



**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND
ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AT A SELECTED CHEMICALS
MANUFACTURING COMPANY IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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ABSTRACT

The 21st-century business environment requires that employees perform extra-role activities to gain and retain their organisation's competitive advantage in the industry in which they operate. Engaged and committed employees are crucial in achieving and sustaining this competitive advantage. This quantitative study aimed to assess the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment. Data was collected from 135 participants through a structured questionnaire and the responses were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The findings indicate that employees displayed higher job engagement levels than their commitment to the company. However, the results suggest that employees were effectively engaged and committed to the organisation.

This study contributes significantly to the existing knowledge on employee engagement and organisational commitment.

DECLARATION

I, Precious Zinhle Mkhize, hereby declare that this dissertation submitted for the Degree of Master of Management Sciences specialising in Human Resources Management in the Faculty of Management Sciences at Durban University of Technology is my own original work and has not previously been submitted at any institution of higher education. All the sources have been acknowledged, accurately cited, and referred to in the reference list.

Precious Zinhle Mkhize

Dr Pauline Ngo Henha /Eyono

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Mr SC Mkhize for his unwavering support throughout my journey and to my son Gcwabelihle Mkhize for understanding that he had to share his time with my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I give glory to God in the Name of Jesus Christ for granting me Divine wisdom and strength during this study.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| HR | Human Resources |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| JD-R | Job Demands-Resources |
| DUT | Durban University of Technology |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for Social Sciences |
| IREC | Institutional Research Ethics Committee |
| CSR | Corporate Social Responsibility |
| MNCs | Multinational Cooperations |
| HPWSs | High Performance Work Systems |
| HRM | Human Resources Management |
| FWAs | Flexible Work Arrangements |
| EFA | Exploratory Factor Analysis |
| CFA | Confirmatory Factor Analysis |
| KMO | Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy |
| CR | Composite Reliability |
| AVE | Average Variance Extracted |
| MSV | Maximum Shared Variance |
| MaxR(H) | Maximum Redundancy |
| ANOVA | Analysis of Variance |
| SD | Standard Deviation |
| df | Degrees of Freedom |
| df | Document Frequency |
| CMINDF | Collection Minimum Document Frequency |

| | |
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| CFI | Comparative Fit Index |
| RMSEA | Root Mean Square Error of Approximation |
| TLI | Tucker-Lewis's index |
| IFI | Incremental Fit Index |
| SEM | Structural Equation Modelling |

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the last three decades, employee engagement and organisational commitment have developed to become inseparable concepts in business research because of their positive relationships with the behaviour of employees that endorse the organisation's performance and subsequently lead to profit-making (Rameshkumar, 2020:107). Therefore, employees who lack skills and support will not perform to their optimum, resulting in a loss for the company as it will not enjoy the benefits of a fully functional engaged and committed workforce. When employees perceive the presence of support, assistance with skills development, and inclusion in decision-making, they commit themselves. This commitment has a positive direct influence on the company's competitive advantage. On the contrary, uncommitted employees are resistant to change, and their resistance results in a negative influence on change implementation. The negativity then delays the achievement of organisational objectives. As employee engagement is the employee's mental, emotional, and physical commitment to the company they work for, it is therefore, the company's responsibility through management to ensure that the workforce level of engagement is kept high. Employees remain committed so that they may be able to contribute toward the achievement of individual and organisational goals, targets, and missions.

According to Sutrisno, Ausat, Permana and Harahap (2023:1). the human resource market is gaining momentum and becoming increasingly competitive due to globalisation and information technology's impact on businesses. Therefore, organisations should invest in their human capital to enable them to compete globally to gain and retain the organisation's competitive advantage. A competitive workforce is motivated, engaged, and committed to attaining organisational goals, given that engagement and commitment directly affect the company's performance. Engagement in one's work sparks creativity, and

innovation, and increases productivity. Previous studies (Sahni, 2019:285; Putri and Setianan, 2019:524) have reported employee engagement as a positive antecedent to organisational commitment, therefore, employees who are engaged in their jobs intend to stay with the company.

Munyaka, Boshoff, Pietersen, and Snelgar (2017:2) conducted a study on a South African manufacturing company and suggested that organisations that remain relevant, and sustainable and that retain their competitive advantage globally, should ensure that they have improvement strategies in place for increasing psychological capital and maintain a conducive psychological climate. Companies should have authentic leaders who positively influence employee behaviour, which will translate to the employees engaging in their work and opting to commit to the organisation instead of entertaining intentions to leave the organisation.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Burger (2019:1) reports that the chemicals' manufacturing industry is crucial in accelerating South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP). Therefore, employees in this sector should remain engaged in their jobs to ensure improved performance, which will translate into their respective organisations' growth and subsequent sector growth. Employees' commitment to the companies that trade in the chemical industry is pertinent to the sector's growth and maintenance of its contribution to the GDP. The effect of engaged and committed employees is reflected as an outcome in the organisation's performance levels. It is therefore important to have strategies in place to ensure that employees are always engaged in their jobs and are committed to the company so that the company gains and retains its competitive advantage.

In an investigation on the impact of an organisational structure on employee engagement and commitment in manufacturing firms, Funminiyi (2018:579) found that when an organisation has decentralised control mechanisms, employees are more productive and efficient which then leads to the positive contribution towards individual and organisational development. The development is an outcome of the engaged and committed workforce that leads to increased output of products and subsequent good customer service. Similarly,

a study conducted by Dhir and Shukla (2019:975) on the chemical manufacturing industry revealed that employee performance is enhanced when employees are engaged in their jobs. The engagement has a ripple effect on their colleagues within the team and consequently on overall organisational performance.

This study aims to gauge the level of engagement and commitment of employees of a chemicals manufacturer and determine the effectiveness of the employee's engagement and commitment to the company.

1.3 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Constructs under investigation are briefly defined in this section and broad definitions will be reported on in chapter two.

1.3.1 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is a persistently pervasive but positive vigorous psychological state that is work-related, where the employee is absorbed into and dedicates himself to his job as well as the company (Uddin, Mahmood and Fan, 2019:47). Sarangi and Nayak (2016:1) add that the level of employee participation and commitment to fulfil organisational values, is interpreted as an employee's engagement level. It is the dedication of the employee, good and effective skills in leadership, coupled with senior management support that determines employee engagement.

1.3.2 Organisational Commitment

Commitment is divided into three sub-concepts, the first being affective commitment where an employee is emotionally attached to the company, second, continuance commitment where an employee commits to the company because of the benefits he gets by being an employee of the company and is afraid to lose these benefits should they exit the company. The third sub-concept is a normative commitment where an employee continues to work at a company simply because they are paid for the job either intrinsically or extrinsically (Mukanzi and Senaji, 2017:1). Mugizi (2019:112) states that committed employees help reduce turnover rates in an organisation due to their loyalty and shared values, this makes it easier for the company to implement change as these employees willingly participate in change initiatives, making the transition to be efficient and effective.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Fayad and Easa (2020:6) observed a gap in the research regarding the concept of employee engagement in relation to human resource management practices. They discussed the evolution of this construct and its relationship with organisational commitment, stating that employees make significant contributions to an organisation when they are entrusted with responsibilities. This, in turn, enhances organisational commitment among the workforce (Fayad and Easa, 2020:6).

The impact of employee engagement and organisational commitment on companies can have either positive or negative consequences, depending on how these companies address employee behaviours. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of these behavioural constructs within a specific chemicals manufacturing company in South Africa.

Prior to this study, Mabele and Hoque (2020:211) conducted research on the chemical industry in Africa, including South Africa, and observed that employee performance was influenced by various antecedents and consequences of engagement and commitment, such as job satisfaction and work-related stress. This dynamic negatively impacted the industry in the long run. Due to this adverse effect, Heyns and Boikanyo (2019:1) argued that high levels of employee engagement are essential for the sustainability of the chemical industry's performance, which holds economic significance for the country. The lack of engagement and commitment would negatively affect the industry's economic relevance, as disengaged employees create a disparity between peer efforts and the company's effectiveness. At times, this disengagement impacts the organisation's financial performance and contributes to elevated turnover rates.

Employees with decreased engagement levels cannot effectively and efficiently perform their respective job functions. Therefore, it is imperative that the subjects of employee engagement and commitment receive the attention they deserve, as an engaged workforce is committed and valuable for the benefit of the organisation (Hairapetian, 2020:6). Aujla and McLarney (2020:14) additionally highlight that employee commitment can be built through a needs hierarchy that aims to meet psychological, safety, social, esteem, self-actualisation, and

balance between work and personal life needs. When human resource development occurs within an organisation, most of these needs are met, contributing to the building of employee commitment (Aujla and McLarney, 2020:14).

When an organisation's human resources are not adequately developed through practical initiatives, it becomes difficult for the organisation to introduce, implement, and evaluate change, and to encourage employees to commit to change implementation activities, as noted by Mitsakis (2019:285). Therefore, Seal, Sarupria, and Piramanayagam (2020:504) suggest that a concerted effort should be made to understand the factors that significantly impact employee engagement and commitment, such as turnover and turnover intent. This compels employees and management to be aware of the determinants of employee engagement and organisational commitment in order to maintain a healthy work environment, which would inevitably contribute to increased engagement and commitment levels (Seal et al., 2020:504).

1.5 THE AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aims to assess the effectiveness of engagement and organisational commitment of employees at the selected chemicals manufacturing company.

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the level of employee engagement and commitment to the company.
- To determine the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at the company.
- To identify antecedents and consequences of employee engagement and organisational commitment.
- To provide recommendations to management based on the findings.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the level of employee engagement and commitment in the company?

- What is the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at the company?
- What are the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement and organisational commitment?
- What do the findings recommend to management?

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is anticipated that this study will enhance the existing literature on employee engagement and organisational commitment concepts. The study aims to integrate theoretical concepts with practical applications. Furthermore, it has examined the effectiveness of these concepts within the company. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable recommendations to the organisation, ensuring that employees are engaged and committed to all organisational activities, experience job fulfilment, achieve work-life balance, and realise both individual and company growth. According to Marseno and Muafi (2021:5), employee engagement and organisational commitment have a positive and significant relationship with employee work-life balance.

A study by Sahni (2019:286) concluded that an employee's quality of work life is shaped by factors such as working conditions, opportunities for growth and development, social relationships, work culture, and job satisfaction. A positive relationship exists between the quality of work life and employee engagement and commitment. Therefore, when strategies are implemented to promote employee well-being in the workplace, this support proves instrumental in helping employees manage work-related stress and face other challenges at work. When an employee's emotional well-being is prioritised at work, it positively impacts their personal life, reducing work-family conflicts. Consequently, employees can concentrate their attention and energy on their jobs, which indicates engagement and subsequent commitment. These behaviours yield positive effects on the organisation, as employees remain undistracted by both internal and external factors, focusing entirely on their work. The result is increased productivity, which leads to higher profitability.

1.9 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on a selected chemical manufacturing company, registered under Durban Chemical's cluster, with the head office based in KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa with a staff complement spread across four of South Africa's nine provinces in which the company trades. The four provinces are KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Western Cape, and Eastern Cape. The remainder of the provinces are excluded because the company does not have a footprint in them. The study included administration and operations or production staff and excluded the organisations' customers/clients, suppliers, independent contractors that conduct work on site and any other external stakeholders of the organisation.

1.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

To balance business needs and meet reasonable employee expectations, management needs to ensure that their teams are kept highly engaged and committed to the organisation's mission and values (Sahni, 2019:285). This research study aims to determine the level of employee engagement and organisational commitment and the effect that these work behaviours have on the organisation. Chapter two will review existing literature and explore empirical studies that have been concluded on employee engagement and organisational commitment both in academia and in industry. The existing literature will form a backdrop for this study so that findings can be compared to or contrasted against previous studies that examined employee engagement and organisational commitment concepts.

CHAPTER 2

AN EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The 21st-century business environment demands that employees engage in extra-role activities to gain and maintain their organisation's competitive advantage in their respective industries. Engaged employees play a critical role in achieving and sustaining this competitive advantage, as their additional efforts contribute to success through innovation, motivation, punctuality, and a drive for excellence. Employee confidence and a drive for success are fostered through the creation of a conducive work environment, where employees can thrive and demonstrate engagement in their tasks. This engagement, in turn, translates into commitment and helps achieve organisational goals.

This chapter will review the literature supporting the constructs of employee engagement and organisational commitment. The history and evolution of these concepts will be outlined by examining similar studies conducted over time in both business and academic literature. The concepts of engagement and commitment will be discussed systematically, focusing on their history, definitions, different approaches, determinants, and dimensions. The antecedents and significance of employee engagement and organisational commitment will also be examined in this chapter. In addition, the benefits that a company derives from a committed and engaged workforce will be reviewed. Various theoretical models that underpin employee engagement and organisational commitment will serve as a framework for this study.

Subsequently, the relationship between employee engagement and organisational commitment will be explored, along with the impact of demographics on engagement and commitment, followed by the effectiveness of these concepts within the work environment. The state and impact of employee

engagement and organisational commitment within the chemical manufacturing context will be highlighted. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model will be utilised as a reference framework due to its relevance to the study.

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Harunavamwe, Nel and Van Zyl (2020:508) identified that employee engagement had become a popularised concept to gain competitive advantage and improve organisational performance for over two decades before their study, yet academic studies on the construct were scant, therefore creating a knowledge gap in the literature which ultimately gave rise to the need for additional empirical studies.

Chadni and Rahman (2020:932), view engagement as a psychological state in theory (academics) but is viewed as a workforce strategy in practice. These differing views give rise to different conceptualisations as researchers explain the concepts from their own point of view (theory or practical). As such, definitions of employee engagement differ and conclusions on the concept often differ. The authors observe that a lack of resources and support denies employees the opportunity for optimal performance and attainment of targets and thus results in decreased levels of engagement which inevitably taints commitment levels (Chadni and Rahman 2020:932).

Employee engagement is deemed as an employee's involvement in the organisational activities and in organisational values. An engaged employee collaborates with their team to contribute towards the implementation of the business framework. Engagement is dependent on how employees perceive the organisation and the treatment they receive from the company (Sridevi and Priyanka, 2018:254). In agreement, Miawati, Sunaryo and Yusnita (2020:102) add that some employees who have worked for many years in a company remain engaged in their jobs because they feel proud to be associated with the organisation and are inspired by the organisation's values. This group of employees is mainly the homegrown talent of the organisation (Miawati *et al.*, 2020:102). To ensure that the home-grown talent is retained, leaders are responsible for driving engagement within the organisation through managing organisational culture. When the organisational culture is managed effectively,

employees will channel their abilities and energies into engaging in their jobs because they will have a positive outlook toward the company's culture (Pepra-Mensah and Kyeremeh, 2018:13).

Ameen and Baharom (2019:138) point out that engaged employees are content, devoted, and involved in management plans for organisational development and reinforcement and they exude a mature level of discretionary exertion. According to Ibrahim, Rodzi and Zin (2021:33), engaged employees are a source of motivation for colleagues and they enhance unity in the workplace. Engaged employees are essential contributors to organisational development ideas and innovation. Similarly, Barinua and Deinma (2022:7) believe that engaged employees remain motivated to deliver above the requirements of their jobs which develops their commitment to the company. Therefore, employee engagement is key to any organisation's overall performance.

