eagerness to embrace membership and affiliation with the organisation.

The next section ponders on aspects that measure employees' contentedness with their positions, in a way that motivates them to continue working for the same company.

2.4.4. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction signifies one of the most intricate aspects that are facing today's human resource practitioners. The term "job satisfaction" was first coined by Elton Mayo from the Hawthorne studies of the late 1920s and early 1930s and was later revised by Hoppock (1935) who proposed that it entails employees' attitudes and emotions toward their jobs and is their subjective response toward their work. In general, job satisfaction relates to the inner sense of pride and fulfilment realised when performing a particular job and it encapsulates an employee's feelings about the job, and these attributes can be noticed through an individual's behaviour (Gohel, 2012). More aptly, it entails an employee's subjective affective response about a given job and the need for contentment on aspects like working conditions or impressions about one's occupation (Belias & Koustelios, 2014; Özer & Günlük, 2010). Porter and Lawler (1968) submitted that the amount of an individual's satisfaction is influenced by the variance between the actual returns and anticipated returns. This implies that employees get attracted to the satisfaction the job can give them. Employees with higher job satisfaction levels have a tendency to become loyal to their jobs, feel stable, and are more likely to voluntarily spread positive word of mouth about the organisation they work for, to the extent of being the organisation's brand ambassadors (Kreitner & Kinicki 2004; Yang, 2010). This highlights the value of having highly satisfied employees as they always go the extra mile to speak well about the company as well as shielding it against any negative utterances about their 'beloved' organisation.

Extant literature has conceptualised job satisfaction as a multi-dimensional construct, and this variable is often influenced by many internal and external factors, for example, an individual's personality, principles, values and expectations and the nature of the job, the opportunities for career growth or progression among others (Kasemsap, 2017). For example, extant literature suggests that there are two dimensions of job satisfaction, i.e., (i) internal satisfaction [(this dimension represents an individual's satisfaction that can be evoked when presented with opportunities to exhibit his or her abilities, when they feel a sense of accomplishment acquired from their work, moral values of the work among others (Özaydın & Özdemir, 2014)] and (ii) external satisfaction [(aspects relating to this dimension include salary, job content and/or job enrichment, fair channels for promotion, work equipment or clothing and the general work environment among others (Ertekin & Avunduk, 2021)]. Satisfied employees are more likely to have enhanced commitment levels, remain attached to their current organisation and yield superior performance which leads to increased profits for the company (Egenius, Triatmanto & Natsir, 2020). When workers are content with their work, they also tend to be more creative and innovative and deliver advances that let the company to positively evolve in dynamic market conditions (Egenius et al., 2020). Having satisfied employees equates to high productivity, profitability and less likelihood of leaving that organisation, thus creating a 'win-win' outcome for both parties. There are two major forms of job satisfaction (e.g., as suggested by Rastogi & Dhingra, 2021) that have been identified in the existing literature:

(i) Intrinsic job satisfaction – This type of job satisfaction encompasses contentment with the type of work that an individual is doing (e.g., rewarding, challenging enough without leading to work overload, task variety, interesting, matching a person's skills and competencies among others)
(ii) Extrinsic job satisfaction – It involves the environment in which the work is being conducted in, e.g., working conditions (e.g., safety, lighting, ventilation, cleanliness, job security)

Job satisfaction can also be understood through the theories that have been submitted by previous scholars. The theories of job satisfaction have a huge overlap with theories that seek to explain individual motivation, and these theories are discussed below.

2.4.4.1. Theories of job satisfaction

Several theories were devised in an endeavour to explain job satisfaction, but two prominent theories have been identified from the extant literature, i.e., content and process theories.

- **Content theories** – Based on content theories (i.e., Maslow's needs hierarchy, McClelland's theory of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, Alderfer's ERG theory and Theory X and Theory Y), job satisfaction can be realised when an individual feels that his or her job provides a sense of growth and self-actualisation (i.e., in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs). These theories further emphasise the features and needs that boost and inspire correct behaviour as well as performance (Nel, van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werne, 2004).
- **Process theories** – Unlike content theories, process theories (i.e., Equity theory, Expectancy theory, Cognitive evaluation theory, Behavior modification, Goal setting theory and Reinforcement theory) are more focused on how the satisfaction takes place, that is, they explain the extent to which an individual's expectations and values are fulfilled in a job and are cognitively accepted (Gruneberg, 1979; Luthans, 2005). Based on process theories, the job holder's behaviour is driven by their diverse needs as well as the cognitive process behind these diversities (Perry, Mesch & Paarlberg, 2006).

Since literature (e.g., Soenanta, Akbar & Sariwulan, 2020) suggests that job satisfaction leads to reduced job stress, and decreased employee turnover, which usually results in higher employee productivity levels, this study noted that including this variable was necessary to help practitioners in SMMEs to increase the positive ambience that is brought about by having highly satisfied employees.

The next section deliberates on the current understanding regarding how employees create a bond that makes them eventually become connected to their organisation.

2.4.5. Organisational commitment

Documented evidence regards organisational commitment as the key aspect that augments an individual's elongated attachment to the organisation (e.g., Nwankwo, Orga & Abel, 2019; Pepple, Akinsowon, Oyelere, 2019). Committed employees are those individuals that voluntarily maintain their affiliation with a particular organisation and wield a sizeable amount of effort to positively contribute to attaining organisational goals (Nwanko et al., 2019). Extant literature posits that workers who exhibit a strong commitment to their organisation are

regarded as more valuable than those who demonstrate weak dedication levels (Meyer, Morin & Wasti, 2018). As conceptualised by Allen and Meyer (1990), organisational commitment can be viewed from two angles: attitudinal perspective (i.e., how individuals think and feel about their organisation) and behavioural perspective (i.e., the way people have become entrenched in their organisation). Although there is currently no consensus regarding the meaning of organisational commitment, the widely accepted view is that this construct is multidimensional (e.g., Nwanko et al., 2019; Pepple et al., 2019) and reflects individuals' affective attachment and loyalty to the organisation (Allen & Meyer 1991). This implies that commitment is a psychological state that shows an individual's intention to voluntarily continue his or her membership with the current organisation into the future while exerting efforts to achieve its predetermined goals and objectives (Meyer et al., 2018).

This study also draws from the three-component model that was conceptualised by Allen and Meyer (1990) and Meyer and Allen (1991) to highlight that employee commitment can be broken down into (i) the desire to remain within a particular organisation (affective commitment), the alleged cost of leaving an organisation (continuous commitment) and an obligation to remain part of a certain company (normative commitment). Traditionally, commitment depended on a complex combination of different factors, like human resource practices, economic conditions, social factors, individual factors, and environmental factors (Meyer et al., 2018). Certainly, workers are more likely to remain committed to their organisation if they are content with human resource offerings like training, career development opportunities, rewards, and greater autonomy (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005).

As specified above, organisational commitment is a multidimensional construct (Allen & Meyer, 1990) and the following section presents and highlights the multifaceted nature of this construct.

Evidence in the existing literature suggests that previous scholars have conceptualised organisational commitment from different standpoints (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Nwanko et al., 2019; Pepple et al., 2019). At the outset, organisational commitment was approached from two perspectives, i.e., attitudinal and behavioural (Allen & Meyer, 1990; 1991). However, subsequent researchers have extended these two dimensions by treating organisational commitment as a more complex construct, i.e., attitudinal, behavioural, normative, and continuance – as highlighted above (Jaros, Jermier, Koehler & Sincich, 1993; Suliman & Isles, 2000). The following section explains these dimensions:

- The attitudinal dimension largely regards commitment as an array of behavioural intentions that comprise the confidence in and identification with the company's objectives, and values, while displaying a strong disposition to exert maximum energy to attain the goals and continue affiliating with the organisation (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2019).
- The behavioural approach views commitment as a requirement for an individual to continue being affiliated with the company, owing to the accrued financial and social bonds, for example, extrinsic rewards like loyalty benefits, tenure in the organisation, and friendships (Borst, Kruyen, Lako, de Vries, 2019). Extant literature claims that these financial and social ties make resigning unattractive and too costly for employees (Borst et al, 2019). Therefore, an individual's willingness to continue being committed to their current employer is partly informed by the cost consideration i.e., if the cost is high, there exists a high likelihood that the worker will elect to continue with their affiliation with the company as opposed to discontinuing this relationship – at a loss.

While the attitudinal dimension uses the notion of commitment to describe employee membership and productivity, the behavioural approach instead utilises the notion of 'investments' as a persuasive force that binds a particular individual to his or her employer (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2019; Borst et al, 2019).

Extant literature further highlights the complexity of organisational commitment by submitting other dimensions that prove the multidimensionality of this construct. Therefore, the intricacies that surround this variable must be viewed beyond the realms of attitudinal and behavioural attachments (Hadi & Tentama, 2020). The following section discusses the three-component approach to organisational commitment that was submitted by Meyer and Allen (1997), i.e., normative, affective and continuance commitment.

The normative school of thought argued that organisational commitment converges an employee's values and goals to those of the company to make a worker have a sense of responsibility to meet the organisation's goals (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Laka-Mathabula, 2004). Such an argument thus views organisational commitment as an internal pressure that induces an employee to attain organisational objectives. Academic literature states that normative commitment happens when an employee feels he or she must keep his or her membership with a particular company, in a way that demonstrates commitment and loyalty to the brand and its values (Ugboro, 2006). Essentially, normative commitment is driven by an ethical persuasion

that propels individuals into believing that continued affiliation with a particular organisation is the right thing to do, as doing otherwise results in the breach of cultural or traditional values. Generally, normative commitment is predominant in religious and traditional organisations where outright loyalty, personal commitment and sacrifice are mandatory for all members, and criticism thereof or renunciation of one's membership is regarded as an insurgence. While such rebellion and/or disloyal behaviour is not legitimised, particularly in an autonomous society, perpetrators are treated as outcasts (Meyer and Allen (1997).

On the other hand, continuance commitment entails an evaluation of one's costs linked with exiting a particular organisation. If an employee decides to leave the organisation, he or she may forfeit certain benefits (either intrinsic or extrinsic) linked to their continued membership, for example, lost working relationships, friendships, loyalty incentives, being associated with the organisation's brand or culture among others (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Ugboro, 2006). Thus, these reasons are swaying considerations that endear some employees to remain embedded in a particular company and discourage them from seeking alternative employment.

Affective commitment denotes an individual's degree of emotional attachment to an organisation alongside his or her willingness to affiliate with, continue membership of, and support the value predetermined objectives of the company (Meyer & Allen 1997; Ugboro, 2006). Essentially, this means that an employee's continued affiliation with the company is emotionally stimulated instead of coercion, hence making their commitment to the company a more natural phenomenon (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Much research attention on labour turnover has been directed towards affective commitment because previous scholars have found it to be the strongest and most consistent antecedent to organisational issues like employee turnover (e.g., Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003; Engelbrecht & Samuel, 2019).

Based on the discussion above, affective commitment will be selected to represent organisational commitment in this study, as it has been described to be the strongest predictor of employees' loyalty, connection with, emotional bond to, and affiliation with a particular company. Therefore, it is bound to effectively predict SMME employees' turnover intentions.

The next section discusses the reasons why employees voluntarily decide to quit their current companies alongside the costs that companies incur owing to this effect.

2.4.6. Labour turnover intention

Labour turnover intention is a salient variable for approximating actual turnover as it represents the likelihood that a certain worker will quit his/her current job in the near future (Belete, 2018; Hussain & Xian, 2019; Lin & Huang, 2021). The constant problem of worker turnover in many companies, irrespective of size, type, and organisational level has been reliably attributed to the effects of globalisation (Butali, Wesang'ula & Mamuli, 2013; Yazdanifard & Ogunjobi, 2010; Kang, Huh, Cho & Auh, 2015). Owing to the devastating effects of labour turnover on both the company and the departing employee, much research attention has been directed on getting remedies of how it can be curbed by proffering a panacea to this persistent problem. However, there is still a lack of convergence in study findings regarding the reliable and validated predictor of labour turnover (Basar & Sigri, 2015; Engelbrecht & Samuel, 2019; Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty & Keiser, 2012). According to Firth, Mellor, Moore, and Loquet (2004), this little convergence in research findings can be attributed to the variety of constructs that have been investigated on the subject matter, coupled with a lack of consistency in the measurement instruments. Perhaps of more prominent importance is the issue of cultural diversity that surrounds the research settings, making it uneasy to get conclusive results across different backgrounds.

To unravel the issue of employee turnover, previous scholars have largely diverted their attention toward predicting *actual* employee turnover together with its damaging tendencies (e.g., Frank, Finnegan & Taylor, 2004). However, of late, many scholars have claimed that labour turnover intention should attract more primary research emphasis because it constitutes a precursor to actual turnover behaviour (e.g., Yan Mansor, Choo, Abdullah, 2021). This premise can be supported by the findings from the research done by Nguyen et al. (2020) who submitted that labour turnover intention strongly predicted actual turnover. Other researchers have also found compelling associations between employee turnover intention and actual turnover that echoed with document literature (Tsai, Jou-Chen & Tang, 2021).

The available literature suggests that employee turnover, whether intended or unintended, can have severe effects, particularly when the withdrawal is voluntarily driven (Rijamampianina, 2015; Simón, de Sivatte, Olmos & Shaw, 2013). High turnover rates have been attributed to the changes in current employment relationships coupled with an employee's reluctance to stay embedded in one company for a long time (Mmamel, Abugu, Ilechukwu, Ogbo, Onodugo, Ofoegbu & Okwo, 2021). The availability of part-time workers through agents has made SMMEs, in particular, to be more disinclined to enter into long-term employment contracts

with workers as this reprieves them of the legal responsibility that comes with hiring permanent workers. This has resulted in several concerns about job security, and South African trade unions have continuously fought for the rights of part-time workers (Wöcke, & Barnard, 2021). Owing to this adjustment in the psychological contract, the employer-employee relationship has also changed, resulting in less adherence to employee rights (employer's side) and diminished loyalty and long-term commitment company (employee's side). Accordingly, this change in the employment relationship has also resulted in high turnover intentions amongst workers.

When employees eventually leave the company, employers are usually left to endure the effects of turnover on their business, e.g., the expense of inviting, hiring and training new workers, and inspiring the remaining workers to accept the change (e.g., Al-Suraihi, Samikon, Al-Suraihi & Ibrahim, 2021). Available studies suggest that frequently, it is the talented and highly skilled and productive workers who voluntarily exit the company, instead of employees with low experience and less-demanded skills in the job market (Madurani & Pasaribu, 2021). The detrimental and destructive nature of high labour turnover is that it has a direct negative effect on the organisation's continued survival (Yan, Mansor, Choo & Abdullah, 2021). Therefore, practitioners should devise proactive procedures for controlling workers' turnover inclinations before full demonstration thereof. Owing to the detrimental effects of the labour turnover on the business' sustainability, it was therefore worthwhile for this study to identify predictors that measure staff turnover intention, to equip practitioners with pointers on the current employees' likelihood to leave their organisation.

The next section unravels the collection of policies and inimitable practices that guide and inform actions, expectations and values that make the company what it is.

2.4.7. Organisational culture

Every organisation, whether big or small, profitable or less successful, has a unique personality or identity called organisation culture which is created, embedded, sustained by leaders and ultimately gets internalised by organisational members (Bell, Chan & Nel, 2014; Bosomtwe, & Obeng; 2018). Previous scholars have used "corporate culture" as a way to signify a more "commercialised" connotation of organisational culture (e.g., Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Frequently understood as a multi-layered aspect, organisational culture entails a mixture of an organisational structure, processes, philosophies, beliefs, espoused values, traditions, assumptions, goals, strategies and attitudes that portray an organisation in a distinctive and pervasive manner (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004; Kharismawan & Sucento, 2019). Organisational culture can be used as a tool for employees to understand how the organisation functions and can accordingly shape their behaviour (Sujatha, Bharathi & Vedavathi, 2018; Schwartz & Davis, 1981). For organisational culture to be effective, it must be strategically relevant; it must be strong and highlight what is important and it must have an intrinsic ability to swiftly adjust when outside conditions fluctuate (Sujatha et al., 2018). Culture affects most features of organisational life, for example, how decisions are made and who makes them, and it also determines who gets promoted and how people are treated, how rewards are distributed, and how the company reacts to its environmental factors and changes (Hofstede, 1998). Therefore, previous scholars have conceptualised organisational culture as the prime factor in determining company procedures (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Jarnagin & Slocum, 2007), unifying the company's capabilities into a cohesive whole (Yilmaz & Ergun, 2008), offering keys to the problems that the company faces (Hofstede, 1998), and, thereby, deterring or facilitating the company's achievement of its predetermined goals (Denison, 1990).

Given its inherently 'causally ambiguous' and 'socially complex' nature, a relative advantage amassed through organisational culture-driven capabilities is frequently hard to imitate, thus constituting an important source of superior performance and sustained competitive advantage (Peteraf, 1993; Yilmaz & Ergun, 2008; Wernerfelt, 1984). Accordingly, previous scholars have provided empirical studies to typify organisational culture and its effects on company procedures and outcomes, particularly on its effectiveness (e.g., Carmeli & Tishler, 2004; Hofstede, Neuijen, Ohayr, & Sanders, 1990; Kaupa & Sulaiman, 2020). From a managerial perspective, these efforts have created valuable insights relating to the roles of particular cultural traits as drivers of effectiveness, predictors of organisational change and determinants of employee embeddedness (Yilmaz & Ergun, 2008).

Strong organisational cultures depict that workers are like-minded and embrace similar ethical values that are manifested in shared beliefs. This is in line with Melo's (2012) finding that there is a strong relationship between organisational culture and corporate *social* performance. When these ethical values and beliefs are aligned with company objectives, they tend to prove to be effective in building teams owing to the rapport and trust that quickly arises. These bonds that the teams build help in avoiding conflicts, allowing them to focus on task completion, thus cementing their desire to be in the company for an elongated period (Gyllensten, & Torner, 2022; Narayana, 2017). Because of the subjective nature of culture, it can be difficult to accurately describe the specifications of organisational culture (Uddin, Luva & Hossian, 2013). Although there is no single theory that is uniformly accepted, there is consensus that organisational culture is traditionally rooted and socially structured, and that is why it includes beliefs, morals, values, and behaviours associated with all the aspects of organisational life (Hofstede et al., 1990).

As organisational culture has been positioned as the core of the company's activities and its overall effectiveness, this study sought to further unravel this construct to solve the identified research problem.

2.5. Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the selected constructs in line with their conceptualisations in the extant literature. This was done to provide a detailed account of each variable based on the submissions by earlier scholars, so as to augment our understanding of these variables. The main aim of this chapter was to emphasise that it is theoretically and practically relevant to study labour turnover intention from the lens of its predictors before such intents manifest themselves into actual turnover intention. This is because it is usually difficult to conduct studies on employees that would have already left their current employer.

The next chapter was reserved for the literature review on the relationships that exist between the study hypotheses. Hypotheses development paved the way to clearly state the hypotheses that were later subjected to statistical testing under path modelling. The conceptual framework ultimately draws together all the hypothesised relationships into a graphical portrayal, and this framework was later confirmed under the confirmatory factor analysis section.

CHAPTER 3

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT, HYPOTHESES STATEMENT & CONCEPTUAL MODEL DEPICTION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the hypothesised relationships between the study variables. Documented in the extant literature was consulted in order to develop these hypotheses before stating them in line with the guidelines from previous scholars. Hypotheses statement was a key feature of this study as hypotheses were formulated in line with the research problem, purpose, objectives and questions, thus giving this study a solid direction that it required. Hypotheses statement also served as a platform for formulating the conceptual framework upon which all the proposed relationships were reflected. It is the same hypotheses that were subjected to hypotheses testing under path modelling to establish whether to reject or fail to reject these suppositions. Moreover, the conceptual framework was confirmed under confirmatory factor analysis to ultimately have a supported best-fit model for this study.

The next section explores the associations between the selected variables, thus creating a fertile ground for the hypotheses statement and finally the formulation of the conceptual framework.

3.2 HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT & STATEMENT

3.2.1. Relationship between transformational leadership style and organisational commitment

Documented evidence from previous scholars suggests that there is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment (e.g., Keskes, Sallan, Simo & Fernandez; 2018; Ndlovu et al., 2018; Nguni, Sleegers & Denessen, 2016; Wang, Zheng, Alam, Murad Gul & Gill, 2022; Nyengane, 2007). Consistent with Wang et al. (2022), the commitment of employees reflects the quality of the leadership within the organisation, making it plausible to assume that leadership behaviour has a noteworthy link with the development of organisational commitment. Other previous scholars have also submitted a significant, direct and positive link between leadership behaviour and organisational commitment (e.g., Cho, Shin, Billing &. Bhagat, 2019; Mclaggan, Bezuidenhout & Botha, 2013). Transformational leadership is usually linked with desired organisational outcomes like the preparedness of followers to expend extra effort in a way that indicates some level of commitment (Mclaggan et al., 2013; Nohe & Hertel, 2017). Therefore, a wide variety of recent studies have submitted a significant, non-mediated and positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employees' desire to remain committed to their current organisation.

Besides the vastness of studies that submitted significant and positive findings on the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment, other scholars provided support for a non-significant, but positive correlation between these two variables (e.g., Eliyana et al., 2019; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). In a separate study conducted by Kent and Chelladurai (2001), a positive correlation was found between individualised consideration and normative as well as affective commitment. According to Walumbwa and Lawler (2003), there is substantial research signifying that transformational leadership style is positively linked to organisational commitment in several organisational cultures and settings. Transformational leadership was found to have a moderate positive correlation with affective commitment (Hayward, Goss & Tolmay, 2004). Furthermore, Hayward et al. (2004) found lower correlation coefficients between transformational leadership and continuance alongside normative commitment. Nyengane (2007) submitted that transformational leaders can impact workers' organisational commitment by stimulating greater levels of intrinsic value linked with generating a higher level of individual commitment to foster a shared vision, mission, and goals. Transformational leaders positively impact their followers' organisational commitment if these followers are involved in the decision-making processes, thereby stimulating their loyalty (Nyengane, 2007). By identifying followers' individual needs and encouraging them to look for novel ways to solve problems and challenges, transformational leaders can cultivate a sense of follower involvement in their work, thus leading to higher levels of organisational commitment (Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003). This outlook was further reinforced by the abovementioned researchers as they revealed that organisational commitment was higher for workers whose leaders advocated for their participation in decision-making (Nyengane 2007), supported company consideration of its employees (Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003) and were concerned about their followers' individualised development (Allen & Meyer, 1990)

The leader-member exchange theory suggests that when leaders seek organisational commitment from subordinates, they must engage them in behaviours that go outside the usual economic exchange, for example, by promoting the principle of reciprocity (Tariq, Mumtaz, Ahmad, Waheed, 2014). This relationship-based approach is similarly derived from the social exchange theory which necessitates that leaders must form a unique exchange relationship with every follower (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). While transformational leadership behaviours are effective in big firms (e.g., Eliyana et al., 2019), it is unclear whether such behaviours will be effective in SMMEs (Mittal, 2016) due to the paucity of studies in such contexts. According

to the "best-fit" theory, SMMEs are less complex enterprises (Mintzberg, 1983) and thus do not need transformational leadership. However, the 'best-practice' theory suggests that workers within SMMEs are more inclined to beneficial treatment from their leaders and this invariably provides a positive mental impact (Kane & Tremble, 2000; Koch & Van Straten, 1997). In line with social exchange theory and the principle of reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960), workers will reciprocate beneficial leader behaviour by demonstrating greater commitment and trust. Even though transformational leadership might not necessarily be effective in SMMEs, extant literature (e.g., Wang et al., 2022) suggests that it fosters a substantial and positive influence on workers' emotions to continue being embedded within their current work settings.

Consistent with the discussion above, this study hypothesises that:

> *H1: Transformational leadership significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.1.2. Relationship between perceived empowerment and organisational commitment

Current research suggests that when superiors relinquish authority to their subordinates, the workers experience a sense of control and ownership over their jobs, which significantly and positively impacts their commitment to the organisation (Limpanitgul, Boonchoo, Kulviseachana & Photiyarach, 2017; Liu, Chiu & Fellows. 2019; Rawah & Banakhar, 2022; Khan, Tariq, Hamayoun & Bhutta, 2014). Kanter (1977) argued that managers can reinforce or weaken employees' self-determination and efficacy belief by giving them support, access to information, resources and opportunities. Hanaysha (2016) suggested that a working environment that encourages employee training mentoring and participation is paramount in reinforcing employee commitment. In essence, empowerment gives continuous authority, power, autonomy and control as opposed to temporary authority (Marin-Garcia & Bonavia, 2021). If employees are empowered, they tend to feel invigorated and have a sense of control over their careers and are more likely to be attached to their current organisation (Murray & Holmes, 2021).

The existing literature further submits that it is workers' perceptions of empowerment (not only the organisation's empowering structures), but that are also essential in producing positive worker outcomes and higher commitment levels (e.g., Yilmaz, 2015). Avolio, Zhu, Koh and Bhatia (2004) investigated the mediating role of empowerment and concluded that the

organisation's empowering conditions have a significant and positive effect on workers as they tend to react by displaying more organisational commitment.

Employee commitment to the organisation has great benefits for workers and their organisations alike. The findings of several studies submitted that employees' commitment to their jobs and the organisation in general, is another key outcome of psychologically empowered people (Meng & Sun, 2019). In a study conducted in the Netherlands, Janssen (2004) found that psychologically empowered teachers exhibited significantly enhanced commitment levels to their organisation. In another study surveying Singaporean employees, Bordin, Bartram, and Casimir (2007) found that workers' levels of organisational commitment tend to be greater when they have a higher sense of psychological empowerment. Many other researchers also suggested that empowered workers have a significantly higher level of organisational commitment (Avolio et al., 2004; Engelbrecht & Samuel, 2019; Kraimer, Seibert, & Liden, 1999). Therefore, it is apparent that organisational commitment is a significant and positive outcome of perceived empowerment within a workplace setting.

Accordingly, this study hypothesises that:

> *H2: Perceived empowerment significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.1.3. Relationship between perceived company support and organisational commitment

The existing literature on the above relationship highlights that a company must show its concern for its workers' well-being, in order to significantly stimulate employees' overall commitment (Cho et al., 2009). Employees' perceptions of the company's support mechanisms designed for their upliftment have been found to yield the strongest relationship in terms of inspiring them to be committed to their organisation (Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019; Cho et al., 2009; Mabasa, Ngirande & Shambare, 2016; Pattnaik, Mishra & Tripathy, 2020). This finding is in line with Suárez-Albanchez, Gutierrez-Broncano, Jimenez-Estevez & Blazquez-Resino's (2022) submission that employees' perceptions about the company's support mechanisms were found to have a dual impact on intention to stay and this was the only variable that significantly decreased employees' turnover intention. The link between employees' perceptions on whether or not the company has the necessary support mechanisms in place to support them can be described within the context of social exchange theory and the principle of reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Lee & Peccei, 2007) as per below.

The dominance of the social exchange approach is underpinned by the research relating to employee perceptions about the organisation's support mechanisms (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Suhermin & Wulandari, 2019). Social exchange theory shows that individuals' views about psychological contracts are expected to impact their organisational commitment levels and, subsequently affect their productivity (Behery, Paton & Hussain, 2012). The theory's conceptualisation lies in the argument that if an organisation demonstrates that it supports and cares about its employees, for example, by providing satisfactory working conditions and contracts, then employees are more likely to react with improved organisational commitment (Suhermin & Wulandari, 2019). Contrariwise, when workers perceive that the organisation does not support or care much about them, this is likely to result in reduced levels of belief in, as well as devotion and commitment to the organisation (Cho et al., 2009; Passarelli, 2011). Furthermore, within the context of social exchange theory, employees' positive perceptions about the company's support mechanisms can help in achieving their vital socio-emotional needs, for example, the need for self-esteem, association and approval (Blau, 1964). The fulfilment of employees' needs is likely to augment their identification with and emotional attachment to the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Suhermin & Wulandari, 2019).

In terms of the principle of reciprocity, workers who think that their company values them and cares about their welfare tend to have a sense of responsibility towards the company and, thus, reciprocate this positive treatment with deepened commitment and loyalty (Gouldner, 1960; Passarelli, 2011). The widely accepted description of the link between employees' perceptions of the company's support mechanisms and organisation commitment is consistent with the principle of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). This description denotes how satisfactory treatment of employees formulates a sense of indebtedness to the company amongst workers (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to Gouldner (1960) employees' sense of indebtedness to the organisation offers a foundation for a solid emotional association with the company by generating a felt responsibility to care about the business and help in meeting its predetermined objectives (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli & Lynch, 1997; Passarelli, 2011). Moreover, workers who perceive the company as caring for their welfare are presumed to reciprocate this gesture, not only by engaging in many pro-social behaviours linked to the betterment of the company but also by creating a solid emotional commitment to the company (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch & Rhoades, 2001). Therefore, employees with a high social exchange ideology are likely to reciprocate organisational support and care both in attitudinal and behavioural terms. However, it must be noted that this reciprocal behaviour is also likely

to be linked to employees that believe that the company is providing such support purely voluntarily, instead of out of compulsion by labour unions or by the country's labour regulations (Eisenberger et al., 1986, 1997; Huysamen, 2019; Lee & Peccei, 2007).

Extant literature further established that if employees believe that the company is doing enough to support their needs and protect their wellbeing, then this perception has a significant, direct and positive effect on their commitment to the organisation (Colakoglu, Culha & Atay, 2010; Eisenberger et al., 2001; Mabasa et al., 2016). The direct, positive and strong causal relationships between employees' perceptions of the company's support mechanisms and organisational commitment were also established by other previous researchers, for example, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), Rhoades, Eisenberger and Armeli, (2001), Lee and Peccei (2006) as well as (Liu, 2009) among others. A study conducted by Colakoglu, Culha, and Atay (2010) provides extra justification to support the outcomes from earlier studies, by confirming a significantly positive relationship between employees' perceptions of the company's support mechanisms and organisational commitment. Contrastingly, a study conducted by Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) found a significant negative correlation between perceived company support and workers' behaviours of absenteeism, alienation and turnover. The finding by Meyer and colleagues (1993) suggested that workers who perceive that the company supports them tend to work harder and remain embedded in their current organisation. However, if they do not perceive any support, they tend to assume a passive attitude toward their work, which sometimes makes them feel burnout, thus reducing their job satisfaction, commitment, productivity and overall organisational efficiency.

Most of the scholars in the above section established that workers translate the care they receive from their employers into their affective attachment to the company. Consistent with the results from earlier empirical studies as well as in line with social exchange theory and the principle of reciprocity, this study hypothesised that:

> *H3: Perceived company support significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.1.4. Relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment

Despite the extensive extant literature on job satisfaction and organisational commitment, the widely accepted view is that the link between these constructs is still disputed, such that some important questions have remained unanswered (Armutlulu & Noyan, 2011; El-Nahas, Abd-El-Salam & Shawky, 2013; Masale Barkhuizen, Schutte & van der Sluis, 2021; Vilela, Gonzalez & Ferrin, 2008). Job satisfaction has been arguably the key antecedent to organisational commitment, i.e., employees' opinions about their job are usually shaped earlier than their opinions about the organisation, and if employees are dissatisfied, they are more likely to be less committed to their organisation (Eliyana, Ma'arif & Muzakki, 2019; Luz, de Paula, & de Oliveira, 2018; Yucel & Betkas, 2012; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011). Furthermore, Deconinck (2009) and Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, Madupalli and Rutherford (2009) indicated that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational policy and support, supervision, and rewards. Moreover, Velde (2021) suggested that job satisfaction impacts organisational commitment, i.e., the higher the job satisfaction, the higher the organisational commitment of employees. Also, Saridakis, Lai, Torres and Gourlay (2018) argued that job satisfaction is very paramount such that its absence frequently results in reduced organisational commitment. Furthermore, Wu and Norman (2006) as well as Mitonga-Monga, Flotman and Cilliers (2018) submitted that there is a reciprocal and positive association between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Several scholars (e.g., Armutlulu & Noyan, 2011; Arifin & Matriadi, 2022; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011) argued that job satisfaction tends to develop more rapidly than organisational commitment as commitment is an 'emotional bond' to an organisation (i.e., it takes time to develop) and job satisfaction is more a reaction to one's specific job. Therefore, job satisfaction is regarded as an antecedent to organisational commitment, and this is in line with the way the conceptual framework of this study was structured.

