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Toxic leadership, social support and individual and organisational outcomes

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2018

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25901

Middleton, Sarah Jesse. (2019). Toxic leadership, social support and individual and organisational outcomes. University of the Witwatersrand, https://hdl.handle.net/10539/25901

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Chapter 1: Literature Review: Theoretical and Conceptual Background

1.1 Introduction

The study of leadership coincides with the very birth of civilization with the documentation of Egyptian rulers, Greek heroes, and biblical patriarchs (Saenz, 2015). Since the industrial revolution and the world wars of the previous centuries, the application of leadership has been researched in relation to every organisational structure from armies to massive corporations.

Leadership studies refer to the multidisciplinary academic field of study that focuses on leadership in organisational contexts and in human life (Dvir & Shamir, 2003). Leadership studies have evolved to include a vast array of different styles and have progressed with the times. This includes the progression from the early 1900s with Taylor's (1939) practice of scientific management, to more empathic and person-orientation approaches such as variations in degrees of *Approachability leadership* (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

For this research, an individual is characterised as a leader if they influence, motivate, support, facilitate, and encourage individuals in their given teams (Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen, & Rosen, 2007). Leaders are also characterised as having the ability and influence to generate similar attitudes and behaviours in their teams (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007). An individual is classified as an organisational leader if their team is made up of employees, and their aim is to ensure organisational goals are met (Vroom & Jago, 2007). Individuals that are led by these organisational leaders may be referred to as; subordinates, followers, members, and employees. For this research these individuals shall simply be referred to as employees.

Leaders are important in organisations as they are responsible for providing inspiration, operational oversight, and other administrative services (Luthans, Van Wyk, & Walumbwa, 2004). "Good" leaders are, as a result, important assets in any organisation. However, there are leaders that engage in behaviours that are the antithesis of what 'good' leaders should do. However, before the discussion of what happens when 'leadership goes wrong', the practice and history of leadership needs to be outlined.

1.2 Situating Leadership Theory

In the early 20th century, leadership theory was framed through Taylor's (1939) practice of "scientific management". This came as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution and subsequent hierarchal and bureaucratic organisations. This is not a leadership theory as we have since come to understand the term, but it informed how leaders interacted with their employees and their products in the age of mass production (Coggins, 2011). Taylor (1939) believed that a leader could get the most results from breaking down the process into various labour projects and employees were to be treated as labourers that specialised in each and very specific station or stage of production. In addition, each part of the production process would be timed in the hope of finding areas of improvement to raise production levels to maximum efficiency. In terms of leadership within organisations, leaders were framed as being "born", not "made". This suggested "one form of effective leadership" (Taylor, 1939). This premise echoed *Great Man* and *Trait Theory* (Coggins, 2011).

Similar to Taylor's (1939) theory, *Great Man Theory* leadership, proposed that specific people are "born" to lead. For this theory, these leaders are a select few and viewed almost as "heroes" that step up to their "destiny" when a crisis arises (Coggins, 2011). Similarly, trait theory proposed that only people with the innate characteristics for leadership would be successful (Coggins, 2011). Stogdill (1948) identified "best" traits and skills of what he deemed as successful leaders. The list included elements such as "decisiveness in judgment, speech fluency, interpersonal skills, and administrative abilities as stable leader qualities" (Zaccaro, 2007, p. 7). In 1939, Lewin, with colleagues Lippett and White, proposed three main leadership styles namely; *Autocratic*, *Laissez-faire* and *Democratic* (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Weber (1968) (as cited in Conger, 1990) later rejected this idea of the "big three" and went on to coin charismatic authority, which was the precursor to charismatic leadership theory. He labelled it as a "special" personality characteristic that is the result of a person being assumed as a leader (Conger, 1990).

Despite the move towards a more humanistic approach to management, there was still a dominance of Taylor's (1939) scientific management framework (arguably some organisations still do) (Geraldi, 2008) for "best" leadership. Thus, the idea of "one best style" of leadership that would fit *all* situations persisted (Coggins, 2011). However, Fiedler's 1967 (as cited in Chemers & Skrzypek, 1972) research contradicted this idea and argued that the best leadership style changed in a given situation. He proposed the *Contingency Theory of*

leadership which saw the development of the least preferred co-worker scale. This scale was used to establish whether supervisors were good matches for their assignments Fiedler (1967) (as cited in Chemers & Skrzypek, 1972).

Similarly, *Participative Leadership* was developed and formed the basis of Likert and Bowers' (1969) theory of leadership styles. Their theory of leadership style included four styles; namely exploitative, benevolent authoritative, consultative and participative leadership style. The *exploitative* style saw leaders who show little, if any concern, for their employees or their needs, communicate in a demeaning accusatory fashion, and they make decisions without consultation with employees (Likert & Bowers, 1969). While *Benevolent authoritative leaders* may be concerned with employees and reward quality performance, they still make decisions without any input from employees (Likert & Bowers, 1969). *Consultative leaders* do make genuine efforts to listen to the employees' ideas, but decisions are still centralised for the leader (Likert & Bowers, 1969)**.** *Participative leaders,* however, are leaders that show great concern for employees, listen to their ideas, and include them in the decision-making process (Likert & Bowers, 1969).

This development in leadership theory showcases a shift of the understanding of relationships between leaders and employees. Instead of employees being viewed as one dimensional individuals with a single goal or task (as described in Taylor's (1939) theory), the move saw an attempt to understand the complex nature of these relationships. This gave way to a variety of new theories such as *Leader-Member Exchange* theory.

Leader-Member Exchange theory (LMX), is founded on social exchange and emphases the quality of relationships and interactions between leaders and their employees. This theory argues that leaders develop unique relationships with each subordinate (Coggins, 2011). Those from the "in-group" identify as "fitting" in an organisation and often have positive relations with their leaders (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). These positive relationship results have been found to lead to more positive performance evaluations**,** higher frequency of promotions**,** greater organisational commitment**,** more desirable work assignments**,** better job attitudes**,** more attention and support from the leader**,** greater participation and faster career progression (Hogg, Martin, Epitropaki, Mankad, Svensson, & Weeden, 2005; Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, & Chen, 2005). The individuals in the "out-group" however, most often do not and are often labelled as "having bad attitudes" and exhibiting "less participation" (Hogg et al., 2005). Those from the "out-group" often receive less desirable work assignments,

attention or support from their leader. This in turn, can result in them not being promoted, receiving less attention which all could increase thoughts of leaving the organisation (Wang et al., 2005).

More recent theories also included Hersey and Blanchard's (1969) *Situational Leadership* theory. This theory argued that it is not destiny, rather, leaders actively choose their leadership style. This is influenced by maturity and developmental level of employees. This again showcases that leaders were aiming to move away from exerting force over their employees, towards adapting their approach to best suit the nature of the employee and the situation. Their theory yielded a four-part system. The first, *directing* is aimed at immature employees. The leader must use commands and not supportive behaviours to motivate. *Coaching* entails leaders using high directive and supportive words and behaviours. *Supporting* sees leaders refraining from directive behaviours for supportive behaviours. *Delegating* entails leaders not needing to offer directives or support. Employees are seen to be mature enough to be competent and confident in tasks and do not need constant supervision. Greenleaf (1970) (as cited in Greenleaf & Spears, 2002) proposed a leadership style more focused on the follower; this was termed *Servant Leadership*. Mid-1990s, Spears (1995) (as cited in Spears, 2004) outlined Greenleaf's ideas into ten proposed characteristics of these servant leaders. This included "listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualisation, foresight, commitment to the growth of the people and building community" (Reinke, 2004: p.32). Post-1995 saw a move to promote more ethical forms of leadership (Van Vugt & Hogan & Kaiser, 2008). One such leadership style was *Transformational Leadership*.

Transformational Leadership is characterised by leaders who work with employees to identify needed change and create visions to guide and initiate change (Judge & Bono, 2000). They work by enhancing motivation, morale, and job performance and help to connect employees' sense of identity to projects and a collective identity of organisations (Judge & Bono, 2000). Bass, Waldman, Avolio, & Bebb (1987) broke this style into four parts: *idealised influence* (gain respect, trust and be a role model of ethical behaviour), *inspirational motivation* **(**communicate high expectations and inspire employees to better themselves); *intellectual stimulation* (employees stimulated to be creative and innovative) and *individualised consideration* (care about each employee needs and desires to provide a supportive environment for them). Similarly, a new style; *Authentic Leadership*, coined by Avolio and Gardner (2005), sees leaders using and promoting both positive psychological

capacities and positive ethical climates. Avolio and Gardner's (2005) theory required: *self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing* and *internalised moral perspective*.

1.3. Critique of Current Literature

Despite all this extensive and dynamic work into leadership theory, the dominant way of looking and understanding leadership is still through Lewin's (1939) theory (as cited in Lewin, 1945). This is highly problematic as this theory was developed more than 60 years ago. While organisations seem to be quick to embrace the latest technology, it seems they are not doing the same with leadership. It is important to note, however, that there is nothing inherently wrong with Lewin's theory. The issue arises as it is used in variety of contexts as "gospel", when it should be viewed as a base on which many new theories have since been built and which takes context into account. The dominance of this approach is perhaps due to its convenience. This theory, and many such early theories, fits individuals into 'easy to understand' and simple categories. However, convenience and popularity are not to be confused with best practice.

While the terrain of leadership studies literature and research has been focused around more positive aspects of leadership which include locating the most "effective" person or method to lead, there are still many aspects of leadership that has not been researched and explored (Schmidt, 2008). While there is also nothing wrong with this previous work, which has contributed a great deal to improving employee wellbeing and organisational processes, there is a need to go beyond simply looking at how leaders should be motivating employees towards looking at how leaders can create positive work experiences and find ways to recognize and improve upon harmful work experiences (Walton, 2007).

While empirical research has consistently found that empowering behaviour by effective leaders increases psychological benefits such as job satisfaction and Organisational Commitment Behaviour (Martins & Coetzee, 2007; Petersen, 2012; Stander & Rothmann, 2008), leaders who create job pressure have the opposite effect. In South Africa, results from the annual 2014 State of Employee Engagement Survey done by Public Display Technology reflects similar findings. The study was conducted using participants from a range of organisational areas, including banking, mining, retail and government.

The report indicated a growing disconnect between organisational management and their staff (Fin24, 2015). The study found that only one out of three respondents indicated that their

manager (or given leader) was an individual that provided inspiration, led by example and communicated instructions and goals clearly (PDT, 2014). As many as 42 out of every 100 staff members stated that they strongly agreed that they were not motivated by their leaders in their organisations (Fin24, 2015). To achieve positive environments that foster positive psychological elements, research suggests that employees need to be able to verify the intent of their leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2011; Mayfield, Mayfield & Kopf, 1998). If organisations do not possess sincere leaders, it has been found that environmental support conditions are greatly diminished (Russell & Gregory Stone, 2002). In other words, employees may lose trust in their organisation and, as a result, may not perceive their workplace or co-workers as resources of support. This suggests that employees must be able to validate their leader's reasoning and commitment.

If leaders are felt to be credible, it engenders positive feelings towards the system of values and practices, which characterise a positive workplace and help to clarify the employees' role in it (Brown & Treviño, 2006). This can set the emotional tone of the organisation, which is a large factor of the organisational culture (Russell & Gregory Stone, 2002). Burke (1982) explained further by showing that organisations are more complicated than their purpose, location and name and the same can be said for given employees. Open System Theory reveals that organisations consist of individuals and groups which all have needs that must be satisfied (Morgan, 2006). Organisational culture refers to the shared assumptions, values, and beliefs of individuals in a given organisation (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). These shared values have a strong influence on the people in the organisation and dictate how they act and perform jobs (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). A positive organisational culture can foster creativity, wellness and general productivity.

However, a leader's capacity and potential for motivating and championing positive change in an organisation is as their motivations and actions are just as able to cause negative change and damage work environments. This suggests an extremely dark side of leadership. As a result, research has started to pinpoint a need to address negative leadership styles. While there are many "bad" leadership styles and actions, there is one "unique, more insidious type of dysfunctional leadership" (Schmidt, 2008, p.1). More specifically for this research; *Toxic Leadership*.

The purpose of this research is to discuss and explore the literature surrounding the Toxic Leadership style contextualised within South African organisations. The unique relevance of

exploring this topic in a South African context was described above on page 1. The effect on various outcome variables will also be discussed. This includes the possible effects on Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour. Social Support theory, and its possible role as a moderator, will also be discussed. The broad literature and framework for this research will be Schmidt's (2008) three-part conceptualisation of Toxic Leadership, Matsuda's (2010) seminal study into Toxic Leaders in the United States Army, various other studies and the framework of the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping adapted from Lazarus and Folkman (1980) and Cox's and Mackay's (1981).

1.4 Defining Toxic Leadership

For this research Toxic Leadership (TL), will be defined by Schmidt's (2008) three-part conceptualisation. According to this conceptualisation, the first component of TL refers to behaviours in which Toxic Leaders berate, belittle, and bully their employees. The second component consists of leaders engaging in behaviours that aim to force their employees to blindly follow, rather than being critical of their leader, and their subsequent actions. The third component refers to their own, narcissistic behaviours which lead them to engage in behaviours dedicated to enhancing their own image. As a result, most of their actions are motivated by self-interest and they have little regard for empathy. In short, TL is a leadership style that refers to constant and conscious actions by a leader with the purpose to demoralise their employees through undermining their dignity, self-worth and efficacy (Veldsman, 2007).

As mentioned in the Rationale section on page 1, despite the increasing focus on TL in recent years, research and literature is limited within the South African context. While TL is noted as being a separate type of negative leadership style, it is important to stress that the style is the result of a specific combination of various other negative behaviours, e.g. Abusive Supervision, Narcissistic Leadership and Authoritarian Leadership. These types of destructive leadership styles and behaviours have, in combination, been likened to TL due to their inclusion in the TL definition. These behaviours and styles have all had vast amount of research conducted around the behaviour, and their subsequent effects (Schmidt, 2008), yet they have not been combined and studied under one rubric of a single style, that is, Toxic Leadership. Below follows a discussion of studies that have focused on each of these

aspects, namely *Abusive Supervision*, *Narcissistic Leadership* and *Authoritarian Leadership* in the workplace.

Abusive Supervision occurs when employees perceive a sustained display of hostile behaviours (both verbal and nonverbal), that exclude physical contact (Tepper, 2000). These behaviours may come in the form of public ridicule, temper tantrums, taking credit for employees' successes, inconsiderate actions (such as rudeness), favouritism and scapegoating of employees (Pelletier, 2010). These behaviours can result in "greater job and life dissatisfaction, intentions to quit their jobs, role conflict, and psychological distress" (Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002 p. 1068). Abusive supervision is also often likened to workplace bullying behaviours on the part of leaders. Workplace bulling has been defined as a situation where "persons are systematically, and over long periods of time perceive themselves to be receiving negative treatment due to one or more persons linked to the workplace" (Mattheisen & Einarsen 2007, p. 735). Part of what constitutes this behaviour as bullying is when individuals are exposed to adverse treatment and have difficulty in defending themselves (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2012). Effects can range from those that are moderately severe such as intention to leave and loss of sleep, to those that are much more drastic; such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and suicidal ideation and sickness such as cancer and heart attacks (Vartia, 2001; Djurkovic, McCormack, & Casimir, 2004; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). A study done in Sweden found that 300 individuals who committed suicide had a history of experiencing workplace bullying (Hallberg & Strandmark, 2006). In the workplace, there have been links between bullying causing damaging psychosocial factors, such as role conflict, a negative social climate, and loss of work control (Laschinger, Wong, & Grau, 2012). However, it not just the bullied employees that are affected. Even individuals that have not been the direct target of bullying have been found to be negatively affected if they witness workplace bullying (Hallberg & Strandmark, 2006). Research has likened workplace bullying and its negative effects to TL (Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007; Mathisen, Einarsen, & Mykletun, 2011; Pelletier, 2012). As a result, one can assume that the 'abusive supervision' contained within TL, which is similar in form to bullying, could result in similar negative effects.

Another harmful behaviour is when leaders are more preoccupied with their own self-promotion. Leaders' self-promotion refers to tactics done to bring attention to their positive qualities or past accomplishments (Proost, Schreurs, De Witte, & Derous, 2010). Individuals

who self-promote do so to represent their "ideal self" which features their hopes, wishes, and aspirations. While individuals who use self-promotion have been found to be more creative in problem-solving processes and show more willingness to take risks (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007), it can also create negative outcomes. If leaders are more concerned with their own accomplishments and aspirations by the exclusion of others, they are likely to be more sensitive only to the presence or absence of their own rewards and not to the needs of their employees (Kark & Van Dijk, 2007). As a result, employees may perceive them in a negative light and be less likely to be inspired by them. Such *Self-Promotion* links to another aspect of TL, that is, narcissism.

Narcissistic Leadership refers to individuals with overly positive, inflated, and predominantly agentic self-views, who employ self-regulatory strategies to maintain or enhance these self-views. Leadership positions can promote individuals' perception of self-enhancement (Campbell & Campbell, 2009). It is precisely for this reason, researchers argue that narcissists seek out positions of leadership. Although some research indicates that employees have been found to choose individuals that display narcissistic tendencies as preferred leaders, this belief has been found to be short-lived. Ong, Roberts, Arthur, Woodman, and Akehurst (2016) perceived positive peer-related leadership pre-test revealed that while employees originally associated narcissism with positive peer-rated leadership, their post-test revealed that, the same individuals were negatively associated with peer-rated leadership. Research has revealed that a possible reason for this is that narcissistic tendencies were initially perceived as being the result of an extraverted disposition (Ong et al., 2016). This translated into individuals having seemingly high social skills (such as being charismatic), which made them more "likable". As a result, they were seen as having the ability to perform in public tasks and various tough work situations (Roberts, Woodman, Hardy, Davis, & Wallace, 2013). However, in the long term, these same characteristics of extroversion were perceived instead to be arrogant and diminish long-term effective relationships (Ong et al., 2016). This in turn, seemed to decrease employees' commitment to these leaders'. Thus, instead of inspiring them, they could negatively affect the organisational culture. These characteristics have also been found to create "insecurities and dependencies among followers" (House & Howell, 1992 as cited Ong et al., 2016: p. 11).

A further cause of insecurities is yet another part of the behavioural repertoire of TL, that is, *Authoritarian Leadership*. This leadership is defined as a high degree of control exerted by

leaders, without much freedom and participation of employees in decision-making (Choi, 2007). Studies have found that employees that are supervised by such leaders are more likely to leave the organisation and take their various resources, such as personal skills and competencies, away with them (Van Vugt, Jepson, Hart, & De Cremer, 2004). This could result in damages to the organisation. Damages include decreases in the team's socio-emotional elements such as cohesion, the perception of the importance of groups as a social entity and decreases in work satisfaction, motivation, and effectiveness in organisations (Judge, Picolo, & Ilies, 2004). This leadership style has also been found to have a direct impact on the kind of organisational culture and structure which emphasises disrespect, poor staff morale and fear experienced by employees (Foels & Driskell & Mullen & Salas, 2000). In addition, controlling supervisory styles such as this, whether punitive or non-punitive, have been found to have detrimental effects on employees' intrinsic motivation (Van Yperen & Hagedoorn, 2003).

To conclude the three forms of leadership behaviours combined under the single rubric of TL are likely to manifest in a whole range of severely negative outcomes. Yet while understanding this leadership style in full is important, one also needs to understand the environment within which it occurs.

1.5 Toxic Leadership, Change, Prevalence and Outcomes within the Workplace

1.5.1 Toxic Leadership, Change and Unpredictability

Work environments, especially in South Africa are considered to be complicated. This is because, over above competitiveness, globalisation and constant change that effect most organisations, there are various factors such as the intense drive for transformation and at times extreme cultural, political and gender divides that are unique in South Africa that contribute to the complex nature of work environments. While organisations globally are expected to face changes in "culture, leadership style, structure, system, strategy, production, technology and visions" (Chen, Suen, Lin, & Shieh, 2010, p.3), in South Africa this is further complicated by transformation imperatives, political, race and gender divides. In addition, change, even positive change, can cause anxiety amongst employees. Having to deal with such elements under a Toxic Leader makes these transitions even more difficult.

In Schmidt's seminal (2008) study which examined all three aspects of negative leadership described above, participants noted over and above negative styles, unpredictability was one of the worst traits of their leaders. They indicated that they would "rather work for a

"consistent asshole" than an unpredictable civil [leader]" (Schmidt, 2008, p.29). This suggests that employees can (to some extent) handle abusive and authoritarian leader behaviours, if they know what to expect. Despite the impacts of the negative behaviours, it seems that if employees can predict what will or could happen, they are able to brace themselves for the abuse. If they cannot predict behaviour of their leader, the work climate is thus, much less stable, and employees arguably are forced to focus their energy instead on trying to prevent negative outbursts (Schmidt, 2008).

The above findings informed the decision to investigate all the aforementioned behaviours and styles as they have all already been systematically, although separately studied, form part of the already established literature that highlights the dangers they pose to the workplace. While these leadership styles (and the subsequent behaviours) in isolation can be damaging enough, research has indicated that some leaders adopt styles that are *'combinations'* of these styles and for this research, TL is the one specific combination that will be explored.

Since the styles in question arguably form part of the TL definition, by default, they are likely to present the same consequences to employees in the workplace. The excessive danger of TL is thus, due to the leader incorporating practices such as *Authoritarian Leadership, Abusive supervision, Self-Promotion, Narcissism* and *Unpredictability*. It is not enough to look at these elements and behaviours in isolation. One needs to see how these elements work in combination. Further, it is important to note that a leader will not be deemed "toxic" if they only display authoritarian tendencies for example. They need to also present with severe bullying and narcissistic behaviours contained within their behavioural repertoire.

1.5.2 Prevalence of Toxic Leadership in the workplace and outcomes

The effect that TL has can result in negative work experiences that have shown to be destructive, demeaning and even exploitative. It is such experiences that can be devastating to all aspects of an individual; physically, psychosocially, and even spiritually (Lipman-Blumen, 2006). Such work experiences have even been known to compromise an individual's meaning and purpose. Despite these negative side effects, literature suggests that individuals in the workplace will all probably have to deal with a Toxic Leader at least one point in their working lives, even if only indirectly. Schmidt (2008) affirms, after surveying over 6000

people in the US alone, that three out of ten leaders were toxic. Despite its probable frequency worldwide, this form of leadership is still almost unknown within the field of academia. There are a few possible reasons for this.

Firstly, the term of TL itself has been, and continues to be, used to describe a broad range of negative organisational leadership behaviours. Though these kinds of individuals have been plaguing organisations since their inception and the term TL was already being written about by Whicker as early as 1986 (Whicker, 1996), the term, with its specific characteristics, has only started gaining traction in the last few of years. Secondly, Toxic Leaders (at least for the short-term) have been found to be successful in terms of attaining organisational goals and as a result, the problems of such leaders are often ignored by organisations. It has been suggested that the problem could have been exaggerated by numerous companies using narrow definitions of leadership competence, which requires one to only focus on mechanical and qualified competencies (Veldsman, 2016). Despite individuals being deemed as "toxic", they may be perceived as "competent" as they still may be able "deliver the goods" (Walton, 2007). Toxic Leaders achieve results as they are able to break their employees down to get compliance, which probably comes as the result of the leader's desire for "respect" and immediate obeisance from their employees (Burke, 2016). This could be why Toxic Leaders remain in their positions and are even sometimes promoted, despite their poisonous ways.

Thus, despite the glaringly obvious issue and increased attention on the topic, this style has barely been systematically studied and most organisations remain oblivious to the threat (Goldman, 2006). They may simply choose to ignore it and/or do not know how to address it (Macklem, 2005). In this regard, Reed (2004), points out, that the "poison" is often slow acting, so organisations do not realise they are "sick" until it is too late. As a result, employees can be emotionally broken down, while able to produce work of a "decent" standard. Therefore, toxic leaders are kept on as they are seen to be motivating employees towards task completion (even, though this is achieved by inciting fear). In the long term, however, any increase in productivity or short-term success that is achieved is not sustainable (Veldsman, 2007). This is due to TL behaviours resulting in damage to teams, departments and/or organisations. Thus, individuals should not view a leader as "good" simply because they produce results. It is not enough to be highly competent and effective in their jobs, if their methods of leadership are creating an unhealthy organisational climate with serious consequences that are and can be far beyond a few resentful employees (Burke, 2016).

It is for this reason that it is argued that the biggest problem with TL is that this kind of leadership is more likely simply not dealt with in any capacity and, as a result, is unwittingly fostered by the very organisations that they destroy (Burke, 2016). By virtue of its extremely difficult nature to pin-point and the fact that Toxic Leaders often are successful, particularly in the short-term, organisations often turn a blind eye to it or are completely blind to it. In this regard, the concept is difficult to define. However, it is not impossible;

> *"Toxic Leadership, like leadership in general, is more easily described than defined, but terms like self-aggrandizing, petty, abusive, indifferent to [work] climate, and interpersonally malicious seem to capture the concept. A Toxic Leader is poison to the" [*workplace*]; "an insidious, slow acting poison that complicates diagnosis and the application of an antidote"* (Reed, 2004, p.71).

One such organisation where extensive research on TL has been conducted is on the American military. This is an organisation where the employees' very lives depend on their leaders. One of the first recorded studies of and reference to Toxic Leaders was within the US military (Asbery, 2015).

In 2010, anthropologist Matsuda (as cited in Wilson, 2014), was called in to study and discover why almost 30 U.S. soldiers in Iraq had committed or attempted to commit suicide in the space of a single year in a single unit. While soldier suicide is hardly an unknown phenomenon due to the traumatic and stressful nature of the work environment, the estimated annual maximum of soldiers across war zones, various departments (such as navy and air force) and units of committing suicide is 18. This is during war time experiences such as Iraq and Afghanistan and across the entire US Army (Ramchand, Acosta, Burns, Jaycox & Pernin, 2011). As a result, this number was exceptionally high for a single unit. Matsuda (as cited in Erickson, Shaw, Murray, & Branch, 2015) analysed many factors surrounding the soldiers' individual differences and specific challenges, however, he also looked at the environment surrounding the soldiers. A large part of his investigation was to consider their teams and their leadership. His investigation showed that while those soldiers often had major problems in their personal lives, they all had in common at least one leader, sometimes many, who had actually tormented and bullied them (Asbery, 2015).

While unable to prove explicitly that the soldiers' leaders directly caused them to commit or attempt to commit suicide, this research indicated that there was a direct and profound effect on the soldiers' morale as the result of TL (Asbery, 2015). Matsuda's findings were considered serious enough for the U.S. military to confront the problem of TL and they thus began a nationwide study of Toxic Leaders in the military (Erickson et al., 2015).

Wilson (2014) noted that one of the possible reasons that TL existed and had been fostered in the military for so long, (and possibly it is the same for other similarly structured organisations), is because of the bureaucratic and hierarchical chain of command. Research has found TL present in a range of organisations such as military, education, financial services and nursing (Mahlangu, 2014; Reed, 2004; Rouse, 2009; Wilson, 2014). Thus, Toxic Leaders are not only evident in the army and as with the army, one can assume that TL can be a "disease" for any organisation that lacks the mechanisms for discovering and controlling it. This range of organisations that have been found to have been affected and Schmidt's (2008) high estimate of three out ten leaders are toxic, reveals the inadequacy of current organisational habits of thought surrounding negative leadership styles and how to manage or eliminate it (Wilson, 2014).

1.6 Toxic Leadership as a Workplace Stressor

TL has been linked to increased stress among employees and is consequently a specific type of work stressor (Burke 2016, Lipman-Blumen, 2006; Veldsman, 2007). Utilising a stressor-strain theoretical framework, the impact of stress can have a wide and severe range of negative effects on an individual (as seen in the above extreme example of the military where suicide was identified as an outcome). However, before the discussion of Toxic Leaders as a stressor can commence, the concept and the phenomenon of stress itself must be discussed.