Tepayakul and Rinthaisong (2018:71) state that engagement is a behavioural trait that employees either bring into their work performance or leave out. Employee engagement is a form of attitude that one has towards their job. When an employee chooses to bring a positive engagement attitude to their job, they become highly motivated and devote themselves to personal and organisational growth. In the same vein, Sendawula, Kimuli, Bananuka and Muganga (2018:2) state that employee engagement is a multidimensional phenomenon that is critical to any organisation's growth or lack thereof. Employees are the most valuable asset of any organisation, and their behaviour affects the organisation's reputation whether positively or negatively. To manage employee engagement, the company provides its employees with benefits, whether monetary or not then the employees feel obligated to reciprocate in the form of engagement and enhanced job performance.

2.3 CONCEPTUALISATION OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Kahn (1990:692) first defined employee engagement as "the employment and expression of a person's preferred self in task behaviours that promote connections to work and with others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional) and active full performance". Lemon and Palenchar (2018:143) contribute that employee engagement denotes the employee's psychological

presence while performing their job tasks. While Govender and Bussin (2020:4) further explain that an employee's belief about their organisational culture, the management and their organisation is termed cognitive engagement. The feelings that employees express about their colleagues, superiors and the company are the emotional state of engagement and the extra effort that the employee exerts toward the accomplishment of departmental and organisational goals is the behavioural factor of employee engagement. Cognitive, emotional, and physical engagement adds value to the company (Govender and Bussin, 2020:4).

Antony (2018:34) identified three levels of employee engagement. The first level is the employees who are engaged, the second are the employees who are not engaged, and the third are disengaged employees. Engaged employees are those who utilise their talent efficiently and their strength effectively to increase performance levels and remain consistent high performers. Passionate employees and those who drive innovation in the company, are also deemed as engaged. While employees who perform their tasks without passion or an ounce of energy but just serve time are identified as not engaged. Whereas a group of employees who are not engaged tends to negatively affect the company's bottom line due to their lack of productivity and efficiency. The disengaged lot are unhappy and ensure that their unhappiness is known to colleagues, and they undermine work that is performed by their engaged colleagues consistently, which negatively impacts the organisation (Antony, 2018:34).

According to Joseph, Guhanandan and Panchanatham (2018:39), employee engagement depicts the employee's level of attention to and focus on their work, enabling them to contribute toward a common goal. Employee engagement is when employees are cognitively aware and emotionally connected to their peers. When superiors communicate their expectations and nurture a good working relationship with their subordinates, they make it effortless for employees to remain engaged. An engaged employee shows more creativity and innovation in task performance when they know what is expected of them (Joseph *et al.*, 2018:39). Kumar, De Bruyn and Bushney (2020:2) support this view and state that employee engagement is a form of conscious decision-making by the employee through the expression of passion, use of skill set, experience, and the

expression of intellectual ability as well as the expertise when they perform their jobs. This decision-making adds value to the job that the employee completes and to the organisation on a larger scale (Kumar *et al.*, 2020:2). Additionally, engaged employees can tackle demanding jobs head-on and these employees have a connection with their jobs (Govender and Bussin, 2020:2). Therefore, an employee's positive attitude and passion shown toward the organisation's vision and values denote engagement (Funminiyi, 2018:582).

Akter, Ahmed, Sentosa and Hizam (2022:1) posit that, although the concept of employee engagement has been researched by many scholars over time, it is still difficult to comprehend the definition of engagement. Barinua and Deinma (2022:8) agree that employee engagement does not have a unitary definition and Tepayakul and Rinthaisong (2018:71) concur that employee engagement does not have a universal definition.

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one can conclude that researchers define the concept of employee engagement based on their surroundings and circumstances. The employee engagement constructs have a different definition in theory than it does in practice, however, the employee behaviours that depict engagement are similar in nature.

2.4 APPROACHES TO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Azzahra and Putranto (2023:83) identified three approaches for an engaged employee: Say, Stay, and Strive. Overtime, these approaches have been supported by several authors across different studies that measured employee engagement against other variables (Hughes and Rog, 2008); (Bedarkar and Pandita, 2014); (Zhang, Avery, Bergsteiner, and More, 2014) and (Djoemadi, Setiawan, Noermijati, and Irawanto, 2019).

The *Say approach* is associated with positive talk about the company amongst colleagues, potential future colleagues and external clients or customers. This means that employees are proud to be associated with the company and would recommend the company to others, whether as an employer or business partner. Meanwhile, the *Stay approach* involves having a strong sense of belonging and wanting to be part of the organisation. Employees who manifest this approach are involved in problem-solving teams and contribute immensely to projects that

help the company grow. Lastly, the *Strive approach* deals with remaining motivated and making a concerted effort toward success in one's job and contributing toward the success of the company by performing job tasks that are above and beyond one's job description to obtain quality and extraordinary results (Azzahra and Putranto, 2023:83).

Kwon and Park (2019:354) explain two perspectives of employee engagement, namely the trait (core) and state (surface and attitude) perspective. The trait level is associated with why a particular employee is engaged, while the state level has to do with the fluctuation of engagement levels based on individual employee experiences in their jobs. The outcome of trait and state engagement is behavioural engagement. Behavioural engagement examples include organisational citizenship behaviour, extra-role behaviour where an employee goes an extra mile and proactive behaviour where an employee takes personal initiative. Role expansion and general engagement with peers and superiors, denote behavioural engagement (Kwon and Park, 2019:354). Islam and Tariq (2018:260) add that traits are cognitively related, and the state is emotionally related. The characteristics of an individual that has high trait employee engagement include having a proactive and autotelic personality, and a positive view of work and life which gives rise to a positive effect that assists the employee to deal with challenges in an optimistic manner. Furthermore, an employee who has high trait engagement has a locus of control, whether internal or external. This employee is often conscientious in the performance of their duties. Parallel to trait engagement, an employee with high state engagement is characterised by feelings of absorption and energy. Job satisfaction that results from task involvement and organisational commitment are also characteristics of state engagement. Additionally, when employees feel empowered and are effectively satisfied at work, it brings about state employee engagement (Islam and Tariq, 2018:260). In the same vein, Barreiro, and Treglown (2018:4) used the emotional intelligence approach (state level) as a psychological resource to predict employee engagement and the results indicated that emotionally intelligent employees tend to manifest higher engagement levels.

Chopde, Singh and Pande (2019:2) outlined six work-life factors that affect employee engagement and argued that firstly, when an employee is delegated

with a sustainable workload, that employee can make choices and take control over their position or job. Secondly, the employee should be recognised and rewarded for a well-done job. Thirdly, the department should have a strong support structure to assist the employees. Fourthly, there should be a sense of community amongst colleagues. Fifthly, management should ensure that rules are enforced fairly and just with all employees. Lastly, the employees' work should be valuable and meaningful. When all these factors are well managed and implemented consistently, the employee will remain engaged in their work and prioritise the company's interests (Chopde, *et al.*, 2019:2).

2.5 DIMENSIONS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

According to Brenyah and Obuobisa-Darko (2017:2), employee engagement is characterised by three dimensions, namely physical, emotional, and cognitive dimensions. Physical engagement is related to an employee's expansion of their physical and mental self when performing their tasks, this expansion also increases the employee's level of confidence in their job. Emotional engagement relates to the working relationship an employee has with their employer. The relationship is built through the provision of a conducive working environment that enables the employee to feel a sense of belonging in the company, to trust and to have a buy-in on the company's vision and mission. Cognitive engagement is achieved when employees are aware of the organisation's goals and strategies and what role the employee needs to play to ensure that there is implementation of the organisational strategies. It is in these dimensions that an employee invests to perform at their optimum thereby becoming a source of competitive advantage for the organisation (Brenyah and Obuobisa-Darko, 2017:2).

According to Gulyani and Sharma (2018:259), employee engagement is divided into three subcomponents, namely vigour, dedication, and absorption.

- *Vigour*, which is the physical dimension, is the resilience of the employee's mental state while performing their jobs. An employee who has vigour willingly invests their efforts and is persistent in the performance of their jobs. Challenges do not hinder this type of employee, instead, they convert frustration to innovation, and they are solution driven.

- *Dedication* or the emotional dimension of employee engagement, is the level of involvement in one's tasks. A sense of pride accompanies this dimension in the employee's results. The significance of the employee's job, the inspiration that the employee draws from the job, and the enthusiasm that they feel when doing their job are indicators of dedication.
- *Absorption* is the cognitive dimension of an employee's engagement, and the degree of focus on one's job leads to attachment to the job. When an employee is absorbed in their job, it makes it difficult to detach from the job due to the intrinsic enjoyment the employee experiences while performing their tasks (Gulyani and Sharma, 2018:259).

Jaya and Ariyanto (2021:312) concur that vigour is related to an employee's physical strength and energy that they show at work along with persistence even when faced with difficult moments. Employee performance is positively influenced by vigour since productivity levels tend to increase when employees have high vigour. Meanwhile, dedication is the employee's disciplined behaviour while performing a task to completion. A dedicated employee takes initiative and provides solutions to problems they encounter during project implementation. They are a valued asset in the organisation because they have a better understanding of how the organisation functions and therefore can contribute to the attainment of integral organisational goals. Lastly, absorption denotes employee persistence and results in high performance levels which lead to the achievement of predetermined targets. Kotze (2018:280) identified the core employee engagement components as vigour and dedication, rendering the absorption dimension a consequence of the preceding two dimensions. When an employee is mentally resilient and has the energy to invest considerable effort into their work, the result is happiness as they become totally engrossed in their tasks. The employee also feels proud and inspired by their job. In addition, Barreiro and Treglown (2020:2) state that an employee's emotional intelligence correlates with the vigour, dedication, and absorption dimensions.

Funminiyi (2018:583) further explored four more dimensions of employee engagement: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

- *Meaning* is a feeling of purpose and belonging to an employee's team and the organisation. The employees treat the company and its problems as if the company were their own and strive to find solutions that will lead to the smooth functioning of the organisation.
- *Competence* is when the employee manifests a degree of efficiency and self-accomplishment. Employees tend to make fewer mistakes and become experts in their jobs over time. This leads to employee knowledge sharing and contributes to individual and company growth.
- *Self-determination* is the perception an employee has that they are in control and have autonomy to make decisions. When employees are given decision-making freedom, they own their jobs and become accountable, which releases pressure on their managers.
- *Impact* is the belief that the employee's input adds value to the team and to the organisation, and that their contributions form part of the 'bigger picture' which consequently translates to organisational effectiveness and growth. This belief fills the employee with pride in what they do and the company they work for (Funminiyi, 2018:583).

In addition, Antony (2018:33) also identifies energy, involvement and efficacy as dimensions of employee engagement in the workplace. Energy is defined as the employee's strength and vitality required to perform a given task. The employee's emotional or personal association with their work depicts involvement. On the other hand, efficacy is the employee's ability to produce work that meets a desired or intended standard.

Therefore, it is imperative that leaders who are primarily involved in engagement improvement practices contribute immensely to employee engagement dimensions. These leaders are champions in building employee value propositions that are effective and offer valuable rewards to employees. The leaders are enablers of their team's performance. In conclusion, Shen and Jiang (2019:35) state that employee engagement dimensions can occur simultaneously as well as holistically.

2.6 ANTECEDENTS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Svensson, Jeong, Shuck, and Otto (2021) identify, amongst others, internal communication as a key driver to employee engagement, recognising that effective internal communication influences employee engagement. According to Lemon and Palenchar (2018:144), internal communication as an antecedent of employee engagement positively contributes to the building of meaningful work relationships that in turn optimise employee engagement. Internal communication is a channel through which employees can express their suggestions and innovations which enhances employee engagement in decision making and project implementation. Shahid (2019:45) concurs that organisational performance is driven by employee engagement which is enabled through communication of expectations between employers and their subordinates and a trust relationship which directly translates to mutually beneficial success for the company and its employees. This engagement is characterised by drivers and strategic outcomes that have a direct influence on employees. Seal, Sarupia, and Piramanayagam (2020:507) agree that the absence of effective communication decreases employee engagement levels and creates distrust between the employees and the organisation. It was found that employee engagement is influenced by the employee's ability to make their voice heard. Frequent and transparent communication builds trust between the employee and the organisation. Highly engaged employees communicate more with their superiors than employees with low engagement (Seal *et al.*, 2020:507).

Bhana and Suknunan (2021:318) then identified four more enablers of employee engagement. The first enabler is the company's strategic narrative which is spearheaded by the organisational leadership. Secondly, managers who are engaged and lead by example in engaging their subordinates. Thirdly, considering employee opinions during decision making and lastly, having integrity, which means being honest in business transactions and maintaining strong moral principles and ethical behaviour. On the other hand, Claypool (2017:22) argues that employee engagement is characterised by employee performance that is consistently rewarded through recognition and other monetary rewards, adding that factors that affect employee morale have a direct bearing on organisational success and one of these factors is rewards and how

the rewards system is implemented. To support this idea, Ameen and Baharom (2019:137) propose a conceptual model that signifies the positive effect of employee engagement on measures such as recognition through promotion, financial rewards, training and practical feedback.

Antony (2018:34) opines that employee engagement is driven by effective Human Resources (HR) and organisational policies and procedures that are employee-oriented and enable employee performance. When the employer communicates job expectations to the employee in the form of a well-articulated job description and offers the employee development opportunities that are available to assist with career growth, the employee perceives that the organisation cares about his/her career growth. Management that is actively involved in employee engagement initiatives, contributes to the employee's feeling of belongingness to the company and this strengthens trust relations within the organisation. Additionally, performance management which encompasses employee recognition, effective communication with employees on organisational goals and the progress being made towards reaching those goals, drives engagement. Furthermore, compensation and benefits, conflict management and resolution practices and employee wellness initiatives that address work-life balance and a safe and healthy working environment, also contribute to positive employee engagement levels. Employee assistance programs that assist with the management of stress and depression help reduce non-engagement among employees. Furthermore, the company's participation in community assistance programs with employee involvement through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, is one of the ways that employees feel proud about being an associate of the company they work for, and this increases their engagement (Antony, 2018:34).

According to Akter *et al.* (2022:3), employees are the backbone of the company and the company's measurement of success is determined by employee satisfaction through transformational leadership and adequate training. An employee's abilities, knowledge and behaviour are positively affected by training which leads to increased efficiency whereas the influence of one's abilities, knowledge and behaviour gives rise to development. Employees become engaged when they know and understand the company's vision and core

business and they can rally their performance towards making this vision a reality through utilising the skills they acquire from training programmes. Employee performance is enabled through the provision of tools and resources. The resources can either be physical, for example, machinery or stationery or psychological resources, for example, knowledge sharing. This enhances employee morale which ultimately leads to employee engagement (Antony, 2018:34). Furthermore, when an employee signs up for a training course in their line of work, it builds up their assurance on how to best perform in their current tasks and consequently the employee becomes more engaged in their work. At this level of engagement, the employee is eligible for promotion to a position of added responsibility which positively adds to the employee's engagement attitude in their work. The employees' sense of belonging receives a boost when they are promoted, and they therefore feel an obligation to deliver better results (Claypool, 2017:2).