Several scholars have also submitted positive associations between organisational commitment and desirable work outcomes like adaptability, job satisfaction and performance (Porter & Dubin, 1974; Zeinabadi and Salehi, 2011). Research results further demonstrate that satisfied personnel is likely to be committed to an organisation, and satisfied employees tend to avoid absenteeism, arrive at work on time, perform well and engage in organisational citizenship behaviours and stay with a particular organisation for a long time (Aamodt, 2007; Elmi et al., 2020). Consistent with Kotze and Roodt (2005), a strong correlation has also been empirically

established between job satisfaction and employee commitment. In a meta-analytic review conducted by Mathieu and Zajac (1990), a moderate correlation (i.e., 0.49) was reported between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Likewise, a meta-analysis conducted by Brown (cited in Muchinsky, 2006), submitted that the average correlation between job satisfaction and organisational commitment was 0.53. Although there have been mixed findings on the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment, there exists strong evidence that workers who find pleasure, pride and satisfaction in their jobs are more likely to identify with and be committed to their organisation (Abd-El-Salam & Shawky, 2013; Masale et al. 2021; Salehi & Gholtash, 2011; Yucel & Betkas, 2012).

In line with the above discussion, several studies found a non-significant but positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. To test the relationship between the above variables, the assumption (as guided by existing literature) was that job satisfaction is causally antecedent to organisational commitment, thus, this study hypothesised that:

> *H4: Job satisfaction positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.1.5. Relationship between transformational leadership style and labour turnover intention

Effective transformational leadership behaviour has a likelihood of reducing followers' intention to quit, as it continues to instil members' desire to uphold the values and aims of the group or organisation as well as keep within the agreement between followers and the leader (Donkor, Appienti & Achiaah, 2022; Park & Pierce, 2020; Sulamuthu & Yusof, 2018). Transformational leadership is paramount because it clarifies the organisation's vision, mission, culture, goals, and objectives to followers. To a greater extent, the importance of transformational leadership (as explained above) is that it lessens employees' strain on the daily requirements of their tasks, and this usually lowers employees' desire to leave (Gan & Voon, 2021). This is in line with documented research that suggests that transformational leadership presents a negative impact on employees' willingness to leave their current organisation (Hughes, Avey & Nixon, 2010; Kaymakci, Görener & Tokerc, 2022). A preliminary study conducted by Avey, Hughes, Norman and Luthans (2008) suggested that transformational leadership is negatively related to followers' intention to quit and the followers are less likely

to leave the organisation if they still view the leader as the key to their goal accomplishment. Therefore, the followers are more likely to be motivated to retain their membership with the current organisation if they believe that the leader is meeting their individual needs and interests through individualised consideration and attention (Sun & Wang, 2017).

Some scholars have presented an argument that idealised influence or the leader's charm allows members to resonate with and emulate their leader (Hughes et al., 2010; Bazawi, Rahmat, Tantri, Indradewa & Pusaka, 2019). Also, Shastri, Mishra and Sinha (2010) argued that idealised influence (i.e., charisma) enables followers to identify with and emulate their leaders. In their submission, Bass and Riggio (2006) posited that transformational leaders utilise inspirational stimulus to create an emotional commitment to the goals and mission of the organisation, thus, inculcating the desire amongst followers to remain embedded within the organisation. Preliminary research by Ariyabuddhiphongs and Kahn (2017) also argued that transformational leadership is negatively linked to followers' willingness to leave the organisation. Further studies have also found a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention, for example, a study done by Krishnan (2005). Overbey (2013) similarly indicated that greater transformational leadership reduces employees' turnover intention.

In line with the above-cited and reviewed body of literature, this study hypothesised that:

> *H5: Transformational leadership significantly and negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.1.6. Relationship between perceived empowerment and labour turnover intention

There exists empirical evidence in the existing literature to support the existence of a negative relationship between employees' perceived notions about empowerment and turnover intention (Ngqeza & Dhanpat, 2021; Wilutantria & Etikariena, 2017; Yakut & Kara, 2021). Past studies put more emphasis on the gainful effects of worker empowerment, both to the individual and the company at large (e.g., Ganji, Johnson, Sorkhan & Banejad, 2021). Thus, extant literature further states that empowerment heightens employees' job satisfaction while simultaneously reducing their turnover intention. This argument supports the submission that feelings of empowerment are linked with improved job satisfaction and reduced intent to leave the company (Murray & Holmes, 2021).

Empowerment (e.g., through training, delegation, promotion, and decentralisation of decision-making) provides a fertile ground to promote employee's self-actualisation needs, thus enhancing feelings of self-efficacy and self-esteem while in turn reducing employees' intention to leave the organisation (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Murray & Holmes, 2021). Several previous scholars established a negative relationship between empowerment and labour turnover intention (e.g., Moynihan & Landuyt, 2008; Ngqeza & Dhanpat, 2021; Murray & Holmes, 2021; Wilutantria & Etikariena, 2017; Yakut & Kara, 2021). Although many previous scholars found negative associations between empowerment and labour turnover intention, on the contrary, it is worth noting that Koberg et al. (1999), and Wilkinson (as cited in Dladla, 2011) established inconclusive results on the relationship between these two variables.

In line with the above discussion, this study hypothesises that:

> *H6: Perceived empowerment negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.1.7. Relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention

Employees' perceptions about the organisation's support mechanisms designed to suit their needs are paramount in predicting their turnover intention (Srivastava & Agrawal, 2020) Literature from previous scholars has submitted many findings on this relationship. For example, Satardien, Jano and Mahembe (2019) reported a negative relationship between employees' perceptions of the organisation's support mechanisms and their willingness to leave the organisation. This argument is consistent with Eisenberger et al. (1986) who also declared that perceived organisational support reduces the impact of labour turnover intention – thus this was in line with the Perceived Organisational Support theory. Other scholars and theorists also found a strong inverse relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention (e.g., Alfisyahri, Etikariena & Gatari, 2017; Batt & Colvin, 2011; Nasyira, Othman & Ghazali, 2014; Wadhera & Bano, 2020).

Further studies have discovered that since workers usually react favourably to the support mechanisms that organisations put in place for them (Jing & Yan, 2022), it is thus expected that these employee-oriented and organisation-based support mechanisms are likely to induce a strong desire to stay with the same organisation. Other researchers have submitted an argument that individuals who positively perceive that the company's support mechanisms are tailored for them are less likely to look for alternate employment owing to their satisfaction with the prevailing company's support measures (Eisenberger, Fasolo & LaMastro, 1990; Jolly, McDowell, Dawson & Abbott, 2021). This discovery is consistent with other scholars who also found that if the organisation puts the necessary support mechanisms in place and they meet the expectations of employees, then such employees are less likely to consider exiting the company (e.g., Kinnunen, Feldt & Makikangas, 2008). An extension of similar studies found that turnover intention is further impacted by the degree of support workers get from their co-workers (Brough & Frame, 2004; Lambert, 2006) as well as the support they also receive from their supervisors (Kim & Stoner, 2008; Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell & Allen 2007).

In a similar study, Van Schalkwyk, Els and Rothmann (2011) found a significant negative relationship between an organisation's employee-related support mechanisms and turnover intention. This meant that the more the organisation puts measures in place to support its employees, the more likely these mechanisms will have a corresponding decline in workers' turnover intention. Other studies within the same context put forward the fact that workers who perceive that the organisation has the necessary support mechanisms tend to display stronger feelings of attachment and allegiance to their company (Loi, Hang-Yue & Foley, 2006). This expression has been proven to have a diminishing effect on workers' intent to resign (e.g., Wickramasinghe, 2008).

In line with the evidence provided in the foregoing literature, it is hypothesised that:

> *H7: Perceived company support significantly and positively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.1.8. Relationship between job satisfaction and labour turnover intention

Job satisfaction determines employees' willingness to stay in or leave the organisation (Ali & Anwar, 2021). If workers are dissatisfied with their work, they are more likely to leave the organisation (Bello, Aina & Oluwole, 2021). According to Ghiselli, Lopa, and Bai (2001), job satisfaction is a critical variable when attempting to understand employee turnover intention. In literature, job satisfaction includes the desirability of movement, which is an important predictor of turnover, and this is consistent with the organisational equilibrium theory, which essentially is about the benefits or incentives that the company provides to its employees in exchange for their contribution (Purani & Sahadev, 2008; Direnzo & Greenhaus, 2011; Stilley, Inman & Wakefield, 2010). Job satisfaction usually embodies a set of workers' attitudes or evaluations of their current job, which includes both affective and cognitive features (Bello et al., 2021). For instance, Moorman (1993: 761) asserted that workers' job satisfaction 'may differ in the extent to which they tap more of a cognitive or an affective satisfaction'. Consequently, it is expected that the association between job satisfaction and turnover intention is negative in light of the cognitive dissonant theory, which postulates that there exists an underlying psychological tension when a person's behaviour is at odds with their beliefs and thoughts (Amah, 2009; Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959).

Over the years, a vast number of scholars examined the link between job satisfaction and labour turnover intention (e.g., Tian-Foreman, 2009; Bello et al., 2021; Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000; Ross & Zander, 2006). Most of these studies indicated that job satisfaction is a negative predictor of employee turnover which also means that job dissatisfaction results in a desire to leave the organisation (Coomber & Barribal, 2007; Kumari & Pandey, 2011; Mihajlov & Mihajlov, 2016). In a comprehensive meta-analysis conducted by Hellman (1997), the findings suggested that workers' dissatisfaction inexorably leads to higher odds that they might start considering other employment prospects. This finding was also corroborated by several other scholars (e.g., Berber, Gašic, Katic, 2022; Coomber & Barribal, 2007; Hayes, O'Brien-Pallas, Duffield, Shamian, Buchan & Hughes, 2006) who indicated that positive job satisfaction tends to decrease the likelihood of employee turnover intentions.

Other studies that compared the link between job satisfaction and employee turnover intention found mixed results (for example, Jassem, Djebarni & Mellahi, 2011; Muhammad, Humayon, Ahmad, Qaiser & Aslam, 2017). Some scholars went on to find that the job satisfaction and turnover intentions of employees in the public sector were different from those of the private

sector (e.g., Wang, Yang & Wang, 2012). In particular, Wang and his colleagues (2012) concentrated primarily on the "extrinsic aspects" of the job and found that public sector employees had lower job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions compared to their private-sector counterparts. Correspondingly, the negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions was weaker amongst public sector employees compared to private-sector employees (Wang et al., 2012). In contrast, studies that concentrated on extrinsic satisfaction produced mostly mixed results, for example, Schneider and Vaught (1993) argued that public sector employees are more likely to be more satisfied with extrinsic factors of their job, like pay satisfaction. At the same time, Schneider and Vaught (1993) reported no significant differences between the private and public sector employees. Taking everything into account, several previous scholars strongly indicated that there are significant differences between the two sectors, regarding employees' attitudes and their subsequent behaviours (e.g., Seung-Bum & Keon-Hyung, 2009). However, the direction of the link between job satisfaction and turnover intention has been argued to be consistently negative in both private and public sectors (e.g., Lee & Whitford, 2008; Moynihan & Landuyt, 2008; Lu & Gursoy, 2016; Seung-Bum & Keon-Hyung, 2009; Wang et al., 2012).

Therefore, based on the above arguments and related research evidence, this study hypothesised the following.

H8. Job satisfaction negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs

3.1.9. Relationship between organisational commitment and labour turnover intention

An avalanche of existing literature suggests that employees' commitment to the organisation is an indispensable feature in reinforcing the overall employment relationship, while simultaneously serving to reduce voluntary turnover (e.g., Ekhsan, 2019; Mahendra & Humayra, 2019; Tirelli & Goh, 2015). Workers who are emotionally devoted to their organisation tend to be keen to demonstrate their reliance on the organisation by eagerly supporting the company's predetermined goals and objectives (Johnson, Chang & Yang, 2010; Rajeshwari & Paramanandam, 2018; Tirelli & Goh, 2015). There exists a strong link between the commitment level of workers and several work outcomes, like overall productivity, job satisfaction, withdrawal actions and turnover intentions (Engelbrecht & Samuel, 2019). According to Cho et al. (2009), workers that exhibit strong commitment levels are less likely

to leave the company as compared to those with reduced commitment levels. Additional empirical investigations have also found an inverse relationship between organisational commitment and employees' turnover intention (e.g., Lambert & Hogan, 2009).

Many foregoing studies have variously confirmed the prominence of organisational commitment as a strong predictor of turnover intention (e.g., Griffeth, Hom & Gaerner, 2000; Stallworth, 2003). For example, some studies have submitted a significant negative link between organisational commitment and employees' anti-withdrawal actions (e.g., Meyer et al., 1993; Griffeth et al., 2000). Finally, the current literature further submits that organisational commitment mediates the link between perceived job security and employees' turnover intention (Davy, Kinicki & Scheck, 1991). This finding is in line with Mowday (1998)'s submission that work-related expectations (mainly job security) directly influence mental responses like organisational commitment while any reductions in organisational commitment typify employees' inner attempts to withdraw from the company.

As this study concentrated on affective commitment, as a key dimension of organisational commitment, it became necessary to further unravel its relationship with labour turnover intention, particularly from an SMME perspective. That being said, past research findings demonstrate that affective commitment is negatively and reliably linked to turnover intention (Den Hartog & Den Hoogh, 2009). This finding was in line with Baakile (2011)'s study that discovered that affective commitment was a strong but negative predictor of employees' turnover intentions. Judging from the submissions of previous scholars, it can be noted that there seems to be convergence in the literature that supports negative associations between organisational commitment and the intention to leave the organisation (Ekhsan, 2019; Humayra & Mahendra, 2019; Jepsen & Rodwell, 2012; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Tirelli & Goh, 2015;).

After considering the submissions from previous scholars on the relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intention alongside the empirical evidence that exists therein, this study postulated that:

> *H9: Organisational commitment negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*

3.2. The moderation effect of organisational culture

The conceptual framework in Figure 3.1. depicts that not only there were direct and indirect effects (through the mediation effect of organisational commitment), but the relationships were also moderated by organisational culture. In line with Awang (2014), before introducing a moderating variable into a model, this study ensured that the hypothesised relationships between the predictor variables (in this case – transformational leadership and perceived company support) on its outcome variable (i.e., labour turnover intention) were projected to exist and were significant. However, it was envisaged that the introduction of the moderating variable would alter the causal effects between these variables owing to the 'interaction effect' between the independent and moderator variable.

3.2.1. The moderating effect of organisational culture on the relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention

There is evidence in the extant literature to suggest that organisational culture can effectively moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention. For example, in an empirical investigation of the public sector in the United Arab Emirates, Alneyadi, Al-Shibami, Ameen and Bhaumik (2019) found that organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and the retention of human capital. In another study conducted by Toscano (2015), organisational culture was found to moderate the relationship between leadership and turnover intention of employees in a non-profit organisation. Moreover, Wazir and Jan (2020) found that organisational commitment moderates the effect of transformational leadership and turnover intention. Further studies (e.g., Chen, Wang & Tang, 2016) found that cultural values moderate the relationship between organisational behavioural outcomes and turnover intention.

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that organisational culture has been established to be an effective moderator of the relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention. Therefore, this study hypothesised that:

> *H5a: Organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership on labour turnover of employees in South African SMMEs such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak*

3.2.2. The moderating effect of organisational culture on the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention

A study conducted by Oussam and Johari (2016) found that a culture that supports organisational citizenship behaviours will moderate the relationship between perceived organisational support and labour turnover intention. Similarly, Shafique, Din, Nadeem, Din and Nawaz (2018) established that a culture that discourages employees from breaching their psychological contracts will moderate the relationship between their perceived organisational support and their turnover intention. In line with Pattnaik, Mishra and Tripathy (2020), a culture that supports person-organisation fit will moderate the effect of perceived organisational support on organisational commitment, thus leading to less employee withdrawal intentions.

In line with the above findings from the extant literature, it is envisaged that organisational culture will moderate the relationship between these variables. Accordingly, this study hypothesised that:

> *H7a: Organisational culture moderates the relationship between perceived company support on labour turnover of employees in South African SMMEs such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak*

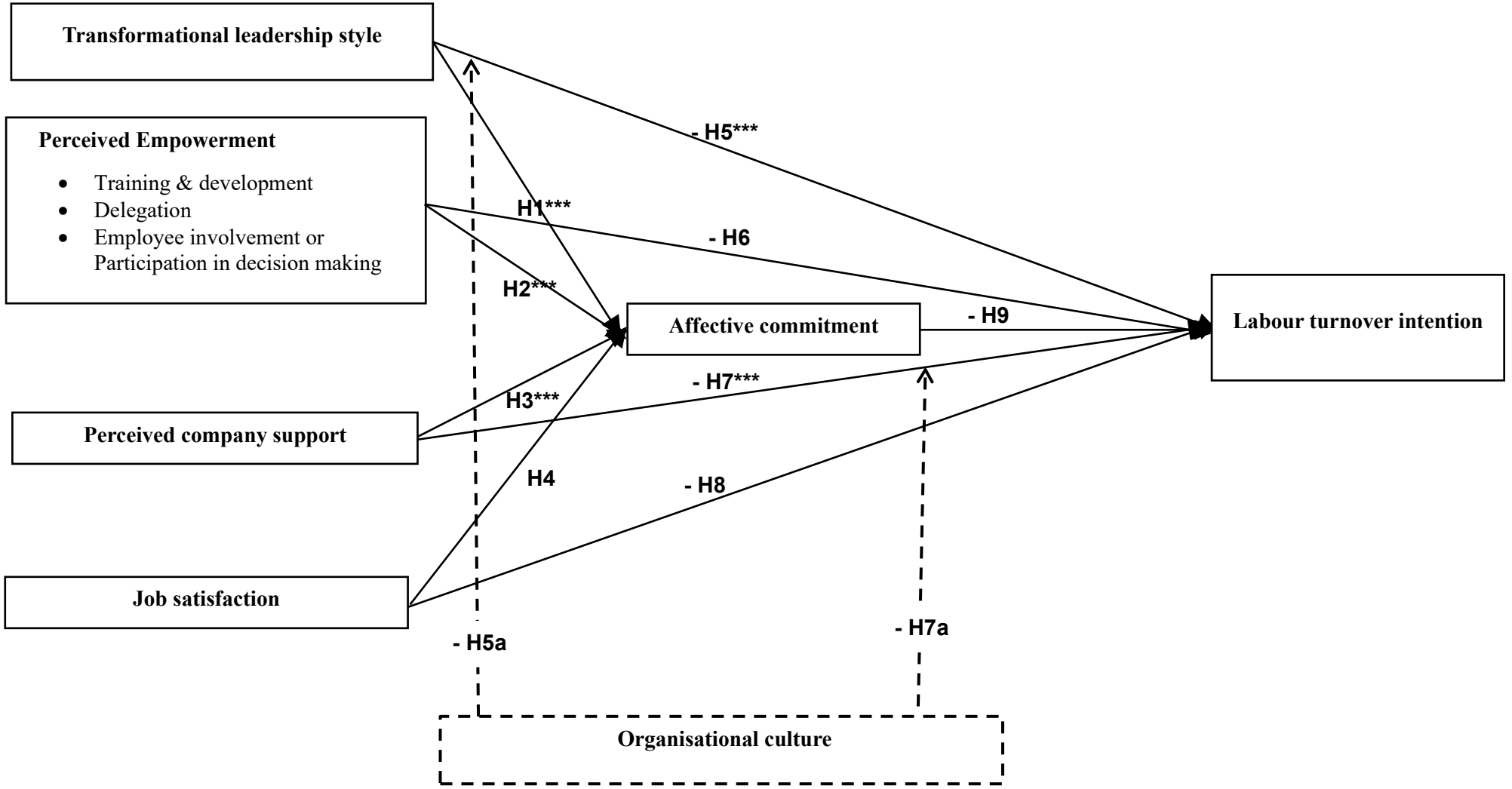
The following section presents the conceptual framework and the expected associations between the variables as presented above and as supported by the evidence from current literature.

Note: this study did not explicitly test the mediation effects as these fell outside of its scope

3.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To provide a vivid display of the direct, mediating and moderating relationships between the antecedents of labour turnover intention, a conceptual framework was devised. The conceptual framework depicts that transformational leadership style, perceived empowerment, perceived company support and job satisfaction (predictor or independent variables) are related indirectly and in some instances directly to labour turnover intention (outcome or dependent variable). Organisational (i.e., affective) commitment is depicted as a mediating variable that mediated the relationship between the four predictor variables on the outcome variable. Furthermore, organisational culture is portrayed as having a moderating effect on the relationship between labour turnover intention and its antecedents (i.e., only transformational leadership style and perceived company support). Thus, the different suppositions were formulated to illustrate the direction of causality as well as to show that this study will analyse the strength of these relationships through the inclusion of the moderating variable. It is the same hypotheses depicted in the conceptual framework that was subjected to statistical path modelling, to determine whether they were empirically defensible (i.e., sufficient evidence was garnered) or they can be rejected altogether owing to insufficient evidence.

Figure 3.1: Conceptual framework



*Note: *** = Hypothesised as significant*
No mediation effects were tested in this study

Table 3.1. Research objectives, questions, hypotheses and procedures

Research objectives	Research questions	Hypotheses	Statistical procedure
1. To determine whether transformational leadership style significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.	1. Does transformational leadership style significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?	H1: Transformational leadership significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
2. To explore whether perceived empowerment significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.	2. Does perceived empowerment significantly and positively influence organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?	H2: Perceived empowerment significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
3. To ascertain whether perceived company support mechanisms significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.	3. Does perceived company support significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?	H3: Perceived company support significantly and positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
4. To investigate whether job satisfaction positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs.	4. Does job satisfaction positively predicts employees organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs?	H4: Job satisfaction positively predicts organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
5. To establish whether transformational leadership style significantly and negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.	5. Does leadership style significantly and negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?	H5: Transformational leadership significantly and negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
6. To find out whether perceived empowerment negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.	6. Does perceived empowerment negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?	H6: Perceived empowerment negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
7. To investigate whether perceived company support mechanisms significantly and positively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.	7. Do perceived company support significantly and positively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?	H7: Perceived company support significantly and positively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
8. To understand whether job satisfaction negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.	8. Does job satisfaction negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?	H8. Job satisfaction negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM

Research objectives	Research questions	Hypotheses	Statistical procedure
9. To establish whether organisational commitment negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs.	9. Does organisational commitment negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?	H9: Organisational commitment negatively predicts turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs	AMOS 28 for SEM
5 (a) To determine whether organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership style and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs 7 (a) To determine whether organisational culture moderates the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs	5 (a) Does organisational culture moderate the relationship between transformational leadership style and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs? 7 (a) Does organisational culture moderate the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs?	H5(a): Organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership on labour turnover of employees in South African SMMEs such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak H7a: Organisational culture moderates the relationship between perceived company support on labour turnover of employees in South African SMMEs such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak	Hayes' PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.0

3.4. Chapter summary

This chapter drew relevant relationships from the submissions of previous scholars to effectively develop the hypotheses for this study. Hypotheses were then stated in line with the existing evidence, thus generating a solid direction required for this study. The conceptual framework was then presented, encapsulating all the hypothesised relationships as supported by the extant literature. It is worth noting that the specific influence of mediation effects was not tested in this research as it fell outside the scope of this study.

The next chapter discusses the methodology that characterised this study from both philosophical assumptions (i.e., ontology and epistemology). Furthermore, a discussion on aspects relating to the research design, sampling design, and questionnaire design is provided alongside the discussion of the data collection procedure that was employed as well as the ethical aspects that were considered.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used to carry out this study by specifying its philosophical underpinnings as well as the research design. Therefore, this chapter discusses the research process that was followed and specifies the procedures that were employed to effectively gather primary data for analysis. This chapter also considered the research problem, purpose, objectives as well as the ensuing questions before determining the suitable methodology and the data gathering procedures for this study. The theoretical and empirical arguments obtained from reviewing the extant literature alongside the resulting hypotheses and the conceptual model helped in guiding the methodology that befitted this study. Therefore, it was indispensable for this study to utilise an appropriate methodology to ensure that impactful and meaningful deductions were derived from the findings of this study. Against this backdrop, this chapter was reserved for articulating and justifying the procedures or designs that were implemented to profoundly accomplish the objectives of this study.

This section explains how this research was conducted by applying a systematic plan to resolve the research problem at hand. Explaining the approach of this study was necessary to ensure that the right data was collected for it to yield reliable and valid results that will meaningfully address the research problem (Patel & Patel, 2019). As this study explored labour turnover intention through its antecedent factors and eventually tested whether the hypotheses were supported or rejected, it was thus deductive in nature. In line with the philosophical underpinnings (explained below) this study employed an objective ontology alongside a positivist epistemology. Consistent with this philosophy, this study collected and analysed numerical data by applying a quantitative research design.

As the sample was selected based on ‘convenient’ sources of data using non-random criteria (i.e., not all respondents had an equal chance of being part of this study), then non-probability convenience sampling befitted the sampling procedure for this study. Raw data was gathered from individuals employed in SMMEs operating in Gauteng province (Johannesburg, Pretoria and Germiston) and a structured survey questionnaire was used. All the ethical principles that guided this research practice were met before, during and after the data collection process. Adherence to these ethical requirements was necessary to safeguard against any harm to the participants, and researcher and thus also protecting the image of the university.

In light of the above discussion, the research methodology was used in this study to methodically disentangle its research problem (Patel & Patel, 2019). Therefore, research

methodology was used to specify the systematic and logical path through which this study was conducted while describing the techniques that were used to acquire and analyse the raw data.

Research methodology was mainly divided into research philosophy or paradigm (ontology, epistemology) and research design (cross-sectional and non-experiential design, sampling design and questionnaire design).

4.2. RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

Research philosophy is a set of beliefs on how primary data relating to a specific phenomenon ought to be gathered, handled and applied (Woiceshyn & Daellenbach, 2018). Therefore, a research philosophy can be viewed as a framework that guides how research activities must be done based on ideas about the nature of knowledge and reality (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill & Bristow, 2015). Almost all research activities have a philosophical foundation upon which they are constructed. Extant literature (e.g., Okesina, 2020) has identified three types of research philosophies: ontology (i.e., the nature of reality and of what actually exists), epistemology (i.e., the relationship between the one who knows and what is known) and axiology (i.e., what we value as humans). This study concentrated on ontological and epistemological positions and how they influenced the choice of relevant methods for this study.

4.2.1 Ontological perspective

Ontology is the starting place for all research undertakings, after which an individual's epistemological and methodological perspectives plausibly follow (Saunders et al., 2019). Ontology is a philosophical study of the nature of reality, i.e., it studies how people determine if things exist or not and classifies the type of existence of those things (McGregor, 2018). Thus, ontology attempts to define abstract things by establishing what they actually are (Okesina, 2020). Whatever ontological stance that the researcher takes is more likely to eventually affect the methodological decisions that are followed in the study. After considering all the available ontological perspectives, it became apparent that this study would adopt an objective ontological standpoint, which is in line with quantitative methodology (Levers, 2013). This is because this study applied statistics, causality, and followed specific thresholds (e.g., 0.5 to justify convergent validity for Average Variance Extracted values) to reach certain conclusions and inferences.

4.2.2. Epistemological perspective

Epistemology is directly associated with ontology, and it is essentially a philosophical theory of justified knowledge that is grounded upon what we believe is true about something (Saunders et al., 2019). Different epistemologies have been identified in the literature, and consistent with objective ontology, then positivist epistemology befitted this study. The positivist paradigm was considered to be in line with the purpose and objectives of this study as it also puts much emphasis on facts that are evaluated empirically by using quantitative techniques e.g., using a structured survey to collect raw data that gets statistically analysed through the use of, for example, Structural Equation Modeling (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Consistent with the above discussion on the philosophical perspectives that characterised this study, it is worth summarising that this study applied an objective ontology alongside a positivist paradigm because this philosophy was compatible with the quantitative design explained in the section below.

4.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is an overall strategy that the study uses to integrate several elements logically and coherently, thereby connecting the conceptualised research problems to the relevant and feasible empirical research in a way that ensures that such problems are effectively addressed (Rahi, 2017). Research design is a plan that guides the research activities to warrant that sound conclusions are attained (Terre-Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Thus, the need to empirically test the importance of the underlying relationships, as hypothesised in the conceptual framework (Figure 3.1) necessitated a proper research design. For this research to be conducted successfully, a suitable research plan was developed and adopted before the start of data collection, so as to achieve the research purpose in a valid way (Asenahabi, 2019). Therefore, the essence of a research design was to convert a research problem into data for further analysis in order to proffer appropriate answers to research questions at the lowest possible cost. In so doing, this helped in binding this study together through a plan that outlined how all the key parts of this research worked together to address the problem at hand. Moreover, the research design was used to determine the types of analyses that must be done for this study to eventually get the desired results (Jongbo, 2014). This was achieved by articulating the required data and specifying the data collection and data analysis methods. In line with current evidence, the research design is split into three classes: quantitative; qualitative and mixed-method research design (Asenahabi, 2019).

4.3.1. Choosing the appropriate research design for this study

It is paramount that a study must adopt a specific research design that ensures that its objectives are achieved precisely, clearly, economically, and objectively, with less extraneous variance and minimal errors (Asenahabi, 2019). When choosing the appropriate design for this study, the researcher repeatedly consulted relevant literature to make coherent and justifiable judgments regarding the types of data that were to be used when collecting and during the data analysis phase. This means that the choice of research design was based on the nature of this study not erratically picking methods and techniques without justifiable reasons. Therefore, the analysis of relevant and existing literature on the different kinds of research designs as well as a careful analysis of the research problem, questions, and conceptual framework helped the researcher in selecting the most suitable and appropriate research design.

Since this study adopted an objective ontological position that was complemented by a positivist paradigm, the research design that corresponded with this philosophical underpinning

was a cross-sectional, non-experiential research design that applied mono-method, quantitative research approach.

4.3.2. Quantitative research method

Quantitative research approach is an analytical research method, with measurements that yield quantifiable or discrete values (Kothari, 2007). In line with Rovai, Baker and Ponton (2014), researchers who use a quantitative approach to data collection and analysis regard themselves as independent of the world and rely on an unbiased and objective reality. Consistent with a quantitative methodology, the study objectives and relationships between the variables helped the researcher in generating the data and eventually testing the hypothesis during path modelling. Conclusions were then drawn regarding the objectives or hypothesis after a series of data analyses. The process of gathering and scrutinising the data was done by applying numerous mathematical and statistical techniques which focused on non-experimental methods (Asenahabi, 2019). Therefore, the design that was applied in this study (i.e., quantitative methodology) was based on objective ontology and a positivist epistemology (Saunders et al., 2019).