The study of negative impacts of stress and strain are extensive with results showing deleterious impacts on aspects such as health (Brewin, Andrews, & Valentine, 2000, Herbert & Cohen, 1993; Watson & Pennebaker, 1989), memory (Van der Kolk, 1994), work performance (Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008; Richardson & Rothstein, 2008) and even social relationships (Lupien, McEwen, Gunnar & Heim, 2009). Stress can be as the result of various experiences, responses, expectations, and/or circumstances. In short, stress places a negative cognitive demand on the individual (De Jonge & Dormann, 2003). For the purpose of this research, workplace stress will be defined as the demand upon an individual;

mental and/or physical (Aitken & Crawford, 2007). Workplace stress is defined as events or conditions that individuals experience at or because of their work and, as a result, they have feelings that they will be unable to cope with such pressure (Kinman, & Jones, 2005). Workplace stress can arise for issues as small (even those that are seemingly positive) such as new policy, new staff members to as large (and inherently negative) as retrenchment. This kind of stress can have substantial impact on the overall workplace and those in it (Bambra, Egan, Thomas, Petticrew, & Whitehead 2007; Wanberg, & Banas, 2000). There are many distinctions and different kinds of stress. One of the most important is that of distinguishing between acute and chronic stressors.

Stressors that are categorised as acute are events that are "extreme and unusual external [events that are] perceived as threatening" (Day & Livingstone, 2001, p.348). Acute stressors are classified as such if the given event has a short duration, has a precise time of onset, and does not have a high probability of recurrence (Barling, 1990). Examples include car accidents or being robbed. Alternatively, chronic stressors have a "continuing problematic nature, extended duration and high likelihood of recurrence" (Day & Livingstone, 2001, p.348). In short, stress becomes chronic when people experience it often for long periods. (Barling, 1990). TL because of its ongoing nature, can arguably be defined as a chronic stressor for those exposed to it.

Based on the research and literature above, it would be expected that TL as a stressor could contribute extensively to degradation in employee wellbeing and organisational environment. TL leaders, despite their noxious ways, are retained and often actually promoted in the organisation (Walton, 2007). This means employees will have to deal with this individual (or multiple individuals) daily. Research has indicated that individuals that are exposed to the chronic stressor of TL have suffered severe outcomes which could manifest in the form of reduced self-esteem, at times increases in alcohol and drug abuse (Ashforth, 1994; Burton & Hoobler, 2006; Lian, Ferris, & Brown, 2012; Tepper, 2007). It has also been found to reduce job satisfaction, Organisational Commitment and organisational citizenship behaviours (Aryee, Sun, Chen, & Debrah, 2007, Rafferty & Restubog, 2011; Steele & Bullies, 2009; Tepper, 2007). The impact of TL unfortunately has also been found to spill over to organisational dynamics and individuals' personal lives. TL has been found to increase work-group and work-life conflict (Carlson et al., 2011; Restubog, Scott, & Zagenczyk, 2011). Research has even found that TL has resulted in increased abuse towards peers and

interpersonal deviance in the workplace (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Tepper, Carr, Breaux, Geider, & Hua, 2009). In addition, TL has been shown to increase an individual's Voluntary Turnover Intention, actual work turnover (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008) and to reduce Work Engagement (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010). It has also been suggested it may result in more severe outcomes as well – such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicidal ideation, extreme forms of physical illness (Asbery, 2015; Wilson, 2014)

1.7. Toxic Leadership and Outcomes – The present research

While there are a wide range of noxious outcomes that are reported in the literature on TL for the scope of this research, the focus will be upon three outcome variables in relation to the perceived experience of TL by employees. These include Voluntary Turnover Intention (VTI), Work Engagement (WE) and Organisational Commitment Behaviour (OC). The reason for the selection of these particular variables will be outlined below.

1.7.1 Toxic Leadership and Voluntary Turnover Intention

Regarding *VTI*, due to a globally competitive market, now more than ever, retention and productivity levels of workforces remain vital success factors for all organisations (Kazalarska, 2010). It is for this reason that employee turnover is one of the biggest threats to business sustainability (Schlechter, Syce, & Bussin, 2016). This is because of the various costs for a given business should employees leave the organisation or be unproductive whilst in employment. These various costs will be outlined below.

Employees desire to leave can be expressed in avoidance and escape behaviours which suggests planning to or actually leaving their jobs (Dawley, Houghton, & Bucklew, 2010). This process of planning to leave one's job can manifest in Voluntary Turnover Intention (VTI).

VTI has been viewed as "a multistage process that includes attitudinal, decisional and behavioural components" (Martin & Roodt, 2008, p.25). The *intent to leave* the organisation has been viewed as the last step in a series of withdrawal thoughts and actions that lead to actual staff turnover (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Low or high VTI has been found to be the result of the combined effects of a number of attitudinal factors (Hongvichit, 2015). Attitudes of work satisfaction and commitment have been found to be negatively related to turnover and intent to leave (Mitchell et al., 2001). A South African study found that Work

Engagement, Burnout, low Organisational Commitment Behaviour and work alienation all predict turnover intention (Du Plooy & Roodt, 2010). However, research indicates that work attitudes are only a small part contributing to employee retention or leaving, and other factors are important for understanding turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001). In particular TL, a form of severe chronic organisational stress/demand has been shown to affect VTI.

Linking VTI to TL, it is unsurprising that research has indicated that if an organisation has been found to have TL, it causes an increased desire by employees to escape (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Loi, Hang-Yue, & Foley, 2006). The process can be likened to the "fight or flight" response. If employees feel that they cannot handle or mitigate (or fight) the stress (in this case it would be the stressed caused by the Toxic Leader), employees have been found to want to get out the situation (flight) (Ansari, Aafaqi, & Sim, 2012). Increased VTI, and its possible manifestation in actual turnover, can lead to many and high costs for the organisation.

If employees do decide to leave the organisation, the company will have to deal with the effects of a high staff turnover rate. This comes in the form of the cost and time of additional recruiting and training people into the newly vacated positions. However, the process of employees escaping can come in many forms that is not limited to simply *physically* leaving the organisation.

Given South Africa's economic climate in which individuals cannot always find another job easily and a dependence on fixed income, employees' VTI levels may not always manifest in actual turnover. This means that employees may physically stay in a given job, but their feelings towards the organisation will most likely be negative. Thus, they stay in the organisation, but this "staying" has been associated with numerous other negative costs. For example, VTI has been found to increase absenteeism, privilege abuse and even theft in organisations (Appelbaum & Roy-Girard, 2007). Thus, is due to staff unhappiness and VTI being higher than their loyalty to the organisation. Staff that are not able to physically leave the organisation, have also been found to be more likely to engage in labour disputes (Turney, 2003). In addition to VTI, staff that are not able to physically leave, may see a reduction in their actual Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour, which will be discussed below.

Those who are able to leave cause a problem for an organisation if they have critical skills. Given the shortage of skilled labour in South Africa, organisations must compete to attract

and retain skilled employees as the workplace environment is characterised by a growing skills scarcity (Schlechter et al., 2016). Consequently, the cost of such skilled employees leaving is exacerbated when their skills are not easily replaceable.

1.7.2 Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement

Regarding *Work Engagement (WE); v*arious positively focused leadership styles such as person-orientated and servitude leadership have been linked with work-environments that increase engagement, work satisfaction and seem to result and be linked to productivity for employees (Laschinger, Wong, Cummings, & Grau, 2014). So, if a given organisation is not fostered by a positive leader, the assumption is that there could be a decline in the above positive outcomes.

Historically, Kahn (1990) developed the first grounded theory of personal engagement and personal disengagement. Kahn (1990) theorised that the elements of engagement were made up of meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Meaningfulness was argued to be a "sense of return on investments of self in role performance" (Schuck & Wollard, 2013, p. 705). Safety was the ability to show one's self "without fear or negative consequences to self-image, status, or career" (Schuck & Wollard, 2013, p. 705). Finally, availability was argued to be the "sense of possessing the physical, emotional, and psychological resources necessary" for the completion of work (Schuck & Wollard, 2013, p. 705).

Research has since progressed form Kahn's early theory with WE currently being defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind" (Shimazu, Schaufeli, Miyanaka, & Iwata, 2010, p.89). WE of employees is considered to be made up of three parts including; absorption, vigour and dedication (González-Romá, Schaufeli, Bakker, & Lloret, 2006). Absorption is observed when engaged employees have a sense of energy and an effective connection with their work (Salanova, Agut, & Peiró, 2005). Vigour is characterised by high mental resilience while working (Salanova et al., 2005). Dedication refers to being strongly involved in one's work and experiencing a sense of significance and pride (Salanova et al., 2005). In addition, it has been indicated that WE increases when there is Social Support from colleagues and superiors (Shimazu et al., 2010).

As a result, if employees have high WE, it has been found that these employees are able to achieve more work goals and show personal growth and learning (Shimazu et al., 2010). However, if there is low WE it has been hypothesised that individuals with low WE would struggle with the above objectives. If left long enough, this low engagement arguably could

eventually manifest in burnout, which, in turn, has severe negative individual and organisational outcomes such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment and low productivity in the workplace (Maslach, 2003; as cited in Federici, & Skaalvik, 2012). Employees that observe low WE have been found to be tired, uninvolved and simply ineffective in their work (González-Romá, et al., 2006).

Linking WE to TL; research has indicated that if an individual is exposed to a leader and work environment that is deemed as toxic, WE can be seriously impaired (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010; Burke, 2007, Gallus, Walsh, van Driel, Gouge, & Antolic, 2013; Tavanti, 2011). The work environment and subsequent organisational culture is a significant driver of employee engagement. Per above, this includes management, designing jobs, providing support and setting goals (Popescu & Liliana, 2004, p.174). In addition, since it is argued that TL is a chronic stressor, it may well lead to burnout if employees must deal with a TL for long periods of time. It is for this reason that WE and its possible relationship to TL has been included as a possible organisational outcome within this present study of TL.

WE is viewed as being a precursor to Organisational Commitment Behaviour. This is because individuals who experience deep engagement in their jobs, arguably, identify more with their organisations and thereby, experience greater commitment (Field & Buitendach, 2011; Jackson, Rothmann, & Van de Vijver, 2006). It is also said to make VTI less likely (Bashir & Ramay, 2008). As a result, the final essential outcome to be explored for organisations and TL, within the present research is the commitment of the people working in these given organisations.

1.7.3 Toxic Leadership and Organisational Commitment Behaviour

Regarding *Organisational Commitment Behaviour (OC)*; this refers to the desire of an employee to stay with the organisation (Pitt, 2012). Researchers have long maintained that organisational goals are almost unattainable without the stable commitment of employees (Tella, Ayeni, & Popoola, 2007). As a result, this is a vital organisational outcome.

Early literature surrounding OC, argued that it should be viewed as “a single dimension, based on an attitudinal perspective, embracing identification, involvement and loyalty” (Manetje, 2009, p.37). However, work in this field has indicated that OC is more complex and is made up of various elements. One such theory is that of Meyer and Allen’s (1991)

three-part theory of OC; which is composed of Normative, Affective and Continuance Commitment.

Affective Organisational Commitment Behaviour refers to the employees' participation, attachment, and identification to organisations. This commitment is seen through their conscious thought and in the result of their desire to stay in a given organisation, without any influence of money or other constraints (Field & Buitendach, 2011). In other words, it refers to their psychological attachment to a given organisation. The strength of this psychological attachment can be influenced by the extent to individual's given needs and expectations are matched by their organisation (Storey, 1995). Continuance Commitment Behaviour relates to feeling committed to an organisation for fear of loss (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Individuals may stay out of fear of unemployment (lack of income) or pressure from others from the organisation, often leaders (Mowday et al., 1979). Normative Commitment is the sense of obligation employees feel to stay in organisations (Mowday et al., 1979).

Meyer and Allen (1997) (as cited in Manetje, 2009, p.42) maintain that OC is influenced by factors such as "job challenge, role clarity, goal clarity, and goal difficulty, receptiveness by management, peer cohesion, equity, personal importance, feedback, participation, and dependability". The theory also notes that OC involves identification and internalisation. Identification refers to the desire to establish a rewarding relationship with an organisation (Manetje, 2009). Internalisation refers to congruent goals and values held by individuals and the organisation. As a result, OC is the extent an individual identifies with the given organisation (Manetje, 2009).

While the positives for OC are great, so too are the possible negatives. The negatives associated in having low levels of OC in an organisation have been found to affect attitudes and behaviours of employees. This includes rejection of long tenures, decrease in expressions of loyalty, motivation, involvement, performance and obedience to organisational policies (Manetje, 2009).

Linking OC to TL, in a study on TL in US military units, it was found that this leadership style had a devastating effect on OC (Gallus et al., 2013). Soldiers (as employees) started to make negative attributions about their organisation (that is, the army) based on their perceptions of the organisation's perceived malice, due to those in charge engaging in such negative behaviours (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli & Lynch, 1997). Individuals exposed

to TL in the military were found to be more critical and negative towards their organisation and as a result, were found to place less value on their jobs or loyalty towards their organisation (Gallus et al., 2013). The relationship between OC and TL has not yet been tested in a South African context. However, the above findings of its already tested relationship in the US, suggest that it is a variable that is crucial to consider. It is for this reason that OC and its possible relationship to TL has been included.

To conclude on the links between TL, VTI, WE and OC, these are felt to all be crucial variables to consider. If TL is indeed related to these outcomes (higher levels of VTI, lower WE and lower OC), it will likely lead to organisations experiencing an ever-revolving door of exiting workers, or being left with a team of lifeless, fearful broken-down employees. As the above literature suggests that these various outcome variables are interrelated to TL, given that it is relatively new concept within South Africa, there is a need to examine these variables within South African companies.

1.8 Coping with Toxic Leadership

The purpose of this research hopes to extend beyond just analysing the impact of TL on various organisational outcomes, but to also understand how social resources may assist individuals to manage the stressor of TL. An individual can cognitively appraise if a given stress event exceeds or does not exceed their ability to handle the stressor. This cognitive appraisal forms part of the process of coping with exposure to stressors or demands. While TL has the potential to cause negative stress and can have an adverse impact on the above outcome variables, individuals, due to various interpersonal aspects or access to external resources, may be more or less able to cope with this stressor.

1.8.1 Defining coping

Coping relates to realistic, flexible thoughts and/or actions that individuals engage in to solve problems to reduce stress (Aitken & Crawford, 2007). Lazarus and Folkman (1980) argued that an individual's perceptions of demands relative to their ability to cope can result in *balance* or *imbalance*. Balance is achieved when an individual believes that they have the 'capacity to cope' with the perceived threat, and imbalance is the opposite (Bernstein, 2013).

Cox's and Mackay (1981) argued that whether an individual can cope (or not) with a given stressor/demand scenario can be influenced by more than the actual stressor itself, but also

the individual differences between people. Research has found links between past-coping experience, personality, and available personal and external resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1980). These resources have been found to affect the way in which an individual perceives a demand situation (Cunningham, Lischeron, Koh & Farrier, 2004).

Past-coping experience refers to both strategies that individuals have adopted to try cope with the stressors and what stressors they have faced previously (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986). Individuals may be assured that they can cope with a given stressor if they have overcome a similar stressor in the past. This may also affect their coping approach as they may adopt a similar strategy to the one previously used as it yielded positive results (Folkman et al., 1986). Personality "refers to the distinctive patterns [including affects, feelings, emotions and actions] that characterize each individual enduringly" (Mischel, 1999, p.4). McCrae and Costa (1986), for example have shown that personality, more specifically, the influence of neuroticism and extraversion, has had an influence on coping mechanisms. Those who identified as extraverts showed an increased use of rational action and positive thinking. However, those who identified as being neurotic, typically engaged in more hostile reactions, self-blame and passivity when presented with stress (McCrae & Costa, 1986).

Personal internal resources such as self-efficacy, self-control, self-esteem, and tolerance for ambiguity can also have consequences for an individual's ability to cope with stress (Shaw, Fields, Thacker, & Fisher, 1993). Further, external resources, which refer to elements that exist outside of a person, can alter an individual's perception of demand/s and their ability to cope with stress (Bernstein, 2013). One particular external resource of huge importance is that of Social Support.

1.9 Defining Social Support

The premise of human beings needing Social Support is not a recent finding. As early as 1871, Darwin wrote about the needs and the benefits of humans as social animals (Darwin, 1952). This came with reference to being part of a "cohesive group to provide protection from predators and continuation of the species" (Williams, Barclay, & Schmied, 2004, p.942). This suggests that need for Social Support is ingrained into the very core of our being.

Social Support has been deemed as a resource that assists individuals in coping with stress. Subsequent research has confirmed from a health perspective, there is a direct link between Social Support and better physical health. Such health aspects include lower risk of cancer

(Wortman, 1984) infectious diseases and mortality (Leserman et al., 1999). If individuals can rely on the support of others when they are stressed, the stress experience has been found to be less detrimental (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

Early work into Social Support in the work setting revealed that "supportive behaviour by work supervisors can improve both the morale and productivity of workers and reduces many forms of organisational stress" (House, 1981: p.60). Social Support from colleagues and supervisors has been identified as a powerful external resource in combating stress (House, 1981; Taylor, Welch, Kim, & Sherman, 2007).

However, if an organisation has TL or other such forms of abusive leadership or supervision, it is unlikely that employees shall receive support from their supervisors as it is the same source that is causing stress for the individual (Kelloway, Sivanathan, Francis, & Barling, 2005). Thus, within the present study the decision was taken to focus on colleague support only. In examining Social Support within the present study, it is important to note that Social Support can have both main and moderating effects within the stress process. These effects are described below.

1.9.1 Social support: main and moderating effects

The main or direct effect of Social Support from colleagues on organisational outcomes has been well documented. Such effects may occur in the absence of stress and thus, it is noted that Social Support has direct effects on health whether stress is experienced or not. These direct effects include better physical and mental health (Browner, 1987; Russell, Altmaier & Van Velzen, 1987; Viswesvaran et al., 1999) and increased productivity, which works towards alleviating the impact of any work overload (Stansfeld, Fuhrer, Shipley, & Marmot, 1999). This alleviation has been found to result in lower levels of burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). It can also have positive effects on job satisfaction, increased well-being and commitment, which has been shown to decrease turnover behaviour (Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2009). High job Social Support can even enhance intrinsic work motivation (Richer & Vallerand, 1995) and as a result, decreases work absenteeism (Undén, 1996). The above positives benefit both the employee and the organisation as a whole.

Social Support can also have a main effect on stress perception, namely right at the beginning of the stress appraisal process. The perception that others can and will provide necessary resources may redefine the potential for harm posed by a situation and/or bolster one's perceived ability to cope with imposed demands, hence preventing a particular situation from

being appraised as highly stressful (Cohen & McKay, 1984). Therefore, Social Support is able to halt the perceptions of stressors before they begin and may circumvent the stress process altogether.

Social support has been shown to act as a moderator or a "buffer" during the appraisal process of stress (Cohen & McKay, 1984; House, 1981). This includes lessening the impact of stress on outcome variables. For example, Quine (2001) found that Social Support alleviated the impact of workplace bullying in a study about nurses. This included outcomes such as job satisfaction, levels of anxiety, depression and desire to leave (Quine (2001). Beeble, Bybee, Sullivan, and Adams' (2009) study showcased that Social Support also increased the quality of life of those who had and were experiencing intimate partner violence.

Social support works as a "buffer" by intervening between the stressful event (and/or expectation of that event) and a stress reaction by attenuating or preventing a stress appraisal response. Thus, adequate colleague support may intervene between the experience of stress and outcomes of stress by reducing or eliminating the stress reaction or by directly influencing physiological and psychological processes (Baqutayan, 2011). In the context of work, it decreases the effect of work strain, which aids in coping, and thus, improves overall quality of life (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Given these above potential positives of Social Support in terms of both main and moderating effects a decision was taken to examine this resource as a potential moderator in the TL outcomes relationship.

1.9.2 Relating Social Support to Toxic Leadership and the outcome variables

For this research, Social Support's direct effect and its effect as a moderator between the various outcome variables will be investigated.

The main/direct effect of Social support will be tested on the three chosen outcome variables namely; VTI, WE and OC. In addition, Social Support's main/direct effect on TL will also be investigated. It is thus proposed that Social Support will result in reduced perceptions of TL (a main effect) and/or a decrease in VTI and increase in levels of WE and OC (main effects).

In addition, Social Support's effect as a moderator will also be investigated. The role of the moderator in this research is to test if Social Support is able ameliorate (weaken), that is, buffer the relationship between TL and the various selected outcome variables. It is proposed

that Social Support would make a person less reactive to the negatives of the experience of TL (Bernstein, 1992).

This research will consequently examine if Social Support has a main effect on the levels of VTI, WE, OC and TL. The moderating effect of Social Support in the relationship between TL-VTI, TL-WE, TL-OC will also be tested. To explore these questions, a particular theoretical model/framework was adopted, namely the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping.

1.10 Theoretical Framework for The Present Research

The purpose of adopting a conceptual/theoretical framework of the theoretical principles is that it offers guidance for the given area of research (Thelwall, 2006). The advantage of a conceptual framework is that it clarifies the conceptual underpinnings of various standards and provides a lens to observe given phenomena (Chen & Paulraj, 2004). In workplace research, "organisational theories help to understand the production of moods and emotions in the workplace and the consequences of those feelings for those in individuals, groups, and organisations" (Brief, 2001, p. 136). Frameworks, as a result, can be used to guide research efforts and provide insights for managerial practice (Chen & Paulraj, 2004).

Previous research into TL has for example used the *Leader–Member Exchange Theory* (Atwater & Carmeli, 2009; Pelletier, 2012) and *Followership Theory* (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). The *Leader–Member Exchange Theory* was proposed by Pelletier (2012) as she argued that the effects of TL was heightened due to the Toxic Leader who created in and "out-groups". Employees that were in the "out-group" were made to feel like they were not a part of the group, and the those in the "in-group" sought to ensure that the Toxic Leader, who was perceived as valuing them, was supported as so to ensure their position in the organisation (Pelletier, 2012).

Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) argued that the *Followership Theory* could also be used to understand TL. They argued that TL remained prominent due to susceptible followers (conformers) and colluders. They argued that conformers comply with TL out of fear and aim to minimise negative consequences by acting in compliance to the ideals and requests of the Toxic Leader (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Alternatively, colluders actively participate in a destructive leader's agenda for their personal gain (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

These are all interesting approaches and have provided invaluable insight into TL. However, for the purpose of this research, an adapted version of the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, drawing from the work of Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) and Cox and Mackay's (1981) theory, was used. The decision to adopt this model was guided by the nature of the research questions which identify a stressor–demand, in this case it is TL and specific outcomes (VTI, WE and OC). In addition, the model, which has been previously revised and used to incorporate coping resources (see Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and Bernstein (2013), was deemed to be suitable as it allowed for the incorporation of Social Support as a moderator variable.

Yagil, Ben-Zur, and Tamir (2011) for instance, also used Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping to frame their research on abusive supervision. The findings of their study suggested that as employees experienced high levels of abuse, they tended to disengage with the leader and use avoidance tactics to cope. This framework has also been successfully used to explore other areas of stress such as workplace bullying (Heames & Harvey, 2006; Colligan & Higgins, 2006; Babatunde, 2013), and various other stress inducing environments and situations (Miller & McCool, 2003; Shurgot, & Knight, 2005).

1.10.1 The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping – Stages and Processes

For the purpose of this research, various integrated components from both Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) and Cox's and Mackay's (1981) theory and frameworks have been used to form a four-stage model which can be found on page 36.

For this research, the *first* stage is the exposure to the actual demand or stressor. Once exposed to the stressor, the individual engages in what has been termed as a cognitive appraisal. This *second* stage of the stress cycle refers to the "process of categorising an encounter, and its various facets, with respect to its significance for well-being" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 31). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) argued that this process involves individuals engaging in cognitive evaluations of whether an event is indeed "stressful" for them. If the stressor is perceived as stressful, the 2b stage of the process occurs; coping response which is either successful (or not).

During this stage, an event/stimulus may be identified as a potential stressor, but the individual may not immediately "suffer" the consequences of stress (Lazarus & Folkman,

1980). At this stage, the individual will still determine if the stressor can be altered, avoided or prevented (Lazarus & Folkman, 1980). In other words, this stage is the internal evaluation done by the individual through which they determine if they have the resources to "cope" with the stressor. Individuals may draw upon various internal and external coping resources (Juth, Dickerson, Zoccola & Lam, 2015), if during this cognitive appraisal process the individual perceives that he or she does have the resources to cope, then less stress will be perceived. Alternatively, if the individual perceives that they do not have sufficient resources to cope, more stress will be perceived.

As mentioned on page 28, Cox's and Mackay (1981) argued that whether an individual could cope (or not) and what strategy they could adopt with regards to a given stressor/demand scenario could be influenced by more than the actual stressor itself. Individual differences between people such as past-coping experience, personality, personal and external resources can all intervene in the process of cognitive appraisal and reduce or increase an individual's perception of their ability to cope with the demand. Within the present study the external resource of Social Support was examined as a possible variable that can enhance coping.

The degree of Social Support could have an effect on the *fourth* and final stage of the stress process. This is the Outcomes/Consequences stage. When Social Support is high, it is argued that, despite initially being stressed by the event or stimulus, the individual will not experience the potential negative outcomes of stress (outlined on page 20-21) as they have been provided with a solution. However, when Social Support is low, the individual may experience a range of negative outcomes. As a result, depending on the level of Social Support, the person has a resource that can affect the extent to which negative outcomes suffered or not.

Thus, for present research, TL will act as the "stressor"/actual demand for stage *one*. The outcomes that will be observed are VTI, WE and OC for stage *four*. It is hypothesised there will be heightened levels of VTI and lowered WE and OC. In addition to the above outcome variables, Social Support is the chosen external resource for stage 3 – the moderator stage. Thus, Social Support from colleagues and its influence as a moderator in the relationship between TL and VTI, WE and OC will be explored as well as its main effect on these variables. A diagrammatical representation of this model is outlined below.

