




A talent management, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention framework for a government department in South Africa



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Orientation: Talent management should be used as a strategy to improve organisational commitment and reduce employee turnover intention.

Research purpose: The purpose of this research was to develop a talent management, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention framework for a government department in South Africa by determining the relationship between these three variables.

Motivation of the study: Most studies focus on talent management and organisational commitment in the private sector, with limited studies conducted on the development of a talent management, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention framework for a government department in South Africa.

Research approach/design method: A survey was conducted by using a non-probability sample of 372. A quantitative research approach was used. Data were collected manually by using a questionnaire. Structural equation modelling was used to analyse the data.

Main findings: The results of the study showed that talent management acted as a mediator between organisational commitment and employee turnover intention. There was a significant relationship between talent management, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention.

Practical/managerial implications: Talent management should form part of a strategic approach to attract and retain talent in the department. Talent management as the mediator explains the causal links between organisational commitment and employee turnover intention.

Contribution and value addition: The new knowledge was produced by the development of a framework for talent management, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention at a government department in South Africa.

Keywords: talent management; organisational commitment; employee retention, employee turnover intentions.

Introduction

Background of the study

According to Nijis, Dries, Van Vlasserlaer and Sels (2021), organisations today invest significantly in talent identification practices, as they believe that these will support them in detecting and developing the future leaders. Determining who should be included in these talent pools remains a challenge. Talent management (TM) is one of the critical issues faced by organisations worldwide – recruiting and retaining talented employees is key to achieving strategic objectives and remaining competitive.

Musakuro and De Klerk (2021) and Poisat, Mey and Sharp (2018) stated that organisations typically adopt one of the three strategies when they would like to recruit people to fill vacancies. Organisations either identify talented employees within their existing workforce or focus on the recruitment of external candidates by headhunting senior managers or signing up candidates with potential from the reputable graduate programmes.

Erasmus, Naidoo and Joubert (2017), Govender and Grobler (2017) and Shobane (2017) opined that the war for talent remains a challenge to many organisations. Human capital is an essential part of any organisation and employees' skills, competencies and expertise are indispensable resources assisting the organisation to achieve a competitive advantage.

Research gap and purpose

Theys and Schultz (2020) stated that the ongoing shortage of skills and poor talent management strategies is the root cause for the organisational failure to retain key talent and contributed to poor service delivery in public institutions. Little information is available on studies conducted on TM as a link between organisational commitment and employee turnover intention in the South African public sector. Talent management should be developed and integrated into the overall organisational strategies to assist organisations to recruit talent and retain it; this is essential to ensure a lower turnover rate. Organisational commitment and employee turnover intention reflect employees' level of willingness to remain employed and contribute to the organisation's success. The South African department under study does not have a framework for TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention that can assist human resource (HR) managers and line managers to properly manage talent, organisational commitment and employee turnover. The purpose of the study was to assist with closing this research gap by developing a framework for TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention at a South African government department.

Literature review

Talent management

According to Lesenyehyo, Barkhuizen and Schutte (2018), Barkhuizen and Matobako (2017) and Van Zyl, Mathafena and Ras (2017), TM is a systematic utilisation of human resource management (HRM) activities to attract, select, develop and retain talent. Lewis and Heckman (2006) stated that the term 'talent management' is a typical process of implementing HR practices and functions, for example, recruitment, selection, development and retention of employees.

Lesenyehyo et al. (2018) and Musakaro and De Klerk (2021) posited that TM generated more interest from academics and HR practitioners in the 21st century and changed into various stages over the period. Barkhuizen and Matobako (2017) stated that whilst TM practices hold benefits for both individual and organisational performance, poor implementation of TM practices has a negative impact on psychological contracts, organisational commitment, work engagement, motivation, job satisfaction, well-being and retention of employees in diverse settings.

Lee (2018) and Musakuro and De Klerk (2021) opined that in the last decade, organisations have increasingly identified and developed talent, resulting in improved employee and organisational performance. Implementing TM strategies is an ongoing concern for executives, because failure to do it properly may have a negative impact on the effective operation of the business.