Quantitative research is classified into two categories: i.e., experimental and non-experimental research designs. Since no experiments were conducted in this research, a non-experimental research design was adopted in this study.

4.3.4. Non-experimental design

Non-experimental design is essentially a quantitative research method that does not entail experiments during the process of data collection (Asenahabi, 2019). This study identified three sub-divisions of this design: correlation design, survey design and causal-comparative design. Since this study sought to study the sampled population to provide a numeric description of SMME employees' opinions, emotions, and attitudes, then a survey approach was more relevant.

4.3.5. Survey approach

A survey approach is a method of obtaining huge sums of data, usually in a statistical way, by using close-ended and structured questions from a huge amount of people in a fairly short time (Asenahabi, 2019; McNeill & Chapman, 2005). The data was collected from employees sampled from different SMMEs around Gauteng in order to determine the current status of the phenomenon being investigated in this study. Therefore, this method came in handy as the researcher was studying many variables that required a large sample size and thorough statistical analysis (Sjøberg, Dybå & Jørgensen, 2007).

Survey research designs can either be cross-sectional or longitudinal studies (Asenahabi, 2019). Cross-sectional designs (exploratory, descriptive and explanatory) are those with observations that are conducted at one point in time while longitudinal studies (trend analysis) happen at different points in time (Jongbo, 2014; Sasayama, Nonoue, Tada & Adachi, 2019). A cross-sectional survey design, which was mainly correlational in nature was used in this study. The research design was correlational in nature because the research strategy described and examined the direct and indirect relationships between the variables, to objectively establish which constructs were closely connected with, and or influenced each other (Apuke, 2017). This research strategy made it possible that the exogenous and endogenous variables were observed across participants, with an endeavour to find any relationship patterns that exist between variables, while simultaneously measuring the strength of each relationship (Asenahabi, 2019). As the statistical analyses for this study were informed by the multivariate causal technique (i.e., structural equation modelling), the benefit of using correlational analysis was that it proffered robust support for the structural paths that were used when testing the validity (e.g., through average variance extracted) of the sequential relationships between the studied variables. Another advantage of using correlational analysis was that it helped in determining the relationships between a combination of variables that predicted a particular variable (for example, measuring the influence of transformational leadership through the mediating effect of organisational commitment on labour turnover intention) (Curtis, Comiskey & Dempsey, 2016). The key drawback of correlational designs was that this study could not use this technique to establish cause-and-effect relationships between the constructs (Asamoah, 2014), i.e., the study did not describe the relationship between variables in which at least one variable was a direct relationship of the others.

Surveys designs usually use structured interviews or questionnaires for data collection to eventually extrapolate the sampled data to a population (Sasayama et al, 2019). There are a variety of techniques that can be used to administer surveys, for example, internet, telephone, face-to-face, or mail. In line with this study, structured questionnaires were administered either through face-to-face methods (i.e., researcher-administered) or through internet-based (i.e., self-administered) email surveys. The self-administered survey (i.e., respondents independently completing the questionnaires) through emailing was relevant in instances where the sampled respondents were considered adequately literate

The benefits of using self-administered survey questionnaires included the considerably low cost of generating data, time saving, responses were at respondents' convenience. elf-administered surveys, however, yielded low response rates, as many respondents expected an incentive to boost their willingness to respond. On the other hand, researcher-administered questionnaires helped in ensuring that respondents were representative of the target audience. They also yielded higher response rates compared to self-administered methods. However, their key disadvantages were that there was room for human error, slow data collection as sometimes the researcher had to explain some questions, and this may have negatively affected respondents' responses.

The principal advantage of using survey designs was the fact that they provided relevant information on large groups of people, with minimal effort, and in a very cost-efficient way Moreover, surveys made it possible for large datasets to be analysed through computer software, they further reduced interviewer bias and were deemed to be mostly accurate and most importantly, they allowed for anonymous and fairly authentic responses from respondents (Asenahabi, 2019). However, the major shortcomings of using a survey method involved the possible low response rate and the difficulty in controlling against sample bias which and this drawback may have further compromised the external validity of this study to the general population. Moreover, the high reliance of the survey on the cooperation of the participants determined the degree of the reliability of the findings as well as the high likelihood of receiving incomplete questionnaires. It was also difficult to unearth any information unknown to the respondents and additionally, it was acknowledged that the aspect of labour turnover intention is very personal and sensitive (Asenahabi, 2019; Wabwoba & Ikoha, 2011), and hence secretive respondents may have submitted inaccurate responses.

The discussion above hinted at the fact that surveys use data based on a sample. Therefore, this underscores the significance of selecting a sample that is suitable for the study, i.e., particular emphasis must be placed on the sampling frame, sample size and other conditions that were specific to this study. The importance of the sampling design that was used for this study is explained in the following section. But first, the study population will be defined.

4.3.6. Population

The population, from the research context, refers to all the people or elements that have similar and defined characteristics upon which the results of the study are relevant (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Essentially, the study population is about all the objects or people to which the study seeks to generalise its findings on. The population of this study was all the workers employed in SMMEs within the Gauteng province of South Africa.

4.3.7. Sampling frame

A key requirement for any research is that it must have a clear sampling frame. The sampling frame is a comprehensive and exhaustive list of all those who form part of the target population and can be sampled, and may consist of individuals, households or institutions (Shook-Sa, Currivan, Roe & Klein, 2016). The sampling frame ought to be representative of the population that the sample is drawn from. This is in line with Bradley (2010) who suggested that a sample frame must mirror the population of interest. In light of this study, the sampling frame was all the registered SMMEs in Gauteng province in South Africa. In line with the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA)'s latest quarterly report, there were 917043 registered SMMEs in Gauteng by quarter 3, for the year 2021. Therefore, the total number of registered SMMEs in Gauteng as of quarter 3 of 2021 was the sampling frame for this study.

Taking a subset from the selected population and as specified in the sampling frame characterised the sampling design of a study, and this aspect will be further explained in the section below.

4.4. SAMPLING DESIGN

Sampling design is a road map and a definite plan or framework for getting a sample from a certain population, thus it serves as the foundation for the choice of a survey sample so that information about the entire population can be gathered by inspecting only a part of it (Rahi, 2017). Therefore, sampling design refers to the procedure that the researcher adopts when selecting an aggregate of the population so as to draw inferences from the sample to the larger population (Vasileiou, Barnett, Thorpe & Young, 2018). Therefore, this study needed to determine and define its sampling before any data was collected.

4.4.1. Sampling method

Over the years, the survey research area has witnessed an ever-increasing contest between two distinctive sampling paradigms, i.e., probability and nonprobability sampling. A distinction can be done between probability sampling (i.e., random, systematic, stratified and cluster samples) and non-probability sampling (convenience, quota, accidental, purposive and snowball samples) (Vasileiou et al., 2018). Because neither of these two sampling paradigms is a panacea on its own, a number of efforts have been done to blend these paradigms to create a single inference that counteracts the shortcomings of each standalone paradigm (e.g., Elliott & Haviland, 2007). Probability sampling is usually characterised by the practice of deriving samples from the whole population by employing a random selection method, with every individual having an equal and known chance of being included in the sample. In contrast, a non-probability sampling procedure includes some form of a subjective selection of respondents into the sample and the likelihood of inclusion is unknown (Vasileiou et al. 2018). Probability sampling remains the best method of sampling since it selects elements from a population in a way that their descriptions (i.e., statistics) precisely depict the parameters of the whole population from which these elements were selected (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). Although the probability sampling method is the best, this sampling technique is not always practical or even achievable in research endeavours that involve human beings (Scholtz, 2021). Therefore, non-probability sampling methods are frequently the most practical alternative.

Given the extreme costs of using probability samples, it is unlikely that academic survey inquiries can always afford a large probability sample for their studies to be generalisable. At the same time, non-probability sampling has its limitations, for example, the absence of a basic mathematical theory similar to probability sampling is problematic especially when it comes to determining the sampling error for estimates that are drawn from nonprobability samples

(Baker, Brick, Bates, Battaglia, Couper, Dever & Tourangeau, 2013). A number of benchmarking research investigations have variously demonstrated that non-probability samples are likely to be less correct than probability samples (e.g., Dutwin & Buskirk 2017; MacInnis, Krosnick, Ho & Cho, 2018; Blom, Ackermann-Piek, Helmschrott, Cornesse & Sakshaug, 2017; Pennay, Neiger, Lavrakas & Borg, 2018). Perhaps a more feasible scenario is for future scholars to consider using a small probability sample survey in parallel with a non-probability sample survey to enhance the efficiency (i.e., lessen the variance caused by small sample estimates) as well as improve the likelihood of generalising the study findings (Scholtz, 2021).

It was for the reasons specified above that this study employed non-probability sampling as a method of generating the right sample. While this sampling technique was the most feasible alternative, this study cannot assert to have sampled a representative subset of employees working in SMMEs located around Gauteng province of South Africa. In order for the researcher to further bring the sample to a manageable proportion, while simultaneously reducing the cost, meet up with the challenge of time while minimising error from the despondence, only Johannesburg, Pretoria and Ekurhuleni metros were considered, i.e., 50% from Johannesburg, 30% from Pretoria and 20% from Ekurhuleni. This is particularly because a convenience sample was used for data collection and the choice of this sampling procedure may have affected the external validity of the findings that ensued from this study.

4.4.2. Convenience sampling technique

The most widely used sampling approach in organisational psychology is convenience sampling – a non-probability sampling technique (Scholtz, 2021; Zhao, 2020). Convenience sampling conveniently gathers data from whoever is keen to participate in a specific study and is thus easily accessible to the investigator (Wienclaw, 2019). Therefore, the researcher used convenience sampling to recruit participants based solely on accessibility and convenience. Consistent with Staetsky (2019), convenience samples are not necessarily representative of the general population, and this severely affects the external validity or the generalisability of the results (Landers & Behrend, 2015). As other sampling approaches (for example, probability stratified sampling) are allegedly more expensive than convenience samples (Jager, Putnick, & Bornstein, 2017), other researchers have analysed the trade-offs between internal and external validity and argued that the scientific rigour (i.e., internal validity) should be considered more important than the generalisability of the findings (external validity) (e.g., Jimenez-Buedo &

Miller, 2010; Landers & Behrend, 2015; Steckler & McLeroy, 2008). In line with these previous scholars, this study needed to focus on describing internal validity (e.g., measure identification), while acknowledging that external validity was one of the limitations of this research.

Collecting data through convenience sampling limited this study in several ways, for instance, the results were susceptible to retaining strong and hidden biases (Andrade, 2020; Palinkas, Horwitz, Green & Wisdom, 2013). In addition, the samples might have contained outliers or individuals who felt they did not form part of this study (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). That is why Steckler and McLeroy (2008) underscored the significance of determining and strengthening the external validity of the results. Nevertheless, Barratt and Lenton (2015) discovered that in some instances scholars and readers can extrapolate the results beyond non-probability samples, despite some authors suggesting it as a shortcoming. This has caused what has been referred to as a 'lumpy social world' (Lucas, 2014: 391) which essentially highlights the difficulties that surround the issue of generalisability. Landers and Behrend (2015) also suggested that broad generalisations can be made from conveniently sampled respondents, even if this sampling technique is listed as an overt limitation. In order to create better chances for this study to yield generalisable results, homogenous convenience samples were used as a means to combat the shortcomings of convenience sampling (Jager, Putnick, Bornstein, 2017). Lastly, in defence of the convenience sampling method, Staetsky (2019) added that conveniently selected samples are suitable if research users are notified of their precision when responding to the questions in the questionnaire, thus making the shortcomings of this technique to be made apparent.

4.4.3. Sampling unit

The sampling unit, also called the unit of sampling, is statistically termed as "who" or "what" is being sampled (Sedgwick, 2015). Sampling units are drawn from the total population, for example, a country, province, or customer database and these are placed into smaller groups to form a sample. A sampling unit can also refer to a person, product, animal, plant or 'thing' being investigated (Sedgwick, 2015). Therefore, a sampling unit can be a person or thing that is being observed. Since this study was conducted using a sample of SMME employees in Johannesburg, Pretoria and Germiston, then each SMME employee became its sampling unit.

4.4.4. Sample size

Researchers advance to selecting the participants from the population, in order to choose a sample that is representative of the whole population in terms of its size and composition. Sample size essentially means the total number of observations or participants incorporated in a particular study (Hanges & Wang, 2012; Vasileiou et al., 2018). Generally, large sample sizes often help in reducing sampling errors while enhancing the generalisability of the study findings (Yang, Wang & Su, 2006). Sample size has an influence on these statistical properties: (i) the precision of estimates and (ii) the power of the study to derive conclusions (iii) sample adequacy and representativeness. 'Perfect' sample sizes usually yield statistically sound results. The sample size for this study was calculated through the Raosoft sample size calculator and was triangulated using Yamane's sample size calculator. Through the Raosoft sample size calculator, this study tolerated a 5% margin of error, with a response distribution of 50%. The total population of registered employees was found to be 917 043, and at a 95% confidence interval, the recommended sample size was 334 responses. With regards to Yamane's (1973) sample size calculator, the following formula was used:

$$n = N/(1+N\ (e)^2)$$

Where n = sample size

N= population

e = error margin (i.e., 0.01)

This yielded a sample size of 333. Thus, this study achieved this representative size by being able to get 338 valid responses.

4.5. QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

A questionnaire entails a number of questions asked to different people to acquire quantitative data that can be used to generate statistically valuable information regarding a given topic (Roopa & Rani, 2012). A questionnaire is the backbone of any survey and its success primarily lies in its proper design, as it is the main means of gathering primary data. It is for this reason that a questionnaire is regarded as the heart of a survey process (Khothari, 2004). Questionnaires must always have a fixed purpose that is linked to the aims of the study, its design should be grounded on a conceptual framework, each question must be scrutinised for relevance and clarity, and it must be transparent from the beginning about how the results will be used. A good questionnaire has the correct format, appropriate questions, proper ordering of these questions and appropriate scaling to make a survey worthwhile, as it may lead to an accurate reflection of the views and opinions of the participants if these conditions are not met (Khothari, 2004; Roopa & Rani, 2012). Thus, a good questionnaire must be reliable, valid, clear, interesting and succinct (Roopa & Rani, 2012). When appropriately constructed and conscientiously administered, a questionnaire can become a crucial instrument by which assertions can be made about particular groups or individuals or the whole population. Previous scholars suggest that a beneficial way of checking the questionnaire to make sure that it accurately captures the intended information is to pre-test it using a smaller subset of the target respondents, i.e., pilot testing.

The questionnaire made it likely that quantitative data was gathered in a standardised way for it to be internally reliable and coherent for scrutiny, i.e., the survey questionnaire was structured. The characteristics of the questionnaire for this study were that the responses from participants were obtained through restricted questions or closed-ended questions with multiple choice answer options. Since the items for the questionnaire were adapted from previous studies, the researcher ensured that necessary modifications were made for the questions to eventually provide answers to the research questions, while fulfilling the purpose of this study.

4.5.1. Layout

The questionnaire was divided into the following parts:

(i) **Invitation** – This involved asking or inviting respondents to respond to the survey questions. It also involved introducing the study, the topic, and the approximate time it was likely to take for each respondent to complete the survey. It also underscored that each respondent's participation was voluntary and that they were free to opt out of the

survey at any time, with no harm. It also emphasised that their responses were to remain anonymous and guaranteed the confidentiality of the collected data. The contact details of the researcher and the supervisor were also specified at the end of this first part of the questionnaire.

(ii) **Consent form** – Before consenting, the researcher made sure that the respondents understood that their participation was voluntary, that their details were to remain anonymous throughout the data collection process and during the write-up of the final dissertation and also that they were free to refuse to answer any questions which they felt uncomfortable responding to. All the respondents were requested to consent by signing with an "X".

(iii) **Demographic information** – Personal information was gathered for descriptive statistics. Respondents were asked to specify their gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, type of occupation, personal income, tenure in the organisation, and whether or not they had intentions to leave their current organisation. In all instances, there was an option of "Prefer not to say" in case respondents felt uncomfortable answering any of these questions.

(iv) **Study instruments** – The study instruments included all the variables and their corresponding items that measured these constructs. This section was pre-coded on a 7-point Likert scale.

(v) **Conclusion** – A closing statement thanked the respondents for giving up their time to participate in this study and highlighted the researcher's appreciation in this regard. Importantly, it further emphasised the researcher's commitment to always treat all the responses with utmost confidentiality.

4.5.2. Likert-type scaling

A Likert-type scaling method is a form of closed question technique that assigns a scale value to each response in the survey questionnaire (Khothari, 2004). This study utilised a 7-point Likert-type scale where respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement in the questionnaire. The scales were as follows: (i) = strongly disagree, (ii) = disagree (iii) = slightly disagree, (iv) = neutral (v) = slightly agree, (vi) = agree and (vii) = strongly agree. Every response was linked to a numerical score (i.e., all the responses for the measurement instruments were pre-coded). Ultimately, the item scores for each variable were totalled to quantify respondents' viewpoints.

4.5.3. Survey instrument

The survey instrument in this study refers to the tool (with all the demographic information and variables combined) that was used to gather data. A considerable amount of literature review was devoted to the process of identifying relevant items that were to be adapted for the variables of this study. Ultimately, this study built a single instrument from multiple instruments with different sources and items. Table 4.2 below was used to describe these scales, the different sources used, the reliability for each scale as well as information about validity.

Table 4.3: Reliability and validity of measuring instruments

Construct	Adapted item sources	Example of items	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha or Composite Reliability	Validity (Discriminant, Convergent, AVE)
Transformational leadership	Measured through Bass and Avolio (1995)'s 20-item Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Adapted from Engelbrecht, Van Aswegen and Theron (2005).	I make others feel good to be around me. I enable others to think about old problems in new ways.	0.73 - 0.93 (Den Hartog, Muijen & Koopman, 1997;). Engelbrecht & Chamberlin, 2005; Pillai, Schriesheim & Williams, 1999)	0.5 - 0.87 (Bommer et al., 2005; Podsakoff, et al., 1996; Kirkman et al., 2009;) Work by Podsakoff et al. (1996)
Perceived empowerment	Adapted 15-item Menon Empowerment Scale adapted from Kotze, Menon and Vos (2007) plus some items from y Rogers et al. (1997)	I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work	0.73 – 0.93 (Menon, 2001; Kotze et al. 2007; Rogers et al., 2010)	0.56 – 0.74 (Menon, 2001; Kotze et al. 2007; Matthews, Diaz, Cole, 2003; Rogers et al., 2010)
Perceived company support	Adapted 12 items from the original 36-item Survey of Perceived Organisational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986) and as amended and used by Cho et al. (2009).	The organisation cares about my well-being. The organisation strongly considers my goals and values.	077 – 0.91 (Arshadi & Hayavi, 2013; Cho et al. 2009; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Worley, Fuqua & Hellman, 2009).	0.61 – 0.87 (Cho et al. 2009; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Worley, Fuqua & Hellman, 2009).
Job satisfaction	Adapted from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (1977).	My job provides steady employment My pay is consistent with the amount of work I do	0.74 - 0.87 (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2009; Gautam, Mandal & Dalal, 2006; Nanjundeswarswamy, 2019).	0.52 - 0.67 (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2009; Nanjundeswarswamy, 2019; Tsounis & Sarafis, 2018).

Construct	Adapted item sources	Example of items	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha or Composite Reliability	Validity (Discriminant, Convergent, AVE)
Organisational commitment	Adapted from Allen and Meyer's (1996) and Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	I feel like 'part of my family' at this organisation This organisation has a great deal of Personal meaning for me	0.77 – 0.92 (Coetzee, Schreuder & Tladidyane, 2007; Karim & Noor 2006; Mowday et al, 1979; Yilmaz, 2008)	0.56 – 0.78 (Allen & Meyer1, 996; Coetzee, Schreuder & Tladidyane, 2007; Ferreira; 2009; Lumley, 2010; Mowday et al., 1979)
Labour turnover intention	Adapted from a 15-item scale developed by Roodt (2004).	I often look forward to another day at work My current job that suits my personal needs	0.77 – 0.89 (de Coninck & Johnson, 2009; Cohen, 1993, Becker, 1992; Roodt, 2004)	0.77 – 0.89 (Bothma & Roodt, 2013; Dwivedi, 2015; Roodt, 2004)
Organisational culture	Adapted from Allen & Dyer (1980) and Dawson, Abbott and Shoemaker (2011)	We constantly stretch our goals, to continuously improve People in my company value and make use of one another's unique strengths and different abilities.	0.72 – 0.91 (Kao, Tsaur & Huang, 2020; Scott, Mannion, Davies & Marshallvan, 2003; der Post, de Coning & Smit, 1997)	0.55 – 0.66 (Ghosh & Srivastava, 2014; Kao, Tsaur & Huang, 2020)

Note: AVE = Average Variance Extracted

The questionnaire is available in Appendix II of this study.

After the questionnaire was designed, the next step was to identify a set of principles that ensured that, especially the data collection process, was done ethically. This is because researchers are expected to adhere to a particular code of conduct when gathering data from human beings. The ethical considerations relevant to this study are discussed below.

4.6. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In any academic inquiry, ethical considerations are always crucial to counteract any perpetual or undue harm to respondents, whether inadvertent or not (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This implies that this study needed to pursue its objectives of addressing the identified problem through employing ethical research methods and procedures. Defying these ethical issues may have resulted in the violation of human rights or dignity of responses, and this defiance would have lowered the credibility of this research, owing to morally questionable methods used and the ensuing data thereof (Burles & Bally, 2018). Therefore, this study underscores the fact that research ethics mattered primarily for safeguarding the rights and dignity of respondents, preserving the validity of the study as well as maintaining scientific integrity. Adhering to these ethical principles also made sure that participation in this research was safe, informed, informed, and voluntary for research respondents.

4.6.1. Ethical approval

Before collecting raw data from employees around selected cities in Gauteng, the research proposal and questionnaire were submitted for review by the designated ethics committee at the University of the Witwatersrand. The committee checked whether the research objectives and methodology were ethically acceptable and followed the institution's code of conduct. The institutional authorisation was requested from the University of Witwatersrand, and approval for the commencement of the data collection process was granted on the 19th of November 2021, with ethics number: H21/11/12 (see Appendix I of this study).

After the ethics clearance certificate was obtained, the researcher was ready to collect the data in an ethically acceptable way.

4.6.2. Ethical issues addressed during and after data collection

There were numerous ethical issues that the researcher paid attention to during the data collection stage, to keep within the expected ethical principles governing studies on human participants. However, some of these issues may have overlapped with each other.

Table 4.2: Ethical issues relevant to this study

Ethical issue	Adherence
Voluntary participation	One of the requirements for a study that involves human participants is that respondents must be free to opt-in or out of the research at any stage (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The researcher promoted voluntary participation by informing respondents that they were: o free to participate, thus they were not pressured to give their responses o able to retract from the study at any point without feeling a responsibility to continue. o no repercussions or negative consequences to their refusal to participate.
Informed consent	Consistent with Bryman and Bell (2011), the researcher ensured that all the potential participants were told and understood all the information they needed to know before deciding whether they wanted to participate or not. This included disclosing: o what the study entailed (purpose or what it sought to achieve) o benefits (there were no risks) of taking part o approximately how long it would take them to complete the survey o the ethics clearance from the university was shared o the researcher and the supervisor's contact details were also provided o that no personal information was required o that their data will be always kept confidential o that if they decided to participate, they will be requested to sign a consent form with an "X"

Ethical issue	Adherence
Anonymity	The identities of the respondents were protected by not requesting any personally identifiable information from them. This made it impossible for the researcher or anyone else to link any individual participant to their data (Bryman & Bell, 2011).
Confidentiality	The data collected was kept in a safe and locked file drawer, hidden from everyone else. The soft Excel copy was also password-protected. To keep the data confidential, the researcher took the necessary steps to protect it and thwart any threats to data privacy. This was in line with the institution's data privacy protocols.
Potential for harm	The researcher was also mindful of all possible sources of harm to respondents. Harm comes in different forms, as highlighted by Bryman and Bell (2011): • Psychological harm: Sensitive questions that can spark negative sentiments like anxiety or shame • Social harm: Respondent participation that can lead to stigma, public embarrassment, or social risks • Physical harm: Injury or pain that can result from how the study was conducted • Legal harm: Reporting sensitive information that can lead to the university, researcher or supervisor being sued due to a breach of privacy. The researcher involved the supervisor (before and after ethics application and clearance respectively) so as to consider all possible sources of harm in this study and how they should be mitigated. There were no possible risks of harm to disclose to participants before getting informed consent. The questions around labour turnover intention were structured in such a way that they were not sensitive to the respondents (as labour turnover intention can be a personal and highly sensitive matter)
Results communication	The researcher ensured that this study was free of plagiarism or research misconduct and that the results were accurately represented

4.7. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is a methodical process of gathering raw data from a homogenous sample to gain original insights and first-hand knowledge about the research problem (Goktas, Hasancebi, Varisoglu, Akcay, Bayrak, Baran & Sozbilir, 2012; Uzunboylu & Asiksoy, 2014). Before the commencement of the data collection process, this study considered the objectives of this study, the type of data to be collected as well as the methods and procedures that were to be used to collect, store, and later process this primary data. This study used a survey method to understand the opinions and characteristics of SMME employees in relation to the studied problem. In order for this study to gather high-quality data that was relevant to its purpose, the following steps were taken.

Table 4.3. Steps taken ahead of data collection

Planning the data collection process	(After identifying that the survey method would be used (both through emailing and face-to-face distribution), the researcher planned on how exactly this was going to be implemented.
Operationalisation	This study was also interested in collecting data on more abstract variables or concepts that were not directly observed, for example, job satisfaction. Therefore, operationalisation was used by turning these abstract conceptual ideas into quantifiable observations (e.g., by using a 7-point Likert-type scale).
Standardising procedures	Since a structured and similar questionnaire was used to collect data from all the respondents, this further allowed for the standardisation of the data collection procedures that were employed in this study.
Data management plan	Before starting the data collection process, the researcher decided on how the data would be organised and stored, for example, by taking the extra step of creating a safe drawer to store the anonymised responses from respondents in order to further safeguard the data and any prevent any leakage of information
Collecting the data	Finally, the researcher implemented the chosen methods to collect primary data from the target sample. The researcher personally handed out structured survey questionnaires while in some instances the questionnaire was emailed to respondents for them to fill and return at a later stage. However, the problem pf using emails was that the response rate was low, and there was no chance for the researcher to clarify any queries that respondents may have had.

Based on the above, a researcher-administered, as well as self-administered data collection method, was used during the data collection process.

4.8. Chapter summary

This chapter outlined the methodology that was employed in this study. The philosophical assumptions that underpinned this study include objective ontology and a positivist paradigm. These philosophical perspectives were consistent with the quantitative approach, which further highlighted that this study was deductive in nature. In line with the quantitative methodology was the survey method that was used to collect primary data from SMME employees around selected cities in the Gauteng province of South Africa. This study underscored the importance of adhering to the ethical principles that normally guide research endeavours linked to human participants. Therefore, no data was collected before authorisation was granted by the designated institutional ethics committee. Adherence to these ethical principles was done before, during and after the data collection process so as to guarantee the credibility of the results.

The next chapter discusses the procedure that was used to analyse the primary data that was collected from the targeted sample. Several statical techniques that were used to condense, describe and evaluate the raw data will be explicated.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

5.1. Introduction

This chapter defines the data analysis procedures that were employed in this study. This was done by systematically applying the statistical techniques in a way that condensed large amounts of gathered data to eventually describe, demonstrate and evaluate the data and make sense of it. The research problem, questions, and methodology guided the choice of data analysis methods applicable to this study. The gathered data was analysed through off-the-field mathematical techniques. SPSS 28 and Amos 28 were data analysis tools or software programs that were used for descriptive and inferential analyses respectively. While descriptive statistics were used to summarise the features of a data set, inferential statistics helped to bring about the relevant conclusions, making it possible to generate predictions based on the data.

Once raw data was acquired, it was first extracted from the questionnaires and processed (i.e., editing, coding, classification and tabulation). Thereafter the data was transformed. Data transformation entailed the conversion of the raw data by integrating it into a structured format. This procedure collapsed the data into one Excel file, thus preparing it for further analyses. Therefore, once coded and edited, the data was transformed into an Excel file, and then it was cleansed by identifying and resolving any data errors or inconsistencies that may have reduced the overall data quality. In cases where there were blanks or errors on the spreadsheet, these responses were either deleted or imputation was used. A few responses were deleted, and others were kept and corrected through imputation, as deleting too many responses may have made the sample size smaller than intended, thus likely to make it lose its statistical power. With regards to imputation, missing values were replaced with a new value based on a fair estimate. Imputation was applied with extreme caution, to avoid biasing the data or making it inaccurate altogether (Abulela & Harwell, 2020).

During the process of imputation, this study also identified the extreme outliers that significantly differed from most of the other values in the dataset, as these could have been errors (e.g., unrepresentative sampling, data entry errors and measurement errors) or true values. True outliers were confirmed from the questionnaires (as all questionnaires were numbered) in order to determine whether they were supposed to be retained (i.e., if they represented the natural variations in the sample) (Abulela & Harwell, 2020). These outliers were identified by custom sorting the values from low to high while checking the lowest and highest values to check if they were any discrepancies. The researcher dealt with identified outliers by retaining the ones that were confirmed in the questionnaires (and fell within the 7-

point scale that was used or within the specified codes in the descriptive statistics section) as well as removing responses or imputing estimates on those that required confirmation.

Generally, this study accepted the outliers as much as possible (as long as they fell within the set 7-point Likert-type scale), unless in cases where it was apparent that they represented errors or the data was simply flawed. Once the data was free of errors, omissions, and unconfirmed outliers, it was ready for the relevant analyses.

Firstly, the data was imported to SPSS 28 statistical software for descriptive analyses. Once the relevant descriptive statistics were computed, then the data was imported to Amos 28 for inferential analyses (through Amos 28 for Structural Equation Modelling). Descriptive statistics necessitated the calculation of the measures of central tendency (i.e., the mean), and computation of the measures of dispersion (i.e., the standard deviation). It was through descriptive analysis that Cronbach's alpha values were computed as a first step in measuring instrument reliability and validity (i.e., discriminant validity). Once univariate tests were concluded, the bivariate correlation analyses were done, thus concluding the descriptive analyses. Inferential analyses were realised through structural equation modelling i.e., confirmatory factor analysis (composite reliability, average variance extracted and model fit tests) as well as path modelling (model fit and hypotheses testing). Therefore, path modelling (hypotheses testing) was the ultimate step for all the analyses of this study, leading to either rejecting the hypotheses that were not supported by the data or failing to reject the hypotheses that were confirmed in this study.

The first part will provide a discussion on the procedure for descriptive analyses and then the next step would be inferential statistics, whereby the data will confirm or refute the hypotheses. It is also worthwhile to reiterate that the results from this study will not be generalisable to the larger population due to the sampling procedure that was used in this study.