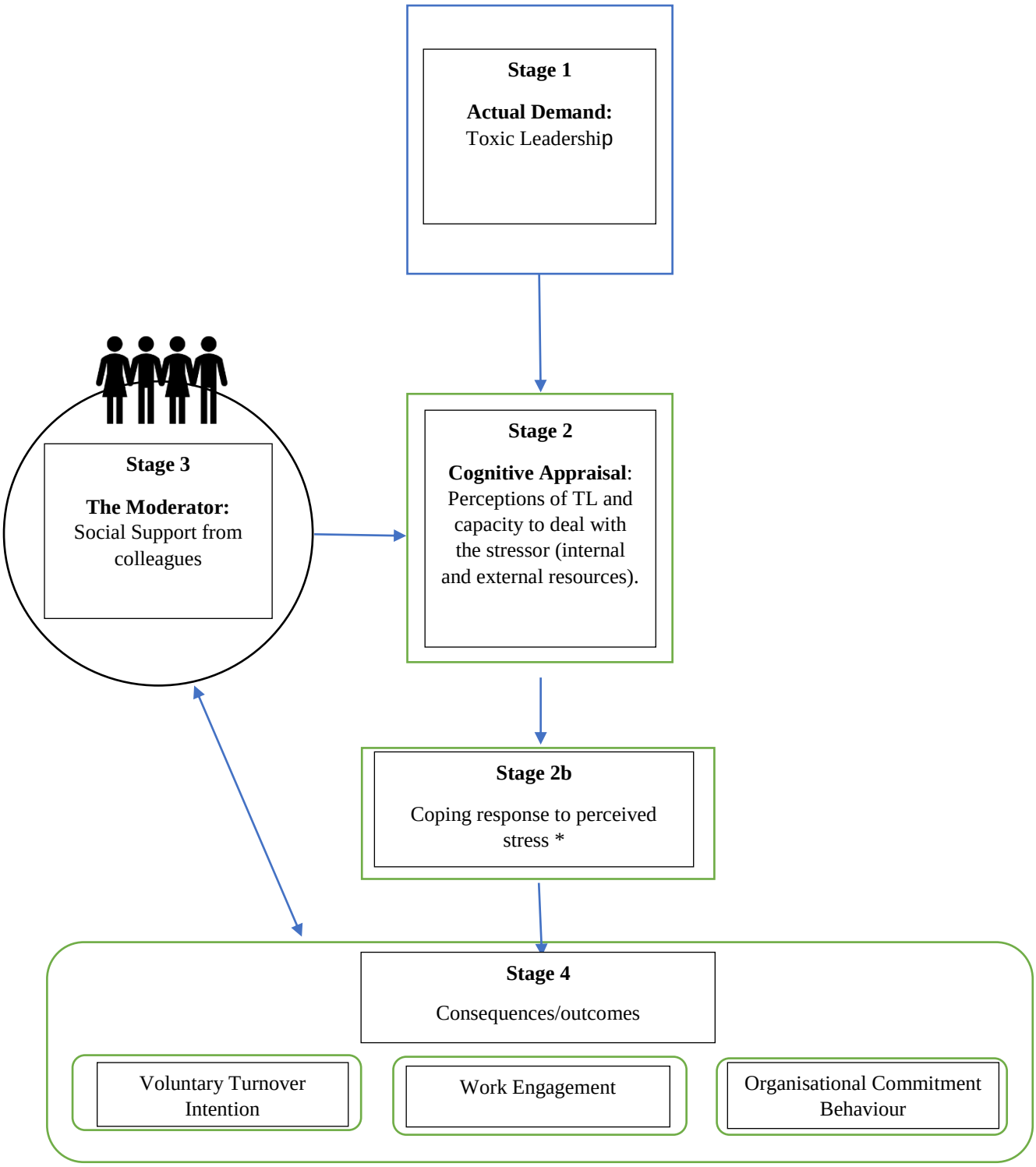

Figure 1: Transactional stress model of Toxic Leadership

(* For the present research, Social Support is the coping response examined. When Social Support is high, coping is enhanced and there are less negative consequences. When Social Support is low, coping is not enhanced and consequences may be more negative.)

1.11 Conclusion

Based on the literature outlined above, it appears that TL has severe implications for individual and organisational outcomes in the form of negatively impacting VTI, WE and OC. However, research also indicates that it is possible that Social Support (in the form of colleagues) will moderate these negative outcomes if it is available. Consequently, this research intends to examine whether TL has a negative impact on the aforementioned outcome variables and if Social Support can moderate this impact, utilising a Transactional Model of Stress and Coping.

The research questions and hypotheses proposed within this framework are outlined along with the methodology of the present research in the following chapter, that is, Chapter 2: Methodology.

Chapter Two: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This aim of this chapter is to set out the research questions and hypothesis (supported by the literature and theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 1) and to provide an outline of the research design and methodological themes, which needed consideration in this current study. Within this chapter the sample of the study is explained along with the procedure, statistical analyses and ethical considerations, thereby ensuring that there is both methodological rigour and adherence to ethical standards for the present research.

2.2 Research Aims

The purpose of the study was to analyse the effect of Toxic Leadership on various outcome variables, namely; Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour. In addition, the research analysed the effect of Social Support as a moderator, along with its main effect on the noted outcomes. The research questions are detailed below.

2.3 Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between Toxic Leadership and Voluntary Turnover Intention?
2. Is there a relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement?
3. Is there a relationship between Toxic Leadership and Organisational Commitment Behaviour?
4. Does Social Support moderate the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Voluntary Turnover Intention?
5. Does Social Support moderate the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement?
6. Does Social Support moderate the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Organisational Commitment Behaviour?

7. Does Social Support have a main effect on Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour?
8. Does Social Support have a main effect on perceptions of Toxic Leadership?

2.4 Hypotheses

1. Employees that experience (a higher degree of) Toxic Leadership will have higher Voluntary Turnover Intention.

2. Employees that experience (a higher degree of) Toxic Leadership will have lower Work Engagement.

3. Employees that experience (a higher degree of) Toxic Leadership will have lower Organisational Commitment Behaviour.

4. Social Support will moderate the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Voluntary Turnover Intention.

5. Social Support will moderate the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement.

6. Social Support will moderate the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Organisational Commitment Behaviour.

7. Social Support will have a positive main effect on Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour.

8. Social support will have a main effect on Toxic leadership, that is, in the presence of high Social Support, perceptions of Toxic Leadership could be lower.

2.5 Research Design

This study followed a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional, correlational design. This design was chosen as it is commonly used to determine whether there are relationships between the variables, and the nature of these given relationships (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006).

The design is cross-sectional design as the participants completed the questionnaire at one point in time, and not a series of times (Busk, 2005). The study is categorized as a non-experimental design due to the absences of manipulation of the variables, control group and the use of random assignment. The study is correlational and utilises “quantitative, multi-subject designs in which participants have not been randomly assigned to treatment conditions” (Thompson, Diamond, McWilliam, Snyder, & Snyder, 2005, p.182). This design can propose that a relationship exists between variables but, it cannot be used to definitely "prove" that a variable causes a change in another (Bush, 1973). As a result, there cannot be any causal claims (Bush, 1973). Correlational research can however, provide an understanding of how various variables relate to each other (Gravetter & Forzano, 2011). It also works for descriptive purposes and is advantageous in terms of ease of implementation and cost and time efficiency (Gravetter & Forzano, 2011). This worked well in the given context of this research; as this research was without funding and had a limited timeframe of under a year to be completed.

2.6 Research Paradigm

This study followed the framework of an explanatory paradigm. An explanatory paradigm involves testing a given hypothesis and deriving that hypothesis from available theories from various bodies of literature (White & Roth, 2009). This paradigm was chosen as there is dearth of research into Toxic Leadership (in conjunction with these given above variables) being empirically tested, especially in South Africa. This paper used literature derived worldwide to form various hypotheses to see if there are similar findings within the context of this country.

2.7 Sampling

For this research, one specific organisation, Wits Plus students (that were from various organisations) and participants from social media were used (described in detail in the Procedure section below). This research implemented a non-probability convenience and snowball sampling method. Convenience sampling refers to a technique that refers the process of recruiting subjects that are easily accessible and within proximity to the researcher (Farrokhi, & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). Snowball sampling refers to the technique in which existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their network (Noy, 2008).

The study sample was composed of 258 adult employees from several South African organisations. These included individuals working in a range of different industries such as Manufacturing, Education, Marketing, Mining, Information Technology (IT), Engineering, Media, Tourism, Medicine and Healthcare, Finance, Emergency Services, Business Services, Human Resources, Security and Architecture. Participants had to be currently employed (excluding individuals who identified as self-employed, that is "their own boss"), aged 18 – 65 and had access to a computer/internet.

The ages of the participants varied from under 30 to 65 years old. The 30-year-old band made up most of the sample (36%) closely followed by those between 31 to 40 years of age (34.1%). The remainder were ages of 41 to 50 (20.5%), 51-60 (8.9%) and over the ages of 65 (0.4%). See Appendix Q, Graph 7. For Gender, the sample consisted of mostly females (79.8%) with males (20.2%) of the sample. It is important to note that the researcher had an option of "other" to account for the long list of other official genders, but none of the participants identified themselves as such (See Appendix Q, See Graph 8).

Most of the sample consisted mostly of white (83.6%) South African working individuals. This was followed by black (24.4%), coloured (5.6%), Indian (3.5%) and then Asian individuals (0.4%) (See Appendix Q, Graph 9). In terms of the home language, it was unsurprising that the dominant home language was English (68.9%) with the dominant ethnic group being identified as white. The next highest was isiZulu (8.5%) and Afrikaans (7.0%). The rest of the languages only made up a small percentage of the rest of the sample; isiXhosa (3.1%), Ndebele (0.4%), Sepedi (3.1%), Sesotho (1.9%), Setswana (2.9%), SiSwati (0.8%), Tshivenda (2.1%), Tsonga (0.8%) and Other (1.9%) (See Appendix Q, Graph 10).

Most of the sample appeared to be undergraduates (23.3%) or diploma (21.3%), closely followed by those with honours degrees (18.2%). The amount of those with Masters degrees (14.7%) and matric (13.6%) were quite similar. While only 0.8% had a grade 10 (which indicates only a tiny population had not matriculated) and Doctoral degrees (3.9%). There were some participants (4.3%) that had qualifications identified as other (See Appendix Q, Graph 11). For Job level, most of the sample were in middle management (26%) and intermediate (23.6%). Followed closely by entry level (17.4%) and junior level (15.9%). The rest were made up from those in executive positions (5%) (See Appendix Q, Graph 12).

Finally, job tenure saw the most number of participants in 2-5 years (26.7%), followed closely by 5-10 years (23.6%) and more than 10 years (20.3%). This was a great finding in terms of results as individuals were reporting on their experiences from a leader and organisation that they had been in for some time. Less than a year (12%) and 1-2 years (17.4%) made up of the sample (See Appendix R, Graph 13). No statistical analysis was run on job industry as there were too many varying organisations and it would have been difficult to draw on any conclusions.

2.8.1 Organisational sample

One organisation in particular was approached. This organisation is in the emergency services organisational sector. The organisation features many teams and leaders. It is an organisation that needs good leadership to ensure high performance of their employees to ensure patient wellbeing and welfare.

Permission for employees to participate in the study was requested (Appendix H). Once permission was granted, participants that chose to participate in the study received an encrypted link from the contact person within the organisation which directed them to the survey and included the participant cover letter (Appendix I), as well as the various questionnaires (Appendix A & C-G). All participants had to be white collar workers and over the age of 18 years, and as previously stated, had to have access to a computer and the internet.

2.8.2 Wits Plus Students

Wits Plus students were also approached as sample subjects after permission for the students to participate in the study was obtained from the Wits Plus course coordinator (Appendix J and Appendix K).

Wits plus students are predominantly students in full time employment that are studying part time. To access a diverse range of organisations, there was no specific criterion in the selection of organisations that the students formed part.

Once permission was granted, participants who chose to participate received an encrypted link which was placed on SAKAI by the course coordinator for them to access. SAKAI is an online forum utilised by students and academic staff to access and exchange learning resources. To participate, students had to be in full time employment and over the age of 18 years. In addition, they needed access to a computer and the internet to complete the survey, which was accessed through the SAKAI platform. Only the researcher and her supervisor had access to survey information obtained from this link.

Students were awarded 1% for participating in the study so there was some form of compensation for students choosing to participate. The Wits Plus Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix B) allowed students to record their student number. The Wits Plus Students' were also afforded the opportunity to pass the survey onto three contacts, the individuals were instructed to return the surveys through the site with their associated student number, then those given Wits Plus Students numbers were awarded an extra percentage, therefore obtaining 2% in total. After permission was requested and granted from the Course Coordinator to contact the Wits Plus students (Appendix K), the researcher, in addition, went to various Wits Plus classes to explain the nature of the study and to elaborate on their choice to participate.

Although students provided their student numbers, once the data was downloaded and student numbers were recorded (to ensure that students obtain their additional percentage/s), the researcher deleted the numbers off the data set. The student numbers were only recorded to provide them to the course coordinator for the percentage allocation. The deletion of the student numbers, once they had been recorded for this purpose, ensured that students' anonymity and confidentiality was ensured. Only the researcher herself had the initial access to these student numbers and no other person saw them before deletion.

2.8.3 Social Media

To enhance the sample size further, the encrypted link was also shared on social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook. On social media sites, it was stated that to

participate, potential participants had to be in full time employment and over the age of 18 years. To access a diverse range of organisations, there was no specific criterion in the selection of organisations. Social Media participants were directed to the same link as the organisational participants and thus, they received the same Participant Information Sheet and Survey as those respondents obtained through organisational access (Appendix A, C-G & H-I). Once data was downloaded, the IP address of all responses was also deleted to ensure the participants anonymity and confidentiality.

2.9 Instruments

2.9.1 Self-Developed Demographic Questionnaire

A self-developed demographic questionnaire was used for descriptive purposes and measured the following demographics: gender, age, race (optional), marital status, level of education, job level, job industry and job tenure (please refer to Appendix A and B. The only instance that involved the utilisation of identifying information was for the Wits Plus Sample. This was because these individuals had to supply their student numbers to assign them course credits for participation (For a full explanation see Procedure section for Wits Plus Sample above).

2.9.2 Schmidt's Toxic Leadership scale (2008)

TL experienced by employees was measured using a revised scale based on the scale developed by Schmidt (2008) (Appendix C). The wording in the original Toxic Leadership scale was revised to be suitable for the South African context. Minor adjustments were made to the wording in consultation with subject matter experts. For example; the word "unit" was changed to "department" to reflect terminology that the majority of the employees would be familiar with and the phrase "shames subordinates" was changed to "ridicule subordinates". The original scale has five dimensions namely: Self-Promotion, Abusive Supervision, Unpredictability, Narcissism and Authoritarianism. The scale includes 32 statements items on a 7-point Likert scale. Participants' Items include; Abusive Supervision (seven items), Authoritarian Leadership (six items), Narcissism (five items), Self-Promotion (five items) and Unpredictable Leadership (seven items). Example of items include statements such as for Abusive Supervision: (agree or disagree) *"Ridicules subordinates"* and Authoritarian

Leadership: *"controls how subordinates complete their tasks"*. The participants can choose to respond from "*Strongly Disagree", "Moderately Disagree, "Slightly Disagree", "Neutral", "Slightly Agree", "Moderately Disagree"* and *"Strongly Agree".* The scales all have a high previous reported reliability (Abusive Supervision: α = 0.93, Authoritarian Leadership: α = 0.89, Narcissism: α = 0.88, Self-Promotion: α = 0.91, Unpredictable Leadership: α = 0.92) (Schmidt, 2008). High scores indicate that the participant is experiencing high levels of Toxic Leadership and low scores indicate that the participant is experiencing low levels of Toxic Leadership in their organisation. The reliability and construct validity of this revised version was assessed for the present study using Cronbach's Alpha and Exploratory Factor Analysis which will be discussed below in the data analysis section.

2.9.3 Kantor's (2013) Voluntary Turnover Intention (VTI) Scale

Employees' level of Voluntary Turnover Intention was measured using the adapted measure of Kantor's (2013) Voluntary Turnover Intention Scale (Appendix D). This scale was developed for use in South Africa (Kantor, 2013). This measure contains five items. Participants were asked to select the statement that best fit their current feeling. Example items include: *"Which of the following statements most clearly reflects your feelings about your future with this organisation in the next year?"* The participants chose to respond from; *"I definitely will not leave", "I probably will not leave", "I am uncertain", "I probably will leave"* and *"I definitely will leave"*. The scale has a previous high reported reliability (α = 0.9) in a study with a South African sample (Kantor, 2013). High scores indicate a high Voluntary Turnover Intention and low scores indicate that there is a low Voluntary Turnover Intention the organisation.

2.9.4. Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES)

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was used to measure Work Engagement (Appendix E) (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006). The scale is in the form of a six-point Likert scale. It includes 9 items/statements which are about how employees feel at work. Responses range as follows: *1 =Never (Never); 2= Almost Never (A few times a year or less); 3= Rarely (Once a month or less); 4= Often (Once a week); 5 = Very Often (A few times a week) and 6 = Always (Everyday)*. Examples of items include; *"At my work, I feel*

bursting with energy" and *"At my job, I feel strong and vigorous"*. The scale has a high reported reliability (ranging from α = 0.75 to 0.83) (Schaufeli et al., 2006). High scores indicate that the participants have high levels of Work Engagement and low scores indicate that the participants have low Work Engagement. The scale has a high reported reliability on a South African sample (ranging from α = 0.78 to 0.89) (Storm & Rothmann, 2003). Although this scale can be scored utilising three sub-scales, for this research, the scores from the sub-scales were scored as a total. Schaufeli and Bakker (2003) argued that not only is this is an acceptable means of scoring and analysing data, but it could actually be more useful because of the moderate to high correlations between the dimensions.

2.9.5 Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) Organisational Commitment Behaviour Questionnaire (OCQ)

Mowday's and colleagues (1979) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire was used to measure Organisational Commitment Behaviour (Appendix F). The scale is a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 'strongly disagree (1)' to 'strongly agree (7)'. An example item is *'I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation*'. High scores indicate high Organisational Commitment Behaviour whilst low scores indicate a low Organisational Commitment Behaviour to the organisation. Items 3, 7, 9, 11, 12, and 15 are reverse-scored. Cronbach Alphas' of 0.88 and 0.90 were obtained for the scale in samples of public employees and bank employees respectively, which indicates "good" to "excellent" internal consistency reliability (Mowday et al., 1979). The scale has also been administered in South African samples and the total scale (Kantor, 2013). Cronbach Alphas were previously reported to be 0.90 - 0.89 (Kantor, 2013).

2.9.6 Procidano and Heller (1983) Perceived Social Support Scale (PSI) (Adapted version*)*

Social Support was measured by an adapted version of the Perceived Social Support Scale (PSI) scale by Procidano and Heller (1983) (Appendix G). For this research, only the colleague subscale was tested. The scale details five questions. For example; *"How much can each of these people be relied upon to help you with a certain task or tasks when things get tough at work?"* and "*How much are each of these people willing to listen or pay attention to your feelings about your work-related problems?".* These questions measure the extent the

participants can rely on colleagues in their life to give them support in various situations. Then the participants answer on a four-point Likert scale which includes the options of; *"Not at all = 1; A little = 2; Fairly often = 3; Extremely Often = 4".* The adapted version of the colleague subscale has reported satisfactory reliability in a South African context with α = 0.77 (Bernstein, 2013). High scores indicate high levels of Social Support from colleagues and low scores indicate low levels of social support from colleagues.

2.10 Data Analysis

The aim for this study was to reach at least 250 responses. 258 were collected and thereafter data analysis began. The statistical methods included; Descriptive Statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis, Pearson's Correlation and Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR). The data analysis was conducted using IBM Statistics SPSS 24. The results of these given analysis will be detailed in the Results Chapter (Chapter three).

2.10.1 Descriptive statistics

The study used descriptive statistics to calculate the mean and standard deviation to describe the scores obtained on each scale. This was also done to check the normality of the data to determine if the tests complied with parametric assumptions (Thode, 2002). This was achieved through using a histogram, the central limit theorem, and calculating kurtosis and skewness coefficients (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004).

2.10.2 Skewness and Kurtosis

Skewness is used as a measure to determine if there is a lack of symmetry within the data set (Field, 2009). It is calculated by subtracting the mean from the mode. If the result is between +1.00 and -1.00, we do not have skewness (Ho & Yu, 2015). Kurtosis, on the other hand, is a measure of whether the data are heavy-tailed or light-tailed relative to a normal distribution (Field, 2009). Typically, a kurtosis amount needs to be between +3.00 and -3.00 (Ho & Yu, 2015). Data with a high kurtosis often have outliers (Field, 2009).

An outlier describes a score that is very different from the rest of the data (Field, 2009). These scores have the potential to contribute to skewness and kurtosis (as described above). These scores need to be check for and deleted from the data set if found. For this study, Tukey's (1977) method which has since been called the outlier labelling rule was used. This method works by

using a formula with the upper or the 75th (Q3) and lower or the 25th (Q1) quartile of the standard deviations of the percentiles in the data set. The results and then put into a formula to identify what are highest and lowest values that the scale can observe. The formula is described below.

Formula for lower bound (or lowest possible values): *Q1 - (1.5 *(Q3- Q1))*
Formula for higher bound (or highest possible values): *Q1 + (1.5 *(Q3- Q1))*

The results from the formula are then compared with the highest and lowest values observed in the data set. If the data does not fall out of the range, then there are no outliers observed in the data set (Tukey, 1977).

2.10.3 Cleaning data

There were 371 people who started to fill out the survey, however, 113 of them did not start the TL scale. This meant that they did not complete more than 75% of the survey and thus, were deleted from the dataset.

In addition, there were a few items that were recoded as they needed to be reverse scored. This included item 13 from the VTI scale and items; 3, 7, 9, 11, 12, 15 from OCQ questionnaire.

2.10.4 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Before analysing the relationship between variables an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on the Toxic Leadership scale. It was felt to be necessary for two reasons. The first was because this scale has, to the researcher's knowledge, not been used in the South African context. In addition, the original scale's dichotomous response format of agree/disagree was changed in favour of a 7-point Likert scale (as described above).

There are three main goals of an EFA. These include; determining the number of latent constructs underlying a set of items (variables), provide a means of explaining variation among variables (items) using a few newly created variables (factors) to condense information, and finally, to define the content or meaning of factors (latent constructs) (Suhr, 2006). The aim of running an EFA for this research was to ensure that the same constructs as proposed by the original author (Schmidt, 2008); *Abusive Supervision, Authoritarian Leadership, Self-Promotion, Narcissism* and *Unpredictability* were still evident in this present sample.

There are a few assumptions that must be met before running an EFA (Suhr, 2006). These include that;

i. Variables used should be metric;
ii. The sample size should be more than 200;
iii. There must be equal distribution of the data (homoscedasticity). Homoscedasticity is when the error variances of the data are the same for all combinations of independent and moderator variables (Field, 2009);
iv. There must be correlations of at least 0.30 between the research variables;
v. There must be no outliers in the data;

Once the assumptions had been met, data analysis could begin.

The number of factors used to describe a construct (in this case TL), were chosen through analysing the eigenvalues and Cattel's scree plot. Eigenvalues work by condensing the variance as a result from each factor in a correlation matrix. From the analyst's perspective, only variables with eigenvalues of 1.00 or higher are traditionally considered worth analysing (Hauben, Hung, & Hsieh, 2017). In addition to the eigenvalues, Cattel's scree plot is used to determine the number of factors. Cattel's scree plot test is used to determine the number of factors to retain in a factor analysis. It involves plotting eigenvalues in descending order of their degree against their factor numbers and determining "where the slope levels off" (D'agostino & Russell, 2005). The "level off" refers to the point of the break of the steep slope and indicates the number of meaningful factors, which are different from random error (D'agostino & Russell, 2005). In addition, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was used as it measures the sampling adequacy for each variable in the model and for the complete model. It is s a measure of the proportion of variance among variables that might be common variance (Williams, Onsman, & Brown, 2010).

2.10.5 Internal consistency reliability

The next step of data analysis was to calculate the Cronbach Coefficient Alphas of the scales to determine and analyze the reliability, freedom from measurement error and homoscedasticity (or lack thereof) of the responses for the scales for Toxic Leadership (TL), Voluntary Turnover Intention (VTI), Work Engagement (UWES), Organisational Commitment (OC) and Social Support (PSI).

Cronbach Alphas were used to determine "the internal consistency of a test…whether items on a test (or a subscale of a composite test), that are intended to measure the same construct, produce consistent score" (Tang, Cui, & Babenko, 2014, p.206). This reliability technique is a single check to provide an estimate of the reliability for test in question (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) have determined that an Alpha of 0.70 is the minimum acceptable for instruments in social science research.

2.10.6 Pearson's Correlation Coefficients

Correlation coefficients are based on a statistic called "covariance". Covariance refers to the extent variables "vary together" (Lee Rodgers & Nicewander, 1988). Pearson's Correlation Coefficients method was implemented to investigate the relationships amongst variables within this study. The covariance for this method is divided by the standard deviations found to offer an estimated result of the correlation. The values obtained will be between -1.00 and + 1.00. The strength of the relationship is determined by how close this value is to either of these given limits (Ong et al., 2016). This method will be used to determine whether significant relationships existed between the variables of Toxic Leadership, Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Organisational Commitment and Social Support. There are a few assumptions that must met before running a Pearson's correlation (Ong et al., 2016). These include that;

I. There must be a linear relationship between variables denoted as x and y;
II. Variables x and y must be independent of each other;
III. There must be Random independent sampling;
IV. The variables must be continuous and randomly distributed variables;
V. Both variables must be at least interval in measure;
VI. Both variables must be normally distributed;
VII. There must be homogeneity of variance.

With regards to random assignment, in a study of this nature, complete random sampling cannot be guaranteed. However, it was felt that one can assume that this assumption has been met in its best possible administration of the survey. This is because it is felt that individuals in the target population, being working individuals (according the above specifications) in South Africa, had access to a computer and the internet and could participate and therefore had an equivalent chance of contributing to this study.

The dependant variables, VTI, WE and OC, are recognised as being interval data as each item demonstrates a numerical value, logical order when relating to another response and an equal distance between each observation.

2.10.7 Moderated multiple regressions (MMR)

Moderated multiple regressions (MMRs) were used to assess whether Social Support moderated the relationship between Toxic Leadership-Voluntary Turnover Intention, Toxic Leadership-Work Engagement and Toxic Leadership-Organisational Commitment Behaviour. MMR is used to determine if there is a there is an additional variable that changes the size and/or direction (negative or positive) of the relationship between two other variables. (Field, 2009). In the present study, we looked at three pairs of outcome variables (VTI, WE and OC) to test if social support moderated some or all the pairs.

MMR contains an "interaction" term which is used to determine the combined effect of two variables that account for variance in the dependant variable. This is in addition to the combination of their individual main effects (Aguinis & Stone-Romero, 1997). The equation of this method involves a criterion or the dependent variable (Y), predictor variable (X), the second predictor (Z) that have been hypothesized to act as a moderator to the X—Y relationship, and the product/interaction term (X-Z) which is the predictor and the moderator. Finally, the predictor variables X, Z, and the X * Z product term (contains information about the interaction) is included.

As a result, this is test enables the assessment of a specific independent variable with greater certainty, since the possible distorting effect of other extraneous variables are considered (Lewis-Beck, 1980; as cited in Upton, 2010). In addition, this method was also chosen and used as it offers scholars important information is not provided by tests of equality of simple correlation coefficients (Aguinis & Stone-Romero, 1997).

There are number of assumptions that need to be satisfied before one can compute an MMR (Field, 2009). These include;

I. The dependent variable should be interval or ratio variable;
II. There needs to be one independent variable;
III. There needs to be independence of observations (independence of residuals).
IV. There needs to be a linear relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable for each group of the moderator variable.
V. There needs to be homoscedasticity (cannot show heteroscedasticity).
VI. An absence of multicollinearity. This is when two or more independent variables are highly correlated. This calls into question if independent variable contributes to the variance explained in the dependent variable.
VII. There cannot be any significant outliers.
VIII. Finally, the residuals (errors) need to be normally distributed.

Independence of observations can be assumed, as the all participants whom completed the surveys only have one set of scores and were therefore only sampled once. Some surveys may have been completed by individuals that work for the same organisation, but this does not imply that the individuals, or their responses, are linked in any way therefore one can assume that the observations are independent.

It is also important to note that for this analysis, our independent variable (Toxic Leadership) was centred. This was done for two reasons. The first is for statistical reasons as it assists in the reduction of multicollinearity (Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998). The second is for substantive resources as it results in improved interpretation (Kromrey & Foster-Johnson, 1998).

2.11. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was applied for through the University of the Witwatersrand's ethics committee to ensure that all ethical obligations were met. The requirements for ethical clearance was met (Please see Appendix M and N). The Protocol number for ethical clearance is MORG/17/008 UG. Once ethical clearance was obtained, the survey was made available electronically and circulated as described above in the procedure section.