Ameen and Baharom (2019:136) assert that performance appraisal systems are a crucial predictor of the level of engagement amongst employees and that the workforce is affected by its purposes which translates to how effective and efficient that workforce performs. Implementation of HR practices such as promotions, training and development, rewards and recognition that result from performance appraisals, determine the increase of engagement levels. HR practitioners should therefore ensure that these practices are implemented properly, consistently, and fairly. In addition, promotion has been deemed a significant aspect that positively affects employee engagement levels. These engagement levels are maintained by receipt of performance feedback from the employee's superior which inspires the employee to engage themselves even further and leads to the feeling of contentment when they see the supervisor's concern for their growth and success. Employee recognition plays a vital role in enhancing employee engagement. When employees are recognised for their efforts and for going the extra mile, their engagement level automatically increases. In the same vein, employees are more enthused when performance recognition is linked to a monetary reward such as a salary increase or bonus. However, non-monetary rewards as a recognition reimbursement also assist in inspiring and engaging the workforce. It is undeniable though that employees will

exert much effort when the reward is financial. Rewards contribute to the employee's intention to stay with the organisation, and this leads to a decrease in turnover and increases job satisfaction and contributes to high engagement levels. The opposite holds, if employees are not well remunerated, they tend to be slack in their performance, are absent more frequently, they lack punctuality, and subsequently resign from the organisation, contributing to increased turnover rates (Ameen and Baharom, 2019:143). In agreement, Alam, Mendelson, Boamah and Gauthier (2022:4) state that the extrinsic and intrinsic reward system that includes both monetary and non-monetary rewards results in an engaged workforce. Transformational leaders are champions of these systems since the receipt of these rewards motivates the employee to go the extra mile willingly. When properly rewarded, employees feel empowered and confident to perform tasks beyond their job description to help the company achieve its objectives (Alam *et al.*, 2022:4).

Alam *et al.* (2022:4) further identified employee engagement antecedents such as reward management, general management, transformational leadership, and performance management and suggested that the competent execution of these antecedents potentially leads to increased employee engagement levels. Engagement increases when the working environment is conducive through favourable working conditions perpetuated by supportive managers who provide coaching and mentoring to their employees. This makes the performance management exercise easy on the manager's part and valuable on the employee's part since performance management drives employee engagement.

In their study on employee engagement and relational energy, Amah and Sese (2018:475) found relational energy to be an antecedent of employee engagement, citing that this energy is the result of employee-manager interaction that assists in managing work-family or family-work conflicts. Employees who are engaged tend to invest in the generation of positive relational energy in work relationships. Conversely, these employees would avoid situations or work relationships that exude negative energy. Perceived organisational support is an element of relational energy. When employees are given the support, they need to enable them to contribute toward organisational processes, they reciprocate by putting in extra effort in their jobs. When management values employees'

efforts and supplies them with the required resources to accomplish their tasks or projects, employee performance levels increase. The authors used social exchange theory to support their argument (Amah and Sese, 2018:475).

2.7 IMPORTANCE OF ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

Hakanen, Ropponen, Schaufeli, and De Witte (2019) observed that employees who manifest high levels of engagement tend to be more respectful to their colleagues, have a positive outlook on their work and the organisation and are efficient team players who demonstrate excellence with continued self-improvement on the job. The scholars further found that engagement levels varied throughout the hierarchy; line-level or shopfloor employees' engagement levels were lower than those of their supervisors and managers. These engagement levels were also linked to rewards, where shop floor staff focused more on monetary rewards whereas supervisors and managers attached more significance to non-monetary rewards (Lu *et al.*, 2016:741).

Engaged employees are more productive than unengaged employees based on four characteristics being that they possess positive job sentiments, they have confidence and are open to work opportunities and have optimism; their well-being enables their engagement which results in improved productivity, and they are resourceful and self-sufficient with high levels of self-esteem (Barreiro and Treglown, 2020). Additional to employee productivity levels, engaged employees contribute to the company's reputation to its customers and other stakeholders (Alam *et al.*, 2022:1). Furthermore, Antony (2018:32) states that an organisation that boasts an engaged workforce benefits from positive word-of-mouth from employees to the public, the employees are loyal and express goodwill towards the company and as a result, there is less absenteeism and attrition rates are lowered.

Regarding teamwork, Bhana and Suknunan (2021:318) suggest that leaders should be engaged first to foster a culture of engagement in their team members. Meaning, that when team members are not engaged and/or disengaged due to the leadership's lack of engagement, their performance is reduced, they become less committed to their tasks or projects, they come up with excuses for producing sub-standard work, and they shift blame for mistakes to their colleagues. To

assist leaders with employee engagement management, Santhanam and Srinivas (2019:511) list employee engagement as one of the seven quality management standards and suggest that organisations should ensure that their employees are engaged to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in management.

Engaged employees are a source of an organisation's competitive advantage. An engaged workforce is more adaptable, a competitive advantage that an organisation can use to their advantage, particularly when implementing change initiatives. Employees who are empowered engage themselves in their jobs and organisational initiatives. Creating a work environment that supports high performance and allows the employees to participate in decision-making by contributing their ideas leads to an engaged workforce (Burnett and Lisk, 2019:113).

In sum, organisations need to have engaged employees as part of their assets as these employees play an important role in ensuring that the company can compete successfully in the market that it trades in. Employees' engagement in their jobs has a ripple effect on the organisation's ultimate success.

2.8 BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Engaged employees are persistent and resilient even during difficult periods in their jobs, they concentrate on and dedicate themselves to the task at hand with a sense of pride which then renders it difficult for the employee to detach themselves from the project or the organisation. Employee engagement, therefore, signifies organisational health or the lack thereof when employees are disengaged, which translates to increased or decreased productivity (Kumari, Jauhari, Rastogi and Sivakumar, 2017:138).

As noted by Alam *et al.* (2022:4) when employees perceive that there is a reward in the form of job resources and related benefits in return for their efforts, they are sure to engage themselves in the current task fully, however difficult it may be, with enthusiasm. This engagement benefits the organisation through task completion. Additionally, when employees perceive management support, they will engage, leading to increased productivity levels that directly translate to the attainment of the bottom line (Gulyani and Sharma, 2018:258-259).

Job satisfaction has been widely associated with employee engagement based on the notion that employees who have high engagement levels are likely to be satisfied in their jobs, however, these constructs are different as employee engagement encompasses a more active psychological state that includes emotions and behaviours towards work, whereas job satisfaction is generally focused on the satiation of work experience. However, these constructs can co-exist (Shuck, Adelson and Reio, 2017:958). In addition to job satisfaction, Antony (2018:32) maintains that engaged employees are passionate in their work and have a deep connection with the company, which leads them to be innovation drivers that subsequently move the company to new and greater heights. As a result, conflict is also minimised amongst an engaged workforce, and should any conflicting issues arise, they are managed much more effectively since the team is almost always in cohesion when engaged (Antony, 2018:32).

Kotze (2018:280) highlighted some personal resources that engaged employees leverage to optimise their performance. These personal resources include but are not limited to coping mechanisms, problem-solving skills, optimism, self-efficiency, high self-esteem, and resilience. A self-efficient employee is convinced of their motivation and maximises their cognitive resources for efficient and successful task execution. An optimistic employee is always expectant of favourable outcomes, which directly increases their motivation and helps them persevere until they attain the desired outcomes. A resilient employee is mindful and able to cope with and endure difficult situations while thriving through adversity (Kotze, 2018:280). In addition, Chopde *et al.* (2019:2) note that engaged employees are involved in personal and company goal attainment, are passionate about their work, show enthusiasm while performing their duties, manifest a focused effort and avoid unnecessary distractions when performing their duties, they are committed to the organisation and exude an energetic spirit.

Similarly, Dhir and Shukla (2019:974) found that an engaged employee will contribute to individual and business outcomes. The individual outcomes include taking initiative, commitment in an emotional, rational, and intellectual way as well as high levels of discretion. The business-related outcomes that an engaged employee would contribute to are of improved productivity levels, decreased

turnover and turnover intention, higher levels of customer satisfaction and an increase in the bottom line (Dhir and Shukla, 2019:974).

Seal *et al.* (2020:506) posit that an engaged workforce leverages supportive leadership. Engaged employees play an integral part in decision-making which encourages them to increase their performance levels and subsequently leads to enthusiasm and satisfaction. The engaged workforce then delivers outputs or services that are of a better and higher quality. Being supportive and providing a platform for employees to grow and develop, automatically leads to increased engagement and commitment levels. Similarly, having a supportive team and established interpersonal relationships among employees influences and promotes employee engagement (Seal *et al.*, 2020:506).

Barreiro and Treglown (2020:1) found that engaged employee's manifest traits such as happiness, self-motivation, emotion management, self-awareness, high conscience, extraversion, and transparency. These traits serve as personal psychological resources that result in increased engagement levels.

Thus, drawing from the above reviews, one can conclude that there is a great benefit for organisations with strategies to ensure that their employees are engaged and remain engaged in their jobs. Management or team leaders bear the responsibility of keeping their teams motivated and engaged. Engaged employees are self-sufficient and independent, making the manager's job much easier.

2.9 THEORETICAL MODELS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

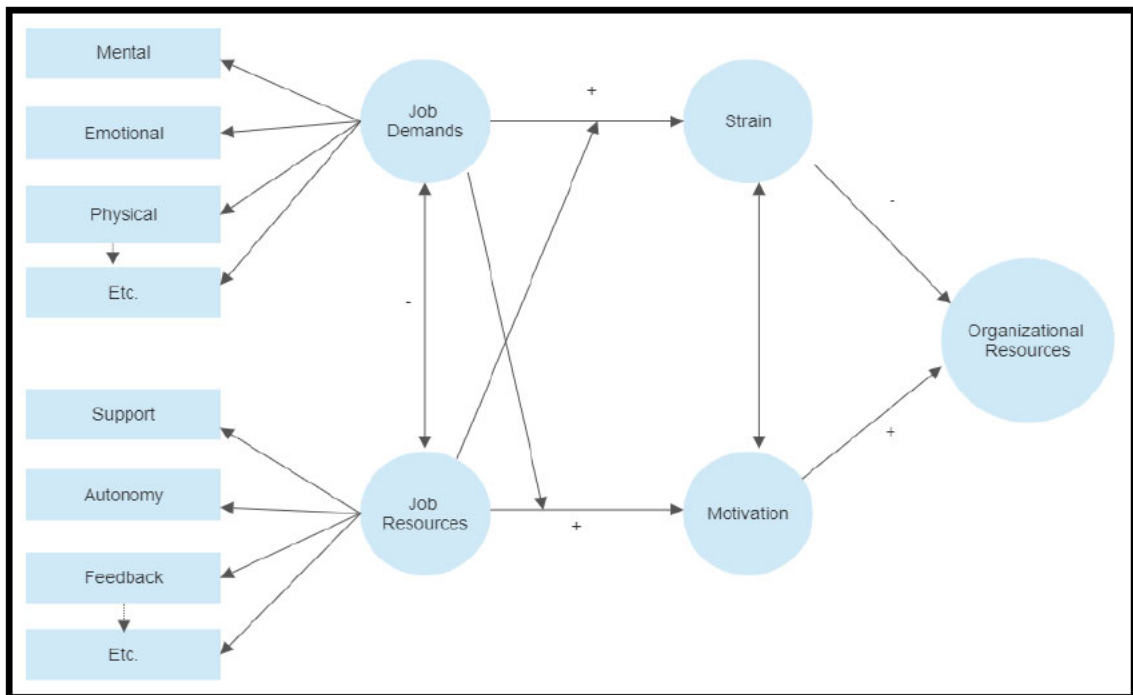
Some various theories and models have been proposed by scholars to explain the employee engagement concept in business and academic research and to aid the practical implementation of the construct in the workplace. One of the models that has gained traction is the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model that was first developed by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti in 2006. This study will utilise the JD-R model as a frame of reference, as its components are significant to the current investigation. Additionally, the Zinger employee engagement model will be visited briefly as it contains elements related to this study.

2.9.1 The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

Bakker and Demerouti (2007:312) developed the Job Demands-Resource (JD-R) model, as illustrated in Figure 2.1, to address employee well-being, an antecedent of employee engagement. Job characteristics such as burnout, job strain and work engagement can profoundly impact human capital well-being. The JD-R model contributes to employee engagement in that, the presence or abundance of job resources could potentially motivate an employee to meet their job demands efficiently, which would then lead to higher levels of work engagement, decreased levels of cynicism, and consequently, performance levels that are above average (Kwon and Kim, 2020:2). Intrinsically, job resources may contribute to employee growth and development through learning or may be instrumental in achieving organisational goals. The JD-R model has been used as the main frame of reference for the present study as it addresses inputs and outcomes that may positively or negatively affect an employee's engagement level. When employees are adequately resourced, they can deal with the demands of their jobs and can make means to maximise the available resources to meet set targets. This reduces work-related stress and promotes engagement since the focus is not on the scarcity of resources but on ways, the team can collaborate to achieve their goals.

Bakker and Demerouti (2007:312) hypothesize that supportive colleagues help each other to accomplish tasks timeously with less or no strain. Constant feedback from superiors increases the chance of overall goal achievement and doubles up as a coping mechanism when the employee's job becomes demanding. The employee's job-related stress levels decrease when the employee is given autonomy over their tasks. This autonomy enables them to plan their task execution without undue pressure.

FIGURE 2.1: THE JOB DEMANDS-RESOURCES MODEL



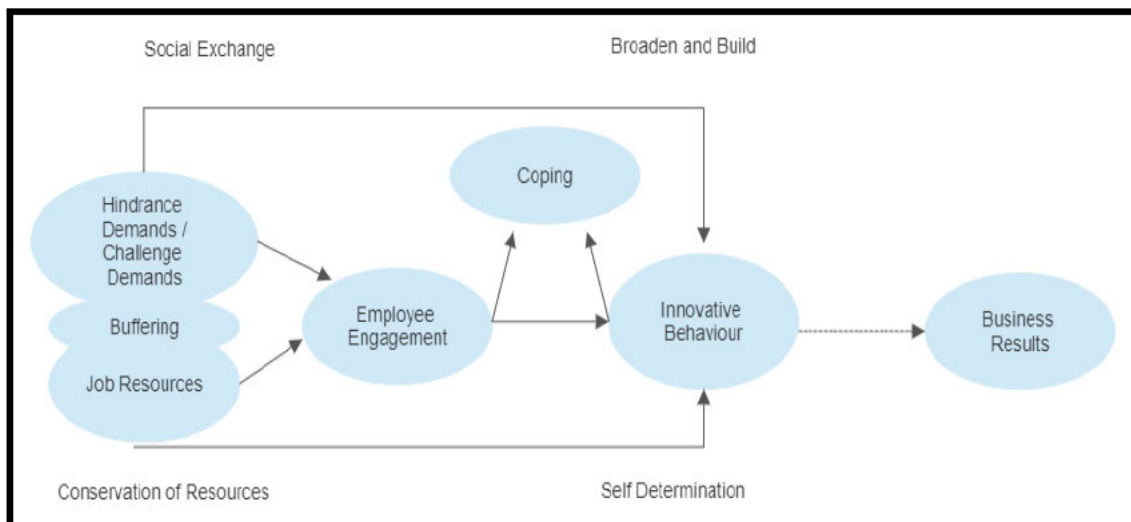
Source: Bakker and Demerouti. (2007:313). (Adapted)

Albrecht, Breidahl and Marty (2018:68) posit that the JD-R model dominates the employee engagement research field, particularly when identifying the antecedents and consequences of employee engagement and putting them into perspective. Previously, research surrounding the JD-R model focused on job resources, but personal resources have since been considered as they play a vital role in the overall performance of employees and help to determine engagement levels amongst employees. These personal resources include but are not limited to optimism, autonomy, and self-efficacy (Albrecht *et al.*, 2018:68). Alessandri, Consiglio, Luthans and Borgogni (2018:35) add that the personal resources that form part of the JD-R model are like the psychological capital concept, in that, it motivates the employee from the inside out, protecting the employee from stress that comes with work demands, potentially leading to increased engagement levels and the achievement of set goals and targets. This intrinsic motivation builds a tenacious and persistent character within the employee and drives success. Barreiro and Treglown (2020:2) additionally identified emotional intelligence as a personal resource and coping mechanism that could be associated with the JD-R model, stating that employees perform

better when they have high emotional intelligence, they are less stressed and are hardly burned out, they can handle workplace bullies and are self-efficient.