5.2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics were used in this study to summarise, organise and describe the elementary characteristics of the dataset that detailed the responses of all the participants in this study (Abulela & Harwell, 2020). Univariate descriptive statistics focused on one variable at a time (Theron, Spangenberg & Henning, 2004). Under univariate analysis, the following types of descriptive statistics were analysed:

- The measures of central tendency i.e., the mean (after checking that the data set was not skewed by outliers as the mean is sensitive to extreme values)
- The measures of dispersion or variability or dispersion i.e., standard deviation

5.2.1. Item analysis

Item analysis was conducted to determine whether the measurement instruments that were used in this study were internally reliable. This was done by identifying items that did not adequately represent a particular variable (Theron et al., 2004). Therefore, the item-total correlations for the study items were determined for all the scales to ensure that the measuring instruments were internally consistent. Items that correlated above 0.20 were deemed acceptable while those below 0.20 qualified for possible exclusion (Nunnally, 1978). Therefore, item-to-total analysis aided in identifying 'poor' items owing to their inability to distinguish between different variables. In line with Theron et al. (2004), items that correlated poorly with the total were removed as they constrained the reliability of measurement instruments.

5.2.2. Reliability

A measurement instrument is reliable when it consistently delivers the same results, regardless of any possibilities of variation that can occur (Nunnally, 1978). Literature suggests that a good study must produce dependable results (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Cronbach's alpha (represented as α), as an indicator of reliability, is a conventional way of measuring the internal consistency of variables (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Cronbach's alpha values were used in this study to measure internal consistency or scale reliability, specifically, it determined how strongly related the items were to the sample group (Cronbach, 1951). The number of items in each variable helped in determining the internal consistency of these items (Nunnally, 1978). Cronbach's alpha values ranged between 0 and 1, where the closer the reliability value of a scale was to 1, the more the internal consistency of the items within that scale. Technically, Cronbach's alpha scores were not considered to be statistical tests, but rather coefficients of internal consistency or reliability. Therefore, the calculation of coefficient alpha values was

performed so as to establish the reliability of variables based on their internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978).

When interpreting the alpha coefficients scores, this study used the general guidelines for the minimally acceptable reliability scores, as suggested by Nunnally (1978) and supported by Streiner (2003) as well as Tavakol and Dennick (2011). Consistent with Byrne (2006), Cronbach (1951), along with Hair et al. (2007), a reliability score of 0.7 is acceptable. Table 5.1 depicts the recommendations for interpreting reliability as suggested by Nunnally (1978):

Table 5.1: Guidelines for the interpretation of reliability coefficients

Reliability score	**Recommended interpretation**
$\alpha > 0.9$	Excellent
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Marginally acceptable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Guidelines for reliability interpretation

Once univariate descriptive analyses were concluded, this study focused on the bivariate descriptive tests. The strength of the direct relationship between the two constructs was computed and displayed in the correlation matrix.

5.1.3. Bivariate correlation analysis

Correlation tests were used in this study to establish the degree to which two variables were related. Although this study utilised Pearson's *r* (which is a parametric test) because the relationship was linear or direct, there was another option to use Spearman's *r* which is mainly useful if the data does not follow a normal distribution. The correlation coefficients were assessed based on their 'effect size' or practical implication rather than using their statistical impact (Bosco, Aguinis, Singh, Field & Pierce, 2015). Since this study could not extrapolate its findings to the rest of the population (as a non-probability sampling method was utilised), effect sizes were the next best alternative (Steyn, 2002). Effect sizes indicated how meaningful the relationships were between the study constructs by demonstrating the practical significance of the results. A large effect size meant that a research finding had practical significance, while a small effect size indicated limited practical applications (Sun, Pan & Wang, 2010). This study accepted minimum cut-off points of 0.30 for the effect sizes, as this was consistent with Cohen (1988) who established that 0.3 represented a practical significance of correlation coefficients.

However, Cohen's (1988) suggestion differed from Guilford's (1973) suggestion of 0.20 – i.e., for acceptable effect sizes (cited in Tredoux & Durrheim, 2002). This study used the following thresholds to determine the strength of the correlations between the constructs, as per Guilford's (1973) interpretation of the extent of significant correlations:

Table 5.2: Interpretations of the correlation extent

Alpha coefficient values (+ or -)	Interpretation
0	No correlation
< 0.3	Slight, no relationship
$0.2 \leq x < 0.4$	Low or minor relationship
$0.4 \leq x < 0.7$	Moderate and substantial relationship
$0.7 \leq x < 0.9$	High and strong relationship
$0.9 \leq x < 1.0$	Very high and strong relationship
$0.95 \leq x < 1.0$	Too high relationship, may indicate the problem of multicollinearity
1.0	Perfect correlation

Note: (+ or -) = Relationship can be positive or negative

The coefficient of determination (r^2) was also computed (see Table 6.3) to ascertain the percentage of shared variance between the variables that correlated with each other (Chicco, Warrens & Jurma, 2021). Coefficient of determination scores helped to show how well the model was a close fit with the observed data (Chicco et al, 2021), for example, a coefficient of determination of 70% revealed that 70% of the data fit the regression model. Thus, higher coefficients of determination would generally indicate a better fit for the model.

5.2.4. Validity

As the literature suggests, reliability and validity are intertwined but each of these aspects serves different purposes (Ghazali, 2016). A measuring instrument can be reliable but not valid; but, a valid instrument must be reliable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). While reliability relates to the consistency of a particular measuring instrument, validity measures the accuracy of that instrument (Hair et al., 1998). Therefore, validity demonstrates the extent to which a particular instrument accurately determines what it is intended to measure (Ghazali, 2016). Several typologies have identified several types of validity, but this study only focused on discriminant and convergent validity. This means that this study sought to demonstrate how the variables were linked to each other in a convergent-discriminant validity matrix. This is because Bagozzi and Phillips (1991) established that it is enough for studies to just concentrate on these two types of validity.

5.2.5. Discriminant validity

Discriminant emphasises that unrelated constructs should be unique from each other (Guo, Aveyard, Fielding & Sutton, 2008). Thus, discriminant validity was used in this study to measure the degree to which the variables diverged or minimally correlated with each other (Guo et al., 2008). This was demonstrated by evidence that measurement instruments that are not theoretically related (i.e., unique constructs) should not be highly correlated with each other. The uniqueness of these variables was tested in this study by applying Fornell & Larcker's (1981) criterion for measuring discriminant validity. This meant that the square root value of the average variance extracted (AVE) was compared with inter-construct correlation values in the correlation matrix. The square root of AVE was supposed to be greater than the inter-construct correlation. Moreover, each item was supposed to load highly on its related construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The inter-construct correlation matrix was also used to check the uniqueness of the study constructs, e.g., checking whether the variables did not correlate highly with each other to suggest a problem of multicollinearity (i.e., $r < 0.85$) as well as to check whether there was no perfect correlation between the study constructs (i.e., $r = 1$ or 100% correlation) (Fraering & Minor, 2006).

5.2.6. Convergent validity

Convergent validity refers to the degree to which conceptually similar variables or instruments exhibit a strong relationship with each other (Götz, Liehr-Gobbers, & Krafft, 2010). In line with Nunnally (1978), Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7 signified that these measurement instruments exhibited item convergence. The corrected item-to-total correlations were also used to determine the existence of convergent validity, and in line with Carlson and Herdman (2012), item correlations higher than 0.5 indicate the existence of convergent validity. Composite reliability (CR) values were also used to verify the existence of convergent validity and in line with Bagozzi and Yi (1988), CR values greater than 0.6 confirm item convergence. Consistent with Fornell and Larcker (1981), this study used AVE values to justify convergent validity. An AVE value of at least 0.50 indicated that there was sufficient evidence to confirm convergent validity. Once the measurement instruments were confirmed to be reliable and valid, then this study proceeded with inferential statistical analyses. While descriptive statistics were used to summarise the features of a data set, inferential statistics aided in drawing relevant conclusions and making appropriate predictions based on the information from the gathered data. This study applied a two-stage process recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), whereby the measurement model was validated first before testing the structural paths of the theorised model.

5.3. INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

Inferential statistics was used in this study to derive conclusions that were not drawn from descriptive statistics. Common methodologies for inferential statistics that were applied in this study included specifying the confidence intervals, multi-regression analysis through a powerful statistical software and hypothesis testing (Dangi, Kaur & Jham, 2019). Structural equation modelling was used to assess the structural model, using Amos 28 through the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) method. As aforementioned, this study followed a two-step process put forward by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), i.e., by first computing Composite reliabilities, AVE values and model fit (Confirmatory factor analysis) then finally rechecking model fit and testing the previously postulated relationships (Path modelling).

5.3.1. Structural Equation Modelling

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) or covariance structure modelling is a powerful and versatile tool for testing and evaluating multivariate causal associations between different variables (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). SEM differs from other modelling methodologies because it tests both the direct and indirect influences on pre-assumed causative relationships (Dangi et al., 2019). The power and versatility of this multivariate statistical technique lie in the fact that it can combine different analyses in one technique, i.e., SEM is a combination of regression, factor and path analyses among others (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Dangi et al., 2019; Hox & Bechger, 1998; Mueller & Hancock, 2018). The graphical path diagrams that SEM software programs use often visually portray the direction of causality, thus allowing the user to specify the directionality of the hypothesised relationships (Marcoulides & Schumacker, 1996). The same software also makes it possible to draw non-linear relationships between (Jöreskog, 1969) and this became evident during the confirmatory factor analysis stage as nonlinear double-curved arrows were drawn to represent the interrelationships between the latent variables. Therefore, the usefulness and perhaps the key strength of SEM (through Amos' MLE technique) was its ability to engender a meaningful identification of the associations between the variables.

5.3.2. Justification for using Amos through the MLE modelling

As a technique for approximating population parameters, the MLE method was used because it yields robust parameter estimates like the mean and variance for normal distribution and lambda for Poisson among others (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). This suggests that the likelihood method is a technique that enumerates the inconsistencies between observed and model-implicit parameters, while at the same time projecting a normal distribution of data.

MLE essentially means that the probability or likelihood of getting the practical information is maximised (Datsiou & Overend, 2018). The MLE method was used in this study to measure the adequacy of the structural equation model and when the assumptions of this method were satisfied, thus making the estimates more likely to have optimal properties (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Therefore, the MLE method was used to estimate parameters (e.g., under the confirmatory factor analysis stage) because this technique has very attractive statistical properties, for example, consistency, asymptotic unbiasedness, normality, and it produces reasonable estimates with the highest level of efficiency (Jöreskog, 1969). However, the key drawback of using this method is that, unlike Partial Least Squares, MLE requires larger sample sizes, for example at least 250 valid cases.

5.3.3. Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical method that is used to verify the factor structure of manifest variables as well as to evaluate the measurement element of the hypothesised structural model (Boichat, Eccleston & Keogh, 2018). As per Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) suggestion, CFA became the first stage of SEM, where reliability (CR values), validity (AVE values) and model fit were computed. The standardised regression weights (i.e., with a factor loading of at least 0.5) were used to calculate the CR and AVE values through the application of the formula that was suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

5.3.4. Composite reliability (CR)

As the calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient was a necessary but not sufficient way of justifying the reliability of the variables, a more robust method was also used (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996). Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested the following formula as a way of computing CR values and was applied in this study.

$$CR\eta = (\Sigma\lambda yi)^2 / [(\Sigma\lambda yi)^2 + (\Sigma\varepsilon i)]$$

where:

$CR\eta$ = Composite reliability,

$(\Sigma\lambda yi)^2$ = Square of the sum of the standardised regression weights,

$[(\Sigma\lambda yi)^2 + (\Sigma\varepsilon i)]$ = Sum of error variances.

5.3.5. Average variance extracted (AVE)

AVE values were used as a measure of the amount of variance in one variable relative to the variance of the measurement error. AVE values with a minimum of 0.50 revealed adequate convergent validity (Götz et al., 2010). This study used the following formula (as suggested by Fornell & Larcker, 1981) to compute the AVE values:

$$V\eta=\Sigma\lambda yi^2/[(\Sigma\lambda yi^2+\Sigma\varepsilon i)]$$

where:

$V\eta$ = Average Variance Extracted (AVE),

$\Sigma\lambda yi^2$ = Sum of the squared correlation coefficients,

$(\Sigma\lambda yi^2+\Sigma\varepsilon i)$= Sum of error variances.

The following table summarises the thresholds that were used to confirm composite reliability and average variance extracted.

Table 5.3: Suggested thresholds for confirming CR & AVE

Measure	**Threshold**
Composite Reliability	CR value must be at least 0.7
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	AVE value must be at least 0.5

Source: Fornell and Larcker (1981)

5.3.6. Model fit

Model fit provided a way to measure any inconsistencies between observed values and the model-implied covariance matrices (Khine et al., 2013). The power of statistical tests for model fit was largely reliant on the sample size and these tests were more likely to be significant, particularly for large samples. (Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen, 2008). An array of fit indices were computed on Amos and these indices measured the soundness of the measurement model in light of the gathered data (Hair et al., 2006; Khine et al., 2013; Kline, 1998). The following fit indices and their thresholds were used for the valuation of the model of this study.

Table 5.4: Modification indices & thresholds

Indices	**Threshold**
Chi-square	<3
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.900
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	> 0.900
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	> 0.900
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.900
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	> 0.900
Root Measure of Standard Error Approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.08

Source: Hair et al. (2006)

5.3.7. Modification indices

This study improved the model fit by (i) deleting items with poor factor loadings (i.e., estimates with a factor loading of less than 0.5) and (ii) applying modification indices (Kang & Ahn, 2021). Post hoc modifications, through the modification indices, were useful in detecting sources of any misfit in the model, and this represented a data-driven alteration of the previously hypothesised conceptual framework (Karakaya-Ozyer & Aksu-Dunya, 2018). If the model yielded an unsatisfactory fit, then non-significant parameters were removed and new parameters were added to ultimately improve the overall fit (Kang & Ahn, 2021). Amos, through the MLE method, made it feasible to use the modification indices as a way of improving the general model fit. This iterative process was done until a satisfactory model fit was realised.

5.3.8. Path modelling

Path analysis, as a precursor to and subset of SEM, is a type of multiple regression and statistical analysis that evaluates causal models by assessing the associations between the predictor and outcome variables via multiple causal pathways (Iweka & Sunday, 2018). By using this technique, this study sought to estimate the size and significance of causal relationships between variables (Mueller & Hancock, 2019). Path analysis was not only used to approve or disprove the model that postulated the causal relations between the studied variables. However, one of its weaknesses was that it did not prove causality (Khine et al., 2013). Path models included manifest or observed variables and latent or unobserved variables in a single model (Martynova, West & Liu, 2018). Therefore, path modelling analysis was used in this study as a way of understanding the regressions of the hypotheses while also clarifying the variation that exists within the structural model (Khine et al., 2013). The key focus of path analysis was hypothesis testing, i.e., reaching a judgment of whether to reject or fail to reject the previously hypothesised relationships.

5.3.9. Model fit

Path modelling also provided a second option of rechecking model fit. This was checked using the same indices from the CFA stage and the results were compared against the ones presented at the CFA stage. Once the model fit was confirmed, then hypothesis testing became the ultimate stage of analysis.

5.3.10. Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses testing is an important part of statistical research. Hypotheses were tested in this study using path modelling statistical tests. Hypotheses testing entailed specifying the null hypotheses (although this study did not stipulate the null hypotheses) and alternative hypothesis, the significance level was set at $p > 0.01$ and concluding whether to reject or fail to reject (i.e., accept/supported the hypotheses) (Khothari, 2004). Since parametric tests were used, the following assumptions were applied:

- the sampled data came from a population that had a normal distribution
- the sample size (i.e., 338) was large enough to be representative of the population
- the variances in the group were similar

5.3.11. The level of significance

The level of significance is a crucial input into hypotheses testing as it controls the critical value and strength of each test, therefore, it has a consequential influence on the outcome of the test and the overall decision-making (Kim & Choi, 2019). The significance level, also regarded as α or alpha, measured the strength of the evidence that was supposed to be available in the sample before rejecting the null hypothesis and determined whether or not the effect was indeed statistically significant. Essentially, the level of significance implied the likelihood of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true, for instance, a significance level of 0.1 suggested a 10% risk of deciding that a difference is there when there is no real difference. According to Kim and Choi (2019), lower levels of significance signify that stronger evidence is required before a null hypothesis is rejected. It is a convention for many researchers to set the significance level at: 0.10, 0.05 or 0.01, but there is no scientific basis for this arbitrary threshold (Kim & Choi, 2019; Khothari, 2004). In line with the arbitrary threshold, the significance level for this study was set at 0.01, suggesting a 1% risk of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true.

5.3.12. Confidence intervals

A confidence interval refers to the likelihood that a population parameter will fall within the set values (Hazra, 2017). A confidence interval utilises the variability around a statistic to produce an interval estimate for a specific parameter and their usefulness lies in the ability to estimate parameters by accounting for sampling error. Each confidence interval is linked with a confidence level. A confidence level specifies the probability (in percentage) of the interval that contains the parameter estimate when the study is repeated (Hazra, 2017).

For example, a 99% confidence level that was used in this study meant that when this research is repeated, using the exact methodology, the estimates would lie within the specified range of values 99 times (out of 100 times).

Consistent with the outputs from Amos 28 statistical software, the level of significance was presented as follows:

Table 5.5: Interpretation of the level of significance

***	99% confidence level (or 1% level of significance)
**	95% confidence level (or 5% level of significance)
*	90% confidence level (or 10% level of significance)
No star	No significance

Source: Author's own

5.3.13. Criticisms of using SEM

SEM is a very flexible statistical instrument that offers a number of possibilities, for example, it can be used for graphically representing causal relationships. Although this study highlighted that SEM is a broad-analytic framework, the existing literature suggests that it has rarely been used in some key design and analysis contexts (e.g., Tomarken & Waller, 2005). There are two most valuable omissions of SEM, which may reflect genuine limitations of this powerful technique. The shortcomings of this technique are detailed below:

(i) Most SEM procedures have been found to contain non-standard and intricate model specifications that are difficult for the average user. This has made SEM prone to model specification errors. Indeed, model specification errors have even been noted by previous SEM specialists, for example, the comments by Joreskog and Yang (1996) on Kenny and Judd (1984)'s model.

(ii) Some procedures have detected a number of convergence problems that result from using the SEM statistical technique (e.g., Algina & Moulder, 2001, Lee, Song & Poon, 2004).

(iii) Since the manifest and latent variables themselves may not have been normally distributed, this meant that the estimates of fit and standard errors were bound to be inaccurate (e.g., Moosbrugger, Schermelleh-Engel & Klein, 1997). This problem may have resulted in the latent exogenous becoming highly correlated, thus requiring the computation of an asymptotic covariance matrix from the data (Joreskog & Yang, 1996) and this may have placed a number of limitations on the number of manifest variables. Also, this problem may have resulted in inefficient and biased estimates (Moosbrugger et al. 1997), leading to inconsistent results on the specific indicators (Lee et al. 2004).

(iv) Although several alternative options and procedures have been proposed, selecting the optimal approach is difficult due to the absence of studies that have assessed all the viable alternatives under different conditions. To make matters worse, some promising approaches (e.g., listwise and pairwise deletion) are still not easily available in standard SEM software (Lee et al. 2004)

(v) SEM models are not able to prove that a model is accurate

(vi) SEM cannot offset or make up for a poorly designed model

(vii) Using modification indices can be problematic if these are not applied cautiously

(viii) Even a well-fitting SEM model can omit important variables and have problematic lower-order components (Breckler, 1990; MacCallum et al., 1993)

In light of the above discussion, one can pronounce SEM as a cutting-edge statistical method that is, however, subject to some problems, misconceptions and constraints like any other statistical tool.

Another important aspect of this study was to test the moderation effect, i.e., testing whether the link between two variables depends on a third variable, with the primary focus being on the significance of the interaction term.

5.4. MODERATION ANALYSIS

The influence of the predictor variable on the outcome variable was also determined in the presence of the third variable – i.e., the moderating variable. Organisational culture was used as a third variable to determine if there will be any changes like the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (in the presence of the moderator). Hayes' PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.0 was used in this study to calculate these moderation effects.

5.5. Chapter summary

This chapter explained how descriptive statistics were used to describe and summarise the characteristics of the data set and how inferential statistics allowed the researcher to make inferences based on a data set. This chapter further discussed the techniques that were used for data analysis, i.e., descriptive analyses used SPSS 28 to compute the mean, standard deviation, and alpha values among others. Inferential analyses used SEM through Amos 28 and MLE method for confirmatory factor analysis (i.e., composite reliabilities, average variance extracted and model fit) and path modelling (i.e., model fit and finally hypotheses testing). Finally, this chapter provided a brief discussion of how the moderation effect was computed through the utilisation of Hayes' PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.0.

The following chapter presents the findings from the various data analysis procedures that were performed in light of the data analysis technique discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER 6

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

This study presented the conceptual model in Chapter 3 based on the relationships that were derived from reviewing the extant literature. Subsequently, hypotheses were formulated and the model was subjected to the methodology described in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 discussed how the primary data were analysed in light of this study. This chapter draws from the previous chapter, as it presents the results obtained by examining primary data through both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis processes. Descriptive statistics through SPSS 28 necessitated the calculation of the mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha (i.e., reliability), discriminant validity and the correlation matrix. On the other hand, inferential statistics involved presenting the structural paths of the hypothesised model through Amos 28 for Structural Equation Modelling. As per the two-step process suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), CFA was the first step, whereby composite reliability and average variance extracted values for all the study constructs were calculated. CFA also necessitated that model fit must be calculated to guarantee that the collected data was in line with the hypothesised model. The ultimate step of Structural Equation Modeling (i.e., Path Modelling) involved the re-testing of model fit as before conducting hypotheses testing that resulted in either rejecting or failing to reject the previously stated hypotheses.

6.2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

This study used descriptive statistics to define the elementary characteristics of the primary data. As suggested by Henning et al. (2004), descriptive statistics were used in this study to simplify, summarise and give meaning to the raw data.

6.2.1. Response rate

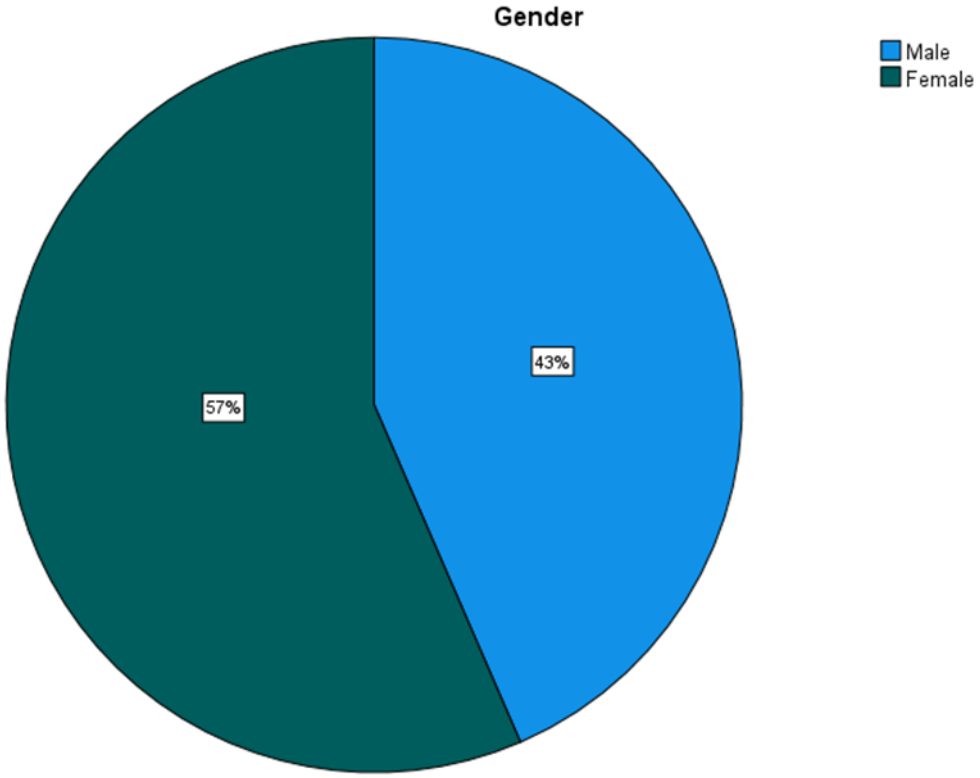
This response rate was used to determine the quality of the survey. Of the total number of 554 potential respondents that were either approached (427) or emailed (127), 406 of them participated in this study. This represented a response rate of 73%. In line with Sturgis, Smith and Hughes (2006), this figure was deemed satisfactory as it was in line with the submission that response rates beyond 60% are reasonable to assume quality in cross-sectional studies as well as sample representativeness. From the 406 responses gathered, 68 were discarded owing to incomplete responses and/or non-response. This meant that all the grossly incomplete surveys were regarded as defective and thus discarded. Hence, imputation was not applied in instances where a lot of data was missing. Eventually, a total of 338 valid responses were utilised for the final analysis.

6.2.2. Missing values

The problem of missing values is common particularly when the study uses self-reporting instruments (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As suggested by Jöreskog and Sörbom (2006), this study addressed this problem through the use of multiple imputations. Multiple imputation entailed generating replacement values or "imputations" for the data that was missing and this procedure was repeated several times, resulting in complete dataset. Using the multiple imputation technique meant that estimates for the missing values were derived for all cases (i.e., the cases with missing values were not deleted) (Du Toit & Du Toit, 2001). As suggested above, in instances where there were too many missing values or where there were incomplete responses, such questionnaires were discarded altogether.

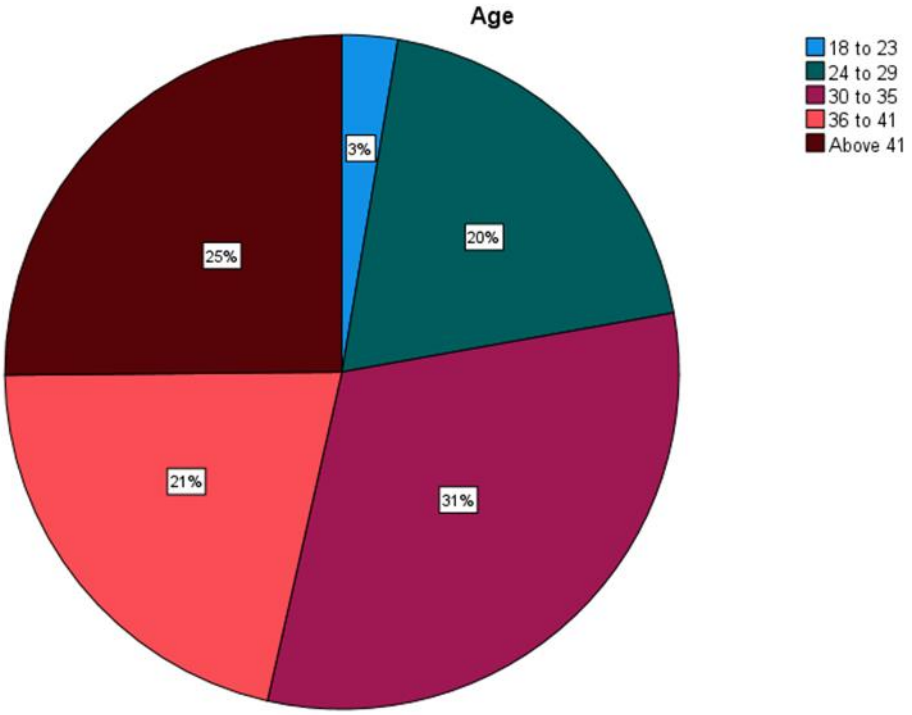
6.2.3. Demographic profile of participants

Figure 6.1: Gender



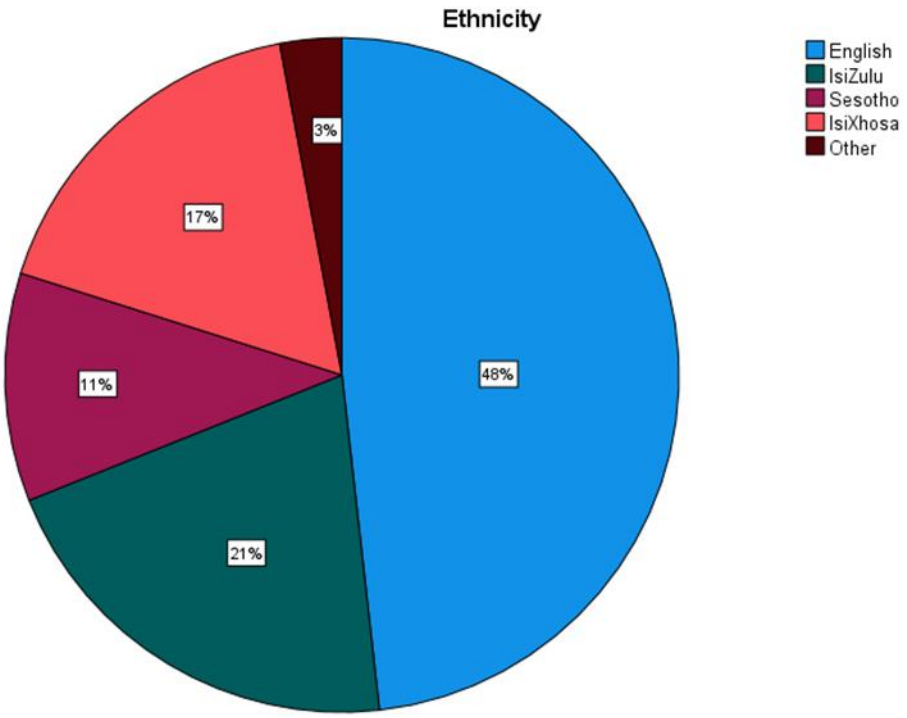
This study analysed the demographic information of respondents by first revealing the participants' gender. The analysis revealed that most of the participants identified as female (i.e., 57%) while the rest identified as male (i.e., 43%) while none of the respondents preferred not to specify their gender. This may mean that women are widely represented in the work field as they characterised a large proportion of the overall sample when compared to their male counterparts.

Figure 6.2: Age



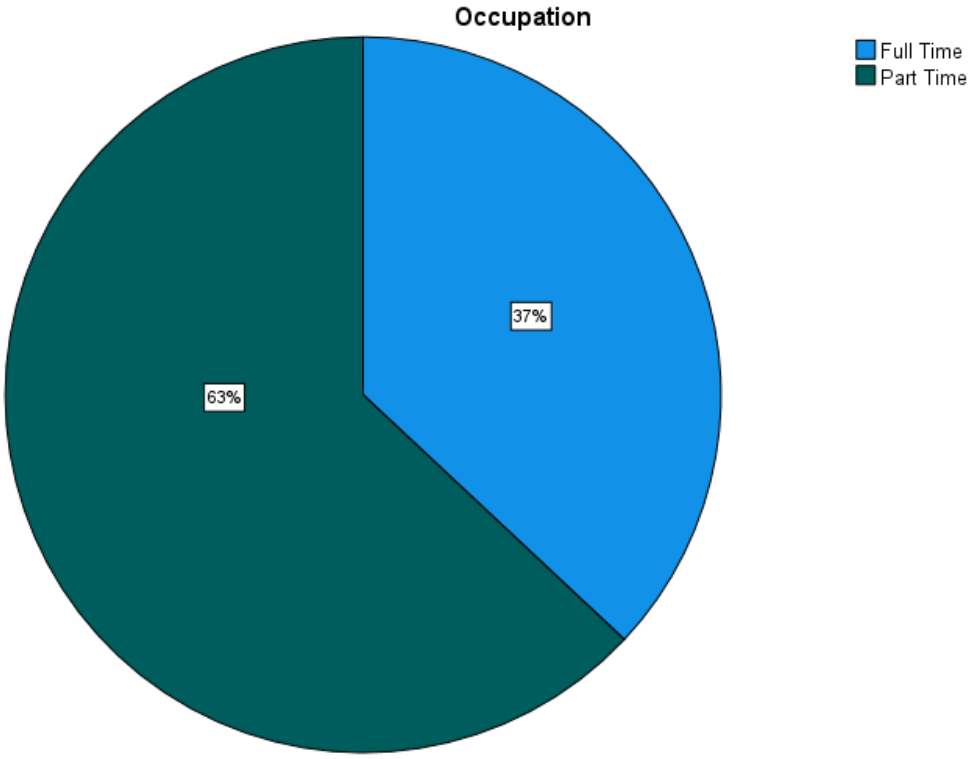
The summary statistics further show that a number of participants were between the ages of 30 to 35 years (i.e., 31%). Moreover, 25% of the respondents were above 41 years, while 21% were between 36 and 41 years. This means that individuals above 30 years represented a total of 77% of all respondents. The remainder of the respondents (20%) were between 24 and 29 years while 3% of the respondents represented individuals between 18 to 23 years. None of the respondents that participated in this study were below the age of 18, and thus, no minors participated in this study.