In terms of ethical compliance, participants were informed of the purpose of the study, its voluntary nature, right to withdraw and informed consent. With regard to informed consent and voluntary participation, participants were informed that they were able to withdraw from the study until such time as they submitted the questionnaires, their submission being deemed as informed consent.

The process of how the researcher would and subsequently ensured anonymity and confidentiality was protected was also explained. The process of anonymity was explained to organisational participants in that no identifying characteristics, such as ID and staff numbers were used that could potentially expose a participant's identity. They were also informed that their questionnaires were done on a secure and encrypted website and that only the researcher and supervisor had access to the data, thus ensuring participants' confidentiality. For Wits Plus students, the process of complying with anonymity and confidentiality was slightly different. This was because Wits Plus students doing First Year Psychology were awarded a 1% toward their final mark as part of course credit and therefore, needed to provide their student numbers in the demographic questionnaire (Appendix B). Once the data was downloaded and the 1% was recorded and sent to the course coordinator, the student number was deleted from the dataset to ensure complete anonymity.

In addition, if the students chose to pass the survey link onto at least three other people to complete the survey, they were also asked to include their student number in the space provided in the demographic questionnaire (Appendix B). This provided the student with an additional 1%. Once again, the student numbers were deleted after recording an additional 1% for them. Respondents within the student sample were provided with a complete questionnaire through a secure and encrypted website accessed through the SAKAI website. As mentioned, although students provided their student numbers, once the data was downloaded, and student numbers recorded for provision to the course coordinator ensuring the students obtained their percentage, the researcher deleted all student numbers off the data set.

For both the organisational access and the snowball sample, participation in the study and filling out the questionnaire was voluntary, and no participant/s were advantaged or disadvantaged in for choosing to complete it or not. Although Wits Plus students were advantaged by receiving 1% for completion of the study and a further 1% for snowballing, if

they choose not to participate, they were not disadvantaged in any way (other than not getting the extra percentages).

Participants were also informed how data and results was stored, presented and possible communication of results. Participants and organisations were informed should they request feedback on the findings, it would be presented in the form of a summary report, which would only describe general trends thus, ensuring that no single participant's responses could be identified. Participants that required any further information regarding the study before or after completing the survey were provided with the supervisor and researcher's contact details within the participation letters. However, no organisation or individual participant requested such results.

Although IP addresses were available to the researcher for all participants and could be considered an identifier, these were deleted by the researcher from the data set once it was downloaded to ensure that the surveys could not be traced back to any single participant. Only the researcher and the researcher's supervisor had access to this completely anonymised data set which was saved and stored indefinitely on a password protected computer with the computer being stored under lock and key in a secure environment.

Chapter Three: Results

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents an analysis of the statistical results obtained from the data that was collected for the current study. The first results to be described will be the descriptive statistics regarding the outlined variables, and then subsequent other statistical tests namely; the Exploratory Factor analysis, Correlations, Linear Regression, Multiple Moderated Regression. Thus, the results will follow in the order that they were conducted.

3.2 Descriptive statistics

To determine levels of TL, VTI, WE, OC and Social Support (SS), in this sample, descriptive statistics were calculated. These findings are presented in Table 1 below.

3.2.1 Means and Standard deviations

Table 1

Means, Standard deviations and Skewness and Kurtosis

Variable	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
TL	258	4.26	1.94	1.00	6.97	-.37	-1.26
VTI	258	3.26	1.12	1.00	5.00	-.40	-.90
WE	258	3.87	1.02	1.00	6.00	-.30	-.27
OC	258	3.98	1.18	1.20	6.8	.07	-.44
SS	258	2.81	.79	1	4	-.24	-.73

Based on the results above (Table 1) and the histograms in Appendix Q, levels of Toxic Leadership in the sample appeared to be moderately high (M = 4.26; SD = 1.94), with seemingly several employees reporting extremely high or low levels of TL, which is reflected in the histogram as there was a bimodal distribution (Appendix Q, Graph 1).

Bimodal distributions in histograms are identifiable by the two clearly defined “peaks” (Peck, Olsen, & Devore, 2015). The two peaks in a bimodal distribution also represent two local

maximums; these are points where the data points stop increasing and starts decreasing (Peck et al., 2015). These two peaks can be the result of there being "two groups" that have naturally divided themselves within the dataset (Peck et al., 2015). For this research, this is probably as of the result of the sample/participants of this research either identifying as experiencing high levels of TL, or very low levels of TL.

Levels of VTI also appeared to be slightly high (M = 3.26; SD = 1.12) as reflected in the histogram in Appendix Q (Graph 2). This result is to be expected since it was hypothesized that TL would affect a large range of individual, since TL was high, it is expected that VTI would be high.

Conversely levels of WE (M = 3.87; SD = 1.02) (Appendix Q, Graph 3), OC (M = 3.98; SD = 1.18) (Appendix Q, Graph 4) and Social Support (M = 2.81; SD = 0.79) (Appendix Q, Graph 5) appeared to be relatively normal/average with only a few participants answering extremely high and low.

3.2.2 Normality*: Skewness and Kurtosis*

Skewness and Kurtosis was also used to test the normality of the data. Despite some of the means (as seen above) appearing slightly high, all results of Skewness and Kurtosis were acceptable, which is indicated by the data below.

As seen above in Table 1, TL (SK=-.37; K=-1.26), VTI (SK=-.40; K=-.90) WE (-.30; K=-.27), OC (SK=.07; K=-.44) and Social Support (SK=-.24; K=-.73), the data appeared to be relatively normally distributed with only a few participants answering extremely high and low. All the skewness coefficients were between -1 and 1 (Groenewald & Meeden, 1984). The kurtosis values were all relatively close to zero and within the 3 to -3 range supporting that the data was not heavily skewed. This was also supported by the histograms (Appendix O), which suggested that all the variables followed a sufficiently normal distribution to be suitable for parametric analysis.

3.2.3 Central Limit Theorem

Finally, while there was some deviation observed in the shape of the histograms (Appendix P), it is felt that this was not a problem for this present study for two reasons.

The first was because as outlined above, both the assumptions of Skewness and Kurtosis saw all the values under -1 and +1 for Skewness and +3 and -3 for Kurtosis. Secondly, it is felt that the assumption of Central Limit Theorem was also met. This theory stipulates that if sample sizes are greater than 30, it can be considered as normally distributed (Field, 2009). The sample size of the present study was fairly large (n = 258), thus, meeting the above requirement. Therefore, the shape of our data should not affect significance tests as the sample is large enough (Field, 2009).

3.3 Results of the EFA

Before, the factor analysis could commence, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity and outliers had to be checked

3.3.1 Homoscedasticity.

To determine if there is Homoscedasticity of the data, there are two checks. The first is to check the graph itself for an appearance of a rectangular shape. This assumption was met, see Graph 2 (Appendix R). In addition, the *Durbin-Watson* test was run, and the assumption was met. Results for this need to be between 0 and 4 (Field, 2009). For this data, p = 1.67.

3.3.2 Multicollinearity.

Table 2

Tolerance and VIF

	Tolerance	**VIF**
VTIScale	.426	2.345
WEScale	.625	1.600
OCScale	.399	2.506
SSScale	.895	1.117

For multicollinearity, VIF and Tolerance were checked. VIF cannot be substantially greater than 1. If it is, then it is indicating that the regression may be biased (Bowerman & O'Connell, 1990). Tolerance levels cannot be below 0.1 and 0.2. (Field. 2009). However, both assumptions were met as all the results for VIF were not substantially over 1, with all the results below 3, there were no Tolerance levels lower than 0.2 (lowest was .399). This suggests that there are no multicollinearity issues.

3.3.3 Outliers.

It is important to note that multiple cases may have answered the most extreme values there were however, no outliers were found in this dataset. The process utilised to determine the absence or presence of outliers was Turkey (1977) method and is described below.

As mentioned above the formula used is;

Formula for lower bound (or lowest possible values): *Q1 - (g *(Q3- Q1))*
Formula for higher bound (or highest possible values): *Q1 + (g *(Q3- Q1))*

The Upper and Lower bound "limits" are detailed in the table below.

Table 3
Lower and upper bound limits for determining outliers

	Q1 (25th quartile)	**G.3 (75th quartile)**	**g (1.5)**	**Q3-Q1=**	**g'=**	**Lower**	**Higher**
TL	-1.76	1.67	1.5	3.43	5.145	-6.90	6.81
				1.8	2.7	0.1	
VTI	2.8	4.6	1.5				7.3
WE	3.2	4.64	1.5	1.44	2.16	-1.04	6.8
OC	3.2	4.86	1.5	1.66	2.49	-4.09	7.35
SS	2.2	3.4	1.5	1.2	1.8	0.4	5.2

For TL, the lowest was case 124 which scored (-3.26) and the highest case was case 113 which scored (2.70). It is important to note that the TL scale was centred (described above in the Methodology section for the MMR discussion) and those subsequent values were used in this analysis. The lower bound limit was -6.90 and the upper bound is 6.81. This means there were no outliers observed in the data set (-3.26 > -6.90) (2.70 < 6.81).

For VTI, the lowest was case 72 which scored (1.00), and highest case was case 3 which scored (5.00). The lower bound limit was 0.1 and the upper bound is 7.3. This means there were no outliers observed in the data set (1.00 > 0.1) (5 < 7.3).

For WE, the lowest was case 19 which scored (1.00), and highest case was case 17 which scored (6.00). The lower bound limit was -1.04 and the upper bound is 6.8. This means there were no outliers observed in the data set (1> -1.04) (6 < 6.81).

For OC, the lowest was case 148 which scored (1.73), and the highest case was case 127 which scored (6.80). The lower bound limit was -4.09 and the upper bound is 7.35. This means there were no outliers observed in the data set (1.73 > -4.09) (6.80 < 7.35).

For SS, the lowest was case 212 which scored (1.00), and the highest case was case 9 which scored (4.00). The lower bound limit was 0.4 and the upper bound is 5.2. This means there were no outliers observed in the data set (1.00 > 0.4) (4 < 5.2).

Once all the above assumptions were checked and met, the factor analysis could begin.

3.4 Exploratory factor analysis on Toxic Leadership Scale

To determine the factor structure of the TL scale, an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted. The varimax rotation is one of the most popular methods (Abdi, 2003). This rotation method results in each factor having a small number of large loadings and a large number of zero (or small) loadings and allows for a simple interpretation as each of the chosen variables are associated with a small number of factors (Abdi, 2003).

There were considerations taken to account assign the number of factors for extraction. Theoretically, it has been argued that Toxic Leadership is a combination between Authoritarian Leadership, Abusive supervision, Self-Promotion, Narcissism and Unpredictability (as described above). These factors were the result of a study by Schmidt (2008) which supported a 5-factor structure based on his definition. However, as to the researcher's knowledge, this scale has never been used in South African content, the factor structure needed to be assessed and confirmed. The scale was also changed from dichotomous response format to a 7-point Likert scale. Thus, construct and internal validity tests needed to be performed.

Kaiser-Mey-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .907 ($p > 0.05$), which indicated that the sample of this study was adequate for this study (Field, 2009). The Eigenvalues obtained

are presented in Table 4. According to the Eigenvalues greater-than-one rule, there were only 2 values greater than 1. This low number was supported by the scree plot (Graph 1 below), which seemed to suggest between 1-2 factors.

Graph 1

Exploratory Factor Analysis Scree plot

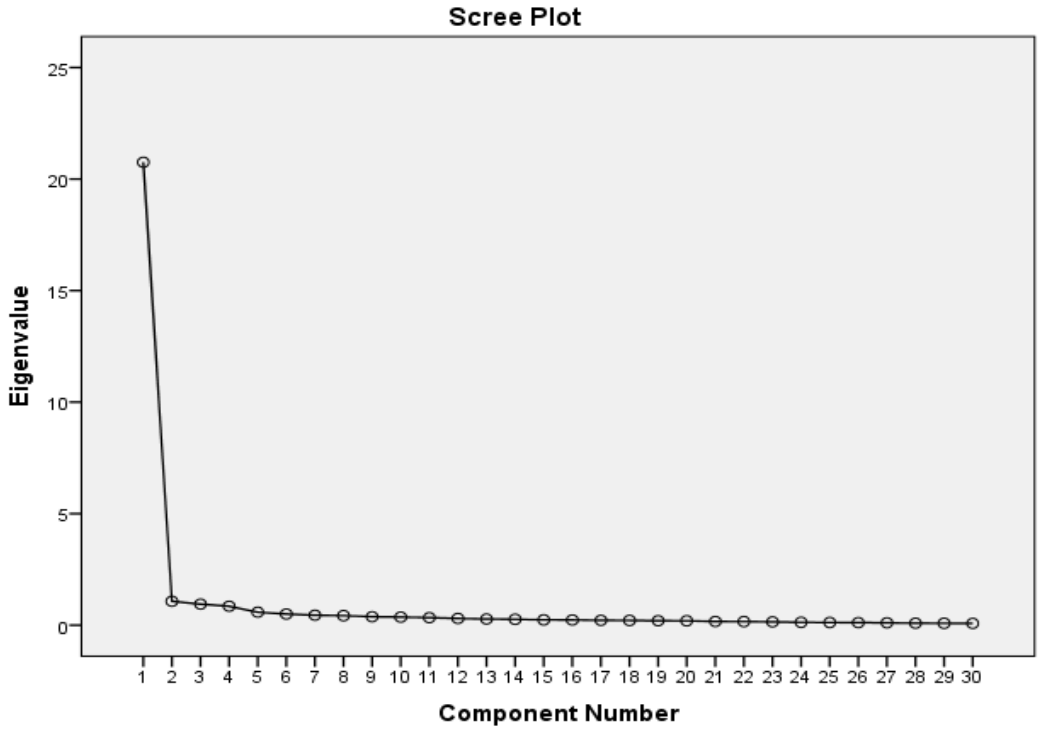

Table 4

Eigenvalues and proportion of variance

	Eigen values	**Variance**
Factor 1	20.756	69.186
Factor 2	1.072	3.573

As is evident in Table 4 above, Factor one accounted for the largest proportion of variance explained (69.186%), and then Factor two (3.573%). It was felt that this low variance of the second factor indicated the need to have a single factor for TL. One factor alone explained 69.186% of the total variance. Based on the Eigenvalues, the scree plot, and the proportion of

variance explained, one factor was extracted. Literature support this single factor as even the scale's developer has used it as a single item (Schmidt, 2008).

3.4.1 Internal Reliabilities.

Once the factor structure for the Toxic Leadership scale had been established, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients were calculated for all the scales to establish internal consistency reliability (Field, 2009).

Table 5

	Number of Items	**Cronbach Alpha**
TL	30	.985
VTI	5	.867
WE	17	.938
OC	15	.848
Social Support	5	.904

As seen above, all the Cronbach alphas' reported results over the stipulated minimum of 0.70, (α= 0.848 and above), which meant internal consistency was met as outlined in the Methodology section (Nunally & Bernstein, 1994).

3.5 Correlations

Pearson's Correlation Coefficients analysis was conducted to establish whether TL and VTI, OC, WE and SS were related and to establish the nature of these relationships.

Table 6

Pearson's Correlations for VTI, OC, WE and SS

	TL	VTI	WE	OC	SS
Independent Variable					
1. TL	---	.591**	-.302**	-.507**	-.300**
Dependent Variables					
1. VTI	.591**	---	-.544**	-.742**	-.295**
2. WE	-.302**	-.544**	---	.587**	.251**
3. OC	-.507**	-.742**	.587**	---	.291**
Moderator Variable					
4. Social Support	-.300**	-.295**	.251**	.291**	---

From table above, it is clear that VTI (r = 0.591; $p < 0.05$) was significantly, positively, and strongly related to TL. These results imply that higher levels of TL in an organisation, seems to be linked with increased intention to leave the organisation. WE (r = -302; $p < 0.05$) was significantly, negatively, and moderately related to TL. These results imply that higher levels of TL in an organisation, seem to be linked with decreased engagement in employee work. OC (r = -.597; $p < 0.05$) was significantly, negatively, and strongly related to TL. These results imply that higher levels of TL in an organisation, seems to be linked with decreased feelings of commitment to the organisation.

However, SS (r = -0.300; $p < 0.05$) was significantly, negatively, and moderately related to TL. These results imply that higher levels of TL in an organisation, seems to see a decrease in feelings of social support from colleagues from the organisation. This proved to be an interesting finding as this was not what was originally hypothesised. This finding is further explored and supported in the linear regressions and MMR's discussed in Sections 6 and 8 below.

3.6 Linear Regressions: Main effects

3.6.1 Effect of Toxic Leadership on Voluntary Turnover Intention.

For this section simple linear regressions were used to determine main effects between the stipulated variables. In other words, this was to predict the value of variables (VTI, WE, OC, SS) based on the value of TL.

Table 7

Regression table between VTI and TL

df	**F**	**p-value**
1	137.52	.000
256		

The table above indicates that the model is significant at the p<.05 level. The following table below indicates Tl predicts 34.9% of the variance in VTI. As per the table above, (F(1,256) = 137.52, p = .000). Thus, this regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data) as indicated by $p < 0.0005$. This suggests that TL predicts levels of VTI.

Table 8

Regression table between VTI and TL

R	**R^2**	**Sig. F change**	**B**	**Df**	**p-value**
.591	.349	.000	3.496	1	0.00
			.343		

As seen in the table above, R relates to the correlation between TL and VTI. R = .591 and this indicates a strong correlation. R^2 is 34.9% (.349 x 100), which is the percentage increase in the variation explained by the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p <$ .0005). We can conclude that TL does have a direct effect on the VTI.

Therefore, a simple linear regression was calculated to predict VTI based on TL. A significant regression equation was found ($F(1, 256) = 137.52$, $p < 0.000$), with an R^2 of .349). Participants predicted VTI levels is equal to 3.496 + -.343 (TL) when VTI is measured using the TL scale.

As seen by Graph 14 in Appendix S, as TL levels increased, VTI increased. This suggests the greater levels of TL in the work place, the greater increased feeling in desire and thoughts of leaving the organisation amongst employees.

3.6.2 Effect of Toxic Leadership on Work Engagement.

Table 9

Regression table between WE and TL

df	**F**	**p-value**
1	25.68	.000
256		

As per the table above, $F(1,256) = 25.68$, $p = .000$. Thus, this regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data) as indicated by $p < .0005$. This suggests that TL predicts levels of WE.

Table 10

Regression table between WE and TL

R	**R^2**	**Sig. F change**	**B**	**Df**	**p-value**
.302	.091	.000	3.87	1	0.00
			-.159		

As seen in the table above, R relates to the correlation between TL and WE. R = .302 and this indicates a strong correlation. R^2 is 9.1% (.091x 100), which is the percentage increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$)**.** We can conclude that TL does have a direct effect on the WE.

Therefore, a simple linear regression was calculated to predict WE based on TL. A significant regression equation was found F(1, 256) 25.68, p < 0.000), with an R^2 of .091). Participants predicted WE levels is equal to 3.990 + -.310 (TL) when WE is measured using the TL scale.

As seen by Graph 15 in Appendix S, as TL levels increased, WE levels decreased. This suggests the greater levels of TL in the work place, the greater decreases in feelings of engagement with employees with their work.

3.6.3 Effect of Toxic Leadership on Organisational Commitment Behaviour.

Table 11

Regression table between OC and TL

df	**F**	**p-value**
1	88.63	.000
256		

As per the table above, (F(1,256) = 88.63, p = .000). Thus, this regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data) as indicated by $p < 0.0005$. This suggests that TL predicts levels of OC.

Table 12

Regression table between OC and TL

R	**R^2**	**Sig. F change**	**B**	**Df**	**p-value**
.507	.257	.000	3.990	1	0.00
			-.310		

As seen in the table above, R relates to the correlation between TL and OC. R = .507 and this indicates a strong correlation. R^2 is 25.7% (.257 x 100), which is the percentage increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$)**.** We can conclude that TL does have a direct effect on the OC.

Therefore, a simple linear regression was calculated to predict OC based on TL. A significant regression equation was found (F(1, 256) = 88.63, p < 0.0005), with an R^2 of 0257). Participants predicted OC levels is equal to 3.990 + -.310 (TL) when OC is measured using the TL scale.

As seen by Graph 16 in Appendix S, as TL levels increased, OC levels decreased. This suggests the greater levels of TL in the work place, the greater decreases in feelings of commitment of employees.

3.6.4 Effect of Toxic Leadership on Social Support.

Table 13

Regression table between Social Support and TL

df	**F**	**p-value**
1	25.24	.000
256		

As per the table above, F(1,256) = 25.24, p = .000. Thus, this regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data) as indicated by $p < 0.0005$. This suggests that TL predicts levels of SS.

Table 14

Regression table between SS and TL

R	**R^2**	**Sig. F change**	**B**	**Df**	**p-value**
.300	.090	.000	2.81	1	0.00
			-1.23		

As seen in the table above, R relates to the correlation between TL and SS. R = .507 and this indicates a strong correlation. R^2 is 9% (.090x 100), which is the percentage increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$)**.** We can conclude that TL does have a direct effect on the SS.

Therefore, a simple linear regression was calculated to predict SS based on TL. A significant regression equation was found F(1, 256) 137.52, p < 0.000), with an R^2 of .257). Participants predicted SS levels is equal to 2.81+ -1.23 (TL) when SS is measured using the TL scale.

As seen by Graph 17 in Appendix S, as TL levels increased, SS decreased. This suggests the greater levels of TL in the work place, the greater decreases in feelings of support of colleagues in the workplace.

3.7 Linear regressions: Main effects of Social Support

For this section both, simple linear regressions were used to determine main effects between the stipulated variables. In other words, this was to predict the value of variables (VTI OC and WE) based on the value of SS.

3.7.1 Effect of Social Support on Voluntary Turnover Intention.

Table 15

df	**F**	**p-value**
1	28.54	.000
256		

As per the table above, F(1,256) = 28.54, p = .000. Thus, this regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data) as indicated by $p < 0.0005$. This suggests that SS predicts levels of VTI.

Table 16

Regression table between VTI and SS

R	**R^2**	**Sig. F change**	**B**	**Df**	**p-value**
.295	.087	.000	4.67	1	0.00
			-.418		

As seen in the table above, R relates to the correlation between SS and VTI. R = .591 and this indicates a strong correlation. R^2 is 8.7% (.084 x 100), which is the percentage increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$)**.** We can conclude that SS does have a direct effect on the VTI.

Therefore, a simple linear regression was calculated to predict VTI based on SS. A significant regression equation was found (F (1, 256) = 28.54, p < 0.000), with an R^2 of .084). Participants predicted VTI levels is equal to 4.67+ -.418 (TL) when VTI is measured using the SS scale.

As seen by Appendix S, Graph 18, as SS levels increased, VTI decreased. This suggests the greater levels of SS in the workplace, the less employees have a desire and thoughts of leaving the organisation amongst employees.

3.7.2 Effect of Social Support on Work Engagement.

Table 19

Df	**F**	**p-value**
1	17.21	.000
256		

As per the table above, F (1,256) = 17.21, p = .000. Thus, this regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data) as indicated by $p < .0005$. This suggests that SS predicts levels of VTI.

Table 20

Regression table between WE and SS

R	**R^2**	**Sig. F change**	**B**	**Df**	**p-value**
.251	.063	.000	2.97	1	0.00
			.324		

As seen in the table above, R relates to the correlation between SS and WE. R = .251 and this indicates a strong correlation. R^2 is 6.3% (.063x 100), which is the percentage increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$)**.** We can conclude that SS does have a direct effect on the WE.

Therefore, a simple linear regression was calculated to predict WE based on SS. A significant regression equation was found F (1, 256) 17.21, p < 0.000), with an R^2 of .063). Participants predicted SS levels is equal to 2.97 + -.324(SS) when WE is measured using the SS scale.

As seen by Graph 19 in Appendix S, as SS levels increased, WE levels increased. This suggests the greater levels of SS in the work place, the greater decreases in feelings connection and enjoyment of employees to their work.

3.7.3 Effect of Social Support on Organisational Commitment.

Table 17

df	**F**	**p-value**
1	23.67	.000
256		

As per the table above, (F(1,256) = 23.67, p = .000). Thus, this regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data) as indicated by $p < 0.0005$. This suggests that SS predicts levels of OC.

Table 18

Regression table between OC and SS

R	**R^2**	**Sig. F change**	**B**	**Df**	**p-value**
.291	.085	.000	2.770	1	0.00
			.434		

As seen in the table above, R relates to the correlation between SS and OC. R = .291 and this indicates a strong correlation. R^2 is 8.5% (.085x 100), which is the percentage increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$)**.** We can conclude that SS does have a direct effect on the OC.

Therefore, a simple linear regression was calculated to predict OC based on SS. A significant regression equation was found (F (1, 256) = 88.63, p < 0.0005), with an R^2 of 25.7). Participants predicted OC levels is equal to 2.770 + .434(SS) when OC is measured using the SS scale.

As seen by Graph 20 in Appendix S, as SS levels increased, OC levels increased. This suggests the greater levels of SS in the work place, the greater increases in feelings of being commitment members of the organisation.

3.8 Multiple Moderated Regression

Results pertaining to the moderated multiple regression (MMR) analysis are discussed below. A summary of the MMR model for the independent variable, moderator variables and dependent variables are presented. Moderated multiple regressions were conducted to determine if Social support moderated the relationship between TL and VTI, TL and WE and TL and OC.

3.8.1 Toxic Leadership, Voluntary Turnover Intention and Social Support.

Table 21

R^2 change	**F Change**	**Df1**	**Df2**
.018	7.54	1	254

A multiple regression was run to determine the main effect of TL on VTI, the main effect of SS on VTI and the interaction of TL and SS effects on VTI addition of an interaction term between SS and TL. For all the variables, tolerance should be around > 0.1 and/or VIF < 10) for all variables in the regression. There were no tolerance levels under 0.1 and 0.2 (.617) and VIF levels greatly over 1 (1.621) for the moderator and independent variables which indicated that there were no issues with Multicollinearity.

Social support moderated the effect of VTI and TL, as evidenced by a statistically significant increase in total variation explained of .018, $F(1,254) = 7.54$, $p < .001$. The table above, R^2 Change", shows the increase in variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. Thus, there is a 1.8% increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$). Thus, we can conclude that SS does moderate the relationship between TL and VTI.

The regression line equation was represented as follows:

VTI = 4.123 + (**.009** x TL) + (**-.206** x SS) + (**.104** x TL_x_SS)

Table 22

Variable	**Beta**	**Standardized Estimate**	***t*-Value**	***p*-Value**
TL	0.009	.016	.079	.937
SS	-.206	-.145	-2.798	0.006*
TL X SS	.104	.549	-2.746	0.006*

*$p < .05$

The above table indicates that we have moderation. The interaction term TL x SS indicates that we have successful moderation as the results are significant p > 0.006 (Field, 2009). This is further confirmed with the non-significant p-value = .937< 0.5 for TL. This is due to the results being greater than .05. During a moderator analysis, the DV (TL) can become non-significant. This method of constructing interactions in multiple regression models is described when interaction variables are uncorrelated with their component variables and with any lower-order interaction variables (Burrill, 1997). In short, this is indicating that it is moderator variable, namely SS, that is causing the change in levels between TL and VTI, and not as the result of other extraneous variables or due to TL in isolation.

A simple regression graph (Appendix T, Graph 21) was then run to examine the nature of the relationship between the variables. This was done to determine if social support acted as a "booster" or "buffer" between TL and VTI. Simple slopes analysis revealed that there was a statically significant positive linear relationship (0.36 ± 0.60) between TL and VTI when SS is present, p < .0005.