Organisational commitment

Ngirande (2021) and Pieters, Van Zyl and Nel (2020) opined that in the 21st century successful organisations rely on the ability to manage human capital so that employees are committed to assisting their organisations to achieve their objectives. Employees' organisational commitment is characterised by a strong sense of acceptance of their role in supporting the organisation's goals, values and objectives and the desire to remain members of the organisations where they are employed.

According to Setsena, Botha and Paul-Dachapalli (2021), organisational commitment refers to the employees' emotional attachment to the organisation. It is concerned with the extent of the employees' desire to remain with the organisation and the relative strength of an individual's identification with a particular organisation. Organisational commitment has three dimensions – affective commitment (AC), continuance commitment (CC) and normative commitment (NC).

Affective commitment

Skosana, Maleka and Ngonyama-Ndou (2021) defined AC as the employees' emotional attachment to the organisation. Employees' emotional attachment to the organisation is influenced by several dimensions, such as the employees' positive work experiences, loyalty and working environment. Pieters et al. (2020) posited that employees with a high level of AC and NC are satisfied with their organisations because they reflect a high degree of intention to stay with the organisation; however, employees with a high level of CC look for new jobs and score high on anxiety and depression.

Continuance commitment

According to Govender and Grobler (2017) and Pieters et al. (2020), CC refers to the employees' awareness of the financial costs associated with leaving the organisation. The level of commitment determines the extent to which the employee may choose to remain with the organisation. Some employees are stuck with one organisation based on reasons such as lack of alternative employment and consideration of the investment they had made in the organisation during the period of employment. Employees assess the cost associated with leaving the organisation compared with the cost of staying and make decisions based on this analysis.

Normative commitment

According to Paltu and Brouwers (2020), NC refers to employees' general perception of their moral obligation to the organisation. Employees with a strong NC have a sense of moral obligation to remain committed and serve the organisation regardless of the circumstances. Normative commitment does not conform to any individual feeling of attachment to the organisation but rather reflects moral obligation to the organisation.

Employee turnover

Els, Brouwers and Lodewyk (2021) and Gupta, Bhattacharya, Sheorey and Coelho (2018) opined that in recent years turnover has become a critical factor for HRM and organisations. Paltu and Brouwers (2020) stated that turnover intention is described as a conscious and deliberate intention of the employee to leave the organisation, turnover intentions are likely to lead to voluntary turnover because the process is initiated by the employee, compared with the decision taken by the employer to terminate contracts. Turnover refers to individual's actual behaviour of leaving the organisation based on the personal reasons. Employees are responsible for voluntary movement of turnover; however, involuntary turnover process involves the steps initiated by the employer based on the actions of the employee to terminate the contract of employment (Barkhuizen & Gumede, 2021).

According to Kwon (2017), turnover as a concept is receiving attention in the public sector because of the escalating employee turnover rate linked to poor management of grievances. Employee turnover is a serious challenge for organisations worldwide because of fast-growing economies and increased job opportunities. A study conducted by the Price water House Coopers (PWC) around 2020 found that the highest turnover rate in South Africa is (11%); however, 50% of employee turnover was because of resignation, reasons cited by employees included job satisfaction, compensation, benefits not meeting their needs and inability to achieve their career objectives (PWC, 2020).

Bazana and Reddy (2021) opined that turnover is the employees' voluntary decision to cease their membership of a particular organisation, resulting from the working conditions and other social and psychological factors. Turnover is inevitable in some instances; it is detrimental and costly for both the individual and organisation. According to Dhanpat, Modau, Lungisani, MaboJane and Phiri (2018), the cost of turnover is high in South Africa especially in call centre industry; this excludes employees with a low morale who choose to remain with the organisation and display counterproductive behaviour and a lack of contribution to organisational performance. Akgunduz and Sani (2017) and Bazana and Reddy (2021) mentioned that voluntary employee turnover refers to the employees' conscious and deliberate decision to leave the organisation. It occurs when employees quit the organisation to accept jobs elsewhere. Turnover has become a huge problem for organisations, exceeding the normal corporate layoffs. Organisations struggling to retain employees need to value and appreciate the contribution they make to the organisation.