Figure 6.3: Ethnicity



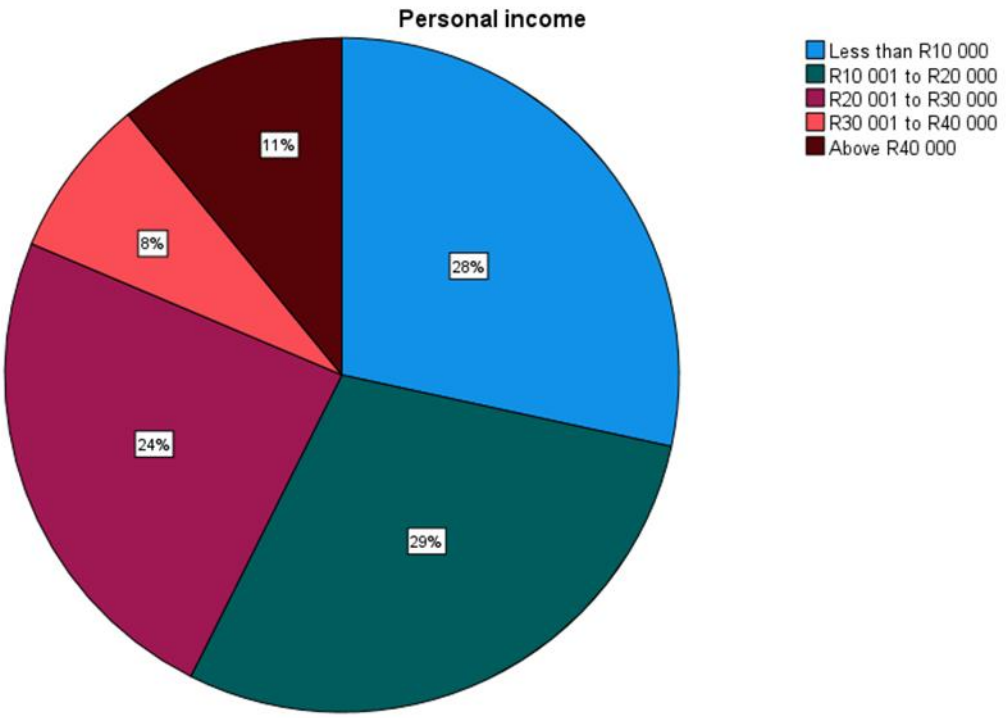
South Africa is a country that has people from different ethnic backgrounds. Although Black people form the majority of the country's population (as they constitute roughly 80% of the country's population) (South African Government, 2021); there is still diversity within this majority group. Most of the respondents (48%) identified themselves with an English background. The prevalence of English can be explained by the fact that many non-South African nationals and other citizens like Indians, Japanese, and Chinese, among others, usually identify themselves as English speakers. Similarly, some Afrikaans people, for example, Coloureds, like to align themselves with the English background (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007). This is especially true for some individuals who have adopted an individualistic culture, which is synonymous with the Westernised culture that is strongly linked to English. Conversely, the assumption that other individuals like to align themselves with the English background may be invalidated by the fact that most South Africans nowadays pride themselves in their heritage and ethnicity (Oliver & Oliver, 2017) and as a result, they shun away from identifying themselves with other ethnic backgrounds.

Figure 6.4: Occupation



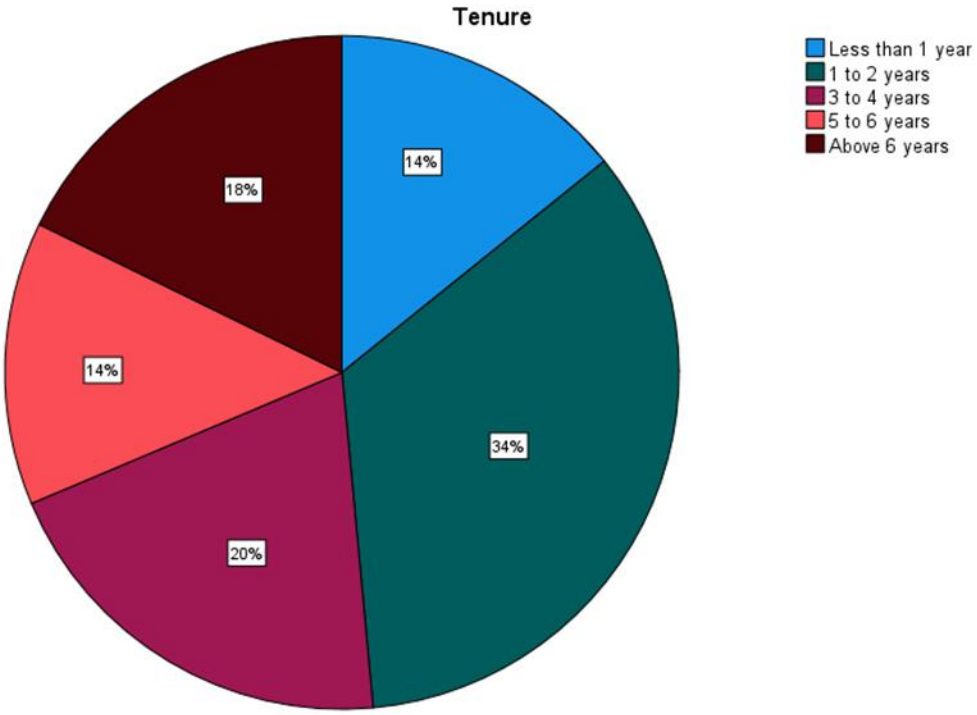
The results on occupation revealed that most of the surveyed respondents (i.e., 63%) were employed part-time while the remaining 37% were employed full-time. This further highlighted that most SMMEs hire employees on a part-time basis, therefore job security for these individuals is usually lacking (Mutyenyoka & Madzivhandila, 2014).

Figure 6.5: Personal income



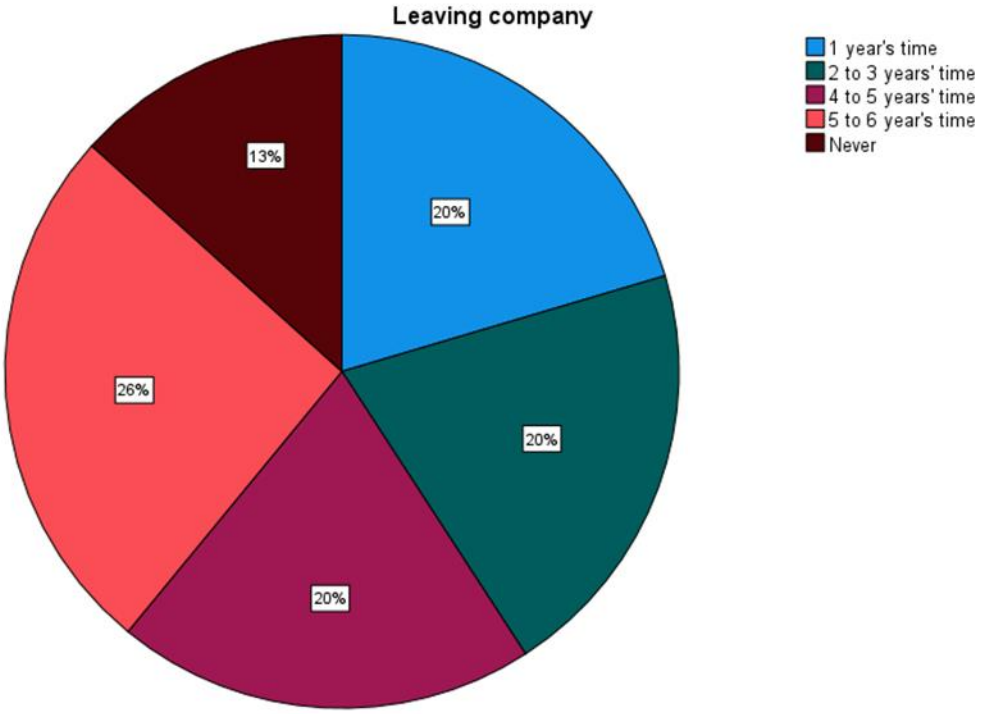
Closely related to individuals' occupations is their income. Most of the surveyed individuals (i.e., 29%) earn between R10 001 and R20 000 per month. Furthermore, 28% of this study's participants earn less than R10 000 monthly, while 24% declared that they earn between R20 001 and R30 000 per month. The results further showed that 11% of the participants professed that they make above R40 000 every month, while 8% stated that they earn between R30 001 and R40 000 every month. The fact that most of the surveyed respondents (i.e., 81%) earn below R30 001 per month further highlights that small enterprises pay relatively low salaries when compared to bigger and well-established firms.

Figure 6.6: Tenure



Under tenure, most of the participants (i.e., 34%) had been with the same company for at least 1 to 2 years, while 20% were working for the same enterprise for 3 to 4 years. Moreover, 18% stated that they worked for the same company for at least 6 years while the rest of the respondents (i.e., 14%) reported themselves as either having been with the same employer for less than a year or between 5 to 6 years.

Figure 6.7: Intention to stay in the same company



This study finally tested these employees' intentions to quit their current organisation and most of the respondents (i.e., 26%) said that they plan to leave their present employer in the next 5 to 6 years. Moreover, 60% of the participants stated that they plan to leave their current employer within the next 5 years while 13% do not plan to leave their current employer. This showed that the labour turnover intention is generally higher in small enterprises, as only 13% of the surveyed employed reported that they were happy to stay with their current employer.

The next section presents the summary statics results, i.e., results on the mean – a measure of central tendency and standard deviation – a measure of dispersion.

6.2.4. Mean and standard deviation

The level of agreement or disagreement with statements that were measured on a 7-point Likert scale was statistically analysed. For values above 4, participants affirmed their agreement with the statements while those below 4 indicated that they disagreed with the statements. The value 4 meant that participants were neutral – i.e., they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statements. This was a way of determining the level of skewness of the data, i.e., if skewed to the left, then respondents were disagreeing with the statements and vice versa.

6.2.4 (a). Arithmetic mean

The usefulness of the mean, as a measure of central tendency, lies in its ability to indicate where the data is mainly clustered around (Hair *et al.*, 2007). The sum of the mean score values for the variables under study ranged between 3.05 and 6.11. On average, this meant that, on average, most of the respondents agreed with the statements that were used to measure the variables of this study, as their responses were skewed to the right. The results of the mean for the study variables are displayed in Table 6.1 below.

6.2.4 (b). Standard deviation

The standard deviation, as a measure of dispersion, determined the variability and described how the data was concentrated around the mean (Hair et al., 2007). A large standard deviation value indicated that response distribution values in the dataset lay far away from the mean distribution. Therefore, a smaller standard deviation figure showed how robust the data is around the mean (Hair *et al.*, 2007). In line with Rhodes, Turner and Higgins (2015), the response distributions with sigma values less than 1 are consistent, while those above 1 were deemed to be inconsistent. Table 6.1 below shows that there was a small to medium amount of disparity in the data that was collected. As all the sigma values were below 1 (i.e., 0.421 to 0.748), this study highlights that all the response distributions were consistent as the standard deviation lay close to the mean. This finding further suggested that there were no gross outliers that may have skewed the variability of sample data.

Table 6.1: Mean and standard deviation

Variables of this Study	Mean $\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$	Standard Deviation $s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X - \bar{X})^2}{n-1}}$
Transformational Leadership	5.78	0.738
Perceived Empowerment	6.11	0.742
Employees' Perceptions of Organisational Support	5.45	0.526
Job Satisfaction	5.91	0.544
Affective Commitment	6.33	0.748
Labour Turnover	3.05	0.421
Organisational Culture	5.96	0.493

**Note: Valid n (Listwise) = 338*

** Scale: 1 – Strongly Disagree; 4 – Neutral; 7 – Strongly Agree*

6.2.5. Item analysis

Internal reliability was established by performing item analysis for all the measurement scales (Theron et al., 2004). The corrected item-total correlation indicated the extent to which each item correlated with the total score. As suggested by Nunnally (1978), values below 0.20 indicated that such an item did not sufficiently measure the specific variable. Thus, through item-to-total analysis, items that "poorly" contributed to the reliability of the latent variables were identified and removed to ensure higher Cronbach alpha for all the measuring scales.

6.2.6. Reliability analysis

Reliability was used in this study to assess the internal consistency of items so as to ultimately determine the consistency of the measuring instruments (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). This study evaluated instrument reliability before checking validity because, according to Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), an instrument cannot be valid unless it is reliable. Therefore, since instrument reliability did not depend on its validity, it was worthwhile to first determine reliability after which the validity of the instrument was tested (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

6.2.6.(a) Internal consistency or reliability of measuring instruments

(i) Cronbach's alpha

Cronbach's alpha is understood to be an average of the inter-item correlations (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). In light of this study, the reliability of instruments was defined as the degree to which all the items measured the same variable (i.e., internal consistency), thus confirming their inter-connection. In line with Bindak (2013), the computation of Cronbach's alpha values for every construct was used to provide the share of deviation of the scale scores that were not characterised by the random error.

Earlier scholars suggested several thresholds that can be used to determine the acceptable level for alpha coefficient values, and in line with Cronbach (1951), Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) also suggested that alpha coefficients must be at least 0.70. The maximum alpha coefficient value must be at most 0.95, as Streiner (2003) if alpha coefficients are too high (i.e., >0.95), this implies that some items are redundant. The alpha coefficient values for this study ranged from 0.72 to 0.91, thus signalling that the suggested minimum threshold of 0.7 was effectively met and no items were found to be 'redundant'.

(ii) Composite reliability (CR)

After this study established that all measuring scales met the suggested threshold of 0.70 (Cronbach, 1951), the next step was to confirm reliability by using a more robust measure – i.e., computing composite reliability values. Unstandardised regression weights from confirmatory factor analysis were used to calculate these values. Table 6.4 below displays the results from the computation of the CR values. Since the CR values for all values ranged from 0.78 to 0.94, this confirmed that the measurement scales used in this study were reliable as they exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Hair et al., 1998).

6.2.7. Summary of the item and reliability analysis results

The results of item and reliability analyses conducted on several scales are summarised in Table 6.2 below. After an assessment of all the variables, it was established that all the Cronbach alpha values surpassed the required cut-off criterion of 0.70 and all items recorded fairly high item-to-total correlations (i.e., item-to-total correlations defined the relationship of items with the total score of other scores to determine items that were a bad measure of validity). The items that did not correlate well with the total were removed altogether. The results from the computation of CR values (see Table 6.4) further corroborated that the measuring scales were reliable. Therefore, all the items were deemed to be internally consistent thus yielding reliable outcomes for the study variables.

Table 6.2: Summary of item & reliability analysis

Measuring Scale	Number of Items	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach Alpha
Transformational Leadership	15	0.671 – 0.726	0.91
Perceived Empowerment	12	0.537 – 0.666	0.88
Employees' Perceptions of Organisational Support	11	0.521 – 0.610	0.72
Job Satisfaction	10	0.588 – 0.718	0.86
Affective Commitment	5	0.593 – 0.774	0.81
Labour Turnover	7	0.538 – 0.675	0.76
Organisational Culture	8	0.540 – 0621	0.82

Source: Author's own

6.2.8. Validity analysis

Another key aspect of a measuring instrument is that it must measure what it purports to measure (Nunnally, 1978). This study assessed whether the relationships between the constructs were related to each other (i.e., convergent validity) or varied independently of each other (i.e., discriminant validity) (Nunnally, 1978). Through validity analysis, this study revealed the degree to which the convergent-discriminant validity matrix of relationships paralleled the anticipated pattern of correlations. This convergent-discriminant assessment further provided an estimate of the degree to which variance in one measure reflected the variance in the other variable (Nunnally, 1978). This study used the following ways to assess convergent and divergence validity between the study variables:

6.2.9. Bivariate correlation analysis

Inter-construct analysis was one of the ways that this study used to check the validity of the study instruments. Therefore, the correlation matrix conveyed a preliminary indication of the degree to which items for every variable either diverged or converged well with each other. This indication helped in predicting the pattern of the results from the convergent-discriminant matrix (Ghauri & Grenhoug, 2010). Higher correlations between variables indicated that these measures were related (i.e., convergent validity), while low correlations indicated that the measures were different (i.e., discriminant validity) (Westen & Rosenthal, 2003). Table 6.3 below displays the results from the inter-construct correlation analysis.

Table 6.3: Inter-construct correlation matrix

Research Constructs	TL	PE	PCS	JS	AC	LTI	OC
TL	^0.72						
PE	0.545**	^0.73					
PCS	0.317**	0.446**	^0.71				
JS	0.119*	0.013	0.023	^0.74			
AC	0.463**	0.519**	0.530**	0.080	^0.75		
LTI	-0.064	-0.132*	-0.005	-0.283**	-.085	^0.73	
OC	0.068	0.099	0.011	0.450**	0.042	-0.561**	^0.73
	338	338	338	338	338	338	338

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); ^ = Square Root of AVE

Source: Author's own

(i) Convergent validity

Coefficient alpha values were used in this study to justify the presence of convergent validity. According to Nunnally (1978), Cronbach's alpha values that are above 0.7 exhibit item convergence. As the alpha coefficient values for this study ranged between 0.72 and 0.91, this meant that the threshold of at least 0.7 was effectively met. Moreover, as the corrected item-to-total values ranged from 0.573 to 0.774, this further highlighted the existence of convergent validity as past scholars argued that 0.5 is the minimum threshold (e.g., Carlson & Herdman, 2012; Nunnally, 1978; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The unstandardised regression weights that were used to calculate CR and AVE values during confirmatory factor analysis were also used to confirm convergent validity. The unstandardised regression weights for all the constructs exceeded the 0.5 threshold (i.e., they ranged from 0.513 to 0.841), hence meeting this threshold further justified the existence of convergent validity as suggested by Anderson and Gerbing, (1988). According to Bagozzi and Yi (1988), CR values were also used to confirm the presence of convergent validity. CR values above 0.6 confirmed the existence of item convergence. Since the CR values for this study ranged between 0.78 and 0.94, this implied that the suggested threshold of ≥0.6 (i.e., at least 0.6) was met, thus further confirming the convergent validity of the study variables. Convergent validity was also established by examining the results from the computation of the Average Variance Extracted scores. In line with Anderson and Gerbing (1988), AVE values greater than 0.5 demonstrate that convergent validity exists. As the AVE values for this study ranged between 0.51 and 0.56, this further corroborated the claim that all the measuring scales converged well with each other.

After confirming the existence of convergent validity, this study further assessed the uniqueness of the measuring scales, i.e., discriminant validity.

(ii) Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity necessitates that unrelated variables must be differentiated (Carlson & Herdman, 2012). The inter-construct correlation matrix was also used to corroborate the existence of discriminant validity. According to Fraering and Minor (2006), discriminant validity can be confirmed if it is established that the variables do not correlate highly with each other (i.e., <0.85) to highlight the problem of multicollinearity. From the results of this study, the problem of multicollinearity was not identified, no perfect correlation was established between the study variables and the correlation between the variables did not exceed 0.85. Moreover, Nunnally (1978) underscored the fact that the lesser the correlation coefficient value

between the variables, the more unique the variables are. According to Fraering and Minor (2006), a correlation of <0.5 is good enough to justify discriminant validity. The results from the correlation matrix depict that the alpha coefficients of most of the correlations between the variables were less than 0.5, suggesting that a satisfactory result was achieved to confirm the uniqueness of the study variables. Generally, the study results proffered enough evidence to justify the satisfactory levels of measurement scale reliability and validity.

Discriminant validity was also determined by checking whether both the coefficient of determination (i.e, Maximum Shared Variance or - 0.73 (see Table 6.3)) and the Average Shared Squared Variance (ASV) were less than the AVE for all the constructs. The factor loadings for each item that were computed from CFA were used to compute the total score for each subscale (see Table 6.4). This study, therefore, confirmed the existence of discriminant validity as the above condition was successfully met.

In line with Anderson and Gerbing (1988)'s dual-process, the next section will provide the results from validating the conceptual model first (i.e., Confirmatory Factor Analysis) and then the results from testing the structural paths of the hypothesised model (i.e., Path Modeling).

6.3. INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

As this study applied Anderson and Gerbing (1988)'s two-step process for Structural Equation Modeling, this necessitated that the measurement model was checked first through confirmatory factor analysis by re-checking the reliability (i.e., CR values) and validity (i.e., AVE values) of the study constructs as well as checking the model fit. After confirming this initial step, the ultimate step entailed re-checking model fit and hypothesis testing (i.e., Path Modeling). AMOS 28 software, through the Maximum Likelihood Estimation technique, was used for Structural Equation Modelling as it has been proven that it yields desirable asymptotic properties like minimum variance and is less susceptible to statistical bias (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

6.3.1. Measurement model analysis (CFA)

This study removed the unstandardised regression weights with items below 0.50 to remain consistent with Nunnally (1978)'s recommendations for convergent validity. Although the computation of Cronbach's alpha values was necessary, it was, however, an insufficient condition to confirm the reliability of measurement instruments. In line with Fornell and Lacker (1981), the computation of CR values was the best way to confirm the reliability of instruments. Estimates that displayed convergence validity (i.e., with factor loadings above 0.5) were used to calculate CR and AVE values. Table6.4 below displays the CR and AVE values after applying the formula suggested by Fornell and Lacker (1981). The CR and AVE values met the threshold of at least 0.7 and at least 0.5 respectively (Hulland, 1999; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Fraering & Minor, 2006). Therefore, the results confirmed that all the study variables were reliable and valid.

After confirming that the measuring instruments were reliable and valid, the next stage step entailed assessing whether the collected data fitted the hypothesised model.

Table 6.4: CR and AVE values

Research Variables		Estimates (λ)	(λ^2)	Σλyi)²	ε	CR Value (Σλyi)² / [(Σλyi)² + (Σεi)]	AVE Value Σλyi2/(Σλyi2+Σεi)
	TL1	0.721	0.51984		0.48016		
	TL2	0.654	0.42772		0.57228		
	TL3	0.771	0.59444		0.40556		
	TL4	0.751	0.564		0.436		
	TL5	0.738	0.54464		0.45536		
	TL6	0.781	0.60996		0.39004		
	TL7	0.513	0.26317		0.73683		
TL	TL11	0.621	0.38564	114.426	0.61436	**0.94**	**0.52**
	TL13	0.775	0.60063		0.39938		
	TL14	0.842	0.70896		0.29104		
	TL15	0.669	0.44756		0.55244		
	TL16	0.742	0.55056		0.44944		
	TL17	0.653	0.42641		0.57359		
	TL18	0.644	0.41474		0.58526		
	TL20	0.822	0.67568		0.32432		
	PE1	0.814	0.6626		0.3374		
	PE2	0.754	0.56852		0.43148		
	PE3	0.703	0.49421		0.50579		
	PE4	0.758	0.57456		0.42544		
	PE5	0.841	0.70728		0.29272		
	PE6	0.781	0.60996		0.39004		
PE	PE7	0.782	0.61152	75.4292	0.38848	**0.93**	**0.53**
	PE8	0.593	0.35165		0.64835		
	PE9	0.777	0.60373		0.39627		
	PE10	0.624	0.38938		0.61062		
	PE11	0.548	0.3003		0.6997		
	PE12	0.71	0.5041		0.4959		
	JS6	0.563	0.31697		0.68303		
	JS8	0.652	0.4251		0.5749		
JS	JS10	0.806	0.64964	13.4542	0.35036	**0.86**	**0.55**
	JS11	0.87	0.7569		0.2431		
	JS1	0.777	0.60373		0.39627		
	LT1	0.749	0.561		0.439		
EPOS	LT5	0.59	0.3481	4.49016	0.6519	**0.89**	**0.51**
	LT7	0.78	0.6084		0.3916		
	AC1	0.658	0.43296		0.56704		
	AC2	0.796	0.63362		0.36638		
AC	AC3	0.796	0.63362	13.9054	0.36638	**0.86**	**0.56**
	AC4	0.822	0.67568		0.32432		
	AC5	0.657	0.43165		0.56835		
	LT1	0.749	0.561		0.439		
LT	LT5	0.815	0.66423	4.81364	0.33578	**0.78**	**0.54**
	LT7	0.63	0.3969		0.6031		
	OC2	0.87	0.7569		0.2431		
	OC5	0.81	0.6561		0.3439		
OC	OC7	0.666	0.44356	18.7143	0.55644	**0.87**	**0.53**
	OC8	0.72	0.5184		0.4816		
	OC10	0.65	0.4225		0.5775		
	OC11	0.61	0.3721		0.6279		

	N	Sum of λ	Sum λ(^2)		Sum of ε
TL Total	15	10.697	7.73396		7.26604
PE Total	12	8.685	6.37781		5.62219
JS Total	5	3.668	2.75234		2.24766
EPOS Total	3	2.119	1.5175		1.4825
AC Total	5	3.729	2.80753		2.19247
LT Total	3	2.194	1.62213		1.37787
OC Total	6	4.326	3.16956		2.83044

6.3.2. Model fit

The initial assessment of model fit was conducted under CFA. In line with submissions from past scholars, several indices were used to eventually justify model fit (e.g., Bentler & Bonnett, 1980; Bollen & Long, 1993; Karakaya-Ozyer & Aksu-Dunya, 2018; Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1984). These past scholars submitted many acceptable thresholds for different indices and highlighted the indices that every study must report on (e.g., Arbuckle & Wothke, 2004; Hair et al., 2006; Joreskog & Sorbom, 1984).

Table 6.5: Model fit indices and thresholds

Model Fit Indices	Acceptable Threshold	CFA Results	Path Modelling Results	Acceptable / Unacceptable
Chi-Square: χ^2/(df)	<3	2.077	2.078	Acceptable
CMIN/DF		*2587.791/1246*	2438/1173	
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	> 0.900	0.854	0.847	*Acceptable
Adjusted Goodness of Fit (AGFI)	> 0.900	0.831	0.830	*Acceptable
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	> 0.900	0.873	0.868	*Acceptable
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	- > 0.900	0.937	0.927	Acceptable
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	> 0.900	0.922	0.920	Acceptable
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	> 0.900	0.904	0.901	Acceptable
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.057	0.057	Acceptable
Parsimony Fit (PRATIO)	Close to 1	0.940	0.940	Acceptable

Source: This Study

*Note: *Acceptable = Marginally Acceptable; RMSEA = Root Measure of Standard Error Approximation*

1) **Chi-squared test** – Available literature (e.g., Smith & McMillan, 2001) widely regards the chi-squared test (i.e., χ2/(df)) as a useful index for evaluating overall model fit. In line with suggestions from the current literature, this study also made use of the chi-squared test to determine the degree of variation between the sample and the covariance matrices, through the use of the analysis of covariance matrix structures (Karakaya-Ozyer & Aksu-Dunya, 2018). Past scholars suggested that an χ2/(df) value must be less than 3 to justify an acceptable model fit. Table 6.5 above displays the chi-squared from CFA and Path Modelling, and since the results were 2.077 and 2.078 respectively, this meant that this index

met the recommended threshold of <3. As the chi-squared test is a statistical significance test (for example, a statistically significant chi-squared figure can be a result of model misspecification), it is susceptible to sample size fluctuations, making it to be insufficient to guide the model adequacy (Smith & McMillan, 2001).

Since model testing through the chi-squared statistic was not immune to statistical problems, for example, the susceptibility to sample size fluctuations as mentioned above, this study also used other ways of determining model fit.

2) **The goodness of fit index (GFI) and adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)** – To address the sample size fluctuation problem of the chi-squared test, Joreskog and Sorbom (1984) developed the alternative fit indices of Goodness of Fit (GFI) as well as Adjusted Goodness of Fit (AGFI). Several scholars (e.g., Bollen & Long, 1993; Khine et al., 2013; Joreskog and Sorbom, 1984) have submitted that GFI and AGFI values above 0.9 suggest adequate model fit, while values between $0.8>X\leq0.9$ represent a marginally acceptable fit. The GFI and AGFI results are displayed in Table 6.4 above. The GFI results were 0.854 (under CFA) and 0.847 (under Path Modeling), while the AGFI results were 0.831 (under CFA) and 0.830 (under Path Modeling). In line with Khine et al., (2013), these results suggested that a marginally acceptable fit was achieved for both GFI and AGFI.

3) **Normed fit index (NFI)** – As an incremental fit index, this study used the NFI to further evaluate model fit by equating the verified model with a more constrained null model, whereby all the observed variables were assumed to be not correlated (Bentler & Bonnet, 1980). The advantage of using the NFI was that its value is not impacted by the problems that are inherent in absolute fit indices as well as the chi-squared test. Previous scholars have highlighted that an NFI index value greater than 0.9 represents an adequate fit, while values between $0.8>X\leq0.9$ have traditionally been considered to represent a marginally acceptable fit (Bentler & Bonnet, 1980). The NFI results are displayed in Table 6.5 above, and they show that a marginally acceptable threshold was achieved for both CFA (i.e., 0.873) and Path Modeling (i.e., 0.868).

4) **Comparative fit index (CFI)** – In a bid to the efficiency of this index, extant literature suggests that Bentler (1993) created another model fit index, i.e., Incremental Fit Index -the Comparative Fit Index), as an alternative to NFI. In line with previous scholars, CFI values larger than 0.9 depict acceptable levels of model fit while values that fall within $0.8>X\leq0.9$ signal a marginally acceptable value (e.g., Karakaya-Ozyer & Aksu-Dunya, 2018). The

results for the CFI are displayed in Table 6.5 above and they highlight that an acceptable fit level was attained, both under CFA (i.e., 0.937) and Path Modeling (i.e., 0.927).