Table 23

	R2	R2 square rooted (correlations)
Low Social Support	0.131	0.361
Moderate Social Support	0.422	0.649
High Social Support	0.367	0.605

As seen above, the correlation increases between VTI and TL when SS is high and moderate. This suggests that SS actually makes the situation worse for the employees. Thus, it is acting as a "booster" to increase the levels of VTI in the organisation that has TL.

The graph provided another interesting finding (Appendix T, Graph 18). VTI levels were lowered when SS was high (increased), without the presence of TL. This suggests that SS is having a negative main effect on VTI.

However, when TL and SS were both present, it seemed to make the issue of VTI much worse. This was contrary to what was initially hypothesised. As a result, SS acted as a "booster" and made the situation worse for employees instead of acting as a buffer and ameliorating the negative impact on VTI.

3.8.2 Toxic Leadership, Work Engagement and Social Support.

Table 24

R^2 change	F Change	Df1	Df2
.026	7.700	1	254

A multiple regression was run to assess the increase in variation explained by the addition of an interaction term between social support and TL composition to a main effects model. Social support moderated the effect of WE and TL, as evidenced by a statistically significant increase in total variation explained of 0.26, $F(1,254) = 7.700$, $p < .001$. There were no tolerance levels under 0.1 and 0.2 (.857) and VIF levels greatly over 1 (1.167) for the moderator and independent variables which indicated that there were no issues with Multicollinearity.

The table above, R^2 Change", shows the increase in variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. Thus, there is a 2.6% increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$). Thus, we can conclude that SS does moderate the relationship between TL and WE.

The regression line equation was represented as follows;

WE = 3.115 + (**.009** x TL) + (**.205** x SS) + (**-113**x TL_x_SS)

Table 25

Variable	**Beta**	**Standardized Estimate**	***t*-Value**	***p*-Value**
TL	**.205**	.389	1.635	.103
SS	**.251**	.195	3.187	.002*
TL X SS	**-.113**	-.653	-2.775	.006*

*$p < .05$

The above table indicates that we have moderation. The interaction term TL x SS indicates that we have successful moderation as the results are significant $p > 0.006$ (Field, 2009). This is further confirmed with the P-value of TL, which is $p = .103$ ($p < 0.5$) which is greater than .05 and thus, non-significant.

A simple regression (Appendix T, Graph 22) was then run to examine the nature of the relationship between the variables. This was done to determine if social support acted as a "booster" or "buffer" between TL and WE. Simple slopes analysis revealed that there was a statically significant negative linear relationship (0.19 ± 6.91) between TL and WE when SS is present participants, p <. 0005.

Table 26

	R2	R2 square rooted (correlations)
Low social Support	6.961	2.638
Moderate Social Support	0.098	0.313
High Social Support	0.190	0.435

As seen above, the correlation increases between WE and TL when SS is high and moderate. This suggests that SS actually makes the situation worse for the employees. Thus, it is acting as a "booster" to decrease the levels of WE in the organisation that has TL.

The graph provided another interesting finding (Appendix R, Graph 15). WE levels were increased when social support was high (increased), without the presence of TL. This suggests that SS has a positive main effect on WE.

However, when TL and SS were both present, it seemed to make the issue of low WE much worse. This was contrary to what was initially hypothesised. As a result, SS acted as a "booster" and made the situation worse for employees instead of making it better.

3.8.3 Toxic Leadership, Organisational Commitment and Social Support.

Table 27

R^2 change	F Change	Df1	DF2
.011	3.830	1	254

A multiple regression was run to assess the increase in variation explained by the addition of an interaction term between SS and TL composition to a main effects model. Social support moderated the effect of OC and TL, as evidenced by a statistically significant increase in total variation explained of 0.11, $F(1,254) = 3.830$, $p < .05$. There were no tolerance levels under 0.1 and 0.2 (.711) and VIF levels greatly over 1 (1.406) for the moderator and independent variables which indicated that there were no issues with Multicollinearity.

The table above, R^2 Change", shows the increase in variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. Thus, there is a 1.1% increase in the variation explained by the addition of the interaction term. This increase is statistically significant ($p < .0005$). Thus, we can conclude that SS does moderate the relationship between TL and OC.

The regression line equation was represented as follows:

OC = 3.260 + (**-.031** x TL) + (**.246** x SS) + (**-.084**x TL_x_SS)

Table 28

Variable	**Beta**	**Standardized Estimate**	***t*-Value**	***p*-Value**
TL	-.031	-.051	-.235	.814
SS	.246	.165	2.951	.003*
TL X SS	-.084	-.420	-1.957	.051*

*$p < .05$

The above table indicates that we have moderation. The interaction term TL x SS indicates that we have successful moderation as the results are significant $p > 0.051$ (Field, 2009). This is further confirmed with the P-value, as p-value of TL is .814 ($p > 0.5$) which is greater than .05 and thus, non-significant.

A simple regression graph (Appendix T, Graph 23) was then run to examine the nature of the relationship between the variables. This was done to determine if social support acted as a "booster" or "buffer" between TL and OC. Simple slopes analysis revealed that there was a statically significant negative linear relationship (0.105 ± 0.286) between TL and OC when SS is present participants, $p <. 0005$.

Table 29

	R2	R2 square rooted (correlations)
Low Social Support	0.105	.324
Moderate Social Support	0.260	0.50
High Social Support	0.286	0.534

As seen above, the correlation increases significantly between OC and TL when SS is high and moderate. This suggests that SS actually makes the situation worse for the employees. Thus, it is acting as a "booster" to decrease the levels of OC in the organisation that has TL

The graph provided another interesting finding (Appendix R, Graph 15). OC levels were increased when social support was high (increased), without the presence of TL. This suggests that SS has a positive main effect on OC.

However, when TL and SS were both present, it seemed to make the issue of lowered OC levels worse. This was contrary to what was initially hypothesised. As a result, SS acted as a "booster" and made the situation worse for employees instead of making it better when TL was present.

3.4 Summary of Results

Statistical analyses were conducted once the assumptions underlying the statistical technique of moderated multiple regression were fulfilled.

The analyses revealed that:

1) Toxic Leadership was strongly related to all the dependent variables; as indicated by the correlations all correlations were in the expected directions.

2) Toxic leadership was inversely related to Social Support. This resulted in Social support levels being lower in the presence of TL.

3) Social Support had a positive main effect for all three dependant variables (Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour).

4) Interaction effects for all three dependent variables (Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour) between Social Support and Toxic leadership were reported. However, it was a counterintuitive effect in all instances; that is, in the event of experiencing Toxic Leadership, Social Support worsened/boosted the negative impact on outcomes.

Chapter Four: Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The current study aimed to contribute to the body of limited research on Toxic Leadership within the South African context to aid theorists and practitioners in understanding the relationships between Toxic Leadership, Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Organisational Commitment Behaviour and Social Support. This is one of the few studies that has analysed Toxic Leadership in South Africa and the data yielded some significant findings.

4.2 Toxic Leadership and Voluntary Turnover Intention

The present study's findings indicated that Toxic leadership significantly increased levels of Voluntary Turnover Intention. As reported in the previous literature, it was argued that levels of Voluntary Turnover Intention would still be high despite the risks of financial insecurity. This suggests that these findings were aligned with previous literature. This is a particularly important finding as it is the first time, to the researchers' knowledge, that Voluntary Turnover Intention and its relationship to Toxic Leadership has been tested for in South Africa, and it appears to have real effects on employees' desire to leave the organisation.

In the Literature Review on page 22, Ansari's et al. (2012) argument of employees engaging in a "fight or flight" response when exposed to an abusive supervisor was brought forth. It was argued that if individuals find themselves in an unjust and stressful situation, they may resort to behaviour that increases their survival (Ansari et al., 2012). The findings of this research seem to align with the above argument and indicate that employees are resorting to these survival tactics and engaging in thoughts of escaping or actually planning to escape. Wei and Si (2013) support this finding as they argue that due to the power and position differences between supervisor and employees (which, arguably, is pertinent in this South African content), it is unlikely that individuals will reciprocate abusive behaviour they receive. The employees that do not perceive themselves as "powerful enough" may instead withdraw from the situation or organisation as manifested in high Voluntary Turnover Intention or actually leaving their employment (Wei & Si, 2013).

In general, it appears that a Toxic Leader's behaviour is sufficiently inimical to motivate employees to leave or at the very least consider it. As a result, organisations will be faced with both the costs of individuals physically leaving the organisations and the costs of mentally leaving the organisations which may include withdrawal behaviour and the various costs which include stealing, bad mouthing and lack of group cohesion that are associated with this.

This finding is arguably the most severe of the three possible outcomes of the dependant variables. Low levels of Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour and their effects on the organisation's outcomes (as described above) are severe, but Voluntary Turnover Intention indicates that the problems are so damaging that employees wish to completely disengage and absent themselves permanently from the work environment. If the data revealed that there were just low levels of Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour, there is a sense that organisations could implement various other strategies to combat or at least lessen/buffer the effect of the Toxic Leaders. However, Voluntary Turnover Intention levels are indicating that Toxic Leadership must be dealt with, or employees will eventually leave. This study also illustrated the severity of the next outcome variable; Work Engagement.

4.3 Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement

The present study's findings indicated that Toxic leadership significantly decreased levels of Work Engagement. This confirmed the argument brought forth in the Literature Review. It was argued that if an individual was exposed to a leader that was deemed as toxic, Work Engagement could become seriously impaired (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2010; Burke, 2007; Gallus, Walsh, van Driel, Gouge, & Antolic, 2013; Lipman-Blumen, 2006; Tavanti, 2011). These findings appear to suggest that employees in South Africa may be experiencing similar feelings. It gives the impression that employees that are exposed to Toxic Leadership may become disengaged from their work and its content. This is also a particularly important finding as it is the first time, to the researchers' knowledge, Work Engagement and its relationship to Toxic Leadership has been tested for in South Africa, and it appears to have real effects on employees' engagement with their work and organisation. The importance of low levels of Work Engagement are crucial as they in turn are related to a whole host of other variables that are crucial to optimal organisational functioning. For examples workers with

low engagement are less productive, may be absent more often, found to be tired, uninvolved and simply ineffective in their work (González-Romá et al., 2006). Therefore, the long-term sustainability of the organisation, regarding to remaining profitable and productive, are impaired (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002).

The argument brought forth by Lipman-Blumen (2006) on page 17, for instance, argued that Toxic Leaders cause decreases in Work Engagement due to their abusive behaviour, but also their unpredictable nature (discussed on page 16). The findings in this present study seem to suggest that employees are simply not able to effectively prepare themselves for the abuse, and this could provide reasons for why employee Work Engagement was not strong enough to buffer the effect of Toxic Leadership. It was argued that Toxic Leadership could cause decreases in Work Engagement as the result of the abuse being both psychosocially and spiritually damaging (Veldsman, 2004). As such the present study's findings align to the literature.

In general, it appears that Work Engagement is being severely impaired by Toxic Leaders. It was argued that despite the seemingly good results or outputs that Toxic Leaders may initially get from their employees by motivating them by fear, this finding suggests that this is not sustainable (Harter et al., 2002). Employees may become disengaged or even worse, become "Burned-out". As such, it is suggested that the "false perception of the toxic leaders' high performance is unmasked by hidden costs in the organisation or by the 'carcasses' of those who work for them" (Reed, 2008). This study also illustrated the severity the next outcome variable; Organisational Commitment Behaviour.

4.4 Toxic Leadership's negative relationship with Organisational Commitment Behaviour

As discussed previously (See page 16), it was argued that Toxic Leadership would decrease levels of Organisational Commitment Behaviour. The findings of this present study were aligned with the argument brought forth in the Literature Review such as Gallus' et al. (2013) study in Toxic Leadership in US military units. Soldiers made negative attributions about the army based on their perceptions of the organisation's perceived malice, due to those in charge engaging in such negative behaviours (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997). The results of this research appear to suggest that employees in South Africa may be experiencing similar feelings. It gives the impression that employees that are exposed to Toxic Leadership may become critical and negative towards their organisation, and as a result, may place less

value on their jobs or loyalty towards their organisation (Gallus et al., 2013). This is also particularly important finding as it is the first time, to the researchers' knowledge, Organisational Commitment Behaviour and its relationship to Toxic Leadership has been tested for in South Africa, and it appears to have real effects on employees' levels of Organisational Commitment Behaviour. Thus, aligning with the findings in the previous literature ((Tella, Ayeni, & Popoola, 2007).

Generally, this finding suggests that the actions of Toxic Leaders are affecting the perceptions and subsequent loyalty of the employees to their organisation. Burris, Detert, and Chiaburu (2008) study provided further justification as it was found that when there is a presence of destructive leadership (as the result of a given leader or team of leaders) employees show a decrease of Organisational Commitment Behaviour in the organisation as a whole. It was argued that it was due to the perception of the employees' feeling that it is the organisation that 'allows' destructive leadership and as a result, it is the organisation's fault as it fails to protect those that work there (Burris et al., 2008). Schaubroeck, Walumbwa, Ganster, and Kepes (2007) also provide justification for this finding as they found that even if jobs/positions that were intrinsically satisfying and provided meaningful feedback to the individual, it was not enough to neutralise the negative effects of destructive leader behaviour on employee outcomes such as job satisfaction and commitment. As such, these findings were aligned with the argument suggested previously for example those proposed by Gallus et al. (2013), Manetje (2009) and Eisenberger et al. (1997).

To conclude: These above findings for Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour appear to be suggesting that Toxic Leadership and its effects are particularly stressful and that these "leaders" are forcing employees to resort to basic survival tactics just to "survive" in an organisational space. This is hardly describing the conditions of an ideal working environment that fosters creativity and productivity. Thus, in general, the findings of the present study support the notion that Toxic Leaders do not create a sense of a team, belonging, commitment and/or engagement. The above findings suggest that uses of authority, control over employees, manipulating and/or coercing them is not really 'leading' them", and probably is not making them feel any attachment or engagement with the organisation (Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Toxic Leaders seem to seek to fulfil their personal desires at the expense of their organisations and its employees. It is argued that this is done through the exploitation of the loopholes that are present in management systems and thought (Schaubroeck, Walumbwa, Ganster, & Kepes, 2007).

While it is argued that Toxic Leaders have always been around, "the growing complexity of the businesses, escalating amount and speed of information flow, and greater pressure for performance have increased the probability of conscious – and sometimes unconscious – ethical slipups in decisions, actions, and behaviours of leaders" (Ofori, 2009, p. 1). This seeming unjust behaviour of leaders may make employees feel little attachment to an organisation or engagement with the content of their work if that organisational space has a leader that seeks to use them for their own gain, amongst other things.

4.5 Social support's positive effect on Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour

The present study indicated that Social Support decreased levels of Voluntary Turnover Intention and increased levels of Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour. This finding aligned with the various arguments brought forth in the Literature Review on page 29.

These arguments that were supported by a number of studies indicated that Social Support has the ability to increase wellbeing (Browner, 1987; Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987; Viswesvaran et al., 1999) and increased productivity, which works towards alleviating the impact of any work overload (Stansfeld, Fuhrer, Shipley, & Marmot, 1999). It has also been found to have positive effects on job satisfaction, increased Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour, which in turn have been shown to decrease Voluntary Turnover Behaviour (Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2009). High job Social Support has even been found to enhance intrinsic work motivation (Richer & Vallerand, 1995) and as a result, decreases work absenteeism and also increase Work Engagement (Undén, 1996).

The finding of the positive effect that Social support would have on the dependant variables was unsurprising. However, it was anticipated that Social Support would, at least, be some form of a resource to combat the effects of Toxic Leadership. The results of the research, however, proved otherwise.

4.6 Social Support: The counterintuitive findings for the moderating role of Social Support in the relationships between Toxic Leadership and the outcome variables

Although Social Support was hypothesised to buffer the relationship between Toxic Leadership and the outcome variables the findings of these relationships indicated the opposite. Social Support, in the presence of Toxic Leadership, no longer resulted in a positive

relationship between the outcome variables, and it actually became exacerbatory in nature. The argument that Social Support would have been a very strong resource to aid coping was as per a large body of literature and research. Nevertheless, this was not the case in terms of the results received in this present research. The benefit of Social Support has been documented and studied about in the early 1970s (House, 1981), but the findings of this result seems to showcase that the actions of these leaders destroys these benefits.

Social Support, as illustrated above, increased levels of Organisational Commitment Behaviour, Work Engagement and lowered Voluntary Turnover Intention when individuals do not experience Toxic Leadership. However, in the presence of Toxic Leadership, Social Support no longer had the desired effect. As a result, Toxic Leadership seems to be so powerful that it has the potential to damage a well-documented and powerful resource of coping. Despite these seemingly counterintuitive findings, this is not an unknown phenomenon in research on Social Support. There is research that has found similar results.

For example; Wu and Hu's (2009) study found an unexpected pattern of a moderating effect of perceived co-worker support on abusive supervision and emotional exhaustion. Instead of it being a buffer, there was actually, a stronger relationship between abusive supervision and emotional exhaustion that existed when co-worker social support was found to be high (Wu & Hu, 2009). There have also been a range of other studies that have found surprising counterintuitive moderation effects in relation to organisational stressors. Glaser, Tatum, Nebeker, Sorenson, and Aiello's study (1999) showed that high Social Support actually led to higher stress in the work environment. Jenkins and Elliott (2004) study into nursing staff found that staff support groups could help to alleviate feelings of burnout, but if the group conversations were not structured in a way that minimized negative communication, it actually had a reverse effect and made the stressors worse.

There are a number of other possible reasons that Social Support from colleagues could have exacerbated the relationship between Toxic Leadership and outcome variables. The first reason is due to the concept of "co-rumination", which was described above in the Jenkins and Elliott (2004) study. This describes "excessive negative 'problem-talk' about an issue" (Boren, 2014, p.3). The reason for this is because individuals, and those that provide support, may be unable to control or change the situation of a source of stress (Beehr et al., 2010). As a result, those conversations seem to increase negative emotions and exacerbate the impact of

the stress on individual and organisational outcomes through constantly talking how bad a situation is that they cannot fix (Boren, 2014).

In a similar vein Beehr et al. (2010) found similar counterintuitive findings for social support. Their results showed that supportive interactions with colleagues could actually increase one's intention to leave a job. It was found that it was not the actual presence of Social Support that did the damage, but rather the content of Social Support received from the organisation that had the effect because of co-rumination. Social Support that reinforces conversations and disclosure of negative aspects of the job can create a reverse buffering effect. This effect can become more pronounced in the case of individuals who work in the same department, with negative sharing of stressors. This becomes a form of workload (Beehr et al., 2010). As a result, Jenkins and Elliott (2004) suggested that communication should be handled in a structured manner. If this is not ensured, organisations may believe that they are doing something positive by bringing the employees together, but they may just be creating this culture of high "in-group" collectivism which is outlined below.

Furthermore, as argued in the Voluntary Turnover Intention section above, Wei and Si (2013) argue that if employees feel they are not "powerful enough", they may withdraw from the situation/organisation. As a result, they may not reach out to individuals that are available in this situation, so they will not attempt to gain support from individual at their place of work. So even though individuals may have access to social support they may withdraw form social engagement and interactions and may therefore actually never draw on this resource.

A second for counterintuitive findings may be that in negative work situations, there can be issues if colleagues who should be the ones offering support form part of the toxic leaders "in-group". This is because there is a possibility that individuals that support (or pretend to support) the Toxic Leader can also engage in behaviours to further reject the "out-group" (individuals that the Toxic Leader does not like for whatever reason) (Berk, Türetgen, & Sun, 2010). It is possible that the study of this sample may not have identified their colleagues as a source of support as their colleagues could be in the Toxic leaders' "in-group" and therefore, will probably will not been seen as being a support to the targeted victim/s (Einarsen et al., 2007). Einarsen et al. (2007) argues that destructive leaders often "create groups of insiders and outsiders, fomenting distrust within the group, using propaganda, and creating scapegoats who they punish harshly to serve as a warning to others" (p.212). As a result, Toxic Leaders tend to divide and rule through singling out "in-groups" and "out-groups". Employees who

are in with the leader may reject those being abused to the Toxic Leader while still "appearing" to be listening to victim's problems and this may in turn, create distrust, which further exacerbates the 'so called support as a positive coping resource' situation.

A third reason for counterintuitive findings could be that seeking Social Support draws attention to one as a victim, undermines one's competence and ability to cope and be 'tough'. Research has indicated that the very act of seeking Social Support can be a psychological traumatising event for employees. Shrout, Herman, and Bolger (2006) argue that this process of engaging in Social Support acts can actually threaten employees' self-confidence and very sense of agency and autonomy. The reasons for his could be because this is "drawing attention" to the individuals: problem, which can result in feelings of being undermined and incompetent. Toxic leaders are known to break employees emotionally to the degree that they may not complain as they may be just too afraid to do so (Boddy, 2014). So, it is possible employees may also feel that they may become stigmatised if they talk about their problems with colleagues. A large component of Toxic Leadership is that those leaders break down employees, so they may not want to "lose" face even more in front of their leader and colleagues (Mehta & Maheshwari, 2013). It is possible that they attempt to handle the situation alone. However, this can be an incredibly isolating process for the individuals and will in the long term seriously impact even further on wellbeing.

A fourth possible reason could be that for individuals to talk about their problems with people and receive support, they must first acknowledge that they are "victim" and this may be difficult to acknowledge if they are attempting to appear strong (Phelan & Rudman, 2010). This seems to contradict the behaviours that are associated with utilising Social Support, which is more team focused and vulnerable approach. The process of admitting that you are being abused is a difficult when you are trying to attempt to maintain your reputation of being "tough" (Phelan & Rudman, 2010). Thus, individuals may have been reluctant to draw on this resource as it would cast them in a light of being a weak victim who is unable to deal with their own problems.

Furthermore, (a fifth reason) as mentioned on previously (See pages 17-18), research has indicated that Toxic Leaders are often a popular choice for recruitment (Walton, 2007). Toxic leaders achieve results as they are able to break their employees down to get compliance, which probably comes as the result of the leader's desire for "respect" and immediate obeisance from their employees (Burke, 2016). This could be why toxic leaders remain in

their positions and are even sometimes promoted, despite their poisonous ways. Thus, it may be difficult to speak out against leaders who are in a higher position of power and valued by the organisation.

In South Africa, this can be exacerbated by the unequal nature of power dynamics still present in the country. For individuals to complain about their bosses is a tough act as these individuals are complaining about someone that has made them feel worthless. These are the very leaders who are seemingly very well "liked" by others of the organisation. In addition, employees could be actively withdrawing from colleagues out of fear that those colleagues may be in the "in group" with the Toxic Leader and could report back to them as outlined above (Einarsen et al., 2007). While some employees may be able to leave the organisation due to feelings of being unable to cope, they may not communicate their reasons for leaving as they do not see their colleagues as a source of support. Thus, the issue of the Toxic Leadership as part of a fixture of the existing climate remains unresolved as other leaders in the organisation may not know about it and the new and present staff must continue to endure it.

In addition, a study by Lian, Ferris, and Brown, (2012) found that even when abusive supervisors had a good relationship with employees, it was not enough to buffer the effect from a shock on the employees of an abusive incident, even if the abuse occurred "occasionally". Their results showed that the leader's positive relationship did not mitigate the abusive behaviour they performed. Thus, even supportive supervisors who maintained (occasional) abusive aspects of their supervisory style are apparently not much better than supervisors who provide less support (Lian et al., 2012). While the present study only measured colleague support, the findings of Lian et al. (2012) further support why the present study chose not to explore supervisor support. This is because even when a supervisor is supportive, if they are at the same time responsible for being toxic, their support offered in-between abusive events has no effect and even worsens the situation as it creates confusion and ambiguity and unpredictability for the recipient.

The present study's findings of significant relationships between Social Support and the outcome variables indicate that the importance of social support must not be negated, but rather points to the severity of the nature of Toxic Leadership's ability to counteract these positive effects. In the absence of Toxic Leadership, Social Support does have a positive relationship with the outcome variables, but when Toxic Leadership is present then it changes

the pattern. Toxic Leadership was inversely related to Social Support and therefore it was not surprising that the interaction of Toxic Leadership with Social Support had a negative 'boosting' as opposed to moderating effect on the outcomes.

To conclude on the counterintuitive effects of colleague Social Support: it seems that there is a myriad of possible factors that in isolation or combination could explain these exacerbating effects of Social Support on these outcome variables when Toxic Leadership is present. Thus, while Social Support is a crucial resource for dealing with stress, how it is delivered and by whom and in what context (that is in a context in which Toxic Leadership is being experienced), along with the residual negative feelings that seekers of such support may accrue by asking for it – may explain these negative booster findings.

4.7 Conclusion

It is clear from the above that Toxic Leadership has severe consequences for organisational outcomes in the form of increased Voluntary Turnover Intention and lower levels of Work Engagement and Organisational Commitment Behaviour. However, the research has indicated that Social Support from colleagues, when toxic leadership is being experienced can make things worse. While this finding is quite completely unexpected, it is an important finding as it directs attention to examining under what conditions social support will act as a buffer or a booster for outcomes of import.

It is for this reason that this research has the potential to add value to the research are of Toxic Leadership and its outcomes. However, the issue of Toxic Leadership needs to be explored further. This particular study given its limited scope only focused on three outcomes and one potential moderator. More research needs to be conducted on a wider range of outcomes and potential moderating resources. This could result in contributions to the greater knowledge of Toxic Leadership and its various implications and, in turn, help to assist various organisations and companies in introducing policies and procedures to prevent, detect and better manage toxic leadership in their respective work environments.

4.8 Limitations

While there were many important findings and possible practical contributions, the study was not without weaknesses. This included; 1) unequal demographical nature of the sample, 2) the cross-sectional design, 3) methods of data collection and 4) the sample size itself.

The first issue was that the characteristics of the demographic data were unequal. Most of the study was made up of woman and white individuals. While women make up 51% of the population in South Africa (StatsSA, 2017), women made up 78% of the population of this study which is not indicative of the natural distribution of gender in South Africa. In addition, the sample also consisted of mainly white individuals (4.49 million of the population). This was not representative as there are more individuals of colour (Black, Coloured and Indian). For example, there are 45.6 million Black African alone (StatsSA, 2017). This makes it difficult to generalise these findings across groups. A further issue of the sample was around the participants' job industries. Individuals were sampled from the services and production sectors per their job descriptions, which also vary. Such variability may have hindered finding a relationship for particular job sectors.

The study also required the use of the computer and this could have hindered the number of participants. However, it was felt that by the researcher that many individuals would have access to a work computer. However, it is felt that there is a need to measure the experiences of individuals that are in lower levels and income levels as they are known to be less power and control within their jobs (Rohe & Stegman, 1994) and thus, arguably may be more subject and less able to resist when exposed to a Toxic Leader's abuse. In addition, in environments where there are vast disparities in terms of power differentials between leader and employees (Wei & Si, 2013), this could create an environment in which Toxic Leadership is likely to exist and thrive.

Secondly, the design which was cross-sectional was an issue. While it was necessary given the scope and timeline of this project, this design does make conclusions about causality difficult. This is because the participants are only completing the survey during a single point in time and thus, there are no given indications of the sequence of events (Gravetter & Forzano, 2015). This is because we do not know if the exposure with the stressor (in this case Toxic Leadership) occurred before or during the time at which respondents were sampled.

Thirdly, the responses for the surveys were gathered via self-report questionnaires and this approach is often a target for criticism. Social desirability bias may have participants answering questions in a way that made the situation seem better or worse than it was (Spector, 1994). This might have artificially inflated or deflated the presence of damage of Toxic Leadership. However, the researcher tried to combat this by using anonymity to make the participants feel ensured that their responses would be used for academic purposes only and no one could trace their responses back to them.