Talent management frameworks

Shikweni, Schurink and Van Wyk (2019) conducted a TM study in a prominent South African internationally operating construction company and the main objective of their study was to develop a framework for TM practices. This study reported the following findings:

- Talent management in the construction industry supposes mutual actions from the organisation and its talented employees.
- Internal enablers drive business outcomes in alignment with a well-crafted strategy.
- A regulatory framework should acknowledge labour dynamics and diversity.
- Effective implementation of TM practices results in sustainability and competitiveness.

Shikweni et al. (2019) stated that TM is enhanced by the development of policies and procedures to cater for employee needs. Their framework emphasises the four practices steering TM in line with organisational strategy, viz. sourcing, managing, growing and compensation.

Van Zyl et al. (2017) studied the development of a TM framework for the private sector. The study found that formal TM initiatives should be linked to HRM functions, flowing vertically from the corporate strategy-making process. The study identified the following dimensions as critical for the successful implementation of TM: attraction, sourcing and recruitment, development, performance management, talent reviews, rewarding and recognition, engagement and retention. Employees interacting with line managers could improve the degree of employee retention (Van Zyl et al., 2017).

Several studies have been conducted on TM frameworks. The findings of two of those were selected to compare with this study. The objectives of the study conducted by Van Zyl et al. (2017) were to develop a TM framework in the private sector. This study established several important TM dimensions to assist organisations with the implementation of talent management strategies. A study conducted by Barkhuizen and Gumede (2021) reported a significant negative relationship between TM and voluntary turnover intentions, an indication that weak TM practices are associated with higher employee turnover intention. The study also found that a lack of career development was significantly related to voluntary turnover intention.

Employees are likely to leave the organisation because of a lack of career development and growth opportunities. Poor talent development practices also significantly reduce the job satisfaction of employees (Barkhuizen & Gumede, 2021). According to Lesenyeho et al. (2018), TM factors such as talent development, compensation and recognition are significantly positively related to organisational commitment and negatively related to employee turnover intention. Talent management practices are significant predictors of staff turnover intentions. Labour turnover has negative consequences in terms of loss of knowledge and experience, time and cost related to training new employees.

Abazeed (2018) posited that talented employees are selected based on their skills, knowledge and competencies and are nurtured through leadership development programmes. Malkawi (2017) and Betheke-Langenegger et al. (2011) supported the findings of the study conducted by Abazeed

(2018). This is a significant finding because there is no substantial evidence in the literature to support it. Talent management plays a crucial role in influencing employees' psychological state, which determines whether they stay with the company or leave.

Organisational commitment frameworks

According to previous studies, the relationship between organisational commitment and employee turnover intention is negative and significant (Allen & Mayer, 2003; Gnanakkan, 2010; Malaeb & Garavan, 2013; Ncube, 2016). Baron and Kenny (1986) and Ncube (2016) found that organisational commitment did not mediate the relationship between TM and employee turnover intention. However, other studies reported that TM had a positive and significant relationship with organisational commitment (Malaeb & Garavan, 2013). Organisational commitment was significantly and negatively related to employee turnover intentions. No relationship was found when adding organisational commitment as a moderator between TM and employee turnover intention. Talent attraction was significantly positively related to turnover intention of the employees (Gnanakkan, 2010).

Employee turnover intention frameworks

Ngo Henha (2019) reported that demographic variables of age and gender had a significant relationship with turnover intention. This finding was further confirmed by the results from the studies conducted by Mobley et al. (1979) and Zhou and Volkwein (2004). The model postulated that the senior employees are likely to reduce turnover intention. Theron, Barkhuizen and Du Plessis (2014) reported that more than half of the academics considered quitting their jobs to accept better jobs with better compensation. Talent management practices exacerbated employees' intentions to quit (Lesenyehlo et al., 2018). The same results are associated with the length of service: the study assumed that the more years employees worked for the same organisation the less likelihood that they would leave or lessen the turnover intention. Committed employees are less likely to leave their organisations.

Method

Research method

Empirical research was conducted in this study using a survey method. The study followed a quantitative research approach within a positivistic research paradigm. Musakuro (2018) opined that positivism philosophy holds the view that there is one objective reality that is singular and separate from consciousness. Knowledge is acquired using scientific means where data can be measured using objective methods. Factual data can be measured using controlled variables, independent of the observer and the instrument used, to give an objective account of the real world.

A questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents and conclusions were drawn based on the analysis of the data (Manenzhe & Ngirande, 2021).

Population

The population of the study consisted of employees in the government department under study. This department had 9 provincial offices, 125 labour centres, a compensation fund, an unemployment insurance funds and a head office.

Sample

For the purposes of the study, the researchers used purposive non-probability sampling, targeting employees from salary level 6 to salary level 13 who attended the training interventions conducted by the department at any given point. Training interventions such as the advanced management development programme, emerging management development programme and an executive development programme were offered. These training interventions were available for all the categories of employees within the department.

A survey was conducted by using a non-probability sample of 372. Only 214 employees completed the questionnaires in the study. The study obtained the response rate of 57.5%.

Research approach and design

A quantitative research method and survey research design were used for the purpose of the study. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents (Miko, 2017; Poisat et al., 2018). The results were presented in graphs and tables. The choice of research approach was influenced by the nature of the research problem under review.

Research instrument

According to Setsena et al. (2021) and Maleka, Paul-Dachapalli, Ragadu, Schultz and Van Hoek (2020), a questionnaire is defined as a written, structured document containing a set of questions designed to collect data from the respondents for the research purposes. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale (1 represents strongly disagree and 5 represents strongly agree). The questionnaire has four sections: biographic information, 29 questions on TM, 24 questions on organisational commitment and 20 questions on employee turnover intention.

Talent management measurement

The TM Questionnaire from Van Hoek (2014) was used. This questionnaire consisted of 29 questions. Examples of items posed in this questionnaire are:

- I was attracted by the compensation package offered by the organisation.
- I am satisfied with the way in which the organisation's performance management system is applied.
- There are career improvement programmes in the organisation that empowers me to advance my career.

In this study, performance management obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85; however, remuneration had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.62 and career development a Cronbach's alpha of 0.63.

In this case two factors, that is, remuneration and career development, obtained a Cronbach's alpha just below the acceptable level and performance management obtained an acceptable level of 0.85 that made the scale more reliable.

Organisational commitment measurement

The organisational commitment questionnaire of Allen and Meyer (1990) was used. This questionnaire consisted of 24 questions. Examples of items posed in this questionnaire are:

- I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with the organisation.
- I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it.
- This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

The three dimensions of organisational commitment obtained different Cronbach's alphas in this study: AC had 0.87, CC scored 0.75 and NC obtained 0.79.

Employee turnover intention measurement

The Turnover Intentions Scale developed by O' Driscoll and Beehr (1994) and used by Riley (2006) was used. This questionnaire consisted of 20 closed-ended questions. Examples of items posed in this questionnaire are:

- My work schedule is fair.
- I think the level of pay is fair.
- I consider my work load to be fair.

This study produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91; the instrument obtained an acceptable level of Cronbach's alpha, which makes it acceptable and reliable. Work and family life balance (WFLB), work environment and work demands were detected as the three factors that were generated after conducting a factor analysis.

Data collection procedure

The questionnaire was manually distributed to the respondents. Sealed boxes were used for the collection of completed questionnaires to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Returned responses with missing values were excluded from the data analysis.

Data analysis

The statistical analysis was conducted by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) (Oosthuizen, Mayer, & Zwane, 2021). The structural equation modelling (SEM) approach was adopted to analyse data, followed by bootstrapping methods used to estimate the parameters and associated standard errors in the direct and indirect effects in the statistical analysis (SEM) through the non-parametric method.

Measurement model evaluation

Measurement model assessment seeks to evaluate the consistency and validity of the manifest variables.

Consistency is evaluated through an individual manifest and construct reliability test. However, the validity of the variables was tested through convergent and discriminant validity. Individual manifest reliability explains the variance of latent variables by calculating standardised outer loadings of the manifest variable (Hair, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014; Memon & Rahman, 2014).

Structural equation modelling consists of two parts, namely measurement model evaluation and testing of the structural model. The measurement model is intended to evaluate the validity and consistency of the manifest variables. Validity of the variables is tested based on convergent and discriminant validity and individual manifest reliability explains the variance of individual manifest variables relative to latent variables by calculating standardised outer loadings of the manifest variables; however, consistency evaluations are performed through an individual manifest and construct reliability test.