Kwon and Kim (2020:2) later refined the JD-R model, as illustrated in Figure 2.2. The model works as a dual process of job demands that lead to employees being exhausted and left with low energy levels on the one hand versus the abundance of resources that fuel employee engagement and raise energy levels of the employee on the other hand. When job resources are equal to or more than job demands, employees tend to be more productive, concentrating on the task at hand and not the stress that comes with a lack of resources. The availability of resources serves as a buffer against job demands.

FIGURE 2.2: THE J-DR MODEL REDEFINED



Source: Kwon and Kim. (2020:14). (Adapted)

The availability of job resources shifts the focus from the difficulty or stressfulness of the job and serves as a motivation to assist the employee to remain invigorated and accomplish set goals. This prevents burnout meant to be caused by job demands and adds meaning and psychological safety to the employee's job. The employees then fully avail themselves psychologically to meet the job demands less strenuously and remain engaged (Mhlanga, Mjoli, Qhamisa and Marange, 2021:3).

Munir, Wahab, Perveen, Khan, Kashif, and Shehzad (2022:334) concur that the JD-R model has been widely utilised for employee engagement and burnout or exhaustion and organisational commitment predictions. More predictions such as

absenteeism, employee well-being, performance and motivation levels have been made possible through this model where management or researchers have used the JD-R model to analyse trends. Taking proactive and preventative actions to address these predictions has assisted organisations in avoiding negative outcomes such as disengaged, unengaged, and uncommitted employees in their workforces (Munir *et al.*, 2022:334). Rattrie, Kittler and Paul (2020:178) posit that job resources play a dual motivational role, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsically, they enrich the employee's learning capabilities, growth, and development; they satisfy the employee's need for independence and autonomy, serve to make decisions, acknowledge employee competence and affiliation, and receive social feedback from superiors or peers. Extrinsically, job resources propel the employee to commit to the organisation and remain engaged, increasing the chances of completing tasks and achieving set goals. Moreover, Laulié, Pavez, Echeverría, Cea, and Jiménez (2021:514) state that the availability of resources helps mitigate risks associated with the job at hand. These risks include not meeting deadlines and demands, sub-standard outputs, service rendering that is below average and consequently, loss of customers, profits, or income.

Munir *et al.*, (2022:334) present an account of job resources across four levels. The first set of job resources are at company level, such as job security, opportunities for career growth and advancement and remuneration and benefits. The second set of resources are at the work level where supervisory, peer support and teamwork are encouraged. The third level of resources enable the employee to submit suggestions for process improvement. This is enabled through unambiguous roles and the employee's ability to participate in decision making. The fourth and final job resources level encompasses the actual tasks that the employee performs, that is, the variety of skills required and utilised to perform the task, the significance of the task when related to the organisational strategy as well as receipt of constructive feedback (Munir *et al.*, 2022:334).

2.9.2 The Zinger Model of Employee Engagement

David Zinger developed the Zinger (2009) Model of Employee Engagement to address organisational employee engagement. According to the Valamis Group (2020:1), three inputs balance the model: the organisational input, input from the

leadership input and individual employee input. These inputs are briefly explained below.

Input 1: Organisational

According to Ghosh and Sourav (2019:3), employee engagement is prioritised, valued, and shared behaviour amongst employees as this is part of the organisational input to develop such a culture in the company. Recognition and appreciation of employee efforts are additionally important aspects of organisational inputs. Employee engagement levels would also increase when top management supports employees by investing in resources required to perform the employee's job. Investment in educating the workforce is also a value-adding input by the organisation.

Input 2: Leadership

Leadership input is when leaders are developed to become and remain engaged. Zinger's (2009) model illustrates that employees will only become engaged when the leaders are engaged, implying that leaders should lead by example. Leaders' interactions and engagement with their employees must be authentic and not done as a mere tick-box exercise and the leader must pay attention to employee concerns and needs and work with enthusiasm toward developing team abilities and strengths to assist employees in overcoming their weaknesses and leverage off their strengths and remain engaged (Ghosh and Sourav, 2019:3).

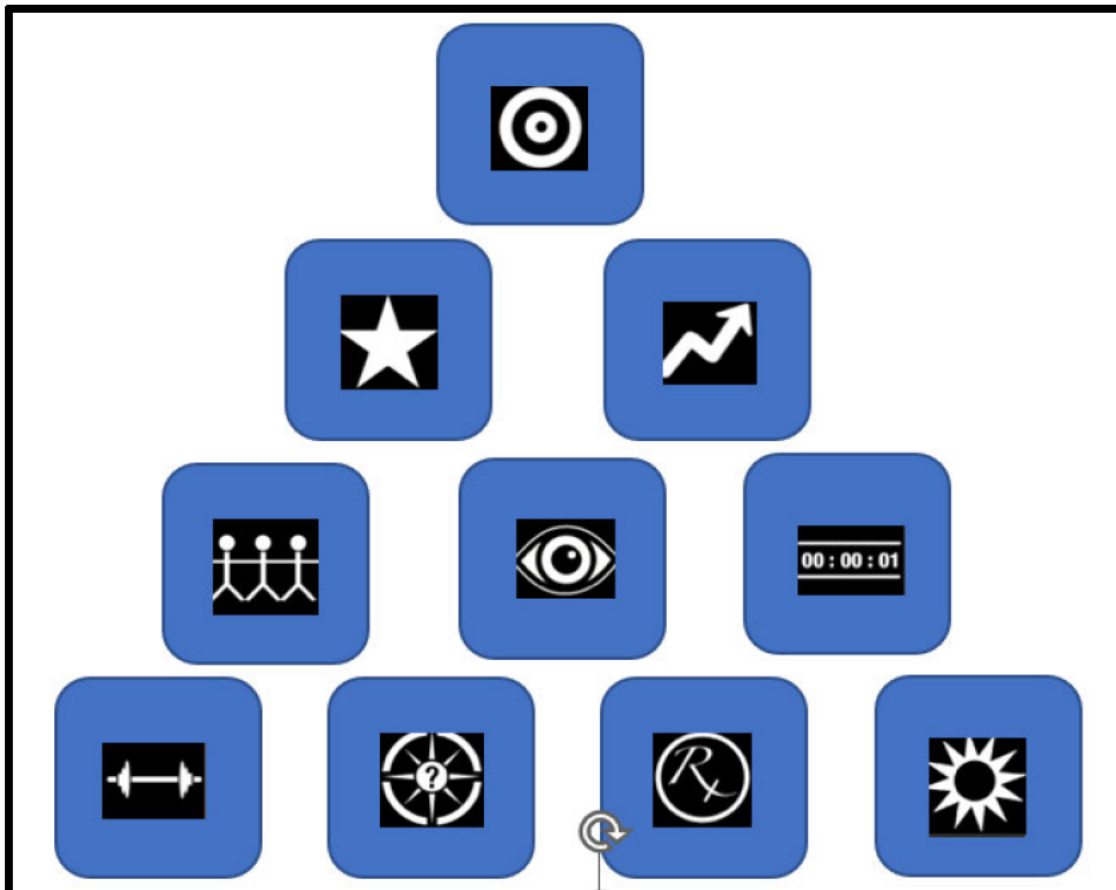
Input 3: Individual

Choudhury and Mohanty (2018:291) state that Individual input is shown through employee contributions that translate to how engaged the employee is. Employees should channel their energies in the right direction while including an element of fun in their jobs and work to focus on positive engagement aspects, therefore owning their jobs is key. Zinger's (2009) model suggests that employee engagement will increase when the organisational, leadership and individual inputs are developed.

The Zinger (2009) engaged model is arranged like a pyramid, as illustrated in Figure 2.3, with the bottom four blocks representing leveraging off the strength of

the employee, bringing meaning to their work and the wellbeing of employees. The next level up has three blocks representing enforcing a strong workplace community, living in the moment, and recognising employee effort. The third level up has two blocks that represent career path development and excellent performance. The final level is the achievement of results, which is the height of all the levels below it (Valamis Group, 2020:1).

FIGURE 2.3: ZINGER ENGAGED MODEL



Source: Valamis Group. (2020:1). (Adapted)

In its review of Zinger's (2009) Engaged Model, the study by Nasution and Absah (2019:337) expressed that employees are inspired by authentic engagement strategies, to perform at their optimum. Essential aspects that directly impact employee involvement, dedication and engagement are built into the Zinger (2009) model of employee engagement. HR practitioners and organisational leaders should therefore have employee engagement strategies in place that are in line with such models, utilising the model as a guide. An organisation benefits from the effectiveness of employee engagement when engagement strategies are planned and implemented properly. The Zinger (2009) model's inputs and

drivers align with the current study; hence, the model is practical to this study. Elements of the model contribute to the study's objective to determine the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment. Nasution and Absah (2019:337) contend that engagement and commitment would be effective in an organisation that prioritises creating awareness about these behaviours, with leadership being at the forefront of its implementation.

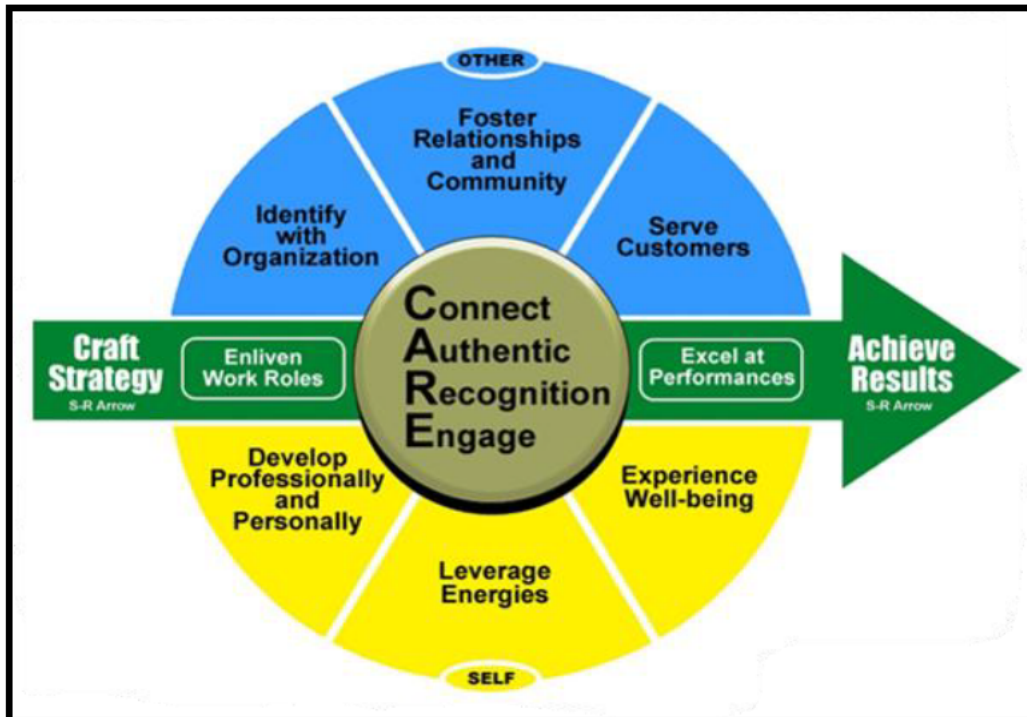
However, Kumari and Yelkar (2022:13) highlight that the Zinger model proposed twelve drivers that could increase the level of employee engagement in the company. The drivers are outlined below.

- Good planning and implementation resulted in the project's success.
- Engagement strategies that are employer and employee centric.
- Assigning challenging work roles to avoid boredom.
- Encouraging excellence to build the employee's self-esteem.
- Establishing a connection between the employees and the company.
- Authentic management responses to employee concerns and fair and consistent disciplinary procedures.
- Live appreciation of employee efforts.
- Acknowledgement of employees as the company's greatest assets.
- Employee learning initiatives and skills development.
- Achieving results through a satisfied workforce.

According to Medhi (2021:1), the David Zinger (2009) model illustrates a modern workplace that caters for employee commitment, motivation, and experience. The model provides team leaders with employee experience enhancement keys such as achievement of results, strategy crafting, making work interesting, promoting excellence at work, connecting with team members, being authentic, recognising employees for a job well done, engaging fully, aligning with

organisational strategies, improving customer service, personal development, happiness, and satisfaction on the job. The keys are illustrated in Figure 2.4.

FIGURE 2.4: THE ZINGER MODEL OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



Source: Medhi (2021:1).

Given the evolvement of the employee engagement construct, Shahid (2019:47) presented a new employee engagement framework with drivers and outcomes, suggesting that the drivers' application would positively influence an employee's engagement level. In addition, Ghosh and Sourav (2019:3) explained that the engagement drivers' outcomes would depend on the company culture and work environment as well as circumstances surrounding the working relationship. The new engagement drivers and strategic outcomes are explained below.

- Employees benefit from a flexible and supportive work environment, which denotes a positive working culture within the company. Employees collaborate in a relaxed and happy environment, fostering positive social relationships amongst the workforce and consequently boosting work performance and commitment levels (Shahid, 2019:47).

- Leadership that motivates and inspires the employees to be dedicated, passionate and creative. Inspiring leaders are progressive and facilitate the attainment of purposeful goals.
- Meaningful work results in a greater drive for producing excellent results, increasing job satisfaction levels among employees. When employees find their jobs meaningful, they tend to stay in the company, increasing employee retention and fostering a sense of community among employees as they build supportive relationships.
- The team's collective knowledge is increased through professional development resulting in employee confidence and the creation of a positive reputation for the company through high standard outputs. External talent is attracted to the company due to its good reputation.
- When employees are given autonomy for decision-making, it positively affects them and motivates them, leading to optimised productivity and a comfortable working environment that is less prone to stress, given that the employees have input on how to do their jobs.
- Employee recognition improves employees' working relationship with management and positively affects employee morale. Recognition for a job well done makes employees feel valued and cultivates a culture of self-improvement.

2.10 AN OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Singh (2018:482) observes that businesses face a rapidly changing and highly competitive trading environment which is challenging due to diversity and globalisation. For the business to thrive in this challenging era, it needs to attract the right talent and have retention strategies in place that will see their talent commit to the organisation for long periods to sustain its competitive advantage. According to Amah and Oyetunde (2019:4), the organisational commitment concept has been widely studied by organisational behaviour scholars and HR professionals due to its contribution to achieving organisational goals. Organisational commitment has received much attention across many disciplines due to its importance and influence on organisational behaviour. Sungu, Weng

and Zu (2019:280) posit that employee organisational commitment is linked to important organisational outcomes such as turnover rate, absenteeism, and job performance. Employees are exposed to multiple facets of commitment; it is, therefore, important to study employee behaviour to determine which commitment facet they have, as this influences their behaviour towards their jobs and reflects their level of attachment to the organisation.

Aujla and McLarney (2020:9) state that the organisational commitment of an employee is influenced by factors such as the upholding of positive working relationships, company rewards systems, management of conflict, system efficiencies as well as an employee's sense of belonging to the company. Hamadamin and Atan (2019:1) add that another organisational commitment factor is the development of human capital which enhances the usefulness and competence of an employee. It is therefore imperative that companies adopt strategic human resource practices that will seek capacity development initiatives that will contribute to employee commitment. When employees are adequately equipped, they will invest in contributing toward organisational success while remaining a proud and emotionally attached member of the organisation.