4.9 Further Contributions for Future Research

While this study fulfilled its purpose of contributing to the dearth of research and literature on Toxic Leadership, especially for the South African context, there are several possibilities for further research.

The present study and its findings thus provides organisations with a means of diagnosing Toxic Leadership, which has been one of the main problems surrounding the construct. Many organisations have not even heard about the term, let alone have the means of diagnosing and removing it. There is a dire need for more research to be conducted especially in relation to the development of possible interventions (further coping mechanisms) or preventive measures to tackle the problem. Thus, there is not only a need to create organisational awareness but also to provide organisations with information relating to policies and procedures on how to combat it.

The relationships between all dependant variables may have all been significant, but there are still other avenues for further studies around examination of Social Support. Only the support of colleagues was tested. Based on the above findings and discussion, it seems that Toxic Leaders really have the ability to poison a work environment and create a toxic organisational climate. It is for this reason, it would be interesting to, at least, test if Social Support from family and friends had a positive moderating effect. Perhaps, Social Support is useful when the presence of Social Support is from sources that are not at the place of work and are completely divorced from the toxic environment. In addition, far more outcome variables of importance, both individual and organisational need to be tested such as psychological wellbeing (Tepper, 2000), self-esteem and self-efficacy (Einarsen, 1999), physiological symptomology (Vartia, 2001) and outcomes related to job satisfaction and absenteeism and productivity (Tepper, 2000). This is due to research indicating that these variables have been

impacted due to workplace bullying and abusive supervision in the past. Furthermore, there should be greater examination of personal and organisational resources (Tuckey, Dollard, Hosking, & Winefield, 2009) that can be useful to mitigate the effects of Toxic Leadership. Lastly to fully unpack the study of this construct, qualitative research should be undertaken to get a deeper and richer understanding of Toxic Leadership and its implications.

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Appendix A: Organisational Biographical Questionnaire

1. **Age:**

   ☐ Under 30 ☐ 41-50 ☐65+

   ☐ 31-40 ☐51-60

2. **Please indicate your gender:**

   ☐ Male ☐Female ☐ Other, please specify _____

3. **Please indicate your race:**

   ☐ Black ☐Coloured ☐White

   ☐Indian ☐Asian ☐ Other, please specify _____

4. **Please indicate your marital status**

   ☐ Single ☐ Cohabiting ☐ Married

   ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed

   ☐ Other, please specify _____

5. **Please indicate your level of education**

   ☐Less than Grade 10 ☐Grade 10 ☐Matric

   ☐Diploma ☐Undergraduate Degree ☐Honours Degree

   ☐Master's Degree ☐Doctoral Degree

6. **Please indicate your job level:**

☐Entry Level ☐Intermediate ☐ Junior Management

☐Middle Management ☐Upper Management ☐ Executive

☐ Other

If other, please specify to which group you belong: _____

7. **Please indicate your job industry i.e. marketing, insurance, engineering, banking etc.**

_____

8. **Please indicate your job tenure (how long you have been working for the organisation)**

_____

Appendix B: Wits Plus Biographical Questionnaire

1. **Age:**

   ☐ Under 30 ☐ 41-50 ☐65+

   ☐ 31-40 ☐51-60

2. **Please indicate your gender:**

☐ Male ☐Female ☐ Other, please specify _____

3. **Please indicate your race:**

☐ Black ☐Coloured ☐White

☐Indian ☐Asian ☐ Other, please specify _____

4. **Please indicate your marital status**

☐ Single ☐ Cohabiting ☐ Married

☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed

☐ Other, please specify _____

5. **Please indicate your level of education**

☐Less than Grade 10 ☐Grade 10 ☐Matric

☐Diploma ☐Undergraduate Degree ☐Honours Degree

☐Master's Degree ☐Doctoral Degree

☐ Other, please specify _____

6. Please indicate your job level:

☐Entry Level ☐Intermediate ☐ Junior Management

☐Middle Management ☐Upper Management ☐ Executive

☐ Other

If other, please specify to which group you belong: _____

7. Please indicate your job industry i.e. marketing, insurance, engineering, banking

_____

8. Please indicate your job tenure (how long you have been working for the organisation)

_____

9. Please fill in your Student number/Student Number of the referring student

Student number: _____

Appendix C: Revised version of Schmidt's (2008) Toxic Leadership Scale

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION BY SELECTING THE APPROPRIATE OPTION.

The following questions measure the extent to which you have experienced Toxic Leadership in your work environment.

Please select Strongly disagree, Moderately disagree, Slightly disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Slightly agree, Moderately agree and Strongly agree to the relevant phrases.

1. Abusive Supervision		
My leader…		
	Agree	**Degree**
Ridicules subordinates		
Holds subordinates responsible for things outside their job descriptions		
Is not considerate about subordinates' commitments outside of work		
Speaks poorly about subordinates to other people in the workplace		
Publicly embarrasses/humiliates subordinates		
Reminds subordinates of their past mistakes and failures		
Tells subordinates they are not good enough		

2. Authoritarian Leadership		
My leader…		
	Agree	**Degree**

Controls how subordinates complete their tasks		
Invades the privacy of subordinates		
Does not allow subordinates to do their job in new ways		
Will ignore ideas that are different to his/her own.		
Is inflexible when it comes to organizational policies, even in special circumstances		
Determines all decisions for the work group/team in the department whether they are important or not		

3. Self-Promotion		
My leader…		
	Agree	**Degree**
Changes his/her behaviour completely when his/her supervisor is present		
Denies responsibility for mistakes made in his/her department		
Will only offer assistance to people who can help him/her get ahead		
Accepts credit for successes that do not belong to him/her		
Acts only in the best interest of himself/herself		

4. Narcissism		
My leader…		
	Agree	**Degree**
Has a belief that they deserve special treatment and/or privileges		
Assumes that he/she is should be promoted to the highest ranks of my organization		
Thinks that he/she has much more ability than others		
Believes that he/she is a special person		
Expects to be always complimented		

5. Unpredictability		
My leader…		
	Agree	**Degree**
Has violent tempers has explosive outbursts/temper tantrums		
Allows his/her current mood to affect everyone else		
Expresses anger at subordinates for no reason.		
Allows his/her mood to affect his/her tone and volume of their voice		
Sometimes they let you go to them, but some days, for no reason, they don't allow you. Varies in his/her degree of approachability		
Expects subordinates to just be able to "read" his/her mood		
Affects the emotions of subordinates whenever he or she is angry or upset		

Appendix D: Voluntary Turnover Intention (VTI) Scale

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following statements most clearly reflects your feelings about your future with this organisation in the next year?	
	I definitely will not leave
	I probably will not leave
	I am uncertain
	I probably will leave
	I definitely will leave

2. How do you feel about leaving this organisation?	
	I am presently looking and planning to leave
	I am seriously considering leaving in the near future
	I have no feelings about this one way or the other
	As far as I can see ahead, I intend to stay with this organisation
	It is very unlikely that I would ever consider leaving this organisation

3. If you were completely free to choose, would you prefer or not prefer to continue working for this organisation?	
	Prefer very much to continue working for this organisation
	Prefer to work here
	Don't care either way
	Prefer not to work here
	Prefer very much not to continue working for this organisation

4. How important is it to you personally that you spend your career in this organisation rather than some other organisation?	
	It is of no importance at all
	I have mixed feelings about its importance
	It is of some importance
	It is fairly important
	It is very important to me to spend my career in this organisation

5. If the economic climate were better:	
	I would definitely want to leave my current job
	I would possibly consider leaving my current job
	I have no feelings about this one way or the other
	I would not want to leave my current job
	I would definitely not want to leave my current job

Appendix E: Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Schaufeli et al., 2006) (Shortened Version)

The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ANSWER ALL NINE QUESTIONS BELOW.

1 =Never (Never); 2= Almost Never (A few times a year or less); 3= Rarely (Once a month or less); 4= Often (Once a week); 5 = Very Often (A few times a week) and 6 = Always (Everyday)

1) At my work, I feel bursting with energy.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2) At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3) I am enthusiastic about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4) My job inspires me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5) When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6) I feel happy when I work intensely.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7) I am proud of the work that I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8) I am immersed in my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9) I get carried away when I am working.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix F: Mowday et al.'s (1979) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)

Please make sure that you answer all 17 questions below. please select the one option for each question that comes closest to reflecting how much you agree with the statement. **1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Moderately disagree, 3 = Slightly disagree, 4 = Neither agree nor disagree, 5 = Slightly agree, 6 = Moderately agree 7 = Strongly agree**

I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected to help this organisation be successful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organisation to work for	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel very little loyalty to this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would accept almost any type of job assignment to keep working for this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work was similar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I often find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I really care about the fate of this organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Deciding to work for this organisation was a definite mistake on my part	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix G: Bernstein's (2014) Adapted Social Support Scale

The following questions measure the extent to which you can rely on your colleagues in your life your life to give you support in different situations.

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ANSWER ALL FIVE QUESTIONS BELOW.QUESTION.

Not at all = 1; A little = 2; Fairly often = 3; Extremely Often = 4

1. How much can your colleagues be relied upon to help you with a certain task or tasks when things get tough at work				
	Not at all – 1	A little - 2	Fairly often -3	Extremely often -4
Your colleague/s				

2. How much are your colleagues willing to listen or pay attention to your feelings about your work-related problems?				
	Not at all – 1	A little - 2	Fairly often -3	Extremely often -4
Your colleague/s				

3. How much are your colleagues are willing to help you in getting your job done?				
	Not at all – 1	A little - 2	Fairly often -3	Extremely often -4
Your colleague/s				

4. How much are your colleagues prepared to give you advice or information on how to handle or do things if you need it?				
	Not at all – 1	A little - 2	Fairly often -3	Extremely often -4
Your colleague/s				

9. How often do your colleagues let you know that they appreciate the job that you are doing?				
	Not at all – 1	A little - 2	Fairly often -3	Extremely often -4
Your colleague/s				

Appendix H: Organisational Access Letter

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4500 Fax: 011 717 4559

Good day,

My name is Sarah Jesse Middleton, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my Master's degree, I am required to complete a research project. The more responses I receive, the greater the strength of my research. My research aims to explore effect of Toxic Leadership on organisational outcomes such as Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Organisational Commitment behaviour and Social Support. I am requesting permission to possibly carry out my study at [name of organisation to be inserted].

Please note that participation will be completely voluntary and will not advantage or disadvantage employees in any way if they choose to complete the questionnaire or not. I am specifically looking for employees that speak English, are between the ages of 18-65 and have access to a computer and the internet. Participation in this research will involve employees completing an online questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and must be submitted within a month of receiving the link.

No identifying information, such as employees' names or I.D. numbers, are needed. Employees will therefore, remain completely anonymous and the data they provide will not be linked to them as individuals in any way. Employees will not be asked to provide the name of the organisation they work for and thus, the data they provide will not be analysed based on their specific organisation. They will be represented as group tends. Furthermore, the name of your organisation will not be known to anyone other than the researcher and supervisor and will be treated as strictly confidential. The completed questionnaire will not be seen by any other person besides the researcher; will only be processed by the researcher and supervisor; and the responses will only be looked at in relation to all other responses. There are no foreseeable risks or benefits to taking part in this study.

If employees choose to participate in the study, they will be asked to complete the questionnaire as carefully and honestly as possible either at home or in their free time. By distributing a link electronically to your organisation's employees via email, they will be able to complete the survey online and no IP addresses will be recorded. This will ensure their anonymity. If they complete the questionnaire, this will be considered consent to participate in the study. All data will be kept on a secure, password protected computer indefinitely, to ensure that all information remains confidential. Responses will not be used for any purposes, other than research. If they choose to complete and submit the online questionnaire, it will be considered as informed consent to participate in the study. However, they will be able to withdraw from the study until they submit the questionnaire.

Be assured that data would solely be used for academic purposes. The organisation will only receive a summary of the overall results if requested. The results will be presented as group trends, which make it impossible to identify any respondent.

This research may contribute to psychological information, as there appears very little research in South Africa regarding this specific topic. If you choose to allow the study to be conducted in your company with those employees who are willing, it would be greatly appreciated. This could contribute to the greater knowledge of toxic leadership and its various organisational outcomes. This may help to assist your company in introducing policies and procedures to prevent, detect and better manage toxic leadership. The research study is an independent study which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor as per the details below.

Questionnaire Link: [Insert link]

Student:	Supervisor:
Sarah Jesse Middleton	Dr Colleen Bernstein
1728018@gmail.com	Colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

Department of Psychology

University of the Witwatersrand

Appendix I: Organisational Participant Information Sheet

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4500 Fax: 011 717 4559

Good day,

My name is Sarah Jesse Middleton and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my Master's degree, I am required to complete a research project. The more responses I receive, the greater the strength of my research. My research aims to explore effect of Toxic Leadership on organisational outcomes such as Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Organisational Commitment behaviour and Social Support. I would like to invite you to take part in this research. Please note that to take part in this research, you need to be employed in an organisation (not self-employed) and you cannot be employed in a chief executive position.

Please note that your participation is completely voluntary, and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to complete or not to complete the questionnaire. Participation in this research will involve you completing the questionnaire by clicking on the link that follows. The questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and please ensure that you submit your completed questionnaire within a month of receiving it.

No identifying information, such as your name or I.D. number is asked for and no-one at your organisation will be aware of whether you choose to participate or not. You will therefore remain anonymous and the data you provide will not be linked to you as an individual in any way. You will not be asked to provide the name of the organisation you work for; the data will not be analysed based on your specific organisation; and your organisation will not be identified by name in writing up the research. Moreover, as you are requested to return all completed questionnaires through a secure and encrypted website, this will ensure that no one other than the researcher and supervisor will have access to the completed questionnaires and will further protect your confidentiality. All data will be kept on a secure, password protected computer indefinitely, to ensure that all information

remains confidential. Responses will not be used for any purposes, other than research. If you choose to participate in the study, please complete the following questionnaire as carefully and honestly as possible. If you submit questionnaire, it will be considered as informed consent to participate in the study. You will be able to withdraw from the study until such time as you submit the questionnaire.

Be assured that data would solely be used for academic purposes and would in no way be accessed by the management in the organisation as the organisation will only receive a summary of the overall results. Furthermore, no one in the organisation will be able to track your choice to participate or not. This is because your responses will be recorded anonymously. The results will be presented as group trends, which make it impossible to identify any respondent. Should you wish to receive feedback on the study, a summary of results will be made available to you upon request.

If you found this research interesting or if you think that others may have had similar experiences, please may you forward this link to those individuals. Your help is very much appreciated

Your responses could contribute to the greater knowledge of toxic leadership and its various organisational outcomes. These could also lead to organisations implementing forms of interventions to tackle this problem and policies to protect staff from toxic leaders.

If you choose to complete the questionnaire, your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated. The research study is an independent study which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University. Please contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions

Kind regards,

Student:
Sarah Jesse Middleton
1728018@gmail.com

Supervisor:
Dr Colleen Bernstein
Colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

Department of Psychology

University of the Witwatersrand

Appendix J: Wits Plus Access Letter

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4500 Fax: 011 717 4559

Good day [Insert name],

My name is Sarah Jesse Middleton and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my Master's degree, I am required to complete a research project. The more responses I receive, the greater the strength of my research. My research aims to explore effect of Toxic Leadership on organisational outcomes such as Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Organisational Commitment behaviour and Social Support. I am requesting permission to carry out this study. Please note that to take part in this research, individuals need to be employed in an organisation (not self-employed) and you cannot be employed in a chief executive position.

I am specifically looking for students that are full-time employees, are between the ages of 18-65 and have access to a computer and the internet. In participating, the individuals would be involved in completing a questionnaire which takes approximately 30 minutes and is completely anonymous and confidential in terms of individual results and findings.

The Wits Plus students will be provided with a complete questionnaire through a secure and encrypted website which they will access from an announcement placed on the SAKAI website. As such, this will ensure that no-one, other than the researcher and supervisor will have access to the completed questionnaires and will ensure the students confidentiality and anonymity. Responses will not be used for any purposes, other than research. Informed consent is assumed by the completion of the questionnaires, i.e. if participants choose to complete and submit the online questionnaire, this will be considered as informed consent to participate in the study. However, participants will be able to withdraw from the study until such time as they submit the questionnaires.

Please note that participation is voluntary, and no student will be disadvantaged in any way for choosing to complete or not complete the questionnaire. However, Wits Plus students registered for First Year Psychology will receive a 1% toward their final mark as part of the course credit. Should

Wits Plus students wish to earn the 1% for participating in the survey, they will be required to provide a student number on the survey that the access on SAKAI. However, once the data has been downloaded and the students 1% has been recorded by the researcher and provided to you, the course coordinator, the student number will be deleted from the dataset to ensure complete anonymity.

Please note that if Wits Plus students pass the survey link on to three other people who complete the survey and include the Wits Plus student's student number in the space provided in the demographic questionnaire, this will provide the Wits Plus student with an additional 1%. The Wits Plus student will therefore be awarded with 2% in total for the completion of the survey and for three other people completing the survey. There will be no direct benefits or risks associated in completing the survey, other than the fact that those who do participate will be provided with an extra one to two percent.

Feedback of the results will be supplied and presented in a summarised form, but no individual responses or information will be provided Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the responses.

Allowing the Wits Plus students to be invited to participate in this study would be greatly appreciated. This research will contribute both to a larger body of knowledge on toxic leadership and its various outcomes. It could also lead to organisations implementing forms of interventions to tackle this problem and policies to protect staff from toxic leaders. The research study is an independent study which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University. Please contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration in allowing us access to your WITS Plus students for this research, each individual's potential contribution by means of completing a survey and circulating it will be greatly appreciated.

Questionnaire Link: [Insert link]

Kind Regards,

Student:
Sarah Jesse Middleton
1728018@gmail.com

Supervisor:
Dr Colleen Bernstein
Colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

Department of Psychology

University of the Witwatersrand

Appendix K: Wits Plus Participant sheet

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 4500 Fax: 011 717 4559

Dear Wits Plus student,

My name is Sarah Jesse Middleton and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Master's Degree in Organisational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my Master's degree, I am required to complete a research project. The more responses I receive, the greater the strength of my research. My research aims to explore effect of Toxic Leadership on organisational outcomes such as Voluntary Turnover Intention, Work Engagement, Organisational Commitment behaviour and Social Support. I would like to invite you to take part in this research. Please note that to take part in this research, you need to be employed in an organisation (not self-employed) and you cannot be employed in a chief executive position.

I would really appreciate if you would consider participating in this study by completing this questionnaire. It should take approximately 30 minutes and should be submitted within a month. Once the survey is submitted, the student number will be deleted, thus making your participation anonymous.

Please note that participation is voluntary, and you will not be disadvantaged in any way for choosing to complete or not complete the questionnaire. However, if you are registered for First Year Psychology you will receive a 1% toward your final mark as part of the course credit if you choose to participate. To access the survey please go to the "Survey Participation" announcement on SAKAI which will provide you with a link to a secure encrypted website that no one other than the researcher and my supervisor will have access to. Within this survey, you will be required to provide your student number in the space provided to ensure you get the 1% for participating. However, once the data has been downloaded and your 1% has been recorded by the researcher and given to your course coordinator, your student number will be deleted from the dataset to ensure your complete anonymity. Confidentiality will also be fully ensured as no one other than the researcher and her supervisor will have access to your responses.

Please note that if you pass this survey link on to three other people who complete the survey and advise them to include your student number in the space provided in the demographic questionnaire, this will provide you with an additional 1%. You will therefore be awarded with 2% in total for your completion of the survey and for the other three people completing the survey. There will be no direct benefits or risks associated in completing the survey other than receiving the one to two percent for participation.

Responses will not be used for any purposes, other than research. Informed consent is assumed by the completion of the questionnaires, i.e. if you choose to complete and submit the online questionnaire, this will be considered as informed consent to participate in the study. However, you will be able to withdraw from the study until such time as you submit the questionnaires. The data will be stored indefinitely on a password protected computer with the computer being stored under lock and key in a secure environment. Furthermore, no one in the organisation will be able to track your choice to participate or not. This is because your responses will be recorded anonymously. The results will be presented as group trends, which make it impossible to identify any respondent. Should you wish to receive feedback on the study, a summary of results will be made available to you upon request.

Be assured that data would solely be used for academic purposes. This research will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on toxic leadership and its various organisational outcomes. It could also lead to organisations implementing forms of interventions to tackle this problem and policies to protect staff from toxic leaders. The research study is an independent study which will be conducted under the supervision of an Industrial Psychologist at Wits University. Please contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions.

Thank you for considering participation in this study

Kind Regards,

Student:
Sarah Jesse Middleton
1728018@gmail.com

Supervisor:
Dr Colleen Bernstein
Colleen.bernstein@wits.ac.za

Department of Psychology

University of the Witwatersrand

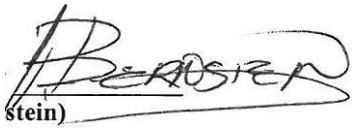
Appendix M: Clearance Certificate

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND JOHANNESBURG

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	PROTOCOL NUMBER: MORG/17/008 11-1
PROJECT TITLE:	Toxic leadership, social support & individual and organisational outcomes
INVESTIGATORS	Middleton Sarah
DEPARTMENT	Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	27/06/17
DECISION OF COMMITTEE*	Approved

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE: 27 June 2017 CHAIRPERSON 

(Dr Colleen Bernstein)

cc Supervisor: Dr Colleen Bernstein
Psychology

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)

To be completed in duplicate and one copy returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

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 be contemplated from the research procedure, as approved, I/we undertake to submit a revised protocol to the Committee.

This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2019

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix N: Ethical Permission

UNIVERSITY OF OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY REGISTRAR
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

27 July 2017

Ms Sarah Middleton
Student number 1728018
MA Candidate in Organisational Psychology
School of Human & Community Development

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

"Toxic leadership, social support and individual and organisational outcomes"

This letter serves to confirm that the above project has received permission to be conducted on University premises, and/or involving staff and/or students of the University as research participants. In undertaking this research, you agree to abide by all University regulations for conducting research on campus and to respect participants' rights to withdraw from participation at any time.

If you are conducting research on certain student cohorts, year groups or courses within specific Schools and within the teaching term, permission must be sought from Heads of School or individual academics.

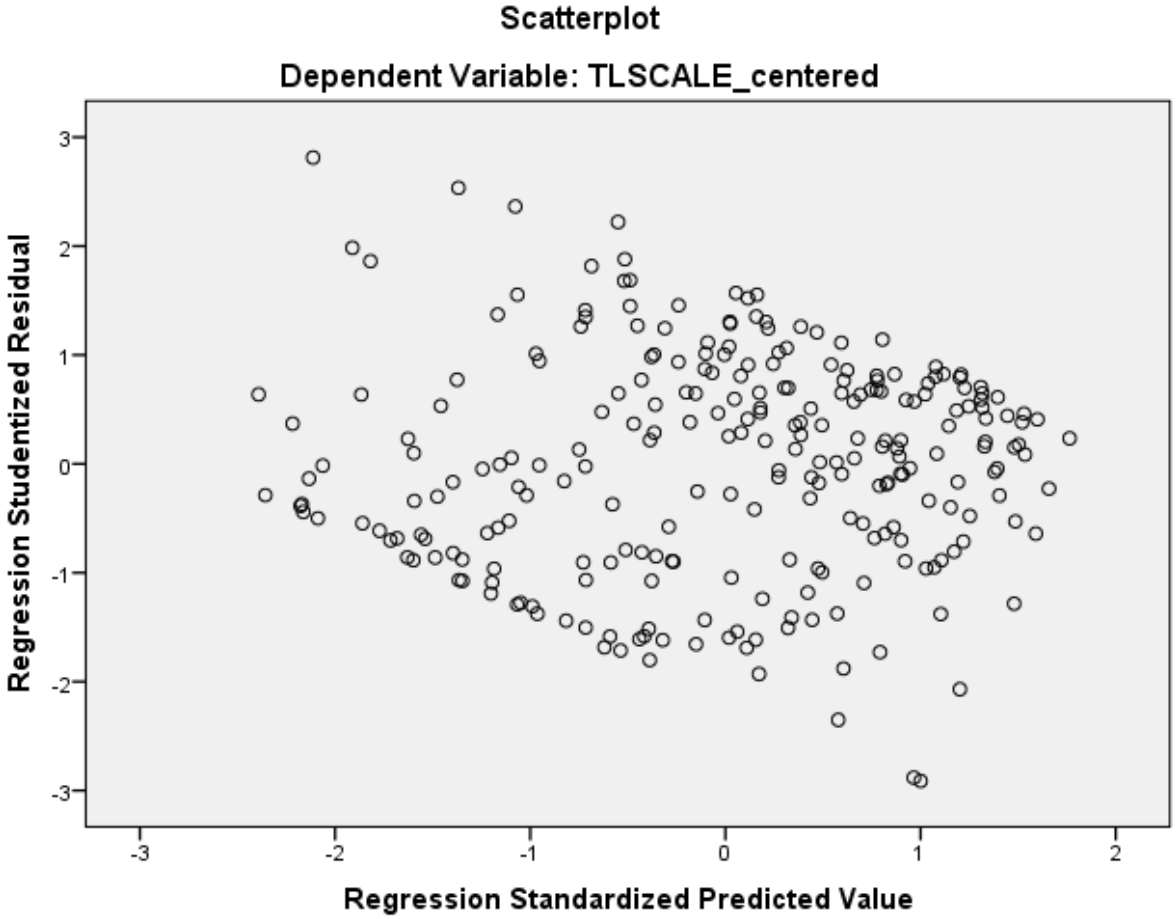
Ethical clearance has been obtained.