Ethical considerations

The Faculty Committee of Research Ethics of Tshwane University of Technology approved the questionnaire used in the study. According to Koch, Geber and De Klerk (2018), research ethical considerations are upheld throughout the process of conducting research. For the purposes of this study, the research was guided by the approved guidelines of the department under study, viz. the TUT ethics committee's approval. The ethical issues of the research were considered whilst conducting research and permission was received from the department under study before conducting the research. Participation of the respondents was on a voluntary basis. All the ethical guidelines, principles and procedures were adhered to during the data collection process.

Results

Profile of the respondents

The profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1. It was clear that the majority of the respondents were females (62.15%), between 31–40 years old (47.20%), administration clerks (37.38%), worked at the department for 1 to 5 years (30.84%), possessed a diploma (28.97%) and worked in Limpopo (21.96%).

Factor analysis

A principal component factor analysis was conducted to identify the factors of each variable:

- For TM, three factors were identified, namely performance management (Perf), remuneration (Remu) and career development (Care).
- For organisational commitment, three factors were identified, namely AC, CC and NC.
- For turnover intention, three factors were identified, namely WFLB, work environment (Work) and demand of the job (Demand).

TABLE 1: Profile of the respondents.

Demographic parameter	Classification	N	n	%
Gender	Male	214	81	37.85
	Female	-	133	62.15
Age	18–30	214	42	19.63
	31–40	-	101	47.20
	41–50	-	48	22.43
	51 years and older	-	23	10.75
Occupation level	Chief Director	214	1	0.47
	Director	-	4	1.87
	Deputy Director	-	1738	7.94
	Below Assistant Director (ASD)	-	37	17.76
	Supervisor	-	80	17.29
	Administration Clerk	-	37	37.38
	Other	-	-	17.29
Length of service	Less than 1 year	214	33	15.42
	1–5 years	-	66	30.84
	6–10 years	-	51	23.83
	11–20 years	-	43	20.09
	21–30 years	-	13	20.09
	31 years and more	-	8	3.74
Highest qualification	Grade 12/matric	214	28	13
	National Certificate	-	20	9.35
	Diploma	-	62	28.97
	Bachelor's Degree	-	46	21.50
	Bachelor's Degree (Hons)	-	51	23.83
	Master's Degree/M tech	-	7	3.27
Provincial distribution	Eastern Cape	214	8	3.74
	Free State	-	10	4.64
	Gauteng	-	43	20.09
	Limpopo	-	47	21.96
	KwaZulu-Natal	-	15	7.01
	Mpumalanga	-	22	10.28
	Northern Cape	-	13	6.07
	North West	-	17	7.94
	Western Cape	-	39	18.22

Reliability analysis

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to assess the reliability of each scale. The Cronbach's alpha should be more than 0.70 to make the scale reliable, but a lower level has been acceptable in some literature (Nunnally, 1978, p. 245 as quoted by Reynaldo & Santos, 1999, p. 3). The Cronbach's alphas of the questionnaires were reported in the given research instrument section.

Structural equation model results

Direct effect

The direct effect of the statistical analysis of the structural equation model was performed through the non-parametric analysis. The non-parametric analysis method established

that the loadings close to 1 show a strong relationship with the Perc 0975 equal to 95% confidence interval. Further loading with zero involved in the reading of interval (−0.12832) becomes insignificant. Bootstrapping was used to estimate the parameters and associated standard errors in the direct and indirect effect in the statistical analysis of the structural equation model using the non-parametric method. Table 2 depicts the total effects of the different paths from the direct and indirect statistical results (Hair et al., 2014).

The findings reported in Table 2 indicate a significant positive direct relationship between AC and performance management, $\beta = 0.409$, confidence interval (CI) (0.279, 0.555). The results of the model assessment indicate a significant positive direct relationship between AC and remuneration, $\beta = 0.413$, the CI (0.260, 0.548). The relationship between AC and career development is also positive and significant: $\beta = 0.434$ CI (0.306, 0.568). The positive relationships indicate that the increase in AC results in an increase in performance management, remuneration and career development.