Uriesi (2019:58) points out that the organisational commitment concept does not have a uniform conceptualisation in literature, but all the existing definitions outline the bond that links an individual with the organisation they work for. This bond makes the employee feel a sense of belonging to the organisation and have an urge to help the organisation achieve its mission. The following section will unpack further literature on the organisational commitment concept.

2.11 CONCEPTUALISATION OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Meyer and Allen (1984:372) coined organisational commitment as an association between an employee and the organisation that is psychologically inclined, making the employee stay with the organisation as a way of commitment. Ahmad, Islam and Saleem (2017:156) opine that employees found to be attached psychologically to the company were committed and saw the company's challenges as their own and subsequently participated willingly in solving those challenges. Munyaka, Boshoff, Pietersen and Snelgar (2017:3) further explain that committed employees are valued by their organisation as they do not

manifest withdrawal behaviours that their uncommitted peers manifest; they are punctual and do not contribute to the organisation's turnover statistics. Spanuth and Wald (2017:129) state that the organisational commitment concept is influenced by work-related factors and organisational factors. A job-related factor is the presence of work autonomy which is the employee's freedom to carry out their work as they have planned, without external pressure or input by other parties. A company-related commitment factor is the availability of training and career growth opportunities. Employees tend to commit to an organisation that supports career progression and allows them the freedom to decide on how to do their jobs (Spanuth and Wald, 2017:129). Furthermore, Mustafa *et al.* (2019:280) add that organisational commitment is the employee's desire to psychologically involve him/herself with the organisation's goals. The employee trusts the organisation and strives to contribute toward the realisation of the organisational vision while having a personal vision to grow with the company as a loyal member of the organisation.

According to Al-Madi *et al.* (2017:137), organisational commitment can be subdivided into three components. The first component is when the employee identifies with the values and goals of the company. The second component is the employee's desire and a sense of belonging to the organisation. The third component is when the employee manifests a willingness to put in extra effort for the attainment of the organisation's goals (Al-Madi *et al.*, 2017:137). Additionally, Loan (2020:3311) identified three reasons through which an employee can attach themselves to a company. The first reason is the expectation of extrinsic rewards for the job that the employee does. The second reason is for a sense of belonging. The third reason is for the alignment with the values of the organisation. When an employee perceives that they will be rewarded, they are compliant and ensure that the job is well done. The employee identifies with the organisation to which they belong and internalises organisational values and they live by those values.

A study that aimed to investigate employee commitment levels was conducted by Chordiya, Sabharwal and Goodman (2017:181) and findings revealed that countries of large economic scales had employees that showed low levels of affective commitment when compared to countries of a lower economic scale. Employees in the latter economy were materially dependent on their jobs. They

would, therefore, be emotionally attached to the company, whereas employees in the former economy had more opportunities and choice of material conditions and were, therefore, less emotionally attached to the organisations they worked for.

Presbitero, Newman, Le, Jiang and Zheng (2019:194) conducted an organisational commitment study on multinational cooperations (MNCs) and found that managers who work for MNCs had lower commitment levels across the three commitment dimensions, namely affective, continuance and normative commitment when compared to managers who worked at domestic companies.

Based on the above reviews, one can conclude that an employee's skill, work attitude and professional behaviour can be impacted by the organisation that employs them, which results in how the employee performs their tasks. Therefore, the organisation should implement strategies that would invite the employees to commit, and as an outcome, an employee's commitment would contribute to the organisation's attainment of objectives and fulfilment of strategic plans.

2.12 DETERMINANTS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Some of the determinants of organisational commitment include motivation, persistence, direction, being receptive to change, involvement in teamwork, contribution to strategic implementation, knowledge sharing and peer support, training, and development as well as rewards and recognition, amongst others. These determinants are explained below.

Al-Madi *et al.* (2017:134) identified motivation as a determinant of an employee's organisational commitment, stating that managers should be able to motivate and keep their employees motivated to reach their maximum potential, which translates into optimal productivity and attain organisational competitive advantage. When an employee is motivated, they move from a worn-out state to a state of attention where they can focus on the task at hand, exerting much effort towards completing it. In addition, motivated employees are intense, persistent, and have direction toward achieving their goals. Employees can either be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. These motivators can either be tangible or non-tangible, such as money, conditions of the work environment, availability of

growth opportunities, learning and development opportunities, communication, availability of information, appreciation for a job well done, inclusion, and job security (Al-Madi *et al.*, 2017:134).

Aujla and McLarney (2020:11) argue that employees who are less committed to the organisation are more resistant to change and this causes their already low commitment levels to drop even lower. On the contrary, employees who show high commitment levels are receptive to change. When changes occur in the organisation, some employees lose their trust in the company, they become stressed, they are susceptible to low morale and are afraid of job loss. Conversely, the other employees embrace the change and see opportunities of growth as the company goes through change. The authors suggest that Employers should therefore assure the employees that the change process will be fair and ensure that employees are involved in the change process. The involvement of employees during change implementation strengthens the company's relationship with the employee and builds trust. Employees that are committed to change are supportive of the change and believe it will be beneficial (Aujla and McLarney, 2020:13).

Chai, Hwang and Joo (2017:143) posit that leaders who show that they believe the team can produce the desired results, include team members in decision-making processes and provide unwavering support to the team. This support leads to the creation of a committed workforce which directly and positively impacts employee performance outcomes. Furthermore, work-related influences such as work autonomy where the employee enjoys the freedom of completing their tasks in a manner that they've decided upon, determine organisational commitment. Having high autonomy eliminates frustration and serves as a motivator during the problem-solving process. Organisational-related influences such as training and career opportunities also have a bearing on employee organisational commitment (Chai *et al.*, 2017:143).

Ocen, Francis, and Angundaru (2017:745) agree that training has a positive impact on organisational commitment as employees perceive that the company cares about and values them as an asset. In return, the employees perform better. These employees remain loyal and committed to the company as a way

of reciprocating the employer's training offering. Upon receiving training, employees become less anxious or frustrated about their tasks or job demands, given that they have been equipped with updated skills, are now more knowledgeable, and have new behavioural competencies to perform their jobs better (Ocen *et al.*, 2017:745). Kim and Kim (2020:28) concur that employees commit to an organisation when they receive training and development, are paid and rewarded fairly, and have adequate planning for task implementation. Ameen and Baharom (2019:140) submit that training and developing employees increases organisational commitment levels.

2.13 DIMENSIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

The literature review on organisational commitment provides three dimensions: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Knots and Houghton (2021:754) conducted a study on work engagement and organisational commitment, and findings revealed that affective and normative commitment partially mediate the relationship between work engagement and continuance commitment, which has a negative relationship with employee engagement.

According to Uriesi (2019:58), organisational commitment is a triple-facet psychological bond that ties an employee to the organisation. These facets are affective, continuance and normative commitment. Singh (2018:483) concurs that the three psychological states that make up the commitment concept are affective, continuance and normative commitment.

The dimensions/facets/states are explained below.

2.13.1 Affective Commitment

Al-Madi *et al.* (2017:137) state that affective commitment relates to the employees' willingness to identify with, be involved in, and attach themselves emotionally to the organisation. Similarly, Aujla and McLarney (2020:9) posit that employees who have an affective commitment toward an organisation fully immerse themselves into its goals, objectives and values and voluntarily stay with the organisation to see these goals and objectives being achieved and the values being upheld. Radosavljević *et al.* (2017:19) explain that affective commitment can be categorised into personal, organisational, job, and experience

characteristics. When decision-making and the writing of standard operating policies and procedures are decentralised to the employee, it empowers the employee and in turn the employee commits to the organisation as they perceive that their contribution matters. Employees enjoy qualities such as a pleasant work experience when they are rewarded fairly, there is no ambiguity in their work roles, and there are consistent conflict management, justice and growth opportunities. These employer qualities increase the employees' affective commitment to the organisation. Uriesi (2019:58) adds that affective commitment is an intense bond characterised by emotions that an employee feels towards the organisation.

According to Singh (2018:483), affective commitment is an employee's emotional attachment towards the company. This attachment is a form of identification with the company values that match the employee's values and the employee's level of involvement in attaining organisational goals. Amah and Oyetunde (2019:4) assert that affective commitment is the most effective of the three organisational commitment forms. With affective commitment, employees commit to an organisation because they want to, and no external force affects their commitment. Employees that have high affective commitment find congruence between organisational values and their own. In the same vein, Usnam, Javed, Shoukat and Bashir (2021:209) utilise affective organisational commitment as a mediator in their study and found that affective commitment is deemed to be more influential when compared to the other two commitment types, continuance, and normative commitment. Employees' internal motivation and drive influence their work behaviour more than external motives do.

2.13.2 Continuance Commitment

According to Al-Madi *et al.* (2017:137), continuance commitment is shown when the employee stays with the organisation due to the costs of leaving the current employer. In essence, the employee stays because they need to. The decision to stay comes after the employee has made a cost-benefit analysis that comprises staying with or leaving the current employer. In this way, the employee considers the pros and cons of leaving or staying with the organisation. The employee's fear of loss outweighs the possibilities that the employee could explore. The biggest fear is failing to find another job. Therefore, an employee

who intends to leave their current employer but is afraid of loss tends to think through their decision thoroughly before execution. The employee ends up staying with the current employer as a way of compliance.

Uriesi (2019:58) posits that employees who remain with their employer due to external pressure are said to have continuance commitment. The employee's decision to remain with the current employer is because of external constraints and not self-determination. This group of employees remain because of a lack of alternatives or because of the level of investment they have made in the current company, where leaving the company would demand a considerable amount of sacrifice. The employee stands to sacrifice benefits that the current employer offers as they are unsure if they would enjoy the same or similar benefits elsewhere. Additionally, the employee could lose their seniority and sometimes long service awards if they had long tenure at the organisation. Similarly, Singh (2018:483) states that continuance commitment is based on the costs an employee could incur when deciding to leave their employer. This is the perceived economic value that arises from the comparison of staying with or leaving an employer.

2.13.3 Normative Commitment

Al-Madi *et al.* (2017:137) explain that normative commitment relates to the employee feeling a sense of obligation towards the organisation in a moral sense. Furthermore, Uriesi (2019:58) posits that an employee with high normative commitment remains with an organisation due to loyalty and feels obligated to reciprocate the employer's actions of providing benefits and training. The employee then feels it is only right to remain with this employer. Additionally, the employee feels it is their moral duty to commit to the organisation and assist it even though it may face a tough financial time. According to Singh (2018:483), normative commitment is based on an employee's obligation toward their current employer. This obligation is based on the morals and ethics of the employee. The sense of obligation may have risen because the employee started their career at the current employer and believes the employer gave them a chance when they were less experienced and the employee received training and coaching, amongst other things, which helped them grow in their career so as a result, the employee feels an indebted obligation to remain with the current employer.

Meyer *et al.* (2019:107) conducted a study where the commitment dimensions were classified as mindsets. The authors tested these mindsets against targets such as commitment to the organisation and commitment to the occupation. The study was conducted on the teaching profession, and findings revealed that some teachers fully committed to the profession (occupation) but were moderately committed to the organisation. Further findings revealed that it would be more difficult for teachers to change their profession than to change employers. Furthermore, the study found that teachers with weaker commitment levels also had lower levels of well-being (Meyer *et al.*, 2019:107).

2.14 ANTECEDENTS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Chai *et al.* (2017:143) identified team-goal commitment as an antecedent to organisational commitment, stating that when employees commit to achieving a team goal, they are cooperative and work in cohesion to achieve the set goal, which translates to organisational commitment.

According to Chordiya *et al.* (2017:178), job satisfaction has been dubbed as the main antecedent of organisational commitment, particularly affective commitment. When employees are satisfied with their remuneration packages and perceive that their jobs are secure, they are likely to be satisfied. Additionally, when employees receive opportunities for growth and career development, they are likely to be satisfied with their jobs and are most likely to commit to the organisation on the perception that the organisation cares for them. Similarly, Loan (2020:3308) states that employees are satisfied when their jobs meet their psychological and material needs and perform better, leading to organisational commitment. Ekhsan (2019:49) warns that employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs intend to leave the organisation once they secure a better employment opportunity. To avoid having dissatisfied employees, Nguyen, Le, Tran, Tran, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2020:439) suggested that employee motivation is an antecedent to organisational commitment. Motivated employees strive to reach organisational goals, which translates to them committing to the organisation until they attain them. Therefore, management should ensure that employees are kept motivated, leading to job satisfaction and commitment.

Presbitero *et al.* (2019:195) created four classes of antecedents to organisational commitment. The first class is organisational antecedents, including HR practices, organisational climate, culture, and high-performance work systems (HPWSs). When employees perceive the existence of HPWSs, they commit to the company. Training, development, supervisor, and peer support as HR practices also contribute positively towards an employee's decision to commit to an organisation (Presbitero *et al.*, 2019:195). Additionally, employees favour organisational cultures that are inclusive and that embrace diversity, and the likelihood of employees committing to organisations with such cultures is high. Work climates that are pro-family and pro-career growth also contribute favourably to organisational commitment. The second class is group antecedents which include employee trust in management, leadership and leader-member exchange which were all found to be positively related to organisational commitment. The third class is job antecedents, which entail employee job satisfaction, security, and autonomy in making decisions. Job antecedents were found to be positively related to organisational commitment as well. The fourth and final class is individual antecedents that address employee demographics and cultural value orientations concerning organisational commitment (Presbitero *et al.*, 2019:196).

Furthermore, the study found that employees who belonged to minority cultural groups were more committed than those affiliated with majority cultural groups. The need for recognition and belongingness from the minor groups fueled this difference in commitment. Employees of a certain age, seniority and length of service were found to be more committed than their peers (Presbitero *et al.*, 2019:200). Similarly, Mahmood *et al.* (2019:420) identified HR practices as a factor that influences organisational commitment through high-performance work systems (HPWS) that are instrumental in employee knowledge maximising, work performance and ultimately, commitment. The authors suggested that when HR practices are effectively and efficiently implemented throughout the employee life cycle, employees would reciprocate by way of committing to the organisation.

Munyaka *et al.* (2017:2) conducted a study on a South African manufacturing company and concluded that for organisations to remain relevant, be sustained and retain their competitive advantage globally, they should have authentic

leaders who have a positive influence on employee behaviour which will translate to the employees opting to commit to the organisation instead of entertaining intentions to leave the organisation. Additionally, leaders were advised to ensure that they have improvement strategies in place for increasing psychological capital and maintaining a conducive psychological climate. The conducive nature of the working environment would positively influence employee behaviour.

2.15 THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMITTED EMPLOYEES

Committed employees have a natural desire to perform their duties well since they understand their contribution to the organisation's bigger picture and bottom line. This commitment is an incentive and stimulus to achieve personal and organisational goals (Al-Madi *et al.*, 2017:134).

According to Mukanzi and Senaji (2017:1), organisational commitment decreases when there is no balance between the employees work and their family, thereby increasing work-family and/or family-work conflict which leads to the intent of leaving the company, followed by decreased productivity and later, lack of job satisfaction. Managers can address the work-family conflict by offering their support to employees. The support will make the employees feel that management is empowering them and enabling them to balance their work and family. The realisation of this perception positively contributes to organisational commitment (Mukanzi and Senaji, 2017:1).