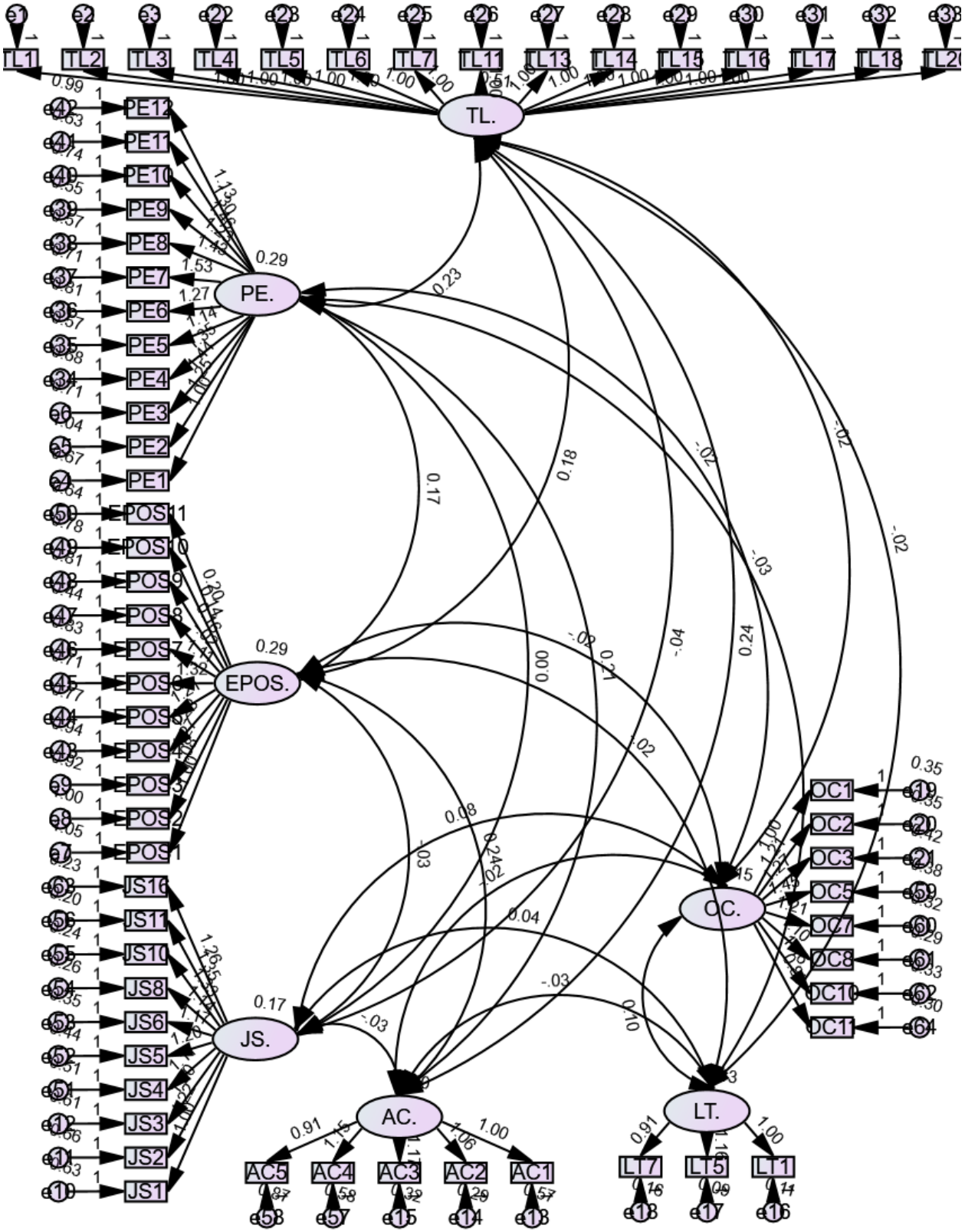
5) **Incremental fit index (IFI) and Tucker Lewis index (TLI)** – This study also checked the IFI and TLI indices to further confirm model fit. Previous intellectuals (e.g., Zhang & Savalei, 2020) have also submitted that these indices must yield a score of at least 0.9 to confirm an acceptable model fit or $0.8>X\leq0.9$ to demonstrate a marginally acceptable fit level. The results for these indices are displayed in Table 6.5 above. These findings exhibit that an acceptable fit was achieved for IFI and TLI, both under CFA (IFI = 0.922 and TLI= 0.904) as well as Path Modeling (IFI = 0.920 and TLI = 0.901).
6) **Root measure of standard error approximation (RMSEA)** – Current literature further submits that RMSEA is less impacted by sample size fluctuations in comparison to the chi-squared test. Moreover, the RMSEA value retains a better descriptive value than the chi-squared index, irrespective of any fluctuations in sample sizes (Steiger & Lind, 1980). The greatest strength of the RMSEA lies in its capacity to define a confidence interval around its calculated values (Zhang & Savalei, 2020), thus making it easy to precisely assess the null hypothesis in order to ensure that the model is an accurate representation of the data. Model fit through RMSEA can be confirmed if the value is less than 0.08. The results in Table 6.5 above show that the RMSEA value for both r CFA and Path Modeling was 0.057, thus indicating that the minimum threshold to justify model fit was met in both instances.
7) **Pratio** – As a parsimony fit index i.e., Pratio was used in this study as an index that yields great explanatory predictive power by explaining the data through a fewer number of parameters (Zhang, Zou, Liang & Carroll, 2020). Extant literature suggests that the closer the value is to 1, the better the fit (Zhang et al., 2020). Table 6.5 above shows that a Pratio value of 0.94 was achieved both under CFA and Path Modeling. Since this value was closer to 1, this meant that an acceptable fit was achieved as the model displayed a great predictive and explanatory power.

Overall, the results of this study demonstrated a satisfactory model fit as a generally acceptable fit was achieved, hence it can be concluded that the hypothesised model depicted an accurate representation of the collected data.

6.3.3. Post-hoc modifications

While the results of this study recorded acceptable, and in some instances, marginally acceptable model fit values, it must be highlighted that this satisfactory outcome was reached after addressing issues regarding model misspecification. Present literature proffers different ways of addressing the problem of model misspecification (e.g., the methods suggested by Smith & McMillan, 2001). To achieve a more parsimonious fit, all the parameters that were not significant were removed during both CFA and Path Modelling analyses, in a bid to increase degrees of freedom. Furthermore, as Amos 28 software was used, the Maximum Likelihood Estimation method, through the modification indices, makes it possible to identify error terms that correlated highly with each other. These error terms were linked and the model was re-run. The linkage of the error terms that correlated highly with each other was done prudently, to avoid upsetting the overall model fit. This was an iterative process that was done until acceptable, as well as marginally acceptable fit levels, were achieved.

Figure 6.1: CFA model



Source: Author's own

6.3.4. Path modelling

The final step of Structural Equation Modeling through Amos 28 involved testing the hypothesised relationships of the structural model by approximating the magnitude and significance of the causal relationships between the research variables (Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015). However, before testing the significance of the hypothesised relationships, model fit was re-tested, as Hoyle (1995) suggested that checking model fit is one of the necessary steps before hypotheses testing.

6.3.5. Model fit

Table 6.5 above demonstrates that the primary data yielded an acceptable representation of the conceptualised framework. When compared with the CFA findings on model fit, the path modelling results paint a similar picture of the data's ability to represent the model. Since model fit was confirmed, both under CFA and Path Modeling, the final step of Structural Equation Modeling entailed significance testing of the structural paths from the postulated model.

6.3.6. Hypotheses testing

The causal paths for the study's hypothesised relationships were demonstrated by the links between the independent, mediating, moderating and dependent variables through single-directional arrows. The results from significance testing are stated in Table 6.6 below.

Table 6.6: Results from hypotheses testing

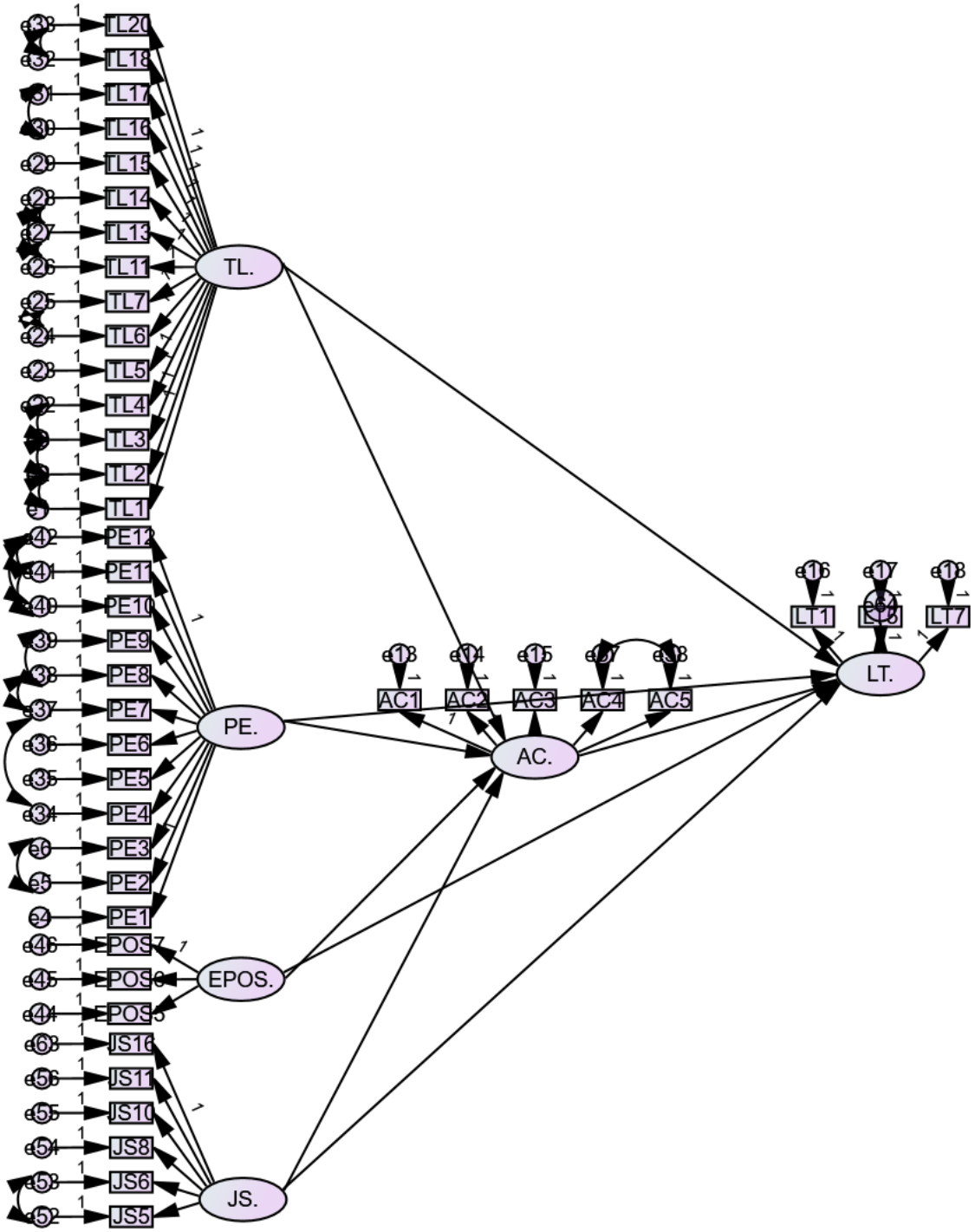
Hypothesised relationships	Hypothesis	Unstandardised regression weights	P	Rejected / Supported
TL ---> AC	+H1***	0.255		Supported
PE ---> AC	+H2***	0.263		Supported
PCS ---> AC	+H3***	0.609	***	Supported
JS ---> AC	+H4	0.005	***	Supported
TL ---> LT	-H5***	-0.140	***	Supported
PE ---> LT	-H6	-0.057		Supported
PCS ---> LT	-H7***	-0.018	***	Supported
JS ---> LT	-H8	-0.047		Supported
AC ---> LT	-H9	-0.038		Supported

*Note: ***p<0.01; p**<0.05; *p<0.1*

TL = Transformational Leadership Style; PE = Perceived Empowerment; PCS = Perceived Company Support; JS = Job Satisfaction; AC = Organisational Commitment; LT = Labour Turnover Intention

Table 6.6 above presents the hypothesised relationships between the study constructs, and it further describes these relationships relative to their corresponding structural paths. The analysis of the directionality between the path coefficients was used to test the study hypotheses. As per the results of this study, all the hypotheses were supported, with four of all the hypotheses yielding significant results. Figure 6.2 below depicts the path model diagram that exemplified all the causal relationships that were subjected to hypotheses testing.

Figure 6.2: Path Model



Source: Author's own

6.4. Analysis of the moderation effect: Simple moderation analysis

This section was reserved to present the moderation analysis results, in order to understand whether the relationship between the studied variables was dependent on the third or moderating variable. In this study, organisational culture moderated the relationship between the predictor variables (i.e., transformational leadership style, perceived company support, and job satisfaction) on the outcome variable (i.e., labour turnover intention). The moderation effect of organisational culture was checked through model regression, using Hayes Process Procedure Version 4.0. Under the options section of this procedure, the following were selected: generating codes for visualising interactions, pairwise contrasts of indirect effects, and mean centering was set at only continuous variables that define outputs. In order to probe any interactions, conditioning values were set at 16th, 50th and 84th percentiles, with probe interactions set as a default p<0.10. Model 1 was set at a 95% Confidence Interval, with 5000 bootstrap samples. The results from analysing the moderation effect of organisational culture are presented in the next section.

6.4.1. OC Moderating the relationship between TL and LTI

Figure 6.3 below depicts organisational culture as the moderating variable in the relationship between transformational leadership style and labour turnover intention. The general model also shows that the sample had 338 valid responses.

Figure 6.3: General model depiction of OC on TL and LTI

```
**************************************************************************
Model  : 1
    Y  : LTI
    X  : TL
    W  : OC

Sample
Size:  338

**************************************************************************
```

Note: p<0.10: TL = Transformational Leadership Style; LTI = Labour Turnover Intention; OC = Organisational Culture

6.4.2. Regression analysis of labour turnover intention

The results from regression analysis demonstrate that the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational culture accounted for almost 57.3% of the variation in labour turnover intention. The slope of transformational leadership yielded a positive value of 0.74 while the slope for organisational culture was also positive, i.e., 1.14. Regarding the interaction effect of these two variables, the slope was negative, i.e., -0.13. Moreover, the results for the statistical significance of the interaction effect also show that zero did not lie between the lower and upper confidence levels, i.e., -0.2240 to -0.0260.

Figure 6.4: Regression model 1

```
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 LTI

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      .5729      .3282      .1203    54.3897     3.0000   334.0000      .0000

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant    -3.9844     1.7419    -2.2873      .0228    -7.4110     -.5579
TL            .7417      .3058     2.4255      .0158      .1402     1.3432
OC           1.1824      .2863     4.1299      .0000      .6192     1.7457
Int_1        -.1250      .0504    -2.4826      .0135     -.2240     -.0260

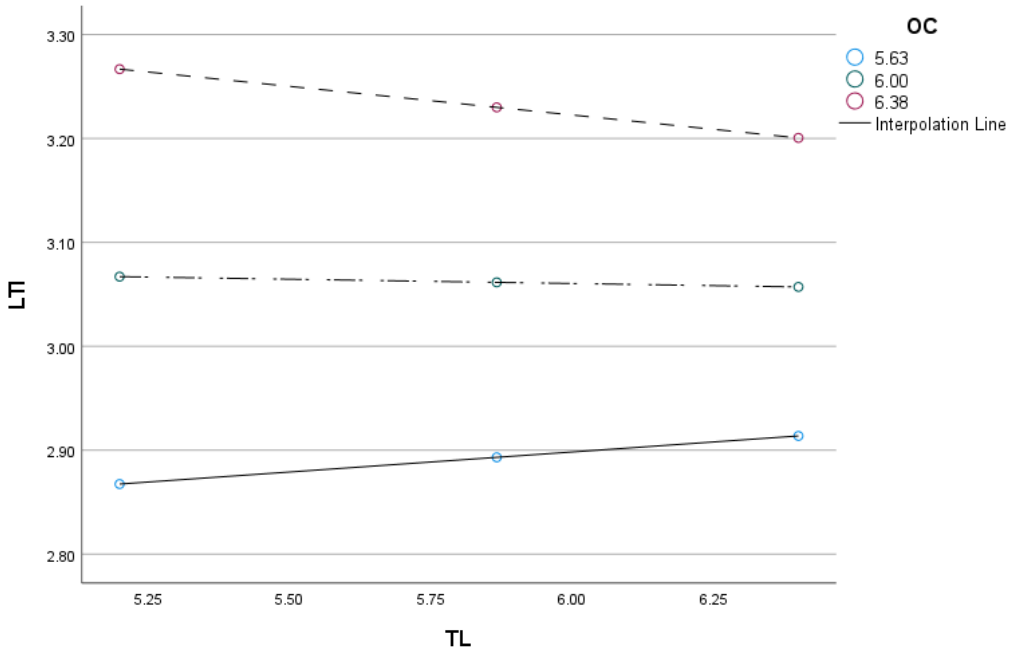
Product terms key:
 Int_1    :        TL       x        OC
```

Note: p<0.10; TL = Transformational Leadership; LTI = Labour Turnover Intention; OC = Organisational Culture

6.4.3. Scatter plot 1

The scatter plot was created by copying the data from PROCESS and pasting it into the SPSS syntax window, before being executed. The scatter plot was used to envision the conditional effects for the main predictor. Figure 6.5 below portrays the scatter plot for the conditional effects.

Figure 6.5: . Sample slopes for the scatter plot 1



Note: TL = Transformational leadership; LTI = Labour Turnover Intention; OC = Organisational Culture

- Blue = most pronounced slope
- Green = the next most pronounced slope
- Red = weakest pronounced slope.

6.4.4. Analysis of conditional indirect effects

The results indicate that the conditional indirect effect was getting smaller when moving from the upper to the lower confidence interval. The effect size started at 0.0386, then to -0.0083 and finally at -0.0552.

Figure 6.6: Conditional effects 1

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

OC	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
5.6250	.0386	.0335	1.1520	.2501	-.0273	-.1045
6.0000	-.0083	.0258	-.3214	.7481	-.0591	-.0425
6.3750	-.0552	.0304	-1.8150	.0704	-.1150	-.0046

Note: Confidence level for all intervals = 95%

Bootstrap samples for percentile confidence intervals = 5000

Moderator values in conditional tables = 16th, 50th and 84th percentiles

6.4.5. OC Moderating the relationship between PCS and LTI

The basic model presented in Figure 6.7 below shows the moderation effect of organisational culture on the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention.

Figure 6.7: General moderation model of OC on PCS and TLI

```
**************************************************************************
Model  : 1
    Y  : LTI
    X  : PCS
    W  : OC

Sample
Size:  338

**************************************************************************
```

Note: p<0.10; PCS = Perceived Company Support; LTI = Labour Turnover Intention;

6.5.2. (i) Regression Analysis on Adoption Behaviour

The results from the regression analysis through the PROCESS procedure show that the interaction between perceived company support and organisational culture yielded a 57.3% of the variation in labour turnover intention. The slope of the conditional effects for both perceived company support and organisational commitment was negative, i.e., -0.9221 and -0.3697 respectively.

The results also depict that the interaction effect resulted in a positive slope, i.e., 0.1580, which yielded a lower and upper confidence level of 0.0385 to 0.2776 respectively.

Figure 6.8: Regression model 2

```
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 LTI

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
      .5734      .3288      .1202    54.5487     3.0000   334.0000      .0000

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant     5.1425     1.9468     2.6416     .0086     1.3130     8.9719
PCS          -.9221      .3597    -2.5637     .0108    -1.6296     -.2146
OC           -.3697      .3288    -1.1242     .2617    -1.0164     -.2771
Int_1         .1580      .0608     2.6007     .0097     .0385      .2776

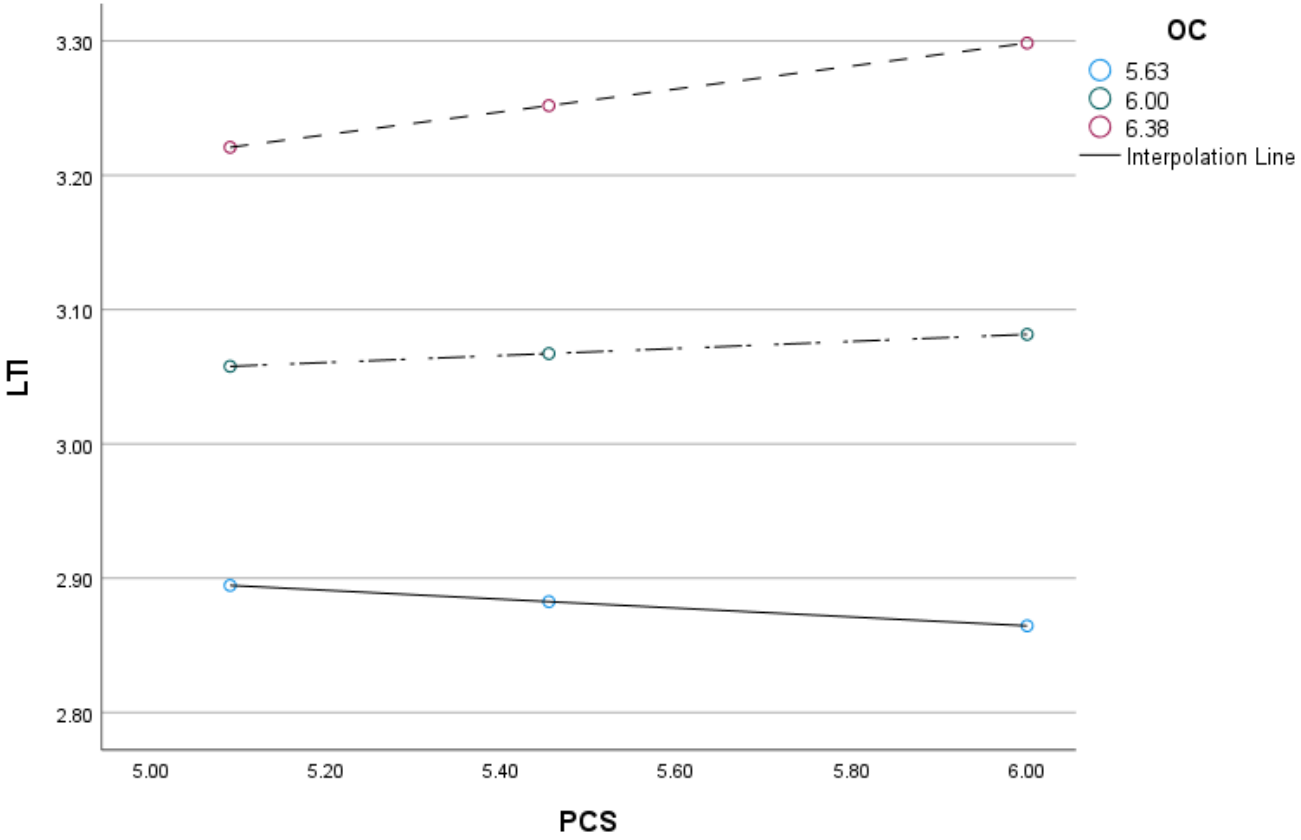
Product terms key:
 Int_1    :        PCS      x        OC
```

Note: p<0.10; PCS = Perceived Company Support; LTI = Labour Turnover Intention; OC = Organisational Culture

6.4.6. Scatter plot 2

The syntax data from the regression analysis was pasted into the SPSS syntax box and then executed to generate a graphic representation of the conditional effects in the scatter plot. Figure 6.9 below portrays the scatter plot for the conditional effects.

Figure 6.9: Sample slopes for the scatter plot 2



Note: PCS = Perceived Company Support; LTI = Labour Turnover Intention; OC = Organisational Culture

- Blue lines depict the most pronounced slope
- Green lines depict the next most pronounced slope
- Red lines depict the weakest pronounced slope.

6.4.7. Conditional indirect effects

The conditional indirect effects depicted in Figure 6.10 below show that the effect of the dependent variable on the dependent variable is getting larger from the lower to the higher confidence level (i.e., the effects start at a negative value of -0.0331 to 0.0262 and ultimately 0.0854.

Figure 6.10: Conditional effects 2

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s):

OC	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
5.6250	-.0331	.0393	-.8417	.4006	-.1104	-.0443
6.0000	.0262	.0365	.7164	.4742	.0457	.0980
6.3750	.0854	.0465	1.8381	.0669	.0060	.1769

Note: Confidence level for all intervals = 95%

Bootstrap samples for percentile confidence intervals = 5000

Moderator values in conditional tables = 16th, 50th and 84th percentiles

6.5. Chapter summary

This chapter reported on the findings obtained after conducting several analyses. Descriptive statistics were reported first, whereby item analysis and bivariate correlational analysis were determined. Thereafter, the results from inferential statistics i.e., confirmatory factor analysis and path modelling were reported. It was through path modelling that the statistical outcomes on relationships between the studied variables were determined. The next chapter discusses these findings in greater depth, thus giving meaning to these results while at the same time drawing relevant conclusions.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS & DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter construes and objectively reports on the results that were presented in Chapter 6 by drawing insights from the submissions of earlier scholars. By so doing, conclusions were then presented in line with their statistical significance. Therefore, this section delves into the meaning, relevance as well as the importance of the results by explaining what was found and linking it to the literature review, while making arguments to corroborate the overall conclusion. The purpose of this study was revisited to further highlight the motive behind this study, ahead of providing meaning to its findings. At the end of each section, key findings were identified and underscored, and this section also highlighted the statistical significance of each hypothesis.

7.2. Purpose and aim of the study

This study entailed an examination of how transformational leadership style, perceived empowerment, perceived company support and job satisfaction predicted SMME employees' turnover intention. This relationship was mediated by organisational (affective) commitment while moderated by the effect of organisational culture within the structural path analysis model. Empirically analysing this relationship was found to be crucial in this study's quest of trying to tame the turnover intention of employees, before manifesting itself into actual turnover. Besides, literature established that a number of SMMEs struggle to retain their employees, and thus a profound understanding of turnover motivations was necessary in a bid to meaningfully contribute to knowledge in this field of study. Therefore, this study aimed at empirically ascertaining the relationships between labour turnover intention and its predictor variables.

7.3. Interpretation of the research results

The assessment of the reliability and validity of the measurement scales was the preliminary analysis in order to ensure that the objectives of this study were effectively realised. Therefore, it became paramount to establish the internal consistency and validity of the measuring instruments to ensure that well-grounded and sound statistical results were attained when performing further analyses. The statistical analysis procedure that this study utilised is discussed in detail in Chapter 5, while the findings thereof are reported in Chapter 6.

The next section discusses and gives meaning to the findings of this study.

7.4. Conclusions on reliability analysis

The reliability of each scale was a pivotal aspect of this research and thus the coefficients for all the variables were determined to confirm that every item included in the measuring instruments added to the overall internal consistency of each scale. Only the instruments that had a satisfactory reliability coefficient were used to gather raw data to eventually test the hypotheses (Nunnally, 1978). According to Cronbach (1951), alpha coefficients are used to indicate the reliability content of variables and an alpha value of at least 0.70 is usually considered acceptable. Moreover, Kline (2011) recommended that alpha coefficients between 0.6 and 0.7 signify a marginally acceptable threshold while item-to-total correlations of at least 0.20 are considered to be adequate indicators of internal consistency (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000; Nunnally, 1978). The Cronbach's alpha figures are presented in Table 6.2 and they show that alpha coefficient values ranged from 0.72 to 0.91. This implies that all the measurement scales attained reliability scores and they surpassed the suggested threshold of 0.70. In addition, all the items presented reached an item-to-total correlation of at least 0.2 as suggested by Nunnally (1978). These results were satisfactory and consistent with the above-mentioned guidelines therefore it was concluded that all the measurement instruments were reliable and acceptable for further tests, for example, hypothesis testing.

In line with Anderson and Gerbing (1988)'s submission, determining reliability through the calculation of alpha coefficients is a necessary but insufficient condition to verify scale reliability. Composite reliability is often advocated as the best alternative option for measuring reliability because CR values provide a better reliability estimate than the typical alpha coefficients (Peterson & Kim, 2012). Besides, Cronbach's alpha figures have previously been criticised for their violation of the tau-equivalency assumption (Hair et al., 2007). Consistent with previous researchers, this enquiry accepted CR values over 0.7 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Hulland, 1999), or marginally acceptable CR values that ranged from 0.6 and 0.7 (Hair et al., 2007). The CR results for the study variables (as depicted in Table 6.4) ranged between 0.78 and 0.94, and thus consistent with Anderson and Gerbing (1988) together with Hulland (1999), all the measurement scales surpassed the acceptable threshold of at least 0.7.

Given all the reliability analysis results (i.e., Cronbach's alpha coefficients and CR values), this study concluded that all the variables and their scaled items were reliable and thus suitable for further tests.

7.5. Conclusions on validity analysis

Validity analysis was used to check whether the variables used in this study precisely and adequately evaluated what they professed to measure (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Determining the validity of all the variables was necessary to ensure that the study used items that truly measured what they were supposed to measure. To determine the validity of the constructs, this study used two metrics i.e., convergent and discriminant validity. Consistent with the recommendation by Westen and Rosenthal (2003), the convergent-discriminant validity relationship that characterised this study was sufficient to determine the validity of the study constructs.

The initial evidence on the degree to which the items for the variables converged well with each other or diverged was garnered by using the bivariate correlation analysis. Consistent with Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2015) as well as Ronkko and Cho (2020), the correlations matrix was employed to determine the pattern of the study findings from a convergent-discriminant validity assessment. According to Westen and Rosenthal (2003), correlations that are at least 0.5 and at most 0.85 represent a sufficient level of convergent validity. If variables do not correlate highly with each other, i.e., between > 0.85 and there is no perfect correlation of 1, this symbolises that they are unique, thus justifying the existence of discriminant validity (Fraering & Minor, 2006; Nunnally, 1978). The results from the correlation analysis, as displayed in Table 6.3, show that convergent validity existed (i.e., for the correlations that ranged between $0.5 \leq X \geq 0.85$). Therefore, the conclusion drawn from the findings of this study demonstrates that the variables correlated reasonably with each other, while simultaneously some relationships highlighted the presence of discriminant validity.

Composite reliability values were also used to verify the existence of convergent validity. In line with Bagozzi and Yi (1988), CR values between 0.6 and 0.7 represent a marginally acceptable item convergence while Anderson and Gerbing (1988) alongside Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that if a variable records a CR value of at least 0.7, that variable would have met the minimum threshold to confirm convergent validity. The CR values for the study variables ranged from 0.78 to 0.94, thus confirming the existence of convergent validity for all the study variables. Moreover, AVE values were used to confirm the existence of convergent validity. Consistent with Anderson and Gerbing (1988) as well as Fornell and Larcker (1981), the acceptable threshold to corroborate the presence of convergent validity is when AVE values are at least 0.5. Table 6.3 shows that the AVE values for all the selected variables ranged from 0.51 to 056, thus indicating that the recommended threshold to justify

convergent validity, for example, by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) as well as other top scholars were effectively met. By and large, the results of this research demonstrated the existence of convergent validity for all the studied variables.