Nicoleen Potgieter
Deputy Registrar

Appendix O: Frequency Graphs

Graph 1

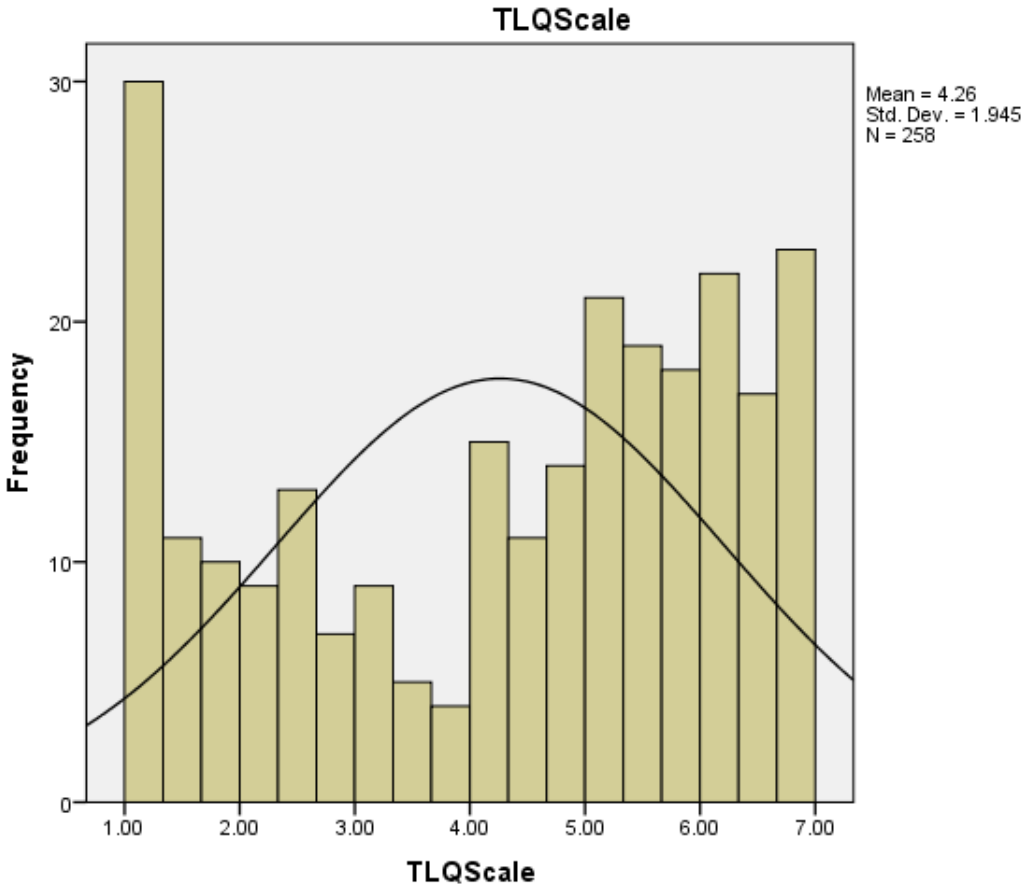
Homoscedasticity Graph



Appendix P

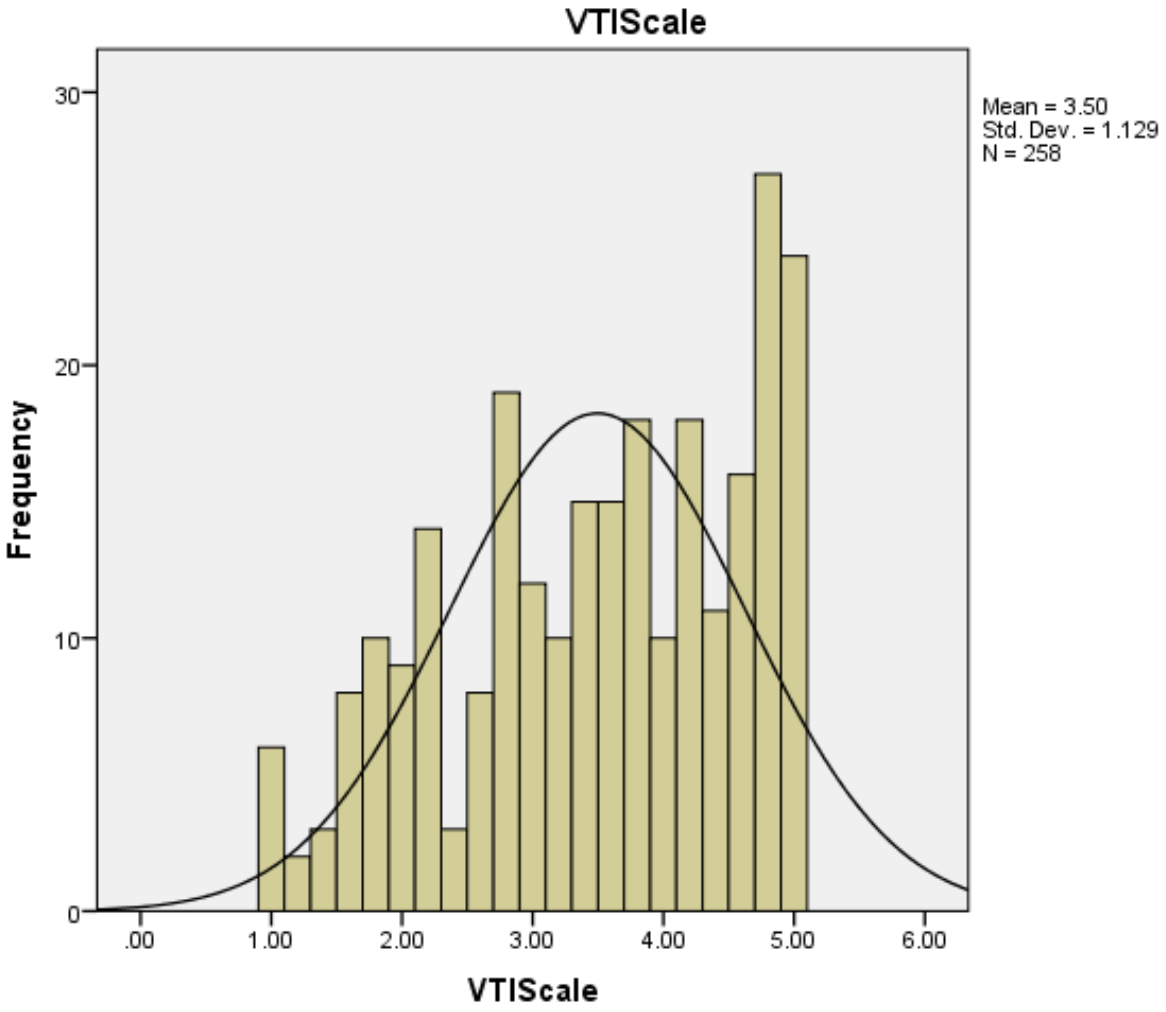
Graph 2

TL Frequency



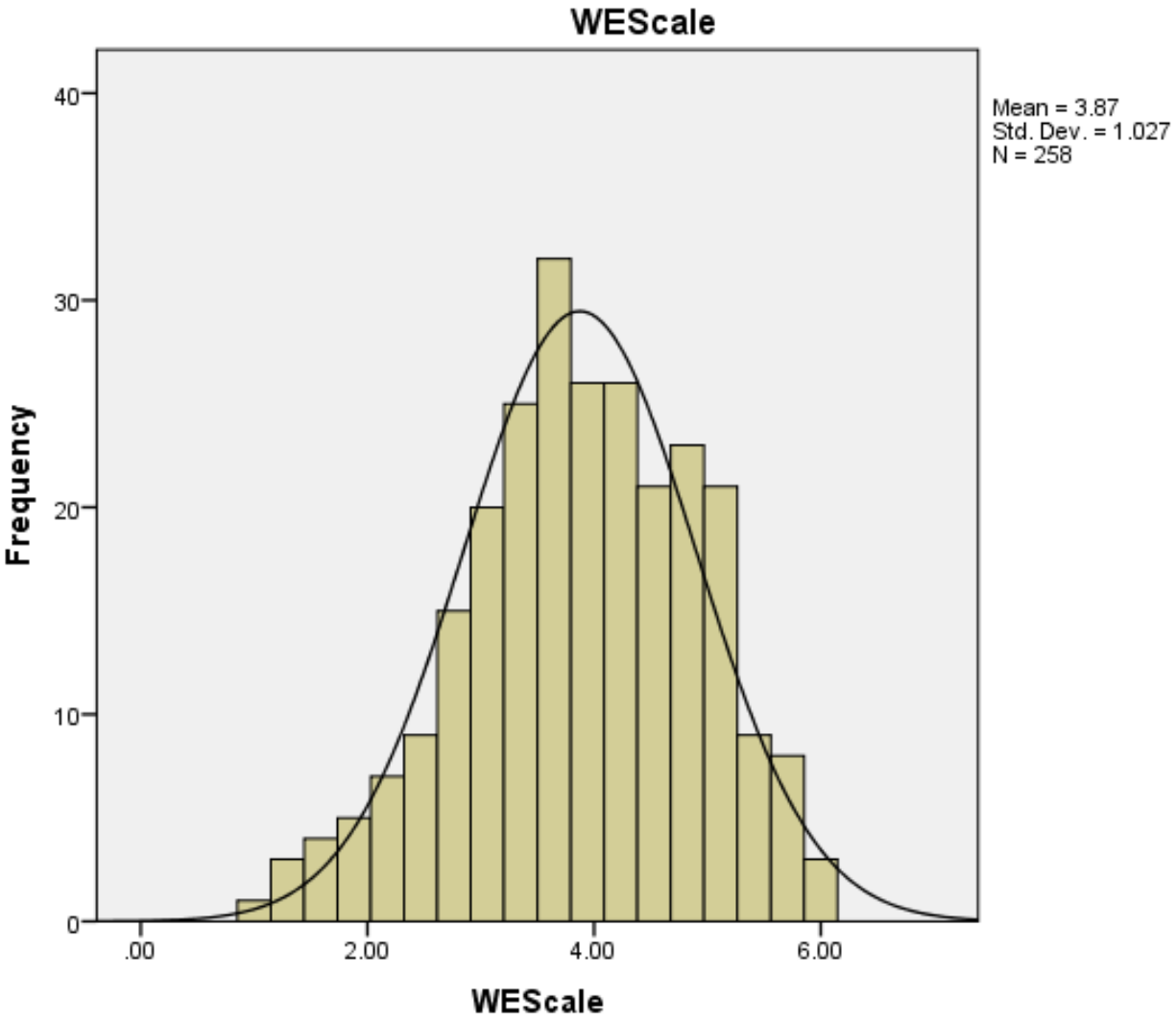
Graph 3

VTI Frequency



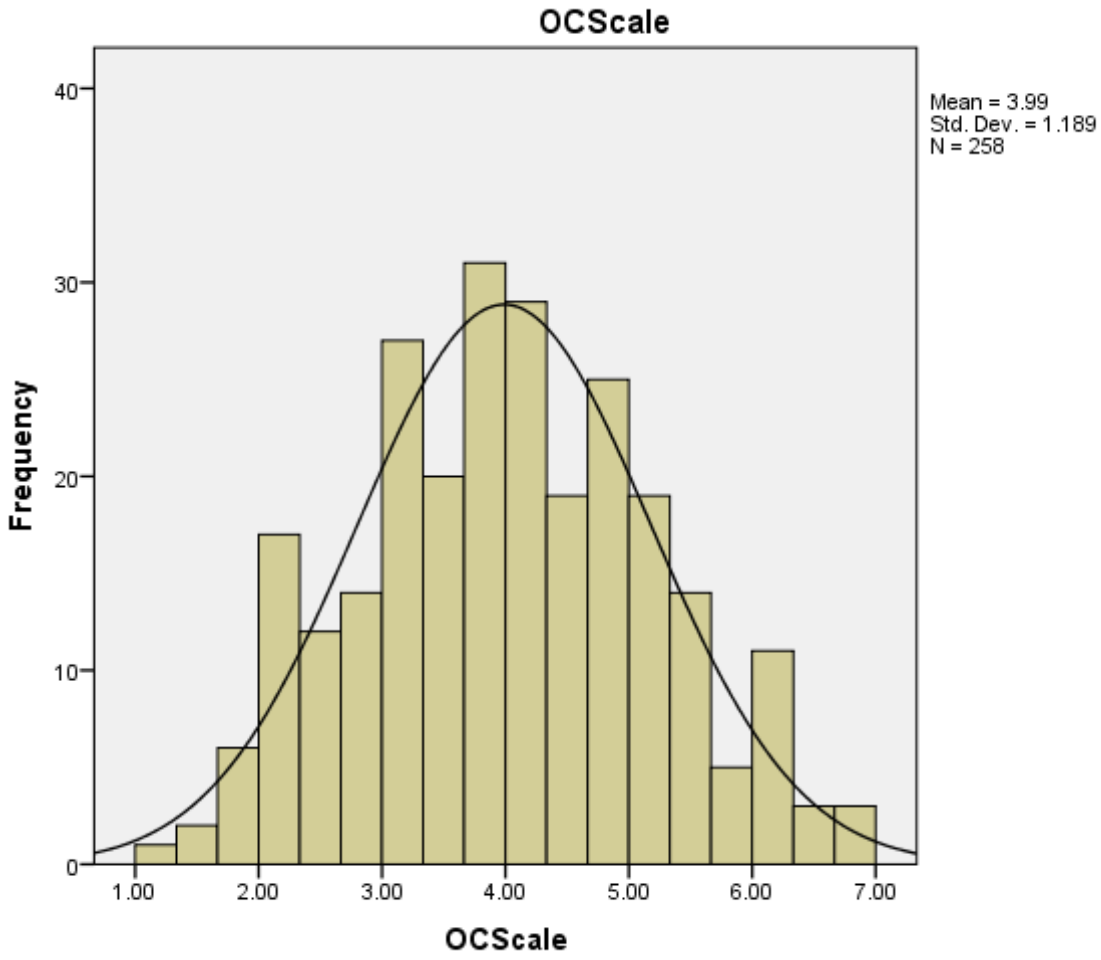
Graph 4

WE Frequency



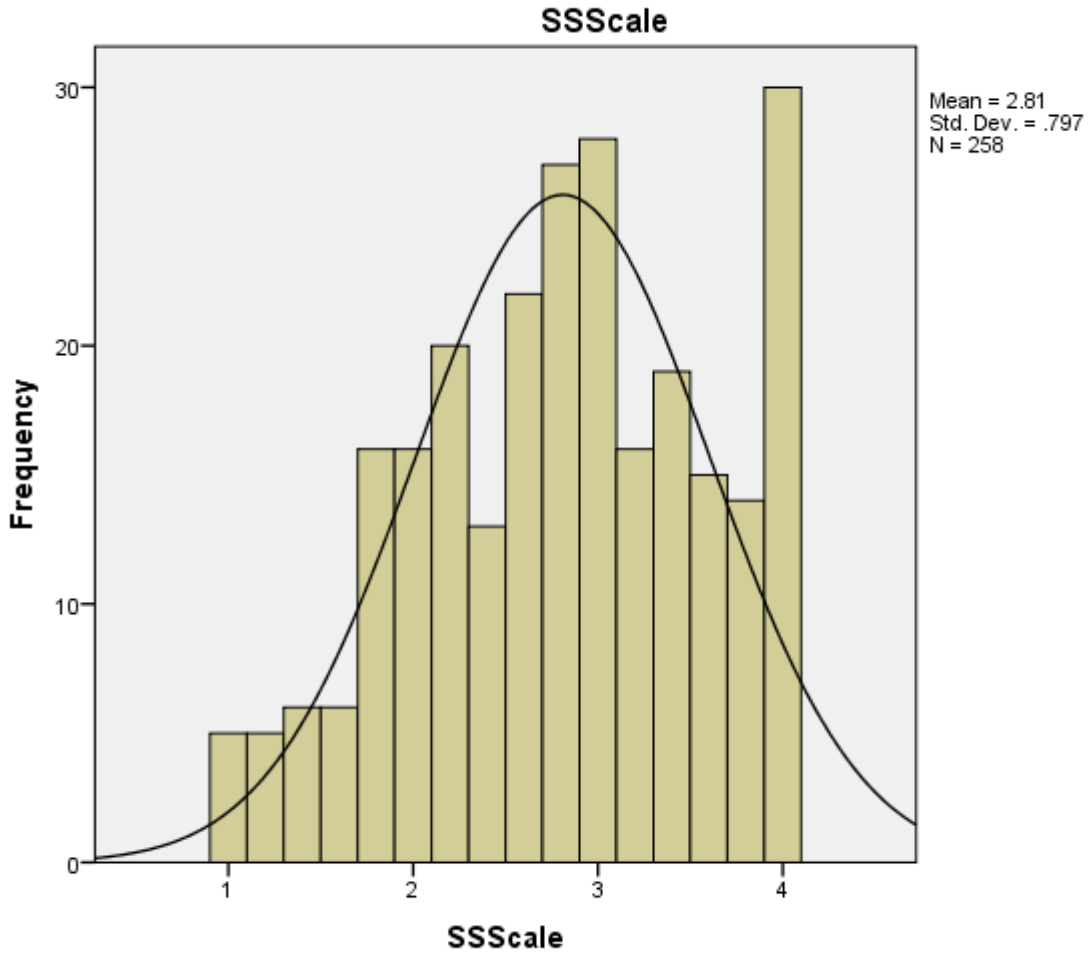
Graph 5

OC Frequency



Graph 6

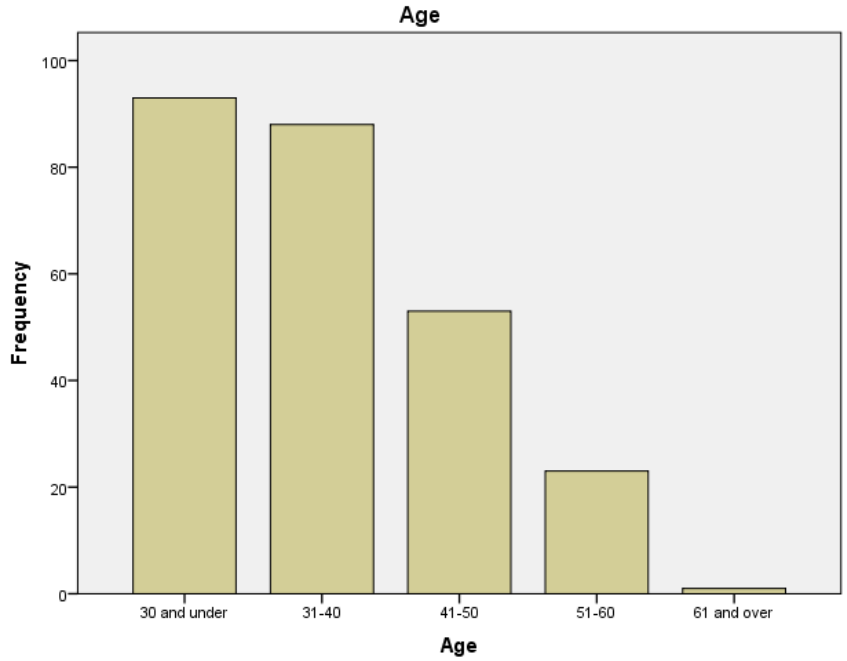
SS Frequency



Appendix Q

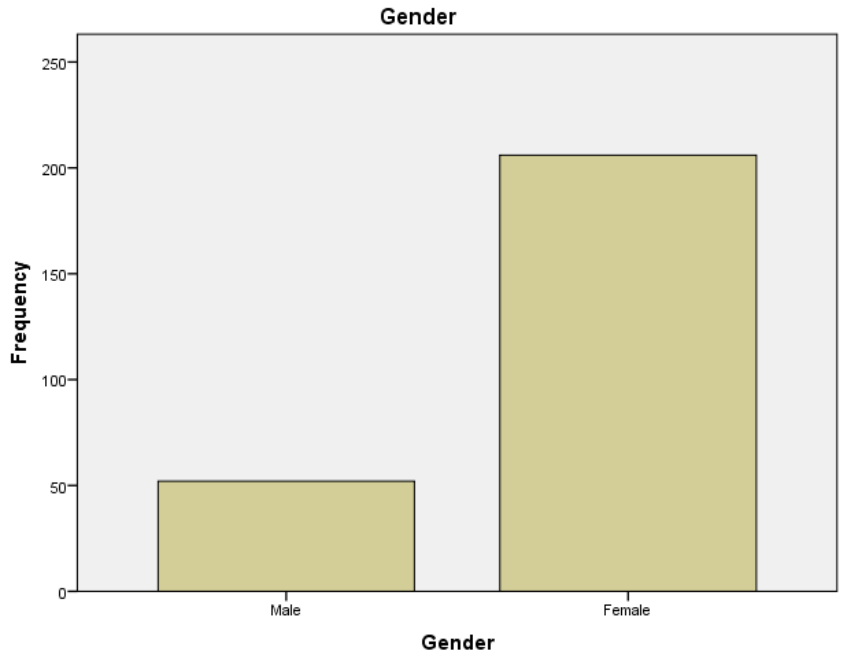
Graph 7

Age Demographic



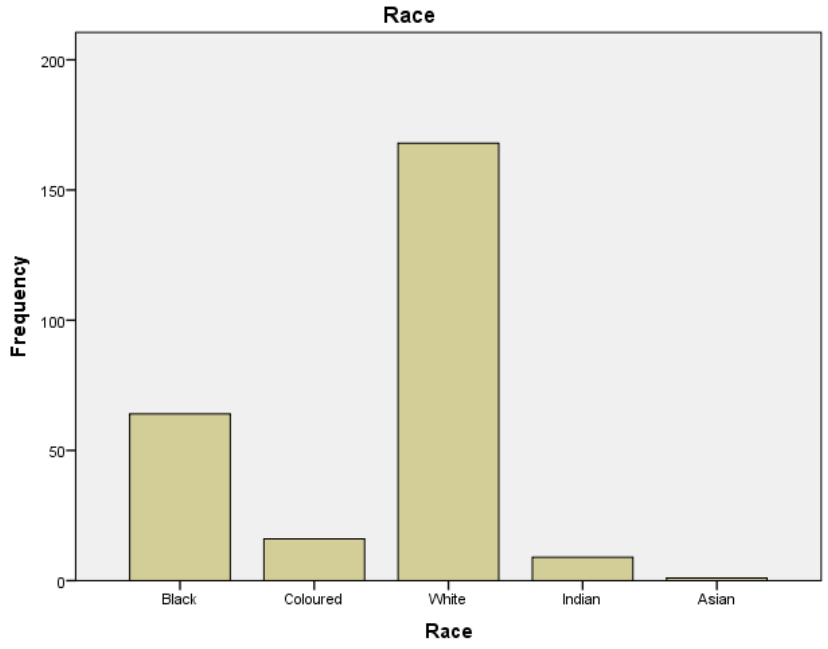
Graph 8

Gender Demographic



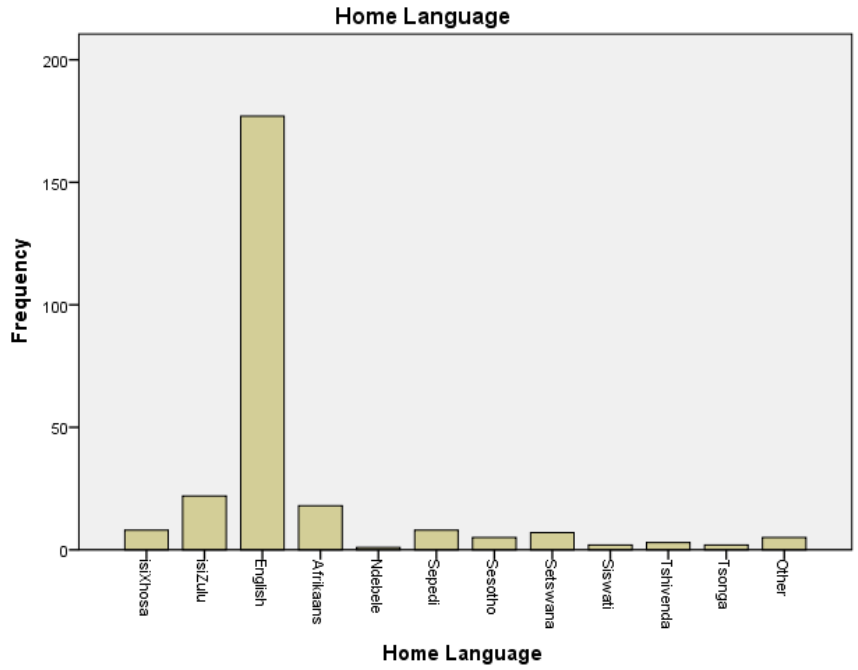
Graph 9

Race Demographic



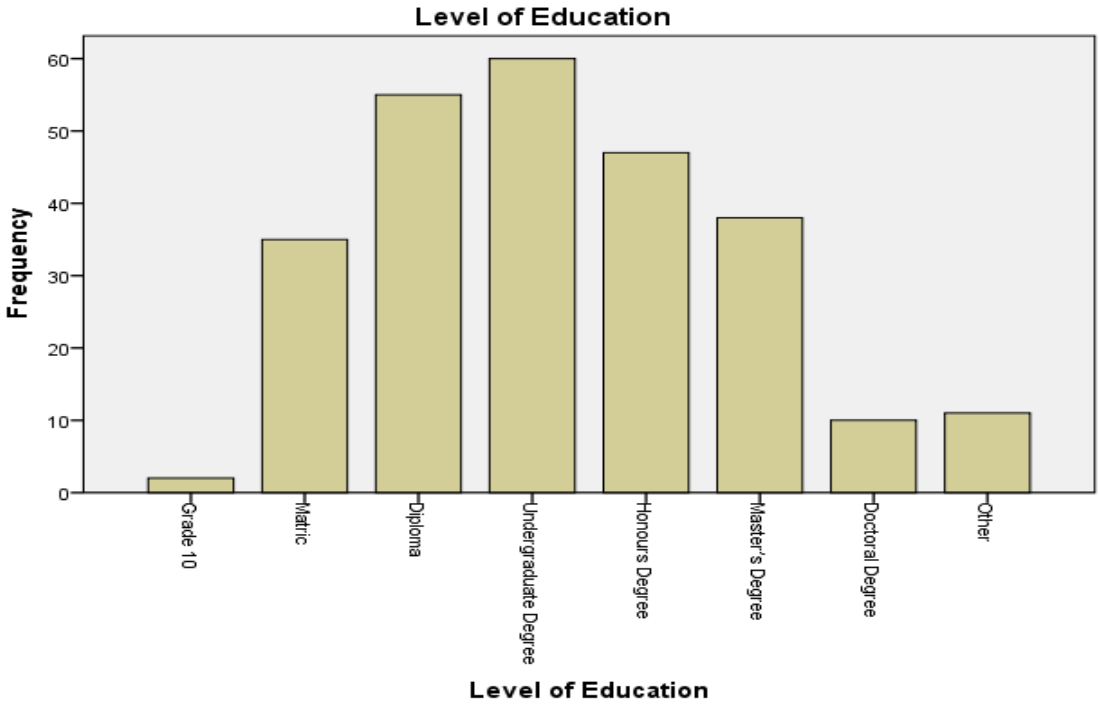
Graph 10

Home Language Demographic



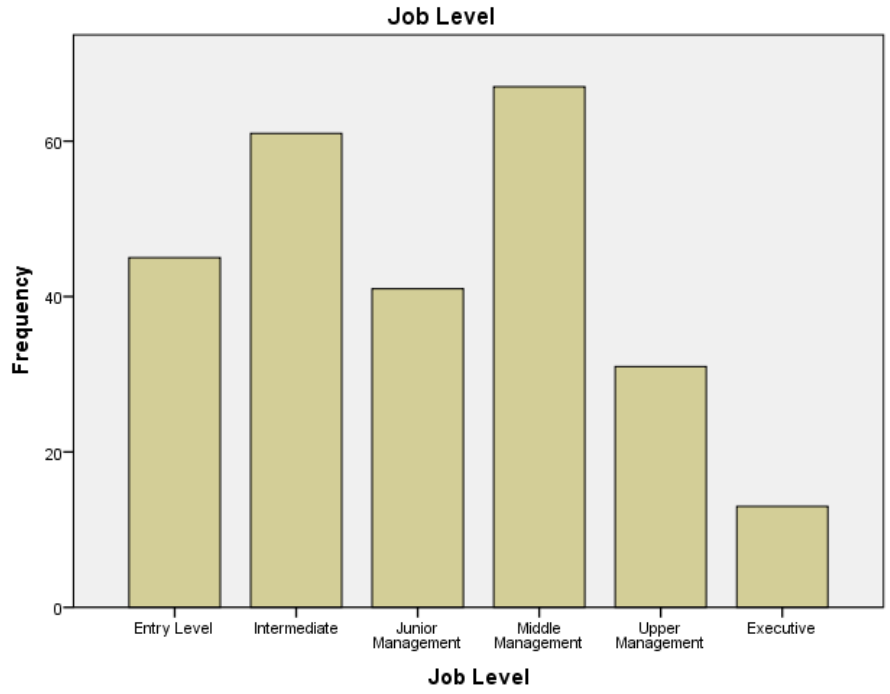
Graph 11

Level of Education Demographic



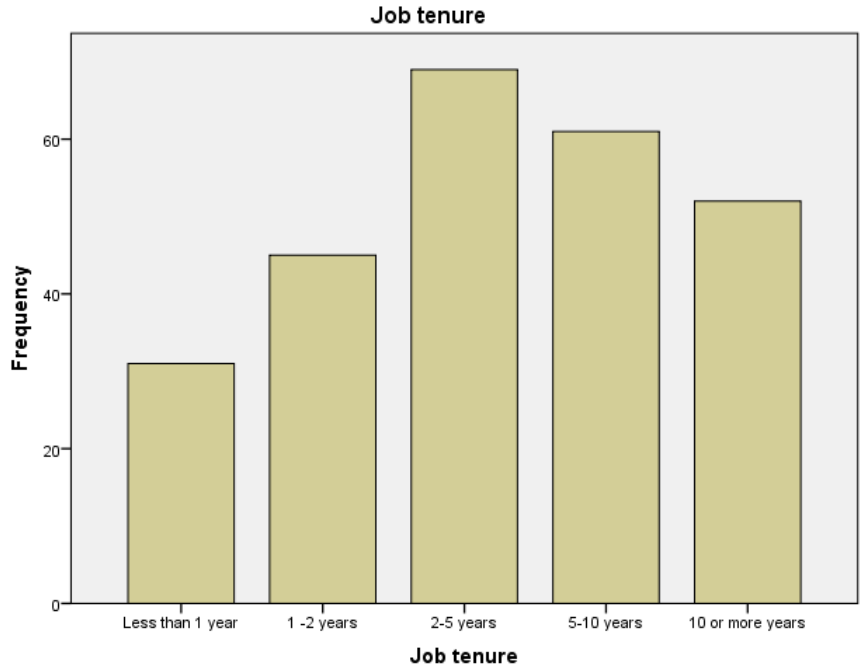
Graph 12

Job Level Demographic



Graph 13

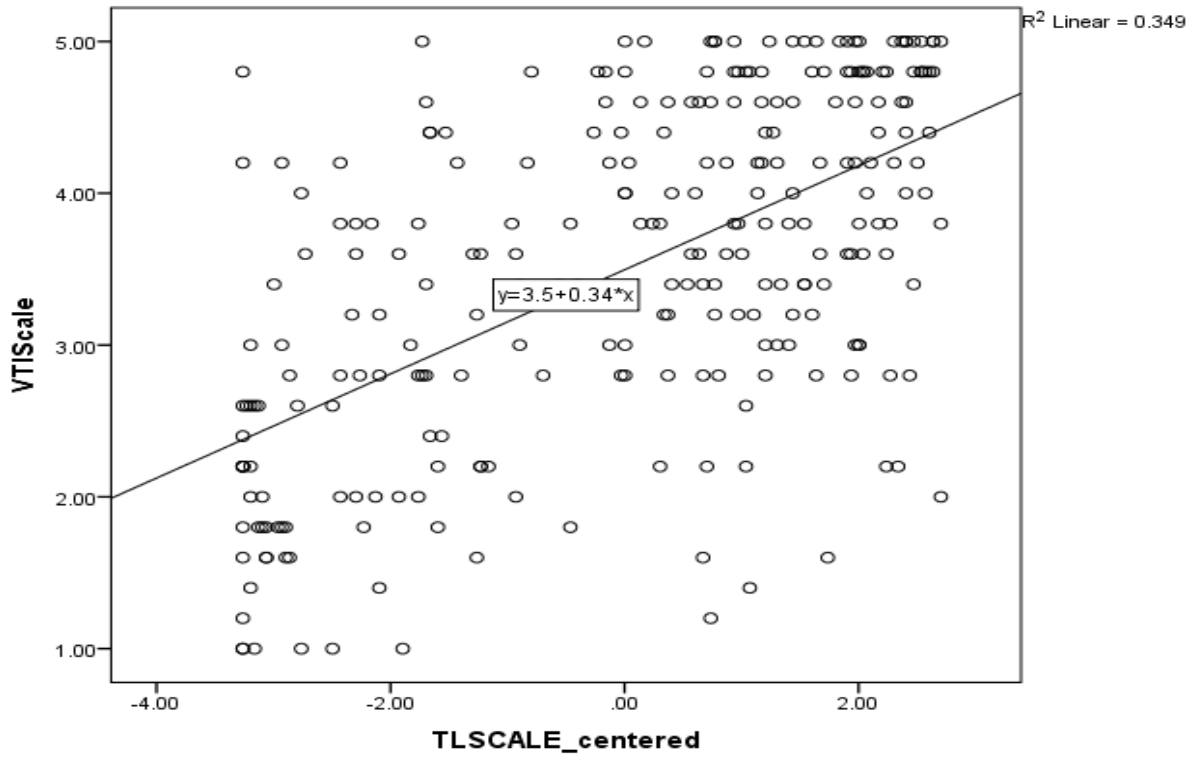