Mustafa *et al.* (2019:280) argue that uncommitted employees can cause delays within the work processes, they are absent frequently, treat personal matters as a priority during working hours and they refuse to work overtime to assist the company in reaching its urgent targets. On the contrary, committed employees are receptive to change and partake in change initiatives willingly, they are instrumental in transformational initiatives, show dedication, have a sense of urgency and responsibility, are attentive and show sincerity toward their jobs. Additionally, Radosavljević *et al.* (2017:19) posit that committed employees have an entrepreneurial mindset that contributes to the organisation's realisation of set goals. The employee's contribution proves their value in the company. Zaraket *et al.* (2018:285) further note that organisations are differentiated by self-reliant and confident employees who contribute innovatively to the organisation and are

proactive in their approach. This differentiation amplifies the level of employee organisational commitment.

According to Yao *et al.* (2019:2), employees who take pride in, respect and are socially involved with the organisation tend to commit to it. Companies that treat employees as internal customers enjoy the benefits of a loyal and committed workforce as the customer treatment psychology is applied to employees. Employees who exhibit loyalty through their attitude and behaviour enable the organisation to strengthen its product or service offering's performance and to witness favourable outcomes. Wombecher and Felfe (2017:1) posit that employees can be committed to their work groups, a special project, their supervisor, and the organisation simultaneously which all have a positive outcome for the organisation. These dually committed employees predictively show off organisational citizenship behaviour. Furthermore, employees who are dually committed are different from those who commit unilaterally or those who are not committed at all, given that they are committed to more than one aspect of the organisation and receive fulfilment when they accomplish both team and organisational goals (Wombecher and Felfe, 2017:2).

According to Joseph *et al.* (2018:44) employee appreciation through rewards such as training and development, flexible work hours and recognition, motivates the employee to remain committed to the organisation. In addition to recognition and rewards, the assigning of challenging tasks to employees is an indication that leaders trust their team members to accomplish those tasks and this trust contributes to increased commitment levels.

2.16 BENEFITS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Al-Madi *et al.* (2017:137) found that committed employees had high performance levels which inevitably led to high productivity levels which translated to profitability for the company. Committed individuals add value to team setups and rally the team towards the end goal. Additionally, Aujla and McLarney (2020:12) explain that employees who have high commitment levels are instrumental in performance improvements, building and maintaining customer relationships and can communicate effectively across the organisation. This group of employees assist the company in change implementation as they champion initiatives and

keep a positive attitude during change. Moreover, committed employees are not complacent, they take initiative in ensuring that the job is done and done well.

Chordiya *et al.* (2017:191) advise that when affective organisational commitment is enhanced, the company can reduce costs that are associated with absenteeism, for example, prevent employees having to work overtime to close the gap that the absent employee opens. Other costs that are reduced when employees are committed are recruitment, replacement costs of employees who have resigned, and induction and training costs for recruits.

According to Presbitero *et al.* (2019:202), organisational commitment is achieved when job attitudes such as satisfaction are high and the intention to leave is low. Job behaviours such as performance and organisational citizenship behaviour are a reciprocation of good treatment from the employer to the employee. Therefore, the employee commits to seeing the organisational strategy through implementation and achievement.

2.17 THEORETICAL MODELS OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Although employee engagement is said to be an organisational commitment antecedent, the two concepts can co-exist with their differences. The same applies to models and/or frameworks that support the concepts individually. This section will outline the models or theories that underpin organisational commitment.

2.17.1 The Three-Dimensional Model of Organisational Commitment

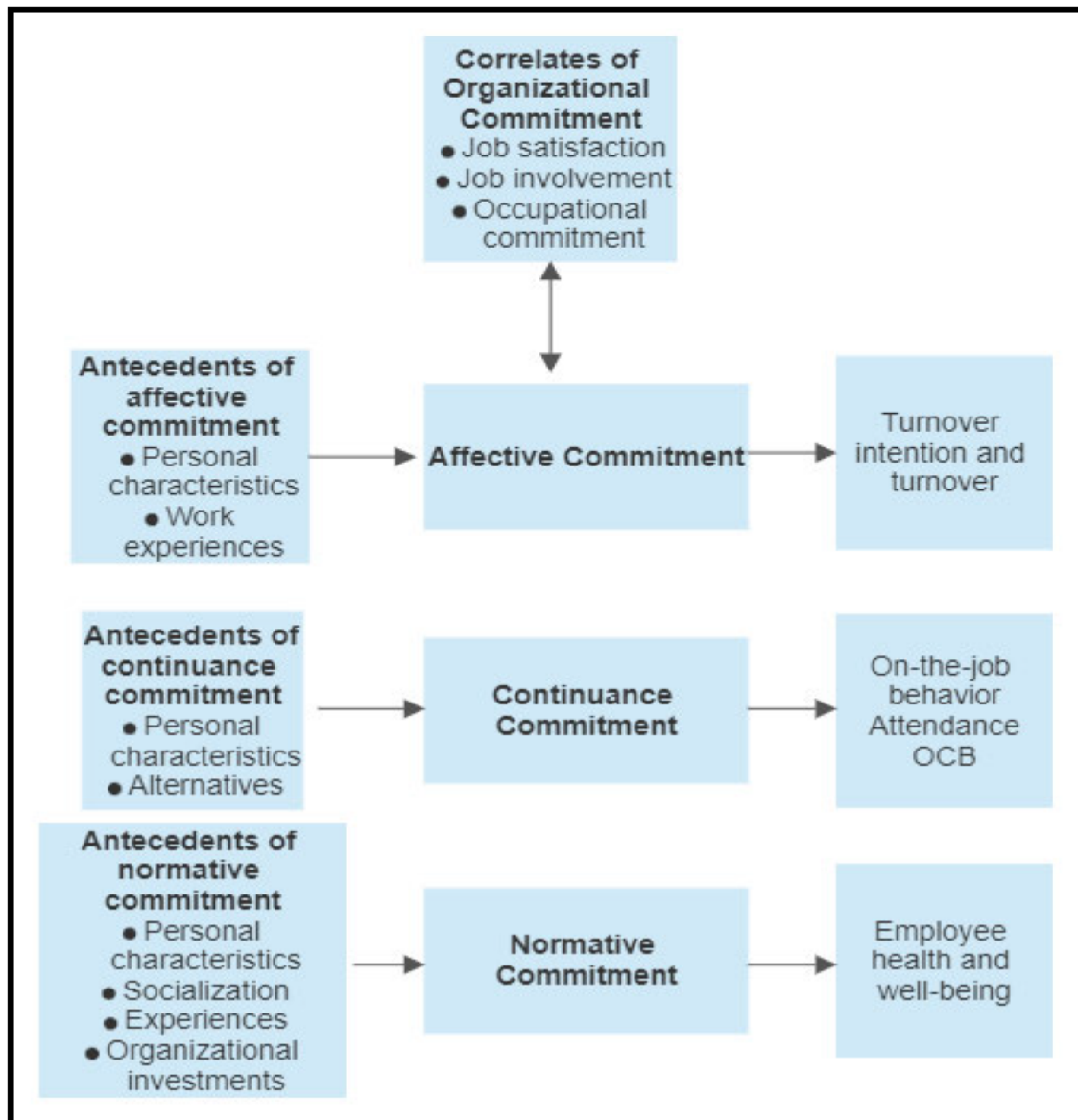
Mustafa *et al.* (2019:281) report on the three-dimensional model of organisational commitment developed by Meyer and Allen in 1991, as illustrated in Figure 2.5. The model has dominated the organisational commitment research space since its inception and comprises the affective, continuance and normative commitment dimensions.

According to Singh (2018:483), employees who show the continuous commitment dimension to an organisation do so because of the losses that are associated with exiting the organisation. These losses include loss of income, benefits that include retirement benefits as well as seniority and length of service with the company. These employees commit due to a lack of alternatives and the

cost of change. While employees who commit in a normative way, do so because of peer pressure and what image they would resultantly portray if they left the organisation, this type of commitment borders on employee values and norms where one feels that it is only right to remain loyal to the organisation that has afforded them an opportunity of employment with benefits. Normatively committed employees believe that it is their responsibility to stay with the company and that they benefit from their commitment when their organisations reward such behaviours through long service awards, career growth paths, and related rewards. Organisations also benefit from employees who show normative commitment as these employees align themselves with organisational goals and commit to seeing these goals being achieved. The company culture thrives through this group of employees, and this then creates a conducive and successful working climate (Mustafa *et al*, 2019:282).

On the other hand, employees who are organisationally bound through their will and desire are said to be effectively committed to the organisation. This group of employees are emotionally attached to the organisations values and goals and are willing and happy to go the extra mile to help the organisation achieve its objectives. Employees who are affectively committed tend to also be engaged in their work and the company's activities. These employees are punctual, have good behaviour, are trustworthy (toward the organisation and their superiors), and perform at the top tier. The Affective commitment dimension has proven to be most impactful on companies and employees (Amah and Oyetunde, 2019:4).

FIGURE 2.5: A THREE-COMPONENT MODEL OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT



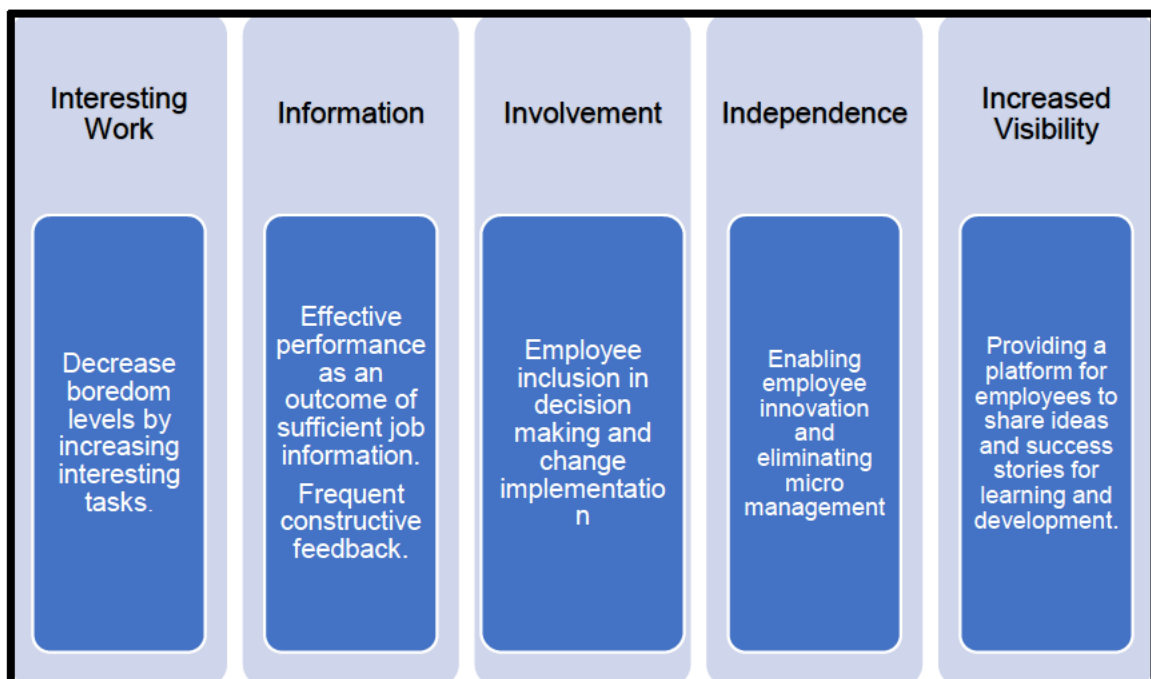
Source: Meyer and Allen. (1991:61). (Adapted)

2.17.2 Nelson's 5I Theory

Aujla and Mclarney (2020:15) explained the provisions that companies must put in place to benefit from organisationally committed employees. These provisions are outlined in the 5I theory by Nelson (1999) as illustrated in Figure 2.6. Implementing this process would be a good investment for companies as it is inexpensive and would be instrumental in developing and sustaining committed employees. When companies take care of their workforce, the employees reciprocate, leading to the formation of meaningful working relationships that are worthwhile and valuable when it comes to change planning and implementation.

When an individual's work is interesting, they pay attention to the challenges and rewards that come with that job. The employee rises to the challenge by utilising their knowledge and skill set which is of significance to the organisation. An employee with a variety of skills and talent has an impact on co-workers, they can exercise discretion, and they are independent and resultantly contribute to improved organisational commitment levels. For these commitment levels to be achieved, leadership has the responsibility to provide employees with clear requirements and not withhold important information that the employee requires to complete their task. Empowering employees includes giving them authority to make decisions on how to implement a task and this results in the employee's voluntary involvement which equates to commitment. The autonomy that is afforded to employees gives them freedom and a sense of independence which strengthens organisational commitment. Knowledge sharing enables employees to exercise innovation and the availability of these platforms in the workplace is mutually beneficial to the employee and the employer as it fosters learning and development of the workforce and enriches the organisation's intellectual property (Aujla and Mclarney, 2020:15).

FIGURE 2.6: NELSON'S 5I THEORY



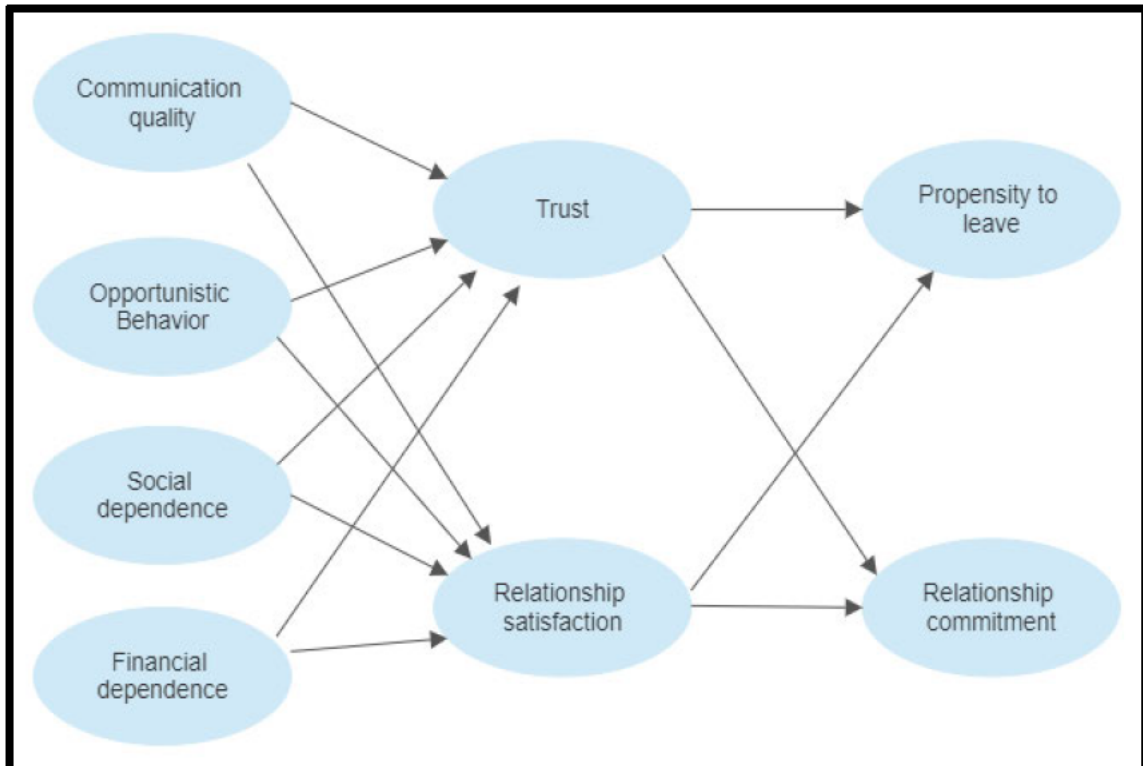
Source: Self-generated (2022).