Discriminant validity was another crucial aspect of validity that this study sought to establish in light of the selected variables. This meant the study variables were meant to be unique from each other, i.e., it was necessary to distinguish between different variables that were tested within the same structural model (Carlson & Herdman, 2012; Rönkkö & Cho, 2020). The inter-construct correlation matrix was used to determine the presence of discriminant validity. Table 6.3 shows that there was no 100% or perfect association (i.e., $r = 1$) between the studied variables. Moreover, the variables were not highly correlated with each other (i.e., $r \geq 0.85$), as this high correlation would have highlighted the problem of multicollinearity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Fraering & Minor, 2006). To further confirm discriminant validity, there was also a need to conduct an AVE analysis by checking whether the square root of every AVE value for each latent variable was larger than the correlation between any sets of the latent constructs, i.e., AVE was used to measure the explained variance of the variable. In line with Fornell and Larcker (1981), the square root of the AVE for each variable must be greater than the correlation of a particular construct with any of the other constructs within the correlation matrix. In light of the findings of this study, all the values for the square root of AVE ranged between 0.71 and 0.75, which was much greater than any correlation between any pair of the latent variables. Moreover, the value of AVE for every variable was above 0.50, hence meeting Fornell and Larcker's (1981) suggestion for justifying discriminant validity. This implies that a sense of exclusiveness existed for all the studied variables. This uniqueness of the measurement scales points out to the existence of discriminant validity.

The above section on validity confirms that the validity (i.e., both convergent and discriminant) of the study constructs was firmly established. Therefore, this section concludes by highlighting that the variables were confirmed to be both reliable and valid before proceeding to conduct any further tests.

The following section provides a discussion of the findings on the relationships between the study variables by giving meaning to the results from hypotheses testing. Each section ends by drawing and highlighting key conclusions for every hypothesised relationship of this study.

7.6. Giving meaning to the study findings

This study hypothesised several relationships between the study variables at the conceptualisation stage. As these alleged relationships were guided by findings from previous scholars, this section provides relevant information that helps to confirm whether or not these theorised relationships were indeed supported by the data. For this study to provide meaningful insights and effectively reach a solid conclusion on each relationship, extant literature was revisited. Consistent with the conclusions between the studied relationships, this section paves way for the modified or refined structural model, as exhibited in Figure 7.1.

7.6.1. Relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment

The bivariate correlation analysis offered evidence of a significant and positive association between transformational leadership and organisational commitment (***r*** = 0.463**; ***p*** < 0.01) (see Table 6.3). In line with Guilford (1973)'s rule of thumb for the interpretation of the correlation coefficient (r), this result represented a moderate correlation, with a substantial positive relationship between these two variables. Path modelling analysis through Amos 28 also showed a significant and positive connection between these two constructs (**β** = 0.255***; **p** < 0.01) (see Table 6.6). Therefore, this meant that H1, which hypothesised that transformational leadership is positively related to organisational commitment was supported. Moreover, this relationship was found to be not just positive, but significant as well. Available research conclusions indicate a significant and positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment (Ananthi & Subramaniam, 2011; Clinebell, Skudiene, Trijonyte, & Reardon, 2013; Ndlovu, Ngirande, Setati & Zhuwao, 2018). A study conducted by Fasola, Adeyemi, and Olowe (2013) found that transformational leadership behaviour significantly and positively influenced employees' organisational commitment (β = 0.507, p < 0.01). This result implies that there is a predisposition that transformational leaders would increase the tendency of their subordinates to be highly committed to the organisation.

Previous scholars have variously submitted that transformational leadership is the best predecessor of emotive and affective organisational commitment (e.g., Islam, Tariq & Usman, 2018). This finding was also supported by Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, and Popper's (1998) conclusion that transformational leaders can influence employees' organisational commitment by inspiring higher levels of intrinsic value linked with the realisation of goals. Moreover, this study highlighted that transformational leadership also generates higher levels of individual commitment and ensures that followers embrace a shared vision, mission and organisational goals. Therefore, the results from extant literature also indicate that leaders who create positive

and valuable change in their followers can further boost followers' affective and emotional attachment to the organisation (Roueche, Baker III & Robert, 2014; Sahu, Pathardikar & Kumar, 2018). Wong and Wong (2017) also demonstrated that the association between transformational leadership and organisational commitment is significant and positive. Another existing study argued that there is a positive correlation between transformational leadership and affective organisational commitment (Buil, Martínez & Matute, 2019).

<u>Key finding 1</u>: This study submits that there is a significant and positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational commitment. This implies that leaders who can create valuable change in their followers can further boost their followers' affective and emotional attachment to the organisation. Consequently, this study failed to reject the supposition that transformational leadership positively influences organisational commitment and further highlights that the relationship between these variables was found to be not just positive but also significant – as hypothesised.

7.6.2. Relationship between perceived empowerment and organisational commitment

The bivariate correlation analysis provided a positive and significant correlation between perceived empowerment and organisational commitment (***r*** = 0.519**; **p** < 0.01) (see Table 6.3). Consistent with Guilford (1973)'s guidelines, this finding also highlighted a moderate yet substantial positive relationship between these two variables. Path analysis found a significant, direct positive relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment (**β** = 0.263***; p < 0.01) (see Table 6.6), hence support was found for a positive relationship between perceived empowerment and organisational commitment. Moreover, this relationship was not just positive, but significant as well.

This result implies that when employees think that they are well-empowered, they tend to be highly committed to their organisation. This finding is consistent with findings in previous studies conducted (e.g., Laschinger & Leiter, 2006; Bordin et al., 2007; Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008; Muda & Fook, 2020; Pieterse-Landman, 2012; Yogalakshmi & Suganthi, 2018) who also submitted a significant and positive relationship between perceived empowerment and organisational commitment. This finding implies that when employees' perceptions about their empowerment increase, eventually their organisational commitment will similarly increase. Nevertheless, many previous scholars (e.g., Chen & Chen, 2008; Choong, Wong & Lau, 2012) submitted that the impact of the four cognitions of perceived empowerment (i.e., self-determination, meaning, impact and competence)(Thomas &

Velthouse, 1990) were not significantly linked to organisational commitment. In line with Kirkman and Rosen (1999), these four dimensions of psychological empowerment were recognised as motivators and facilitators of organisational commitment amongst workers. Drawing from the Social Exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employees are more likely to reciprocate their psychological empowerment experiences with higher levels of commitment and loyalty to the organisation.

Previous studies also highlighted that whilst several scholars assessed the type of connection between perceived empowerment and organisational commitment, most of these findings have consistently remained contradictory. For instance, while the findings from the study conducted by Chen and Chen (2008) indicated a positive association between some aspects of perceived empowerment and organisational commitment, other elements revealed either a negative or no relationship between these two variables. This controversy in the findings can be further highlighted by Chegini and Kheradmand, (2013) as well as Jafari, Moradi and Ahanchi (2013) who found a significantly positive connection between empowered personnel and their devotion to the organisation.

<u>Key finding 2</u>: The result from this study demonstrated that there exists a significant and positive relationship between employees' perceived empowerment and their commitment to the organisation. This indicates that if employees are empowered, for example, through training and development, and they are delegated more challenging tasks while involving them in the decision-making process, this will significantly further increase their loyalty and attachment to the organisation. Therefore, this study failed to reject the hypothesis that perceived empowerment significantly and positively influences organisational commitment as support for this hypothesis was garnered from the results of this study.

7.6.3. Relationship between perceived company support and organisational commitment

Evidence from the bivariate correlation analysis also indicated a moderate and substantial positive correlation between perceived company support and organisational commitment (***r*** = 0.530**; **p** < 0.01) (see Table 6.3). This meant that with higher perceptions of company support, the more committed the employees will be to the organisation, thus supporting Hypothesis 3. The hypothesis testing through Amos 28 revealed that this relationship yielded the most significant and positive relationship in light of all the relationships that were analysed in this study (i.e., **β** = 0.609***; p < 0.01) (see Table 6.6). Consistent with the findings of Cho et al. (2009), perceived company support yielded the strongest effect on its link with

organisational commitment (Cho et al., 2009). This means that support was found for Hypothesis 3 which also assumed a significant positive association between these two variables. This finding is in line with Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnysky's (2002) contention that perceived company support provides a tool through which other work-related aspects like employees' perceptions about fairness at work affect their commitment to the organisation. This finding can be positioned within the framework of organisational support theory which suggests that workers become committed to the company if their concerns about their wellbeing are addressed (Grant, Dutton & Rosso, 2008; Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffard, Stewart & Adis, 2017). Furthermore, the findings of this study can also be viewed from the lens of the theory of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). This means that treating employees favourably creates a sense of indebtedness to the organisation in them. This reciprocal behaviour heightens, particularly, when employees believe that the company provides support voluntarily, instead of being obligated to do so by labour unions or legislation (Eisenberger et al., 1997). On the contrary, literature further suggests that when workers perceive that their employer does not support or care about their wellbeing, this results in reduced levels of faith, devotion, and commitment to the organisation (Passarelli, 2011).

In line with findings from the extant literature, Tumwesigye (2010), Pazy and Ganzach (2009) as well Imran, Ali and Islam (2014) similarly submitted a significant positive link between perceived company support and organisational commitment. Such conclusions imply that workers who feel that their company cares about their welfare and values their contributions will also return this gesture by being committed to the company for an elongated period. Therefore, the results of this study submit that it will be beneficial for human resource managers to create a favourable working atmosphere by putting in place relevant strategies that enhance employee support so as to keep a highly devoted workforce.

<u>Key finding 3:</u> Employees' perceptions about the company's support structures that are designed to uplift their well-being play a strong, significant and positive part in determining their intentions to remain committed to the organisation. Consistent with the findings of this study, this research could not reject the hypothesis that perceived company support has a strong and positive relationship with employees' desire to remain committed to their current workplace. Therefore, the findings of this study underscore the need for companies to show that they are concerned about their employees' well-being in a bid to increase their workers' commitment to the organisation.

7.6.4. Relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment

The bivariate correlation analysis provided a non-significant but positive correlation between job satisfaction and organisational commitment (***r*** = 0.080; **p** < 0.01) (see Table 6.3). In line with Guilford's (1973) explanation of the degree of significant correlations, this finding from the correlation analysis meant that there was a slight association between these two variables. The hypothesis testing results also confirmed that the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment was non-significant, although positive (**β** = 0.005) (see Table 6.6). This finding implies that support for Hypothesis 4 was confirmed, which had initially projected a positive relationship between these variables. Eslami and Gharakhani (2012), Masale et al. (2021), as well as Slattery and Selvarajan (2005), variously reached outcomes consistent with those of this study. According to Govender and Grobler (2017), job satisfaction positively predicts organisational commitment. Mapuranga, Maziriri, Rukuni and Lose (2021) also found a positive relationship between these two variables. Consistent with Thabane, Radebe and Dhurup, (2017), there is a positive association between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Yousef (2017) also stated that the various features of job satisfaction positively and directly affect the different dimensions of organisational commitment. Several scholars have also submitted a declaration that job satisfaction positively impacts organisational commitment, for example, Valaei and Razaei (2016), Fu and Deshpande (2014) and Zandi, Aslam, Nasir and Jiayi (2018). As this study confirmed that job satisfaction has a positive influence on organisational commitment, thus it can be concluded that this study failed to reject Hypothesis 4.

A study conducted by Odoch and Nangoli (2014) submitted a significant and positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Bashir & Gani (2019) revealed that there is a significant and positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. As much as Martin and Kaufman (2013) submitted that job satisfaction is a significant and positive predictor of employees' commitment to their employer, Bashir and Gani (2019) also found that low job satisfaction may result in reduced levels of commitment in the workplace. Moreover, Dalkrani and Dimitriadis (2018) also studied the impact of job satisfaction on organisational commitment and found a positive relationship between these two variables. The results from a study conducted by Ashraf (2020) similarly found that there is no direct effect on the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

<u>Key finding 4:</u> The results of this study demonstrate that job satisfaction has a direct positive effect on organisational commitment. This implies that if employees are satisfied with their work, they will become committed to their organisation. Consistent with the results of this study, it can be concluded that sufficient evidence exists to support a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Therefore, this study failed to reject Hypothesis 4 as it was supported by the results of this research.

7.6.5. Relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention

The bivariate correlation analysis revealed a non-significant, low and negative correlation between transformational leadership and labour turnover (***r*** = -0.064; **p** < 0.01) (see Table 6.3). This finding was in line with Hypothesis 5 which claimed that there exists a negative relationship between these two variables. However, the path modelling analysis found a significant but also a negative relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention (**β** =-0.140***; p < 0.01) (see Table 6.6). Overall, this meant the hypothesis that transformational leadership has a negative influence on labour turnover intention was supported by the findings of this study, and most importantly, this study highlights that this relationship was also significant as hypothesised. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 could not be rejected as support was garnered from the findings of this study.

This finding implies that transformational leaders, through their empowering behaviour, are inclined to decrease the propensity of their subordinates' intention to leave the organisation. From a South African context, this finding is in line with the results from findings from, for example, Pieterse-Landman (2012), who found a negative relationship between transformational leadership and employees' intention to quit. This meant that the effect of having transformational leaders in the organisation was discovered to have a negative connection with employees' intention to leave the organisation (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). Such employees are more likely to become emotionally tied to a leader that inspires and inculcates trust, faith, pride and respect in them (Pieterse-Landman, 2012). This internal desire from subordinates helps in reducing their intent to leave the company. Moreover, Pieterse-Landman (2012) argued that such behaviours by the leader have a tendency to become idealised and are manifested in shared actions and values within the company since the leader will be able to provide a persuasive vision and mission that leads to a strong desire for the emulation of that leader. Pieterse-Landman (2012) contended that a solid establishment of transformational leadership behaviours constitutes a premeditated retention approach. This claim was backed by an earlier submission by Buckingham and Coffman (2005) that workers

do not leave their employers, but instead, they leave their managers. Given the avalanche of literature on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' intention to quit (also see Section 3.5) as well the support established from this study, it can be reasonably concluded that there is a low likelihood of workers exiting the company if they align themselves with the leadership style and vision their leader.

<u>Key finding 5:</u> The finding of this study indicates that transformational leadership style is vital in reducing employees' turnover intention. In particular, the growth in the application of transformational leadership will result in a decrease in employees' turnover intention. Therefore, this study failed to reject Hypothesis 5, as sufficient evidence exists to corroborate the initial claim that there is a significant and negative relationship between the application of transformational leadership style and employees' turnover intentions.

7.6.6. Relationship between perceived empowerment and labour turnover intention

The bivariate correlation analysis indicates a non-significant, low and negative correlation between perceived empowerment and labour turnover intention ($\boldsymbol{r}$ = -0.057; $\mathbf{p} < 0.01$) (see Table 6.3). This result was consistent with Hypothesis 6 which stated that there exists a negative association between these two variables. Hypothesis testing under path modelling analysis also found a negative relationship between perceived empowerment and labour turnover intention ($\boldsymbol{\beta}$ = -0.057) (see Table 6.6). Overall, this implied that the hypothesis that perceived empowerment has a negative influence on labour turnover intention was reinforced by the results of this study, and thus could not be rejected.

The findings of this study are in line with the submissions in the extant literature as there is evidence to support the idea that feelings of empowerment are linked with decreased intentions to leave the organisation (Avey et al., 2008; Ngqeza & Dhanpat, 2021). Empowerment is known to provide several possibilities for increasing employee self-esteem, while simultaneously lowering their intention to leave. Additional studies that discovered negative links between empowerment and employees' intention to resign include Nie, Lamsa and Pucetaite (2018) as well as Moynihan and Landuyt (2008). Moreover, the increased responsibility and flexibility that empowered employees experience is likely to increase their job satisfaction, thus lowering their intention to leave the organisation (Kim & Fernandez, 2017; Zamanan, Alkhaldi, Almajroub, Alajmi, Alshammari & Aburumman, (2020). Aggarwal, Dhaliwal and Nobi (2018) as well as Jaiswal & Joge (2018) highlighted the significant role that psychological empowerment plays in lessening the level of employees' turnover intention.

Furthermore, Mabekoje, Azeez, Bamgbose and Okunuga (2017) established that psychological empowerment demonstrated both incremental and predictive effects on the employees' career commitment. Similarly, Arogundade, Arogundade and Odoh (2017) affirmed the benefits of psychologically empowering employees to reduce their turnover intention.

<u>Key finding 6:</u> Perceived empowerment plays a vital role in decreasing employees' turnover intention. This study provided empirical evidence to indicate that perceived empowerment and turnover intention of employees are negatively related. Essentially, this meant that the more empowered employees are (e.g., through training, the delegation of more challenging tasks, and inclusion in decision making) the less likely that such employees will think of leaving their organisation. Accordingly, this study failed to reject Hypothesis 6, as enough evidence was garnered from this study to substantiate the earlier argument that there is a negative relationship between perceived empowerment and employees' intention to quit their current organisation.

7.6.7. Relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention

The bivariate correlation analysis offered evidence of a slight and negative correlation between perceived company support and labour turnover intention ($\boldsymbol{r}$ = -0.005; $\mathbf{p} < 0.01$) (see Table 6.3). This implies that higher levels of perceived company support are linked with low intention to leave the organisation, hence supporting Hypothesis 7. Path modelling analysis also confirmed that there is a non-significant but negative relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention ($\boldsymbol{\beta}$ = -0.018) (see Table 6.6). As a non-significant result was found, this meant that only a negative relationship was supported in this study. This finding is consistent with research findings from previous scholars, e.g., Imran, Ali and Islam (2014). The findings of this study partially supported the results from earlier studies by, for example, Perryer, Jordan, Firns and Travaglione (2010) as well as Tuzun and Kalemci (2012) who maintained that workers may turn to other methods like searching for alternative employment if they do not perceive that there is sufficient support and care from their current employer.

The findings of this study highlight that companies should institute different support procedures that are targeted towards the professional development of their employees as well as highlighting that the company cares about the wellbeing of its personnel, for example, study leave, educational sponsorships, in-premise child-care amenities for nursing mothers (Imran et al. 2014). These support options offer workers a sense of belonging and they tend to feel that their contributions are being acknowledged by the organisation; an expression that stimulates

favourable perceptions about the organisation. Deriving from the evidence from the hedonistic approach-avoidance theory and the social exchange theory (Setton, Bennett & Liden, 1996; Blau, 1964), the results of this study suggested that employees who think that their employer shows little or no care about their welfare have a greater likelihood to leave the company in search for better employment in another organisation. Consistent with Pattie, Benson and Baruch (2006), this expression conceivably reduces workers' intention to quit the organisation. Therefore, it can be concluded that workers who perceive a sense of recognition of their contributions and regard the organisation as caring about their wellbeing will most likely sustain their affiliation with their current organisation. However, it is also worth noting that the availability of other job opportunities constitutes a vital deciding factor in the perceived organisational support and turnover intentions analysis.

Consistent with Tuzun and Kalemci (2012), high perceived organisational and supervisory support is regarded as less crucial in predicting labour turnover intentions. although this becomes a significant factor in labour turnover, particularly when supervisory support is lacking. Furthermore, Tumwesigye (2010) also argued that there is a negative association between perceived company support and employee turnover intentions. However, Paillé, Bourdeau and Galois, (2010) failed to establish that there is a relationship between perceived company support and employee turnover intentions, thus presenting a direct contradiction to the several empirical findings on the relationship between these two variables.

<u>Key finding 7:</u> This study provided evidence to support the earlier claim that there is a negative relationship between perceived company support and employee turnover intentions. However, support was not confirmed for a significant relationship between these two variables. This meant that if employees think that the company recognises their contributions and takes necessary steps to show that it cares about their wellbeing, then such employees are most likely to sustain their membership with their current organisation. Accordingly, this study failed to reject Hypothesis 7, as partial evidence was found to support the earlier argument that there is only a negative (but not significant) relationship between perceived company support and employees' intention to leave their current employer.

7.6.8. Relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions

The bivariate correlation analysis provided proof of a significant but low negative correlation between job satisfaction and labour turnover intention (***r*** = -0.283**; **p** < 0.01) (see Table 6.3). This finding suggests that higher levels of job satisfaction are related to low intention to leave the organisation. However, path modelling analysis proved that there is a non-significant but negative relationship between job satisfaction and labour turnover intention (**β** = -0.047) (see Table 6.6). This finding was in line with the statistical results from a study conducted by Mahdi, Zin, Nor, Sakat and Naim, (2012) which also showed that intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction have an inverse relationship with employees' turnover intentions. Furthermore, a study conducted by Chen, Ran, Zhang, Yang, Yao, Zhu and Tan (2019) as well as Dewi and Nurhayati (2021) also found that job satisfaction negatively influences employees' turnover intention.

Job satisfaction has long been understood as a push factor (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 2008; Sherratt, 2000) and extant literature highlighted it as a critical variable in explaining employees' turnover intentions. While Ramoo, Khatijah and Chua (2013), Faridah, Salehan and Efend (2022), as well as Yamazakia and Petchdee (2015), found a significant positive association between job satisfaction and employees' turnover intentions, many studies found inverse relationships between these two variables (e.g., El-Jardali, Jamal, Abdallah, & Kassak, 2007; Mahdi et al., 2012). These scholars further highlighted that dissatisfied workers are more likely to develop withdrawal behaviours that propel them to think of leaving the company (Shields & Ward, 2001). Other scholars have however demonstrated that job satisfaction has a positive connection with employee turnover intention (Terera & Ngirande, 2014) and this finding (although illogical) implies that when employees are highly satisfied with their jobs this often enhances their intention to exit the current organisation.

<u>Key finding 8:</u> The findings of this study provided support for the earlier hypothesis that there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and labour turnover intention. This meant that if employees are satisfied with their jobs, they will be less likely to develop withdrawal behaviours that may eventually motivate them to think of quitting the organisation. Therefore, this study failed to reject Hypothesis 8, as ample evidence was found to support the earlier claim that there is an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and employees' intention to leave the organisation.

7.6.9. Relationship between organisational commitment and labour turnover intention

The bivariate correlation analysis presented a non-significant, low and negative correlation between organisational commitment and labour turnover intention (***r*** = -0.085, **p** < .01) (see Table 6.3). This finding meant that high levels of organisational commitment are linked with low intention to leave the organisation. Path modelling analysis also indicated a negative association between organisational commitment and labour turnover intention (i.e., **β** = -0.038). This means that the path modelling analysis also confirmed support for Hypothesis 9, therefore, this hypothesis could not be rejected. This finding further suggests that the growth in employees' attachment to the organisation will decrease the impetus for them to leave their employer.

The finding of this study coincided with those of the previous submissions (e.g., Tumwesigye, 2010) who also found a negative link between organisational commitment and employees' turnover intentions. Thrassou, Santoro, Leonidou, Vrontis and Christofi (2020) recently found that organisational commitment is negatively associated with turnover intention. This submission also meant that workers who become emotionally attached to their organisation are less likely to want to leave that company. This point was also endorsed by Iverson and Buttigieg (1999) who also reported that employees' commitment to the organisation is the most prominent factor in boosting their desire to remain in the same organisation. Other research outcomes provided support for a significant, negative relationship between these two variables (e.g., Kuean, Kaur & Wong, 2010). Moreover, Vrontis, Sakka and Amirkhanpour (2015) proved that organisational commitment and turnover intention are positively linked. Correspondingly, Shang, Abernethy and Hung (2019) indicated that although organisational commitment and turnover intentions are largely positively connected, different types of organisational commitments bring about different outcomes.

<u>Key finding 9:</u> The conclusion drawn from the results of this study supports the earlier supposition that there exists a negative relationship between organisational commitment and labour turnover intention. This implies that if employees are psychologically and emotionally attached to their organisation, this will influence their decision to stay in that organisation. Accordingly, this study could not reject Hypothesis 9, as sufficient proof exists to support the claim that organisational commitment discourages employees from leaving their current organisation.

7.6.10. Conclusions on the moderation effect of organisational culture

When giving meaning to the results from moderation analysis, this study returned to the extant literature in order to interpret and explicate these results from a theoretical perspective. This means that emphasis was placed on the substantive theoretical meaning of the results as opposed to just a mere statistical significance. It can be noted that all the tests on the moderation effect of organisational culture yielded significant results. Section 6.3 of this study presented the findings of the moderation effect and this section was reserved to provide meaning to these results.

(i) OC moderating the relationship between TL and LTI

The results provide statistical evidence on how organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention. The results from regression analysis through the SPSS PROCESS procedure show that the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational culture accounted for almost 57.3% of the variation in labour turnover intention. Regarding the slope of the conditional effects, transformational leadership yielded a positive slope of 0.74 while the slope for organisational culture was also positive, i.e., 1.14. The lower and upper confidence intervals were used to establish the statistical significance of the moderation effect by examining whether zero lay between these intervals. The results show that zero did not lie between the lower and upper intervals, i.e., for transformational leadership (0.1402 to 1.3432) and organisational leadership (0.6192 to 1.7457). This result indicates that the conditional effects were statistically significant

Regarding the interaction effect of these two variables, the slope was negative, i.e., -0.13. The results for the statistical significance of the interaction effect also show that zero did not lie between the lower and upper confidence levels, i.e., -0.2240 to -0.0260. Thus, this study puts forward that a negative slope for the interaction effect was established, which supported the statistical significance of the results of this study. Accordingly, the results of this study show that organisational culture moderates the association between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention since the interaction effect from the regression analysis was found to be statistically significant.

The results indicate that the conditional indirect effect was getting smaller when moving from the upper to the lower confidence interval. The effect size started at 0.0386, then to -0.0083 and finally at -0.0552. Confidence intervals (i.e., from lower to upper confidence levels) were used to check for moderation effect. This meant that the statistical significance of the moderation effect was determined by checking whether or not zero fell within the lower and upper confidence intervals. Based on the results, zero fell outside all the lower and upper confidence intervals. This meant that all the three conditional indirect effects were found to be statistically significant. This finding further reinforces the earlier finding that there is evidence to support the hypotheses that organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention.

This study hypothesised that organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and labour turnover intention (i,e., H1a) such that this relationship is better in the presence of the moderator. The interaction of these variables in the presence of the moderating variable yielded significant results. Statistically, this significant result meant that there is a moderation effect, which meant that H1a was supported. The finding of this study was consistent with the findings of Alneyadi, Al-Shibami, Ameen and Bhaumik (2019) who found that organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and the retention of human capital. This finding was also in line with the finding from Toscano (2015) who also found that organisational culture moderates the relationship between leadership and turnover intention of employees in a non-profit organisation. Based on the findings that emanated from this study alongside the evidence from extant literature, this study submits the following:

<u>Key finding 10:</u> Organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee turnover intention. This meant that this study failed to reject Hypothesis 1a as there was enough evidence to support the earlier claim that organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee turnover intention such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak.

(ii) OC moderating the relationship between PCS and LTI

The results from the regression analysis through the PROCESS procedure show that the interaction between perceived company support and organisational culture yielded a 57.3% variation in labour turnover intention. The slope of the conditional effects for both perceived company support and organisational commitment was negative, i.e., -0.9221 and -0.3697 respectively. Similarly, the statistical significance was confirmed by examining whether zero fell within the lower and upper confidence levels. Since zero lay outside the two intervals, i.e., -1.6296 to -0.2146 (for perceived company support) and -1.0164 to -0.2771 (for organisational culture). This finding meant that the conditional effects were established to be statistically significant.

To further corroborate the moderation effect, the interaction effect on perceived company support and organisational culture was assessed. The results depict that the interaction effect resulted in a positive slope, i.e., 0.1580, which yielded a lower and upper confidence level of 0.0385 to 0.2776 respectively. These findings indicate that zero did not lie within the lower and upper confidence levels. Therefore, this study submits a positive slope for the interaction effect, with corroborated statistical significance. Accordingly, this means that organisational culture was found to moderate the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention since the interaction effect was statistically significant in the regression model.

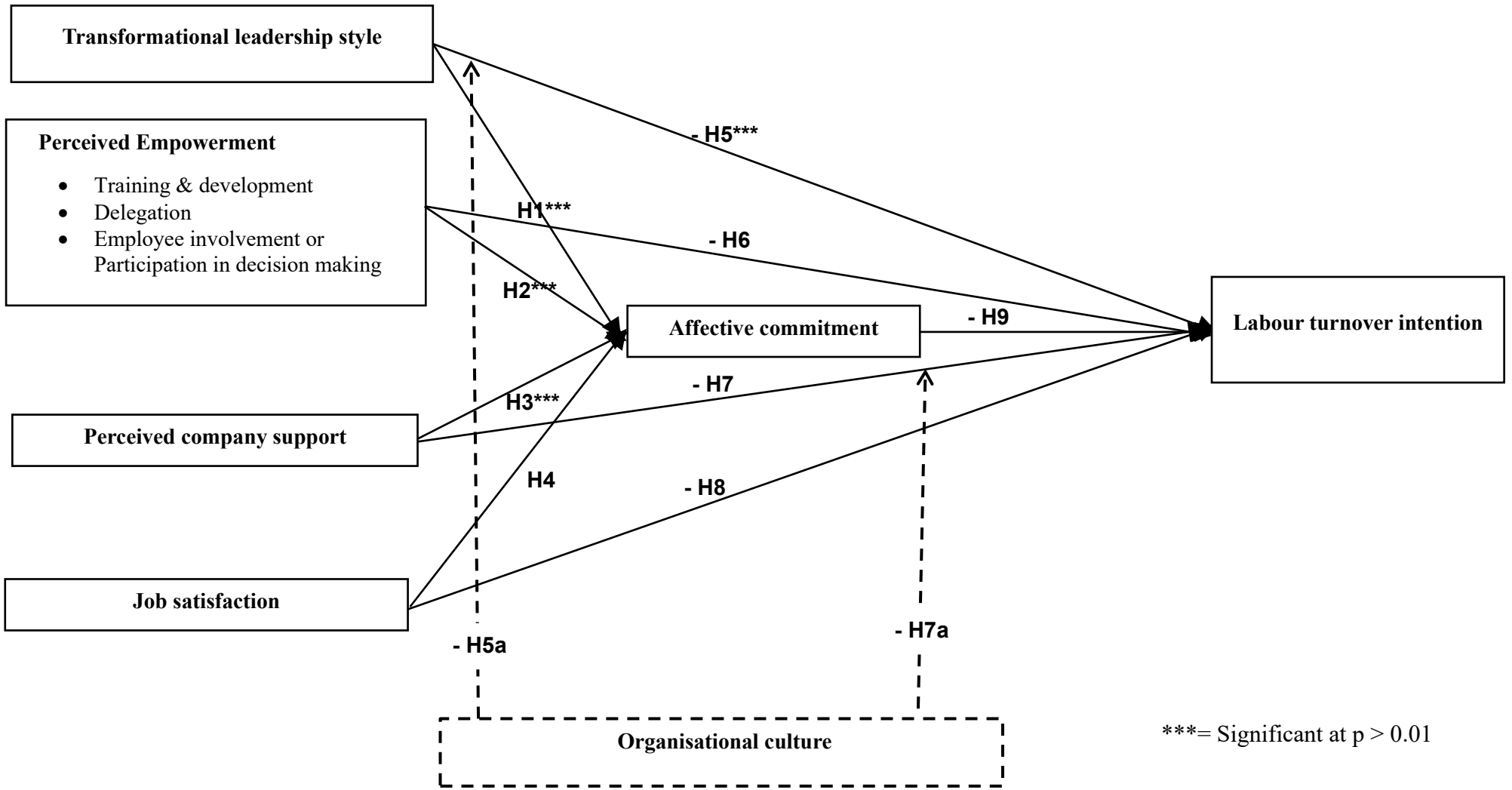
The conditional indirect effects show that the effect of the dependent variable on the dependent variable is getting larger from the lower to the higher confidence level (i.e., the effects start at a negative value of -0.0331 to 0.0262 and ultimately to 0..0854. The moderation effect was confirmed by checking whether zero fell outside or within the lower and upper confidence interval levels. The results show that from the lower and upper bounds, zero fell outside all the confidence intervals. This outcome supported the statistical significance of all three conditional indirect effects. Accordingly, evidence exists to corroborate the earlier hypothesis that organisational culture moderates the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention.