The results indicate that there is a significant positive direct relationship between the AC and work environment ($\beta = 0.155$), CI (0.022) and (0.290). Moreover, the results reveal a positive direct relationship between AC and demands of the job. However, it emerged that there is a significant positive direct relationship between affective commitment, and work life and family balance, $\beta = 0.380$, confidence interval (CI) 0.201 and 0.541.

The results further indicate a significant positive direct relationship between NC and work environment, $\beta = 0.180$, CI (0.046) and (0.292). The results show a significant positive direct relationship between NC, WFLB and demand of the job, $\beta = 0.192$, CI (0.004) and (0.356). The model result reported a significant positive direct relationship between NC and job demand, $\beta = 0.185$, CI (0.021) and (0.336).

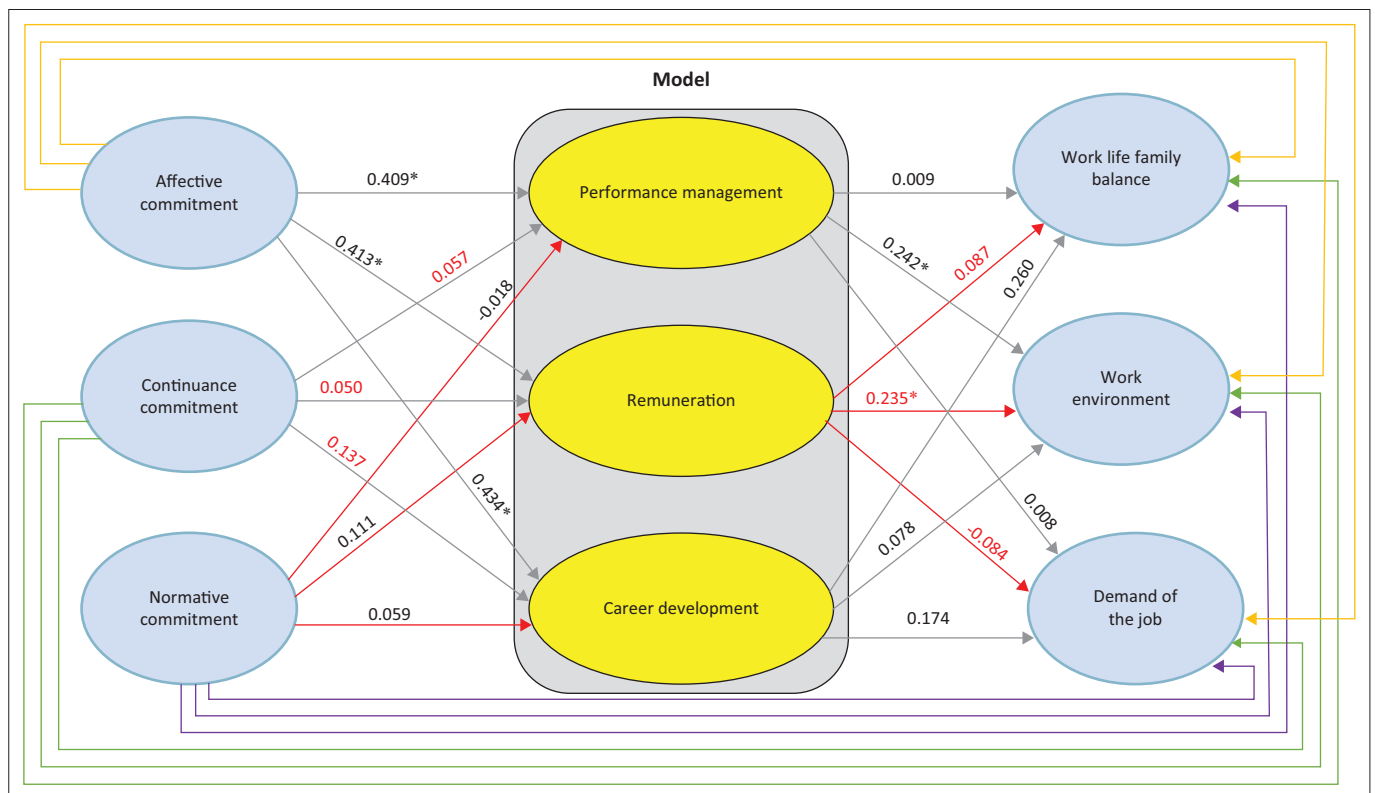
The results indicate a significant positive direct relationship between performance management and work environment, $\beta = 0.242$, CI (0.105) and (0.38). Furthermore, the results of the model assessment reveal a significant positive direct relationship between career development and WFLB $\beta = 0.260$, CI (0.09786) and 0.4500. The results further show a significant positive direct relationship between career development and WFLB, $\beta = 0.260$, CI (0.097) and 0.45. The results also reveal a significant positive direct relationship between remuneration and work environment, $\beta = 0.235$, CI (0.093) and (0.392).