2.17.3 The Social Exchange Theory

The Social Exchange Theory as illustrated in Figure 2.7 has been widely used in management research to conceptualise management support toward employees. When employees perceive that their managers respect and support them to strike a work-life balance, they trust their managers and feel obligated to commit to the company. When employers value an employee's input and communicate effectively, then employees tend to reciprocate the work-family management's treatment and subsequently commit. When these perceptions are realised, work-family conflict and family-work conflict is minimised. This increases effective, normative, and continual commitment, job satisfaction, and reduces turnover intention (Mukanzi and Senaji, 2017:4).

Presbitero *et al.* (2019:191) reiterate that Social Exchange Theory by Blau (1964) proposed that employees will react to good treatment from the company by way of reciprocation through commitment to the organisation. Radosavljević *et al.* (2017:21) also used the Social Exchange Theory in their study to explain employee commitment to an organisation, stating that interactions between two parties are largely based on the reduction of loss and increase in gains or rewards. The higher the rewards and the lower the costs mean increased levels of trust and ultimately, commitment from employees toward the organisation. The exchange can be monetary or non-monetary depending on the recipient. For example, the employee may receive a financial benefit while the employer receives improved performance and commitment in return. Employees that commit affectively, continually or in a normative way, all exert an effort to benefit the organisation by way of reciprocating after the organisation has stretched out an initial helping hand to the employee. Although employees that manifest continual commitment may exert a lesser effort than the others. In the context of this study, the Social Exchange theory has been used as a theoretical underpinning to provide an explanation of employee commitment levels to the organisation (Radosavljević *et al.*, 2017:21).

FIGURE 2.7: THE SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY



Source: Jeong and Oh. (2017:118). (Adapted)

Talukder (2019:102) observes that when supervisors support their employee's family needs by providing flexible work schedules or onsite day care services for employee's children, the employees feel more attached to the organisation and in a reciprocal manner, they tend to commit to the company and contribute towards its success.

2.18 THE LINK BETWEEN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Saks (2006:602) outlines that elements that make up commitment are found in engagement but that does not necessarily mean that the two concepts could perfectly be matched with each other. Engaged employees are naturally expected to have business awareness but the same cannot be said for committed employees. An employee's attitude and degree of attachment to the organisation depicts their commitment to the organisation whereas engagement is depicted in the employee's attention to and absorption in the performance of their jobs. Ferrer, Ringer, Saville, Parris, and Kashi (2022) add that the relationship between organisational commitment and employee engagement is complementary,

therefore an employee's lack of commitment is characterised by disengagement and absence of motivation.

It has been noted by Shuck *et al.*, (2017:958) that overtime, researchers have reported that organisational commitment is a component and an outcome of employee engagement since committed employees are said to be engaged in their work, proving their degree of attachment to the organisation. Jung *et al.* (2021:3) support this idea and explain that employee engagement is the relationship between an employee and their job or individual tasks, whereas organisational commitment is the relationship between an employee and the organisation for which they work. The two constructs are positively related to one another. When an employee is engaged in their job, their commitment to the organisation inevitably increases which leads to the employee making considerable sacrifices towards the attainment of organisational goals and preservation of organisational values.

According to Uddin, Mahmood and Fan (2019:52), organisational commitment may be considered as a facet of employee engagement. Engaged employees exhibit a pervasive and persistent state of mind that is of an affective-cognitive nature which fills the employee with pride about being a part of their organisation. This feeling of pride is like the one that an employee feels when they are affectively committed to the organisation (Govender and Bussin, 2020:4). Employees resultantly go the extra mile in performing extra-role activities just to contribute toward the attainment of company goals. Furthermore, committed and engaged employees show positive organisational citizenship behaviour by helping colleagues during task implementation (Uddin *et al.*, 2019:52). In a recent study by Kaur *et al.* (2020:338) on the connection between employee engagement and organisational commitment, it was found that employee engagement is positively related to the affective component of organisational commitment. Similarly, Ullah, Jamal and Naeem (2018:35) examine the relationship between employee engagement and organisational commitment and found that there exists a significant positive relationship between organisational commitment and engagement of employees in an organisational context. Furthermore, Pieters and Auanga (2019:159) found that the affective and normative dimensions of organisational commitment were positively related to the

vigour, dedication, and absorption dimensions of employee engagement when a study on the relationship between the constructs was conducted. Work engagement was predicted by normative commitment, psychological conditions as well as psychological meaningfulness.

Islam and Tariq (2018:261) outline some of the extra-role behaviours or activities that are ordinarily performed by engaged employees. Behaviours include but are not limited to employees being proactive, and creative, not hoarding their job knowledge but sharing it with their colleagues for maximum utilisation, adaptation, knowledge management and the attainment of common goals (Islam and Tariq, 2018:261).

Lemon and Palenchar (2018:144) posit that the cultivation of employee engagement by internal communication programs that are strategically aligned leads to increased organisational commitment. Antony (2018:33) adds that employee engagement is the employee's apical form of commitment to the company that propels the employee to perform at their peak to benefit the organisation. Whereas Harunavamwe, Nel and Van Zyl (2020:508) report that several personal or psychological resources are antecedents to the engagement and commitment of employees. The resources include optimism, resilience, self-esteem and self-efficacy and the presence of these resources aids reduction of setbacks and increases engagement and commitment. Akter *et al.* (2022:1) conclude that commitment is a pertinent factor in employee engagement prediction.

Teo *et al.* (2020:5) found that a positive and supportive work environment had a profound impact on enhancing the level of employee engagement especially in a work environment that was not sufficiently conducive and one that was infested with bullying. The toxicity of this behaviour (i.e., bullying) negatively influenced the affective component of organisational commitment which in turn contributed to high turnover rates. It was found that the presence of a psychosocial work climate played an important role in the introduction of a positive and safe working environment that reduced stress levels and bullying among employees and increased levels of reciprocal affective commitment from the employees instead. The authors also found that HPWS which incorporates training and employee

development, internal mobility, selective staffing, job design, clear communication, feedback, and performance orientation had a positive impact on the enhancement of engagement and organisational commitment of employees. Conversely, the bullying sometimes leads to the employee to feeling loneliness in the workplace. To address this issue, Jung *et al.* (2019:2) conducted a study that examined workplace loneliness and its influence on employee engagement and organisational commitment. Where workplace loneliness was present, organisational performance levels decreased. Findings further reveal that employee engagement was negatively related to workplace loneliness since the employee would focus on or become so engrossed in their tasks that they would even lose track of time due to the positivity that came with being engaged in their job, thus leaving no room for feeling lonely. There was a decrease in the commitment levels of employees who expressed feelings of loneliness because they felt alienated. A similar quantitative online study on workplace incivility and employee engagement with affective organisational commitment was conducted by Guo *et al.* (2020:1814) and findings reveal that workplace incivility was negatively related to all the other variables in the test, this means that employees who experience incivility treatment in the workplace tend to become disengaged, less committed, they lose their organisational identity as a result and do not feel part of the organisation. Shen and Jiang (2019:34) confirm that the employee engagement and organisational commitment constructs are related but separate.

A conclusion can be drawn from the above arguments and assertions that the employee engagement and organisational commitment concepts can co-exist although they are manifested differently in employee behaviours.

2.19 THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHICS ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

Uriesi (2019:58) states that several socio-demographic variables are associated with organisational commitment, these demographic variables include marital status, age, position within the company, education, and years of service. Presbitero *et al.* (2019:200) agree that demographic variables influence organisational commitment. Their study found that age and seniority based on job titles were positively related to organisational commitment. Length of service also had a positive relationship with organisational commitment. Likewise, Luu,

Ho, Hiep, Hoi, and Hanh (2019:41) posit that a vast number of researchers have associated demographics such as age, gender, level of education, marital status, and tenure with organisational commitment levels. The post-analysis results of their study revealed that there was a strong correlation between employee age, marital status and years of service when tested against organisational commitment, but gender and level of education had a weaker relationship with organisational commitment.

Douglas and Roberts (2020:209) conducted a study on age and the impact it has on employee engagement. Findings reveal that younger employees were less dedicated and absorbed in their jobs compared to older employees, particularly those over the age of fifty. Results for vigour were the same for older and younger employees. The resulting high engagement levels among older employees could be attributed to experience gained over the years and the ability to strike a work-life balance and meet work demands with available resources (Douglas and Roberts, 2020:212). In the same vein, Alam *et al.* (2022:5) used demographic items such as age group, employment status, gender, tenure, and educational level as moderators when testing for employee engagement and found that age was positively related to high engagement levels, concluding that older employees were generally more engaged than their younger colleagues. Barreiro and Treglown (2020:3) concur that older employees are more likely to report feeling engaged in their jobs than younger employees. However, the study found that employee gender did not matter.

Shen and Jiang (2019:40) tested the age, gender, number of subordinates, organisation size, and management level socio-demographic variables and found that there was a strong predictive effect of the physical, cognitive and emotional levels of employee engagement which accounted for positive employee behaviour in the workplace, additionally, age was positively related to employee engagement whereas organisation size did not have any significance on engagement levels among employees. On the contrary, the study conducted by Kumar *et al.* (2020:5) reveal that there were slight variations in the scores for gender, age, years of service and highest qualification, suggesting that there was no significance between demographical and employee engagement variables that were tested.

Dhir and Shukla (2019:976) assume a differing position and used gender as a control variable in their study, stating that the gender versus engagement debate is inconclusive. Although most studies have concluded that engagement levels among employees do not differ because of gender differences, their study found that female employees are more engaged than their male colleagues.

Although arguments may differ, it is evident from the above studies that a moderate percentage of demographic items have a positive relationship with employee engagement and organisational commitment. This study will test for the relationship between demographics, employee engagement and organisational commitment. The results will be discussed in Chapter 4.

2.20 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

According Holbeche (2022) the human resource market is gaining momentum and becoming increasingly competitive due to globalisation. Therefore, organisations must invest in their human capital to enable them to compete globally and retain organisational competitive advantage. A competitive workforce is motivated, engaged, and committed to attaining organisational goals, given that engagement and commitment directly impact the company's performance. Engagement in work sparks creativity, and innovation, and increases productivity. Previous studies (Sahni, 2019:285; Putri and Setianan, 2019:524) have reported employee engagement as a positive antecedent to organisational commitment, therefore, employees who are involved in their jobs tend to stay with the company due to job satisfaction.

Additionally, Holbeche (2022) states that despite the presence of deterrents in the employee life cycle, the employee rises above the challenge and ensures that organisational interests are prioritised, and this denotes a high organisational commitment level from the employee. An employee engages in their job and commits effortlessly to the company in reciprocation to the positive treatment that the employer shows the employee.

Sahni (2019:286) opines that a committed and engaged workforce is a source of competitive advantage for any firm that competes in diverse, global, and technology-infested industries. Therefore, employers ought to be cognisant that

a dynamic business that will strive against the odds of the ever-changing economy needs to invest in its employees. The investment could be through management support and related initiatives.

According to a study on organisational commitment and employee engagement concluded by Sahni (2019:286), employees decided to stay with the company much longer than they ordinarily would. The employee's decision to stay was found to have been positively affected by the company's growth opportunities and benefits. Due to the employee's decision to stay, the company saved on recruitment and replacement costs and enjoyed low turnover rates (Sahni, 2019:286). In agreement, Nienaber and Martins (2020) state that when the working environment is conducive, the employee becomes satisfied with their job and, therefore, commits to the organisation and consequently benefits from this behaviour.

Ullah, Khattak, and Rahman (2018:49) explored the effectiveness of teamwork on employee engagement, and their findings revealed a positive effect that engagement has on teamwork in an organisational context. As a result, projects were reportedly completed efficiently due to teamwork, collective engagement, and commitment to the tasks. Resultantly, this had a positive effect on the organisation's growth. Similarly, Pieters and Auanga (2019:142) posit that productivity is an outcome of employee engagement; therefore, enhancing employee engagement will increase productivity, resulting in growth and profits for the organisation. When employees are engaged, they tend to be satisfied with and enthusiastic about their jobs. The enthusiasm creates a connection between the employee and the company. This connection is deemed a commitment. Engaged and committed employees exude positive energy among their colleagues and this energy breeds positive work outcomes and excellent task completion, the outcome of which positively affects the company. Furthermore, Pieters and Auanga (2019:159) found that employees were psychologically connected to the organisation and consequently produced work that was above standard due to their high levels of engagement and commitment. Additional findings revealed that employees showed affective and normative dimensions of organisational commitment as well as high levels of vigour, dedication, and absorption which enabled them to exert considerable efforts toward their jobs and

focus on accomplishing the set targets. In return, the company benefited through the high quality of work that was produced by this workforce. Similarly, findings from a study on the millennial generation that was conducted by Walden, Jung, and Westerman (2017:81) revealed that organisations that employed millennials benefited from increased engagement and commitment levels from the millennial generation when the organisation had communicated expectations, provided ample and constructive feedback, provided unwavering support, and showed appreciation for a job well done.

In a study on Human Resources Management (HRM) practices and employee engagement, Aktar and Pangil (2018:617) used organisational commitment as a mediating factor and findings revealed that the organisation in enjoyed the benefits of employees who engaged in pertinent organisational activities and committed to the attainment of organisational goals by way of reciprocation given that the organisation had effectively implemented the HRM practices. Likewise, Yousuf and Khurshid (2021:6) utilised employee engagement as a mediating construct in their study on employee commitment to the organisation as a brand. A regression analysis revealed that the employer benefited from having its brand held in high regard through employee engagement and commitment to keeping the brand relevant. Additionally, a study on perceived CSR conducted by Ahmad, Islam and Saleem (2017:156) found that the organisation benefits from positive public relations since its employees are proud to be associated with a company that gives back to the community, this pride then fuels the employee's desire to engage in such organisational activities and be committed to seeing them through. By so doing, the employer brand is upheld. Similarly, Nazir and Islam (2020:1) reported that employees from various higher educational institutions in India experienced increased levels of identification with the organisation and showed affective commitment toward the organisation and as a result, the employee's performance increased which translated to the higher educational institution's overall performance as well. Boyd and Nowell (2020:1037) identified that the affection that employees have toward an organisation is linked to the employee's pride to be associated with the employer brand.

Albrecht and Marty (2020:665) found that job resources influenced an employee's psychological attachment to his/her work. The resources were found to directly

and indirectly affect organisational commitment and employee engagement levels. When employees were adequately equipped, they performed to their optimum and produced work that was above average. Receiving support and regular constructive feedback also contributed to the engagement and commitment, resulting in increased productivity levels. In the same vein, Uddin, Mahmood and Fan (2019:56) posed the question of why individual employee engagement matters for team dynamics and the question was answered through a quantitative study where the findings revealed that an increase in individual employee engagement had the potential to increase team performance through the mediation of organisational commitment and these behaviours positively affected the organisation as team-based projects were completed timeously and meticulously given that the teams were engaged and committed to the completion of the project.

Rameshkumar (2020:105) concludes that the positive association between employee engagement and the affective and normative components of commitment resulted in decreased turnover intention in the organisation and more satisfied employees. The same view was supported by Ampofo and Karatepe (2022:521) when they conducted a three-wave study on organisational commitment and work engagement at an organisation. Findings revealed that affective organisational commitment and work engagement partially mediate the impact of the intention to quit which assists the organisation to save on recruitment costs. Additionally, a quantitative study on employee engagement and organisational commitment was completed by Putri and Setianan (2019:519) and it was found that the affective component of organisational commitment and employee engagement had a positive effect on the employee's intention to remain with the company which decreased turnover rates.