Job Tenure Demographic



Appendix R: TL and outcome variables

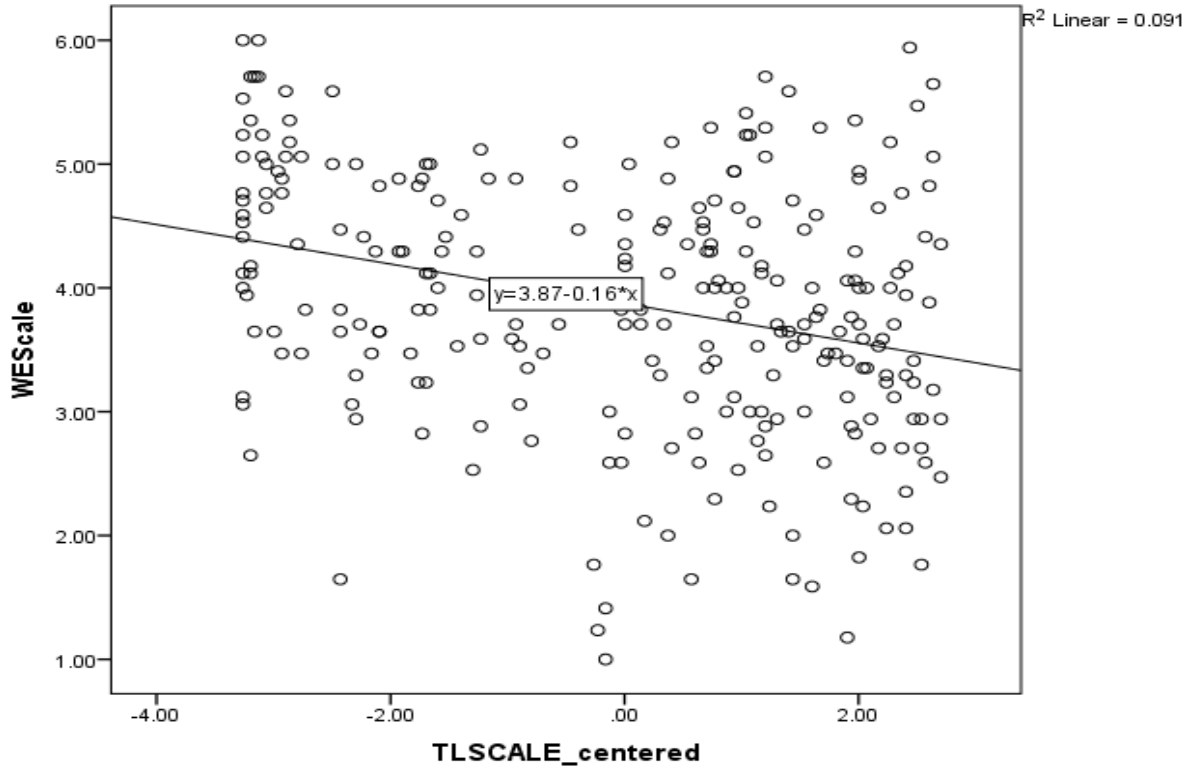
Graph 14

VTI and TL regression Graph



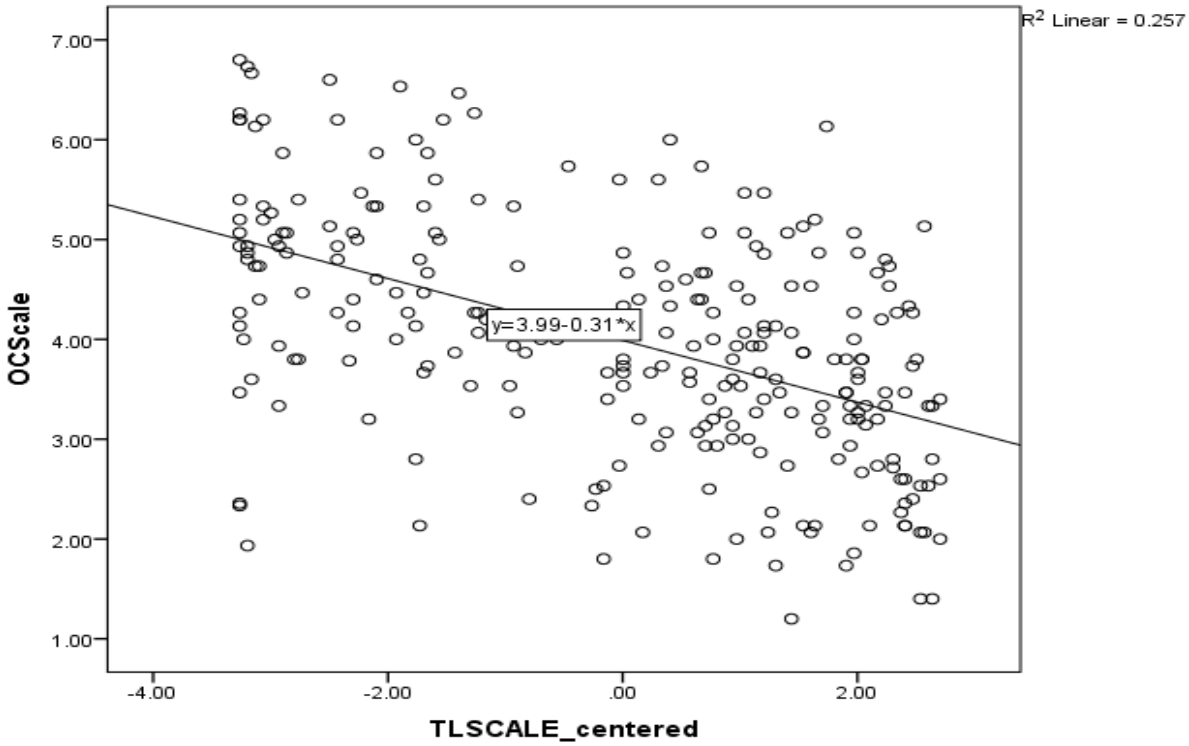
Graph 15

WE and TL regression



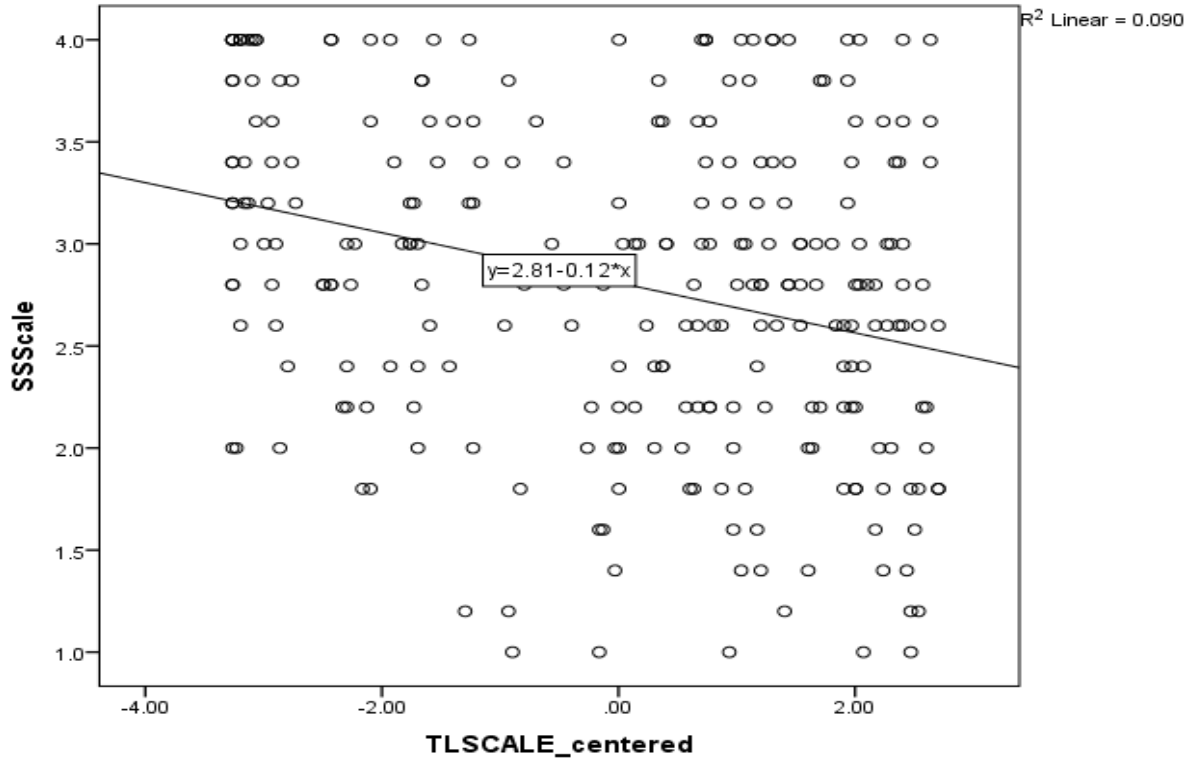
Graph 16

OC and TL regression Graph



Graph 17

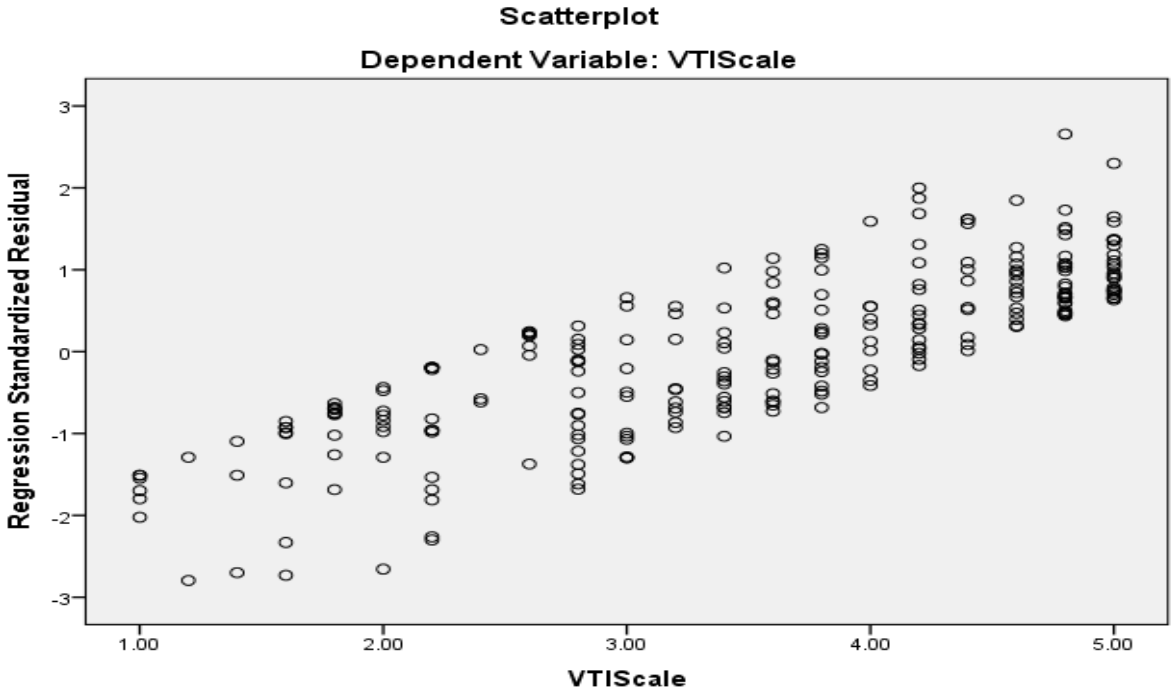
SS and TL regression Graph



Appendix S: Social Support and Outcome Variables

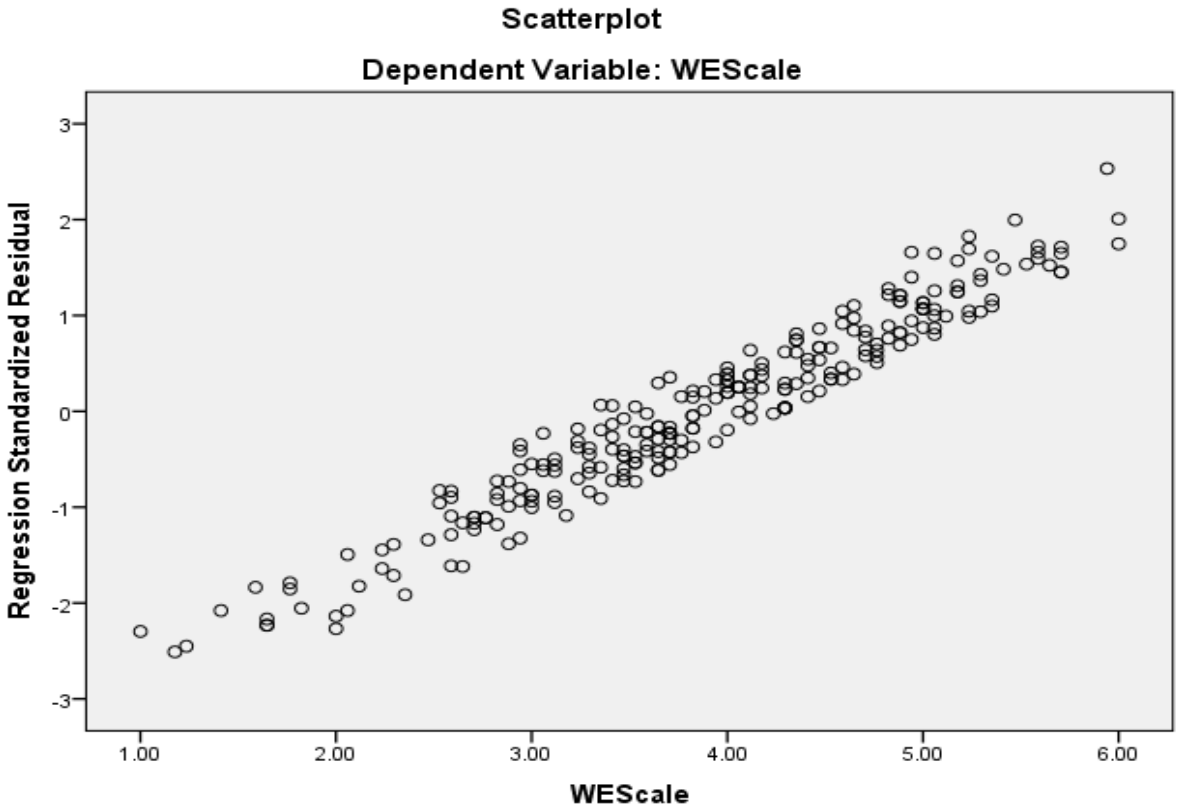
Graph 18

VTI and TL moderated multiple Regression Graph



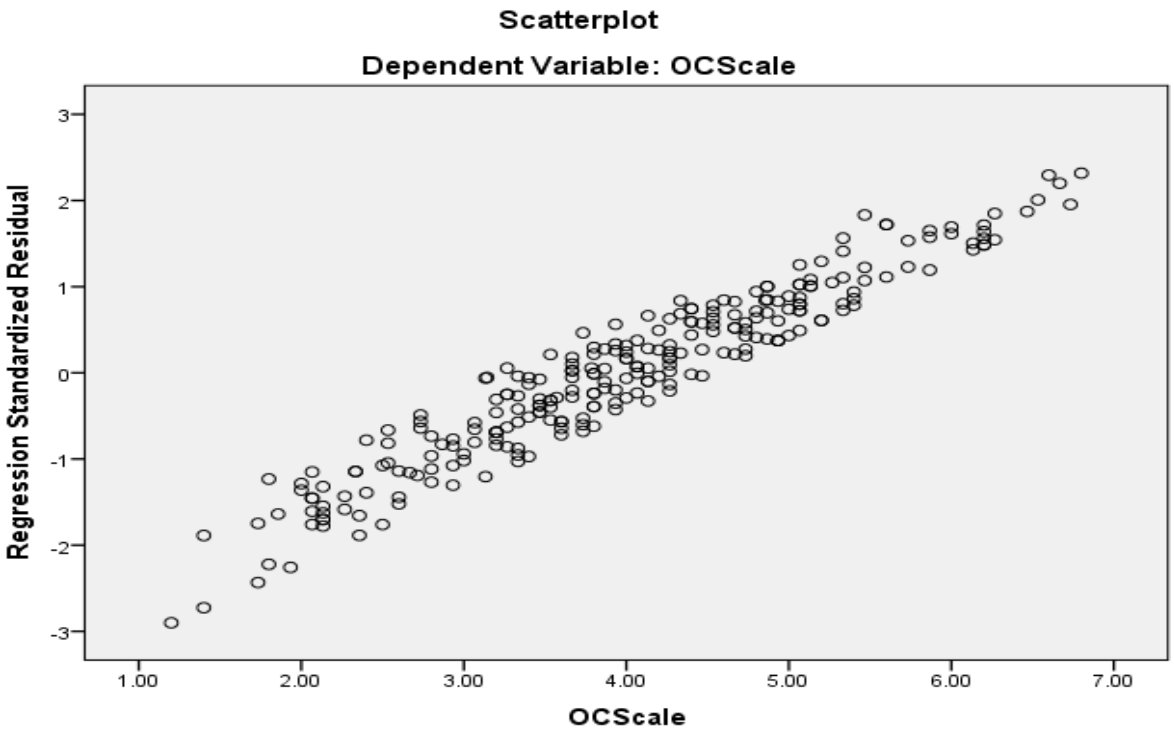
Graph 19

WE and TL moderated multiple regression



Graph 20

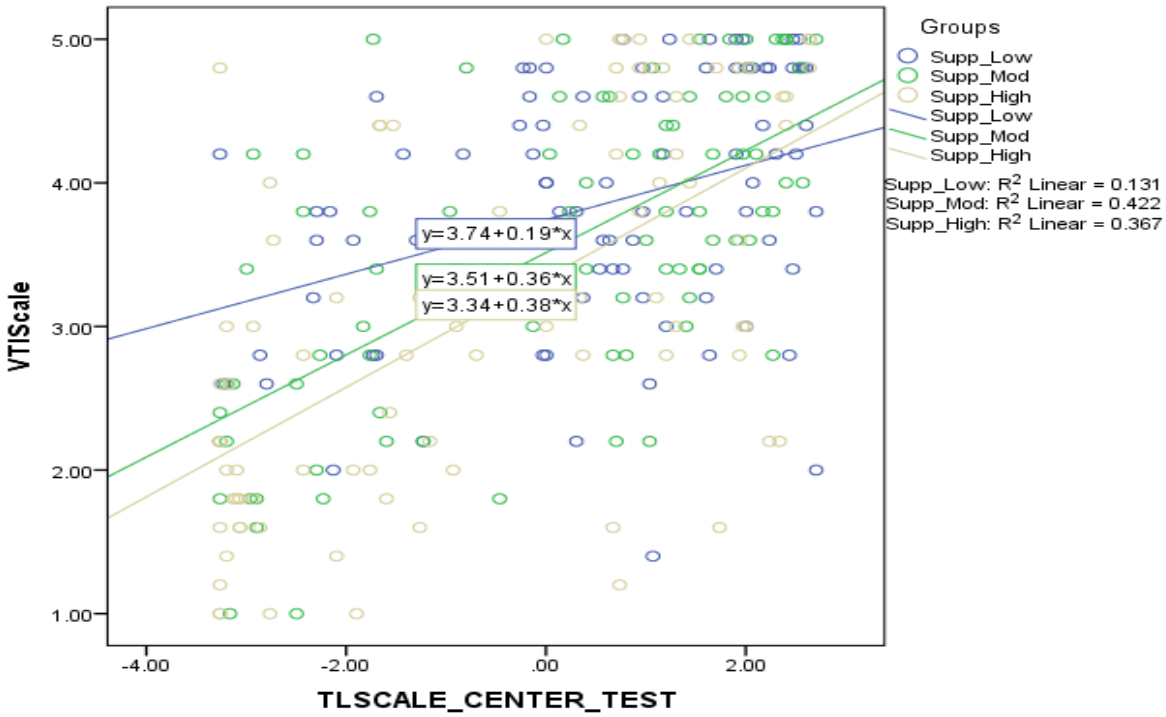
OC and TL moderated multiple Regression Graph



Appendix T: Moderated Multiple Regressions

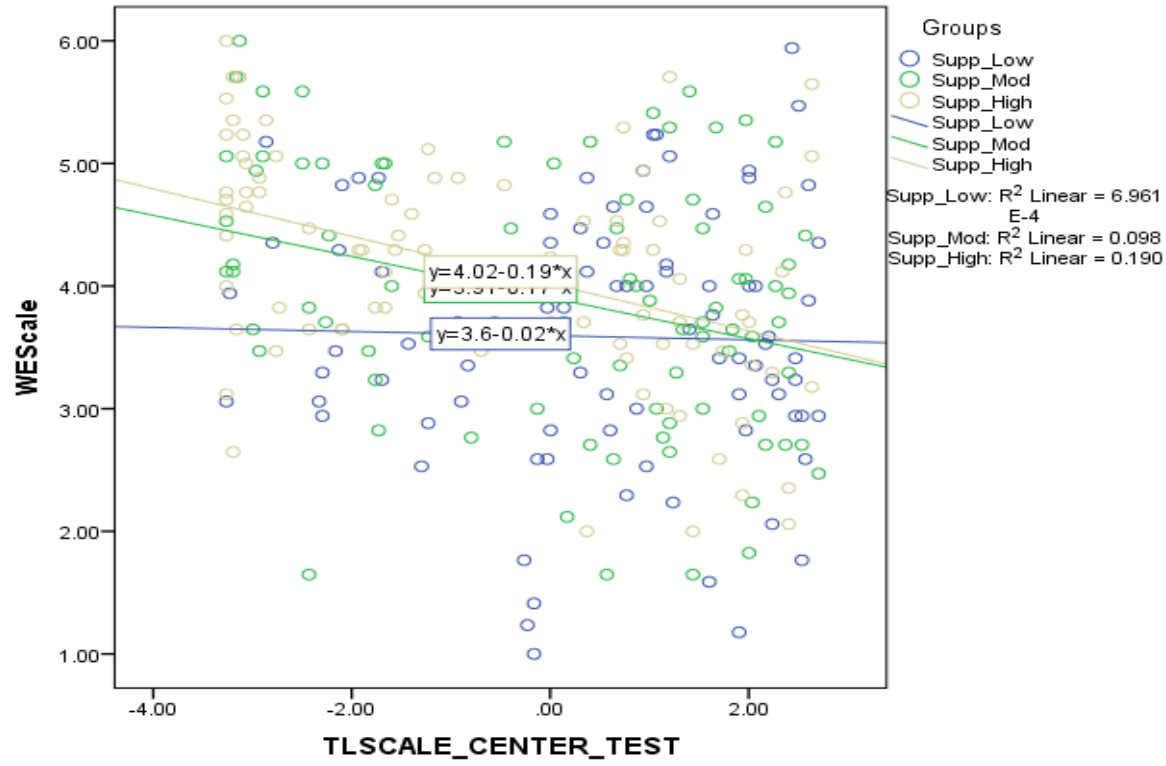
Graph 21

VTI and TL Moderated Multiple Regression Graph



Graph 22

WE and TL Moderated Multiple Regression Graph



Graph 23

OC and TL Moderated Multiple Regression Graph