The goodness of fit (GOF) can be used as a global criterion that helps to evaluate the performance of the model in both the inner and outer models. Goodness of fit assesses the overall prediction performance of the model. The drawback with the GOF index is that there is no threshold that

TABLE 2: Direct relationship estimation of parameters and associated standard errors.

Mediators			Original	Mean boot	Std.Error	perc.025	perc.975
AC	≥	Perf	0.39843	0.40987	0.0744	0.27956	0.5559
AC	≥	Care	0.43461	0.43410	0.0676	0.30666	0.5682
AC	≥	Remu	0.41218	0.41348	0.0718	0.26002	0.5483
AC	≥	Work	0.15676	0.15579	0.0756	0.02298	0.2908
AC	≥	WFLB	-0.12832	-0.13432	0.0853	-0.32141	0.0169
AC	≥	Demand	0.39326	0.38010	0.0982	0.20166	0.5415
CC	≥	Perf	-0.02678	-0.01898	0.1214	-0.27089	0.2116
CC	≥	Care	0.03091	0.05977	0.0816	-0.10693	0.2241
CC	≥	Remu	0.10404	0.11131	0.0916	-0.08240	0.2753
CC	≥	Work	0.06285	0.07318	0.0717	-0.08078	0.1951
CC	≥	WFLB	0.03111	0.04579	0.1005	-0.17593	0.2109
CC	≥	Demand	-0.00140	0.01174	0.0996	-0.20199	0.1778
NC	≥	Perf	0.05789	0.05094	0.0930	-0.14425	0.2097
NC	≥	Care	0.14547	0.13745	0.0870	-0.04353	0.2836
NC	≥	Remu	0.04855	0.05096	0.0767	-0.09264	0.1908
NC	≥	Work	0.18271	0.18039	0.0613	-0.04686	0.2921
NC	≥	WFLB	0.19470	0.19242	0.0979	0.00442	0.3567
NC	≥	Demand	0.17801	0.18591	0.0924	0.02148	0.3363
Perf	≥	Work	0.24239	0.24206	0.0714	0.10564	0.3874
Perf	≥	WFLB	-0.01021	-0.00974	0.0963	-0.19582	0.1714
Perf	≥	Dema	0.00305	0.00810	0.0818	-0.15521	0.1705
Care	≥	Work	0.07364	0.07855	0.0708	-0.06401	0.2010
Care	≥	WFLB	0.24709	0.26067	0.0933	0.09786	0.4500
Care	≥	Demand	0.16578	0.17474	0.0848	-0.00506	0.3277
Remu	≥	WORK	0.24625	0.23504	0.0716	0.09315	0.3926
Rem	≥	WFLB	0.08923	0.08708	0.0824	-0.07401	0.2442
Remu	≥	Demand	0.07773	-0.08470	0.0834	-0.25659	0.0900

AC, affective commitment; CC, continuance commitment; NC, normative commitment; WFLB, work family life balance; Perf, performance management; Remu, remuneration; Care, career development; Work, work environment.

**FIGURE 1:** A framework for talent management, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention at a government department in South Africa.

allows one to determine the statistical significance and there is no number that could be considered a good GOF value or an index of average prediction for the entire model.

Figure 1 supports the findings based on the bootstrapping method; it shows the direct and indirect relationships between the key variables.

Discussion of the findings

The purpose of this study was to develop a TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention framework for a government department in South Africa by determining the relationship between these three variables. The results pointed to significant relationships between TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention. Other studies reported that HR practices were negatively and significantly related to turnover intention; however, the HR practices were positively and significantly related to organisational commitment and the relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intention was negative and significant. These results were confirmed by Allen et al. (2003), Gnanakkan (2010) and Malaeb and Garavan (2013). The study conducted by Chang (2018) on TM found that the relationship between TM practices and employee turnover intention was not significant.