Since the interaction effect in the presence of the moderating variable generated significant results, this cemented the existence of the moderation effect. This meant that Hypothesis 7a could not be rejected. The failure to reject H7a means that this study found that there is sufficient evidence in the present data to confirm support for this moderation effect. This

finding is consistent with the results from Oussam and Johari (2016), who also found that a culture that supports organisational citizenship behaviours will moderate the relationship between perceived organisational support and turnover intention. Similarly, Shafique et al. (2018) established that a culture that discourages employees from breaching their psychological contracts will moderate the relationship between their perceived organisational support on the turnover intention.

<u>Key Finding 11:</u> Again, the results of this study established that organisational culture moderates the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention. This statistical support resulted in H7a being accepted, due to the existence of sufficient evidence to support the earlier claim that organisational culture moderates the relationship between perceived company support and labour turnover intention such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak

Figure 7.1: Final best-fit model



Source: Author's own

7.7. Supported study hypotheses

The following section presents a summary of the hypotheses that were supported in this study.

- *H1: Transformational leadership significantly and positively influence organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*
- *H2: Perceived empowerment significantly and positively influence organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*
- *H3: Perceived company support significantly and positively influence organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*
- *H4: Job satisfaction positively influences organisational commitment of employees in South African SMMEs*
- *H5: Transformational leadership significantly and negatively influence labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*
    - *H5a: Organisational culture moderates the relationship between transformational leadership on labour turnover such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak*
- *H6: Perceived empowerment negatively influences labour turnover intention*
- *H7: Perceived company support significantly and positively influence labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*
    - *H7a: Organisational culture moderates the relationship between perceived company support on labour turnover such that the relationship is significant when organisational culture is stronger than when it is weak*
- *H8. Job satisfaction negatively predicts labour turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*
- *H9: Organisational commitment negatively influence turnover intention of employees in South African SMMEs*

7.8. Chapter summary

The chapter was reserved to provide a discussion and interpretation of the findings of this study, thereby giving meaning to these results. Extant literature was revisited to provide a contextual basis for the conclusions drawn herein. This section further outlined the key findings that this study sought to highlight. Over and above the discussion of the findings from the nine hypotheses of this study, this section also provided more insight into the moderation effect of organisational culture, and according to this study, this moderation effect was supported as the interaction effect in the presence of the moderating variable was statistically significant. The best-fit model was provided at the end and it encapsulated all the relationships and specified how they were supported in this study.

The following chapter outlines the contributions that emanated from this research, and it further presents the study limitations and highlights the study implications for practitioners. Finally, future research directions are provided before providing a conclusion of this study.

CHAPTER 8

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS, RECOMMENDATIONS. CONTRIBUTIONS, SHORTCOMINGS & FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

8.1. Introduction

The first chapter of this study offered a contextual basis upon which this study originated by providing a comprehensive overview of labour turnover intention and its antecedent factors. This was done by providing a review of relevant theories while simultaneously discussing the research problem. It was from the statement of the problem that the purpose, objectives as well as research questions were derived in line with the gaps that were identified in the extant literature. Chapter 1 also justified the necessity of this research, while also detailing how the rest of this study was structured. Theoretical underpinnings and empirical overview of the variables and their conceptualisations were discussed in chapter 2. Consistent with the evidence that was submitted by previous scholars, chapter 3 was reserved for drawing the relationships between the study variables and qualifying them, thus resulting in the formulation of the conceptual framework. These hypothesised relationships were to be analysed in the hypotheses testing section. Chapter 4 discussed the methodology that was adopted in this study, and it specified that this research followed a positivist paradigm coupled with objective ontology. This research philosophy was compatible with the quantitative research design. The study instruments were adapted from previous measurement scales, with proven validity and reliability. Chapter 4 also highlighted the ethical issues that were adhered to before, during and after the data collection process. Chapter 5 provided a discussion on how this study analysed descriptive and inferential statistics while Chapter 6 presented the findings in line with the data analysis procedure detailed in chapter 5. The previous chapter (i.e., chapter 7) presented a discussion and explanation of the findings detailed in chapter 6.

This chapter is an extension of the previous chapter and provides recommendations on what the study findings meant for both theory and practice. Additionally, the contributions that emanated from conducting this study, recommendations as well as managerial implications were deliberated in this chapter. Lastly, this chapter concludes by highlighting the limitations of this study, while simultaneously identifying focus areas for future research endeavours.

The importance of this study lay in its ability to yield significant results for some of the hypothesised relationships. In line with the findings of this study, four of the nine hypothesised relationships produced significant results, and in so doing, these findings corroborated with the findings from other previous scholars. This study further verified that the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables changed in the presence of the moderation effect of organisational culture. This meant that significant results were established between the interaction effect to justify the moderation effect of organisational culture.

In light of this study, the following were some of its key undertakings:

- Tested the hypothesised relationships between the selected variables
- Determined the degree to which organisational commitment mediated the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (organisational commitment mediated some relationships that were proposed and confirmed in this study – see Figure 3.1 and Figure 7.1).
- Analysed the moderating effect of organisational culture on the selected relationships between the study variables

8.2. Research contributions

This study established a deeper understanding of how the selected variables can be used to predict employee turnover intention. This comprehension was deemed necessary for scholars, human resource practitioners and other relevant stakeholders. This study used an integrated tactic that strengthened the arguments presented herein. The following section identifies the contributions of this study in detail.

8.2.1. Conceptual contributions

The conceptual model for this study is unique as there has been no such model presented in the current literature, particularly from a South African context. The uniqueness of this conceptual model offers a new path for the empirical understanding of the interactions that exist between the selected variables. Moreover, the distinctiveness of the conceptual framework lay in its ability to provide a new and best-fit conceptual model that will be used by future scholars to gain a better understanding of this research context. Several researchers (e.g., Hussain & Xian, 2019) have previously endeavoured to delineate factors that influence employees' turnover intention in different contexts. Therefore, the creation and validation of the conceptual framework was the salient contribution of this study. The presentation of fresh insights on the relationship between the studied variables also renewed our existing knowledge of the existing relationships.

8.2.2. Theoretical contributions

The research problem that justified the execution of this study highlighted that there is a paucity of studies that seek to unravel the factors that predict employee turnover intention in SMMEs before it manifests itself into actual turnover (e.g., Kang et al., 2015). This implies that this study contributed to filling the research gap that exists in extant literature by extending our existing understanding of the interplay between the studied variables. This new understanding was realised by providing empirical evidence on the significance of the hypothesized relationships. Thus, by validating that there is a relationship between the studied variables, this study contributed to research theory, particularly from the context of South African small and micro business enterprises. This was done by bringing fresh insights with the aim of helping current SMME practitioners to proactively deal with the dilemma of labour turnover. Therefore, the contribution of this study lay in its advancement of the current knowledge, mainly in light of the turnover problem that South African SMMEs face.

8.2.3. Practical contribution

Another key contribution of this study was to respond to the problems of practical importance. Notwithstanding its scientific significance, this study was also supposed to be practically relevant for its findings to positively influence the current thinking while guiding the necessary actions. Therefore, the requisite for piloting this study entailed providing the solutions to the practical hurdles that were identified in the problem statement section.

This research contributed to practice by making sure that human resource practitioners and relevant stakeholders have access to important information that emanated from this study. Therefore, the practical contribution of this study lay in its ability to create a nuanced understanding of the associations between the studied constructs and present this evidence to practitioners. This evidence sought to aid practitioners to frame and apply well-informed employee retention strategies that will help them proactively detect turnover intentions before it manifests into an actual turnover. Developing effective employee retention strategies is important as prevents the company from incurring costs (e.g., attraction, recruitment, and training) and thus ensures that employees remain satisfied, engaged and highly productive (Hussain & Xian, 2019).

In summary, this study had the following contributions:

- It produced a conceptual model that provided a distinctive way of comprehending the intricate relationships that exist between the selected variables. Understanding these relationship was necessary for SMME practitioners in their quest of taming the

recurrent problem of labour turnover. The complexity of the conceptual model stems from the fact that it integrated the selected variables into a single and unique model. Moreover, the uniqueness of this conceptual model lies on the fact that it does not exist in the extant literature for organisational psychology and was tested for the first time within the South African SMME context. Therefore, this conceptual model provided a new direction and unique way for empirically understanding the relationships that exist between the investigated variables.

- By testing the hypotheses and providing new evidence to explain the associations that exist between the studied variables, this study enhanced our current understanding of what triggers employee turnover intentions in SMMEs, while simultaneously advancing our knowledge within the broad field of organisational psychology. Therefore, the empirical evidence from this research represents a vital contribution to the current body of knowledge while providing practical cues for the formulation of useful interventions to prevent the manifestation of labour turnover intention into an actual turnover from an SMME perspective.

Linked to the above discussion on practical contributions are the implications of the study findings to the human resource practitioners. The managerial implications were used to summarise what the findings of this study mean in terms of the actions that must be taken by human resource practitioners to prevent employees from eventually exiting their organisation.

8.3. Managerial implications

A number of studies have formerly been conducted to unravel the notion of labour turnover intention; however, it is rare to find a comprehensive examination of this concept's anteceding factors (such as those presented in this research) together with the resulting implications. At the heart of this investigation was to understand how these predictors can be changed and used by SMME practitioners as a panacea for handling employee turnover intentions. This study also firmly established the necessity for human resource management in small and micro businesses to understand the stimuli or factors that prompt workers to contemplate on leaving their current employer. This study also highlighted that such an understanding is paramount in enabling SMME practitioners to proactively act and effectively reduce the manifestation of actual employee turnover. When employee turnover intentions are judiciously dealt with, then SMME practitioners will not see themselves having to manage the costly, counterproductive and damaging consequences of labour turnover.

The conceptual model of this study offers a scientific basis that affords SMME practitioners concrete insights to aid in the formulation of informed human resource policies. Based on this model and in line with the findings that ensued from this study, SMME human resource practitioners must consider it most vital to create and sustain a positive employee perception of the organisation's support mechanisms, as perceived company support was the most significant antecedent associated with employee turnover intentions. Overall, the study predictors of employee turnover intention (i.e., transformational leadership, job satisfaction, perceived empowerment and perceived company support) can be consciously integrated into the SMME's general and strategic human resource policy.

This study further demonstrated that SMME managers can create a positive influence on the overall employee retention plan for the company if they possess transformational leadership skills. Transformational leaders were also found to play a critical role in instilling organisational commitment amongst employees, thus preventing such employees from quitting the organisation. Additionally, transformational leaders can also be trained to positively influence the company's retention strategy through their impact on the employees' perception of empowerment. This is because this study highlighted that employees if feel empowered, e.g., through delegation of responsibility, training and partaking in decision making, then they will become committed to their organisation, thus decreasing their intentions of leaving the company. Furthermore, the results of this study further indicated that for SMME practitioners to implement an effective retention strategy, they must ensure that employees are satisfied with their work, for example, by offering them appealing intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Once employees are satisfied and empowered, it is also important for the organisation to create a culture of employee loyalty (i.e., organisational commitment) in a bid to deter any employee turnover intentions.

The application of the above-articulated managerial implications would require the relevant SMME enterprise to espouse an effective retention strategy that is in line with the organisation's culture and policies and must also get the buy-in of top management. Such a strategy will aid the enterprise to retain highly satisfied and committed employees while enhancing the company's reputation as a 'company of choice'. Satisfied employees spread positive word of mouth about the company and this helps the company to attract skilled employees in future. Since an effective retention strategy requires SMME practitioners to understand the cost implications (both financial and non-financial) of high turnover rates, this study has highlighted the importance of this notion. This study also submits that before the retention strategy is developed, it is expedient that a 'cost-benefit analysis' must be conducted. This implies that the intervention cost must not overshadow the costs of employee turnover. Furthermore, this study submits that the cost-benefit analysis is paramount as not all employee turnover intentions or actual turnovers, are harmful to the company's sustainability, for example, functional or 'healthy' turnover (as suggested by Lazzari et al., 2022) for the less skilled, less talented and low performing workers

8.4. Study limitations and recommendations for future research endeavours

This study investigated the nature of the associations that existed between selected variables. While valuable insights about the relationships were obtained, it is equally paramount to highlight the limitations of this research while drawing directions for future studies.

A cross-sectional or correlational research design and non-probability sampling method formed the basis of the methodology of this study. In line with Raifman, de Vost, Digitale and Morris (2022), the non-probability sampling method poses concerns about sample representativeness, thus making the results to be non-generalisable to other similar research contexts, i.e., the results lacked external validity (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Another concern linked with the subject of a cross-sectional study relates to the nature of the raw data that was used to generate the findings, which further creates a threat to internal validity as this inhibits directional inferences relating to causality (Görgens-Ekermans & Herbert, 2013). Since the causal deductions from cross-sectional designs are once-off measurements, they are therefore not are than just inferences. Therefore, this study suggests that future scholars should consider using longitudinal design as an alternative to the cross-sectional design. This is because a longitudinal research design is better when it comes to testing causality as the phenomenon under study is assessed over a realistic period (Moorman, 1991).

Another limitation of this study was the assumption that statistically tested and validated instruments can correctly measure the phenomenon under study and yield reliable research results. This spurious sense of accuracy and precision is not always true (Bryman & Bell, 2011). An additional concern about measurement scales was the assumption that participants understood the statements and attached the same meanings to the items in the inquiry form. However, extant literature shows that respondents have a high likelihood of interpreting the statements differently, although similar options will be provided (Bryman & Bell, 2011). As the survey questionnaire that this study utilised for data collection heavily relied on the instruments' reliability and validity, this inevitably meant that this research fell within the deficiencies defined above.

Closely linked to the above shortcoming is the fact that this study exclusively used the self-report rating technique, which may have influenced the validity and reliability of the data. Another limitation of this study was the researcher's assumption of a fixed disposition of the investigated variables with no consideration of the real experiences of participants (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This meant that all the investigated constructs equally applied to the diverse groups of participants. Nevertheless, the genuine experiences of specific respondents (and in some instances groups) meant that the social, group dynamics and more importantly, the organisational setting might have determined or influenced their responses.

Only seven variables (including the moderating variable) were examined in this research, and this may suggest that other significant variables may have been omitted, thus not fully capturing the predictors of labour turnover intention. Future research endeavours should consider expanding the scope of the conceptual model by including other variables like person-organisation fit, and labour market dynamics, among others. Moreover, since this study only focused on labour turnover intention, future studies may consider testing actual labour turnover to get a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. The addition of these variables may provide a nuanced understanding of the association between labour turnover intention and its predictors as well as an understanding of the causes of actual turnover

By its very nature, workers' intention to leave the organisation is a delicate construct that is frequently impacted by the principle of social desirability. This social aspect is professed to be a real basis of error in any societal research of this nature. Closely linked to the delicacy of the construct of labour turnover was the matter of honesty on the respondents' part when they were filling in the questionnaire. Even though all the necessary actions were taken to alleviate this problem (e.g., requesting respondents to answer as honestly as possible), there was no assurance that the participants were utterly truthful in their answers to the questions. Moreover, the composition of the study participants cut across different educational backgrounds and languages and the items of the inquiry form were only written in English. This was done with no concern for the participants' proficiency in English, which to most of them, constituted a second or third language. The usage of English may have affected respondents' interpretation and the way they attached meaning to the questions that they were asked, and this inevitably influenced their responses. Any misinterpretation of the items in the questionnaire owing to language barriers as well as the ensuing responses thereof constituted a limitation to the validity of this study.

Given the scope and the shortcomings of this study (as indicated above), it is envisioned that other researchers will be encouraged to conduct similar studies on the associations between the variables that were investigated in this study. Such prospective studies may, for example, use a homogeneous or exclusive sample (e.g., non-managerial or managerial employees). Moreover, as previously noted, future studies must consider using a longitudinal research design while implementing a mixed-methods research approach (e.g., quantitative and qualitative design). Over the years, labour turnover intention and its predictors have enticed a plethora of research studies, and yet these variables still continue to be key constructs of examination in modern-day organisational psychology. To date, a group of scholars should synthesise the existing literature by conducting a meta-analytical assessment of distinguished studies. Such a meta-analytical evaluation is more likely to provide practitioners and other relevant stakeholders with a collection of literature that comes with handy references.

8.5. Conclusion

Contemporary studies have upheld the notion that employee turnover is costly, time-consuming, destructive and counterproductive, mainly when talented, skilled and high-performing employees are involved (e.g., Bergman, Payne, & Boswell, 2012; Engelbrecht & Samuel, 2019; Wöcke & Heymann, 2012). Therefore, it became expedient that an inquiry of this nature must be done to forge a nuanced understanding of the selected variables that predict employee turnover intention, particularly from an SMME context in an emerging economy like South Africa. The findings of this study delivered important empirical and theoretical contributions to the extant literature while profoundly advancing our knowledge within the general field of organisational psychology. Equally, the implications for organisational managers were positioned within the context of study results and they provided SMME practitioners with real-world and operational devices that might help in the timely identification of turnover intentions and proactively take corrective action. Thus, this early detection of these intentions would help SMME managers to take necessary steps in intervening and taking relevant steps to manage this phenomenon before it escalates into actual turnover.

The findings of this study highlight that transformational leadership, perceived empowerment and job satisfaction are important variables that significantly predict employee turnover intention. Therefore, SMME enterprises that want to avoid employees from developing turnover intentions must start by putting practical interventions that promote employee empowerment and satisfaction, while ensuring that the managers are trained to have a leadership style that instils valuable change in individuals and their social structure. Most importantly, perceived company support yielded the most significant relationship on organisational commitment, therefore, SMME practitioners should put measures in place to show that the company values the contributions of its employees and that it also cares about the well-being of its workers.

Overall, while the findings of this research largely validated the results of earlier inquiries, it also provided some fresh and exciting outcomes on the associations between some variables, for example, perceived company support was found to have the most significant and positive relationship with organisational commitment.

8.6. References

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

APPENDIX I: ethics clearance certificate

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Edayi

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H21/11/12**
PROJECT TITLE	Fostering Retention of Talented and Skilled Employees by Understanding the Motivators of Employee Turnover Intention from a South African SME Perspective
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Mrs J Edayi
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	School of Business Sciences/
DATE CONSIDERED	19 November 2021
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved Risk Level: Minimal
EXPIRY DATE	30 January 2025

DATE 31 January 2022 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(Professor J Watermeyer)

cc: Supervisor : Dr R Venter

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University. Unreported changes to the application may invalidate the clearance given by the HREC (Non-Medical)

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to submit an amendment of the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a regular progress report. For Minimal and Low studies, this is due annually on 31 December. For Medium and High Risk studies, this is due twice annually on 30 June and 31 December.**

_____ _____/_____/_____
Signature **Date**

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES

APPENDIX II: Survey Questionnaire



November 2021

Good day,

My name is Juliet Edayi and I am currently completing my Doctoral degree in Human Resources Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

The title of my study is:

"*Fostering Retention of Talented and Skilled Employees by Understanding the Motivators of Employee Turnover Intention from a South African SME Perspective"*

I am inviting you to be a participant in this study by filling in the survey questionnaire for my study, and it will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete this survey.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and I can guarantee that your personal details will remain anonymous throughout this research study as well as in the final write-up of the dissertation. As the participant, you are free to refuse to answer any questions which you may feel uncomfortable answering and you can also withdraw from this study at any time. By being a participant in this research you will not receive payment of any form and the information you disclose will be used to complete the final thesis. This survey will result in a research paper that will be written into a Doctoral thesis and will be available through the University's website.

Should you have any further questions or queries, you are welcome to contact me or my supervisor, Dr Robert Venter, at any time, using the contact details provided below.

Researcher
Names: Juliet Edayi
Email. Juliet.Edayi@students.wits.ac.za
Tel.: 073 0663 535

Supervisor
Dr Robert Venter
robert.venter@wits.ac.za
011 7178 090

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read and understood the provided information. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my participation in this research at any time, without providing any reason and with no cost to me.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature (Please sign with an X) _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature (Please sign with an X) _____Date _____

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please read the following questions and put an "X" on aspects that correspond to your answer

1. Gender:

Male		Female		Prefer not to say	

2. Age:

Less than 18	
18 to 23	
24 50 29	
30 to 35	
36 to 41	
Above 41	
Prefer not to say	

3. Marital status

Married	
Cohabitation	
Single	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Prefer not to say	

4. Ethnicity

Afrikaans	
English	
IsiNdebele	
SePedi	
SeSotho	
XiTsonga	
SeTswana	
TshiVenda	
IsiXhosa	
IsiZulu	
IsiSwati	
Prefer not to say	

5. Personal income

Less than R10000	
R10001 to R20000	
R20001 to R30000	
R30001 to R40000	
Above R40000	
Prefer not to say	

6. When do you intend to leave this company?

Less 1 years' time	
Between 1 and 2 years'time	
Between 2 and 3 years'time	
Between 3 and 4 years'time	
Between 4 and 5 years'time	
Between 5 and 6 years' time	
In more than 6 years'time	
Never	
Prefer not to say	

7. Years of service in this company

Less than 1 year	
1 to 2 years	
3 to 4 years	
5 to 6 years	
Above 6 years	
Prefer not to say	

SECTION B: INFERENTIAL STATISTICS DATA

Please read the following questions and put an "X" on aspects that correspond to your answer

	Strongly Disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Slightly Disagree [3]	Neutral [4]	Slightly Agree [5]	Agree [6]	Strongly Agree [7]
Transformational Leadership							
I make others feel good to be around me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I express myself with a few simple words what we could and should do	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I enable others to think about old problems in new ways.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I help others develop themselves.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I tell others what to do if they want to be rewarded for their work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am satisfied when others meet agreed-upon standards.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am content to let others continue working in the same way as always.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others have complete faith in me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I provide appealing images about what we can do.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I provide others with new ways of looking at puzzling things.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I let others know how I think they are doing.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
As long as things are working, I do not try to change anything.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
As long as things are working, I do not try to change anything.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others are proud to be associated with me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I help others find meaning in their work.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Strongly Disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Slightly Disagree [3]	Neutral [4]	Slightly Agree [5]	Agree [6]	Strongly Agree [7]
I get others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I give personal attention to others who seem rejected.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I call attention to what others can get for what they accomplish.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I tell others the standards they have to know to carry out their work.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I ask no more of others than what is essential.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Perceived Empowerment							
The work I do is very important to me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My job activities are personally meaningful to me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The work I do is meaningful to me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am confident about my ability to do my job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have mastered the skills necessary for my job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My impact on what happens in my company is large.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Strongly Disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Slightly Disagree [3]	Neutral [4]	Slightly Agree [5]	Agree [6]	Strongly Agree [7]
I have significant influence over what happens in my department	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Employees' Perceptions of Organisational Support							
The organisation values my contribution to its well-being.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation cares about my well-being.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation appreciates any extra effort from me.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation strongly considers my goals and values.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation would understand a long absence due to my illness.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Help is available from the organisation when I have a problem	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation is willing to extend itself to help me perform my job to the best of my ability	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation provides me with more opportunities to move up the ranks	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation is willing to help me when I need a special favor.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation takes pride in my accomplishments at work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
If the organisation earned a greater profit, it would consider increasing my salary.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation wishes to give me the best possible job for which I am qualified.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The organisation tries to make my job as interesting as possible.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Job Satisfaction							
My job keeps busy all the time.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have a chance to work alone on the job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have a chance to do different things from time to time	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Strongly Disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Slightly Disagree [3]	Neutral [4]	Slightly Agree [5]	Agree [6]	Strongly Agree [7]
My supervisor handles workers well	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My supervisor is competent in making decisions.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I can do things that are consistent with my conscience	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My job provides for steady employment	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have a chance to do things for other people	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have a chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My organisation puts policies into practice.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My pay is consistent with the amount of work I do	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have a good chance for advancement on this job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have the freedom to use my own judgment on this job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I have a chance to try my own methods of doing the job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The working conditions are good	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I get along well with my co-workers	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I get a feeling of accomplishment from my job.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Affective Commitment							
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organisation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel like 'part of my family' at this organisation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel 'emotionally attached to this organisation,	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this organisation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Strongly Disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Slightly Disagree [3]	Neutral [4]	Slightly Agree [5]	Agree [6]	Strongly Agree [7]
Labour Turnover							
I hardly consider leaving my current job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am not searching for alternative job opportunities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My current job satisfies my personal needs	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My personal values are not compromised at my work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My current job that suits my personal needs	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
It is unlikely that I would accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to me	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I often look forward to another day at work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My other responsibilities prevent me from quitting my current job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The benefits associated with my current job prevents me from quitting	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
My current job has a positive effect on my personal wellbeing	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
“Fear of the unknown,” prevents me from quitting my current job	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
The thoughts of quitting my current job does not cross my mind	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I do not plan to look for a new job within the next 12 months	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Organisational Culture							
People in my company are flexible and adaptable when changes are necessary.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
People have a clear idea of why and how to proceed throughout the process of change.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Individuals and teams have clearly defined goals that relate to the goals and mission of the business.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Strongly Disagree [1]	Disagree [2]	Slightly Disagree [3]	Neutral [4]	Slightly Agree [5]	Agree [6]	Strongly Agree [7]
Teams often have the authority needed to get the job done effectively	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
People in my company value and make use of one another's unique strengths and different abilities.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
People have the interpersonal and technical skills they need to work effectively in teams.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
People and teams are often expected to reach goals which they believe are attainable.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Everyone knows and understands our business objectives and priorities.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Individuals and teams are measured and rewarded according to how well goals are achieved	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
We constantly stretch our goals, to continuously improve	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
People believe in working together collaboratively, preferring cooperation over competition.	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Thank you for your participation. The information you shared will be treated with the utmost confidentiality

*****The end*****

APPENDIX III: RELIABILITY RESULTS

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	338	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	338	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.916	15

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
TL1	5.73	1.292	338
TL2	5.88	1.107	338
TL3	5.98	1.104	338
TL4	5.97	1.085	338
TL5	5.92	1.034	338
TL6	5.82	1.019	338
TL7	5.84	1.042	338
TL11	5.56	1.077	338
TL13	5.58	1.057	338
TL14	5.58	1.070	338
TL15	5.67	1.066	338
TL16	5.70	1.106	338
TL17	5.80	1.118	338
TL18	5.86	1.012	338
TL20	5.75	1.077	338

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
TL1	80.92	105.071	.591	.913
TL2	80.77	106.825	.627	.911
TL3	80.67	106.672	.636	.911
TL4	80.68	105.946	.684	.909
TL5	80.73	105.932	.724	.908
TL6	80.83	106.123	.726	.908
TL7	80.81	106.039	.712	.908
TL11	81.09	107.808	.601	.912
TL13	81.07	108.841	.565	.913
TL14	81.07	109.589	.521	.914
TL15	80.99	107.641	.616	.911
TL16	80.95	106.264	.654	.910
TL17	80.86	106.273	.646	.910
TL18	80.79	110.010	.536	.914
TL20	80.90	109.945	.501	.915

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
86.65	122.406	11.064	15

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	338	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	338	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.889	12

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
PE1	6.17	.982	338
PE2	5.96	1.222	338
PE3	5.99	1.149	338
PE4	6.08	1.100	338
PE5	6.17	.977	338
PE6	6.06	1.132	338
PE7	6.08	1.181	338
PE8	6.13	1.080	338
PE9	6.23	.999	338
PE10	6.21	1.169	338
PE11	6.14	1.060	338
PE12	6.07	1.168	338

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
PE1	67.11	70.060	.498	.885
PE2	67.31	66.792	.547	.884
PE3	67.29	65.505	.666	.876
PE4	67.20	66.253	.656	.877
PE5	67.10	68.503	.604	.880
PE6	67.22	67.286	.573	.882
PE7	67.20	65.926	.620	.879
PE8	67.14	66.648	.646	.878
PE9	67.04	68.259	.603	.880
PE10	67.06	65.925	.628	.879
PE11	67.13	67.249	.624	.879
PE12	67.20	68.365	.491	.886

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
73.27	79.214	8.900	12

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	338	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	338	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.715	11

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EPOS1	5.11	1.157	338
EPOS2	5.03	1.155	338
EPOS3	5.00	1.175	338
EPOS4	5.15	1.176	338
EPOS5	5.20	1.093	338
EPOS6	5.19	1.100	338
EPOS7	5.24	1.091	338
EPOS8	6.26	.665	338
EPOS9	5.90	.908	338
EPOS10	5.92	.888	338
EPOS11	5.93	.807	338

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EPOS1	54.83	27.735	.363	.694
EPOS2	54.91	26.720	.456	.678
EPOS3	54.94	26.264	.487	.673
EPOS4	54.79	27.092	.411	.686

EPOS5	54.74	27.617	.408	.687
EPOS6	54.75	27.034	.459	.678
EPOS7	54.71	27.792	.393	.689
EPOS8	53.68	32.466	.078	.725
EPOS9	54.04	30.147	.254	.709
EPOS10	54.02	29.884	.291	.704
EPOS11	54.01	30.498	.264	.707

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
59.94	33.501	5.788	11

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	338	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	338	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.864	10

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
JS1	5.81	.895	338
JS2	5.78	.954	338
JS3	5.80	.923	338
JS4	5.88	.848	338
JS5	5.90	.827	338
JS6	5.94	.766	338

JS8	6.01	.695	338
JS10	6.01	.731	338
JS11	5.99	.714	338
JS16	6.02	.706	338

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
JS1	53.33	24.442	.488	.859
JS2	53.37	23.147	.599	.849
JS3	53.35	23.372	.598	.849
JS4	53.26	24.049	.576	.851
JS5	53.24	24.166	.579	.851
JS6	53.20	24.652	.568	.852
JS8	53.13	25.013	.584	.851
JS10	53.13	24.648	.603	.849
JS11	53.15	24.665	.618	.848
JS16	53.12	24.893	.592	.850

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
59.14	29.558	5.437	10

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	338	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	338	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.810	5

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
AC1	6.29	.988	338
AC2	6.46	.865	338
AC3	6.37	.936	338
AC4	6.26	1.055	338
AC5	6.25	1.098	338

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
AC1	25.34	9.750	.529	.794
AC2	25.17	9.628	.674	.756
AC3	25.25	9.336	.661	.756
AC4	25.37	8.726	.666	.752
AC5	25.38	9.453	.493	.810

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
31.63	13.991	3.740	5

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	338	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	338	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.769	3

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
LT1	3.07	.494	338
LT5	3.05	.514	338
LT7	3.01	.519	338

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
LT1	6.07	.817	.600	.693
LT5	6.09	.737	.675	.606
LT7	6.12	.821	.538	.762

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
9.14	1.598	1.264	3

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	338	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	338	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.822	8

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
OC1	6.00	.708	338
OC2	5.96	.754	338
OC3	5.88	.812	338
OC5	5.90	.832	338
OC7	5.97	.734	338
OC8	5.99	.685	338
OC10	5.94	.727	338
OC11	6.03	.648	338

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
OC1	41.67	12.609	.489	.808
OC2	41.71	12.023	.570	.797
OC3	41.79	11.828	.552	.800
OC5	41.77	11.387	.621	.789
OC7	41.70	12.105	.573	.797
OC8	41.68	12.455	.547	.801
OC10	41.72	12.301	.538	.802
OC11	41.64	13.086	.440	.814

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
47.67	15.569	3.946	8

APPENDIX IV: TURNITIN REPORT