This study found that TM mediated the relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intention. Baron and Kenny (1986) and Ncube (2016) found that organisational commitment did not mediate the relationship between TM and turnover intention.

Ncube (2016) opined that a limited number of studies have explored the implementation of TM in the public service (national and provincial governments); however, a study was conducted on TM as a strategic tool to retain talent.

The findings of this study that HR practices were negatively and significantly related to employee turnover intention were supported by other studies. The HR practices were positively and significantly related to organisational commitment. The relationship between organisational commitment and employee turnover intention was negative and significant (Ncube, 2016), confirming the results of Allen and Mayer (2003), Gnanakkan (2010) and Malaeb and Garavan (2013). According to Thakur and Bhandtgar (2017), the results of various studies indicated that TM practices, for example, employee recruitment, selection, training and talent retention – resulted in decreased employee turnover intention.

The results of the study were supported by the findings of Gnanakkan (2010), career development was positively and significantly related to employee turnover. Gnanakkan (2010) and Malaeb and Garavan (2013) found that there was a positive relationship between TM and employee turnover intention and a positive relationship between employee turnover intention and performance management. The study conducted by Chang (2018) disagreed with the findings of this study and found that TM practices did not have a significant impact on employee turnover intention.

In studies conducted by Baron and Kenny (1986) and Ncube (2016), organisational commitment did not mediate the relationship between TM and employee turnover intention. However, other studies reported that TM had a positive and

significant relationship with organisational commitment (Ncube, 2016).

Practical implications

The complex changes in the world of work highlight the importance of TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention at a government department in South Africa. Management should develop TM strategies on retaining talent to improve organisational performance. Talent management should be linked to the day-to-day operation of the business.

Based on the findings of the study, managers need to invest time in training and development of the low and middle-level employees and make them aware of opportunities for promotion. Employees should be encouraged to attend the identified developmental initiatives – in-house or external training – to make employees feel recognised by the employer. Should the recommendations of the study not be implemented, this will result in poor TM practices in the department and increased staff turnover because of poor organisational commitment.

Limitations

This research had some limitations: firstly, limitations relate to the limited body of knowledge, as this was the first study conducted in a government department. Secondly, the research was conducted in one government department and therefore the research results cannot be generalised to other government departments. Finally, the sample included only employees who participated in TM practices of the department and excluded the majority of the employees. The study was affected by the limited number of respondents and few senior managers sampled participated in the survey. The researcher used a quantitative method to arrive at the research results and maybe the results could have been explained better if both methods had been used.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the government department should properly implement TM strategies to retain talent for the organisation and thus remain competitive. Sustained career improvement programmes empower employees to advance their careers and contribute to organisational success. This will assist the organisation to retain key employees because they expressed satisfaction with the promotion opportunities.

The department needs to enhance the organisational culture and ethical standards. The lack thereof will affect the organisation negatively. The workforce will display counterproductive behaviour. Finally, the department needs to boost the financial rewards it gives to employees for good performance. Financial rewards serve as a motivating factor for employees and excellent performance should be rewarded to motivate employees to perform better to assist the organisation to remain competitive.

In future research, this study can be duplicated in all the South African government departments to compare results and develop a universal model that can be used across different government departments. Other mediators that will link organisational commitment and employee turnover intention should be investigated. A study should be conducted to determine whether this framework will assist with the improvement of service delivery and retaining key talent. Finally, a qualitative study can be conducted to obtain rich data about TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to develop a TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention framework for a government department in South Africa by determining the relationship between these three variables. It was found that there were significant relationships between TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention. There were demographic differences regarding TM, organisational commitment and employee turnover intention. Finally, TM mediated between organisational commitment and employee turnover intention. Talent management interventions should be developed to improve organisational commitment and to reduce turnover intention.

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Competing interests

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Authors' contributions

W.M. conducted his research and C.M.S. and L.-A.P.D. were the supervisors.

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Data availability

The data were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet and captured into the SPSS software package. The data were kept electronically as well as in hard copy. The original completed questionnaires were also stored.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the authors.

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