Basit (2019:651) surveyed the effects of respectful engagement on employee task performance and the level of affective organisational commitment, using job engagement as the mediator. The survey yielded results that showed that when employees have a shared responsibility to accomplish an organisational goal, they ensure that they deal with each other respectfully and work in unison toward the attainment of the shared organisational goal.

Sayuti *et al.* (2021:3) concluded a quantitative study which resulted in an explanation that commitment to the organisation is significantly influenced by the engagement level of the respective employee, similarly, the commitment influences the employee's performance which is consequential of employee involvement in organisational growth initiatives, the outcome of which is organisational growth. Therefore, organisational growth is dependent on engaged, involved, and committed employees. In the same vein, Seal *et al.* (2020:507) conducted a quantitative study on employee engagement and its outcomes on an organisation. The study found that effective implementation of organisational policies and, clear and consistent communication, and effective leadership all contribute to increased engagement levels amongst the workforce, which is reflected in organisational outputs. Furthermore, a cross-sectional survey was conducted to determine the meaningfulness of work and employee engagement and the role of affective commitment amongst employees of India's service sector. Findings revealed that productivity levels increased due to employee engagement and affective commitment, leading to employees finding their jobs meaningful (Kaur and Mittal, 2020:119).

Boonsiritomachai and Sud-on (2021:57) utilised the moderating effect of work engagement on organisational commitment and attitude of entrepreneurship in a study conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic in Thailand. Results from the study indicate that when employee's minds are entrepreneurial it becomes easier for them to engage in and contribute to their work and treat the company as if it were their own. The employees' entrepreneurial attitude was instrumental in their commitment to the organisation, and the organisation thrived on this employee behaviour because the business strategy was accomplished with high professionalism. Similarly, a survey study by Hu *et al.* (2019:4) on work engagement and affective commitment, found that employees with stronger work engagement had stronger affective commitment. As a result, the organisation's goals were achieved as planned due to the employee's concerted efforts.

The studies presented thus far provide evidence that when employees are engaged and committed, especially effectively, they impact organisational growth and are an integral part of an organisation's success. Overall, there seems to be evidence that employees who are engaged and committed to the organisation

they work for will ensure that they contribute toward achieving set goals and targets, fulfilling the company's mission. Affectively and normatively committed employees make the company's problems their own and feel a sense of pride when they come up with solutions to these problems. Receiving rewards and recognition for a job well done also contributes to employee engagement and commitment levels. The organisation inevitably benefits from engaged and committed employees, as proven by most of the studies presented in this section.

2.21 THEORETICAL MODELS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

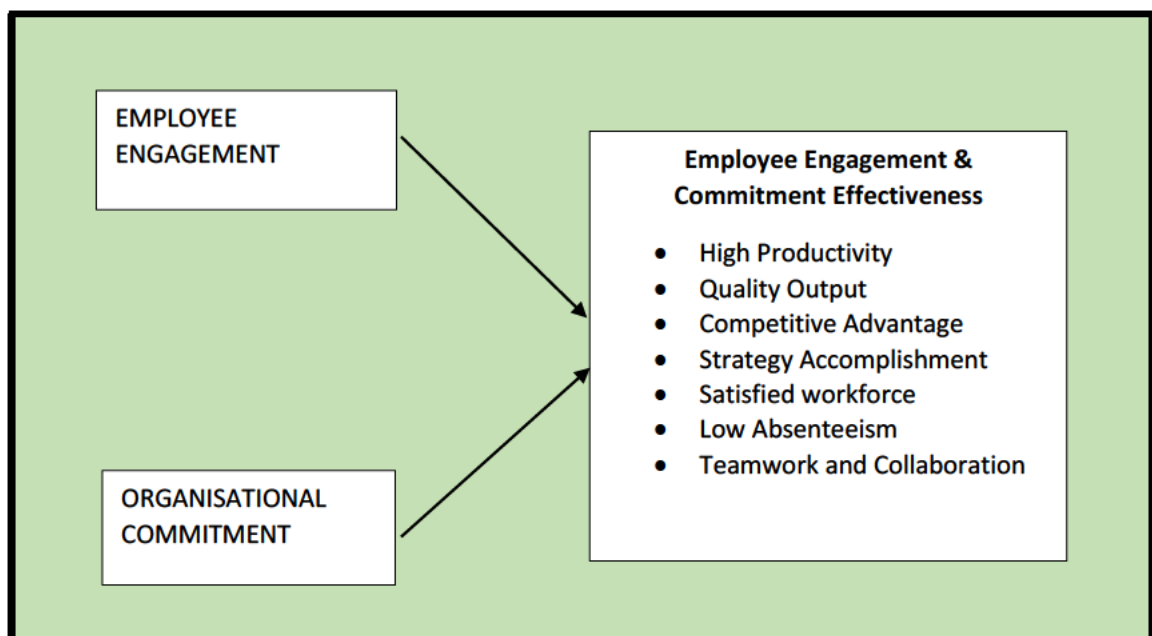
In a study conducted by Jung *et al.* (2021:3), the leader-member exchange and co-worker exchange variables were used as moderators to examine the effects on work engagement and organisational commitment. Findings depicted that employees tend to develop a positive attitude toward their colleagues, their jobs, and the organisation when there is a pattern of relationship exchange between employees, their colleagues, and superiors. The quality of these relationships has a direct bearing on the attitude that employees have toward their jobs and on the outcome of their task performance. Employees engage in their jobs when they receive support from their colleagues and supervisors, and this relieves them from negative experiences they may encounter in the workplace and serves as a resource for optimal job performance. The authors further found that the strength of the social exchange relationship between employees, colleagues and their superiors decreased workplace loneliness and emotional exhaustion.

Rameshkumar (2020:107) employed the JD-R theory in a study on Indian Seafaring Officers while identifying the factors that contribute to employee engagement and its relationship with organisational commitment and found that high job demands lead to burnout that may lead to stress and subsequently other physical ailments. The availability of job resources on the other hand contributed to increased levels of engagement and organisational commitment.

After an extensive literature review on employee engagement and organisational commitment, the researcher of the current study found that there is a paucity of theoretical models or frameworks that address or support the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment within a company setup.

Existing frameworks and theories address the relationship between employee engagement and organisational commitment or use these concepts as mediators and/or moderators. Therefore, The researcher would like to propose a conceptual framework that encompasses employee engagement and organisational commitment with the effect these concepts have on the organisation that the employee works for. The framework will reflect organisational success and benefits from an engaged and committed workforce as illustrated in Figure 2.8. The benefits the company receives from engaged and committed employees reflect these behavioural concepts' effect on the organisation. The proposed conceptual framework is created by extracting the importance and benefits of employee engagement and organisational commitment from existing literature, respectively. Some benefits include employee dedication to their jobs, increased productivity, quality outputs, reduced absenteeism, satisfied employees, increased organisational competitive advantage, team collaboration and the achievement of goals set in the organisational strategy.

FIGURE 2.8: PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT



Source: Self-generated (2023).

2.22 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN THE CHEMICAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

A quantitative study on the impact that an organisation's structure has on its employee engagement and commitment was conducted on manufacturing firms by Funminiyi (2018:579) and findings revealed that when organisational control mechanisms are decentralised, employees become more productive and efficient which contributes immensely toward organisational development through enhanced internal customer service. Kang and Busser (2018:1) echoed similar sentiments when their study found employee engagement to be an effective component of enhanced employee performance and financial success for the company. Of the researched industries, the manufacturing sector was among the leaders in having engaged and committed employees. This was because of a supportive service climate through consistent and constructive feedback and coaching initiatives offered by the leadership in the company.

Kang and Sung (2019:162) investigated a personal care and beauty products manufacturer based in South Korea and found that dimensions of employee-organisation relations are linked to employee job engagement, these relations include but are not limited to commitment, trust relationships, job satisfaction, and mutual control. The authors then concluded that an employee's intention to quit was informed because of procedural disengagement, resulting from organisational justice perceptions. When justice procedures were fair and consistent, employee engagement was high and subsequent commitment was achieved. Similarly, Dhir and Shukla (2019:975) conducted a study in the chemical manufacturing industry. The study sought to find the employee's organisational perceptions and how those perceptions link to the employee's performance on the job, their engagement during job tasks and their commitment to the organisation's values and overall vision. Findings reveal that employee engagement initiatives assisted the employees in performing better as individuals, becoming responsible team members, and being valuable and honest contributors to attaining organisational goals. These positive traits enhance the industry's image in business (Dhir and Shukla, 2019:975).

Additionally, Kwon and Kim (2020:13) concluded a study on employees in the chemical and manufacturing industries. The study was on employee engagement

and innovative behaviour. The authors state that job demands and resources do not have to be adversarial but should interact through their effect on employee engagement and subsequent commitment to the organisation. Innovative behaviour is born of demands and resource interactions, which breed an engaged workforce that can cope with their workload by utilising available resources (Kwon and Kim, 2020:13).

Funminiyi (2018:582) posits that when employees identify with the company's vision, they advocate for the company, and this gives the company a good external image and increases employee confidence levels. Chai *et al.* (2017:144) add that the positive image of the company, which is an intangible asset to the company, helps in talent attraction which in turn increases the talent pool for the industry that the organisation forms part of, building a potential engaged workforce that positively contributes to the sector's overall outcomes.

Duthler and Dhanesh (2018:458) conducted a quantitative study on the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in predicting employee engagement across multiple sectors in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and manufacturing was one of the sectors that formed 0.6% of the total study. The study found a positive relationship between employee engagement and CSR perception particularly between social engagement and sustainable CSR. This meant that employees were emotionally connected to the organisation and socially connected to their colleagues when their organisation met its sustainability and social responsibility. Similarly, a South African study conducted by Nienaber and Martins (2020:483) sought to determine dimensions enhancing employee engagement to improve organisational effectiveness. Findings reveal that organisational and team commitment were significant predictors of employee engagement amongst other constructs. The manufacturing sector made up 14.2% of the sample that participated in the quantitative study. Additionally, A study on flexible work arrangements (FWAs) was conducted across six South African industries including the manufacturing sector that explored the influence that FWAs had on employee engagement and subsequently commitment. Findings suggested that employees were more engaged when afforded flexible working conditions and that contributed to positive employee wellbeing which translated to talent attraction and retention, improved performance and productivity, a work-life

balance, increased employee morale levels and commitment (Weideman and Hofmeyr, 2020:7).

Selected South African manufacturing organisations participated in another study by Els, Brouwers and Lodewyk (2021:6) which sought to determine the effects of work-life quality on turnover intention and organisational commitment amongst employees. Results of the cross-sectional study reflected a positive relationship between organisational commitment and quality of work life, which meant turnover intention levels decreased or were absent when an employee's work-life balance was high. A further revelation indicates that organisational commitment partially mediated the relationship between the quality of an employee's work life and their intention to leave the organisation.

Together these studies provide important insights into the engagement and commitment of employees within an industry. The level of employee engagement and commitment denotes organisational performance which translates to industry performance; therefore, it is vital that employees in the manufacturing sector be kept engaged and strategies be put in place to ensure employee commitment to the organisation and, subsequently, the chemicals manufacturing sector.

2.23 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Keeping employees engaged and committed is a continuous and elongated process, and one cannot simply treat such a strategic process as a once-off project. The process requires planning, implementation, evaluation and repeating the cycle as an integrated and continuous thought-out process to keep the organisation's competitive edge intact. This requires patience.

Employees enjoy their work through the employee engagement process as this process focuses on the physical element of the job and the cognitive and behavioural elements. These elements, when combined, contribute to the organisation's growth through the engaged employee's effectiveness and efficiency.

Organisations have been faced with the issue of disengaged and non-committed employees dating back to the 1990s. Several studies have delved into these concepts to find a solution to this problem that has lingered for ages in both

business and academic research. Many scholars have attempted to answer questions and meet objectives by introducing mediators and moderators to the concepts of employee engagement and organisational commitment, which has resulted in the need for more studies to be conducted into the construct's behaviours.

This chapter sought to define the employee engagement and organisational commitment constructs, and literature was extensively reviewed on the separate variables and their relationship and contribution to organisations in terms of effectiveness. The variable's effect on the chemical manufacturing industry was highlighted. Without an existing framework that supports this study, the researcher proposed a new conceptual framework that addresses the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment within a company setup. These constructs' approaches, determinants, dimensions, antecedents, importance, and benefits were explained, and relevant theories were used to support the concepts under review. The chapter also included demographic variables' impact on employee engagement and organisational commitment. The following chapter will address the methodology and design employed by this study to carry out the research.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section addresses how the research was conducted and how the data was collected and analysed. It focuses on the research design, population sampling, data collection tool, method, and data sources. The validity and reliability testing of the measurement instrument is also reported in this chapter. The research philosophy, purpose, strategy, approach employed for this study, and ethical considerations will be unpacked. The 29th version of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM-SPSS version 29) was used as the data analysis tool.

According to Brooks, Hammons, Nolan, Dufek and Wynn (2019:39), research is carried out in pursuit of a solution to a problem or to understand certain behaviours that affect business, academics and/or society. The outcome of the research therefore improves the researcher's knowledge of the problem and contributes to resolving the existing problem through the collection and analysis of information/data. To find solutions through systematic inquiry, the researchers review past theories of the problem under investigation and use that secondary data to support their empirical study. A research project aims to describe or classify the phenomena under investigation and explore and establish the causality of variable relationships through various strategies (Brooks *et al.*, 2019:39).

3.2 MAIN QUESTION OF THE STUDY

This study seeks to determine the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment of employees at a chemical manufacturing concern. The study aims to answer the following question: To what extent or degree are employee engagement and commitment effective for the selected company?

3.3 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

Research philosophy assumes the concern for assumptions and experiences that underpin research problems. Philosophy plays an integral part in developing knowledge and understanding of society in a logical sense. The philosophy a

researcher adopts dictates their research method and assists in explaining research assumptions that later translate into research outcomes. The chosen philosophy acts as a set of guiding values for the inquiry which consists of the researcher's commitments in an ontological sense, epistemological beliefs and preferred methods (Allemang, Sitter and Dimitropoulos, 2022:39).

3.3.1 Positivism

According to Berryman (2019:273), positivism depends on quantifiable observations that are analysed statistically, fulfilling formal logic and experiential examination rules, and determining the association between variables. According to an empiricist view, this philosophy is that knowledge comes from what a human has experienced. Positivism concerns the existing concepts linked to the problem being investigated and facts that are supported empirically. The positivistic philosophy is focused on the objectivity of phenomena measurement. Positivism is associated with quantitative research and is a scientific method of conducting empirical studies.

The positivism approach was adopted for this study as it relates to quantitative studies using questionnaires for data collection. This approach acts as a guide to obtain a generic concept and understanding of unknown behaviour. This approach assists in finding cause-and-effect relationships of phenomena through observation. A positivist discovers the truth about research concepts by asking quantifiable questions (Berryman, 2019:273). For this study, the quantifiable questions are the items on the data collection tool in the form of a structured questionnaire. This philosophy aims to identify biases within the study, focuses on objectivity, and ensures validity of the measurement instrument and generalisability of the concepts to start and end at the specificity of the concepts post data analysis. This philosophy asks quantifiable questions, answers to which are analysed descriptively and through inferential statistics in chapter 4 of this study.

3.4 APPROACHES TO RESEARCH

According to Woiceshyn and Daellenbach (2018:184), research approaches, alternatively known as types of reasoning, are used for grounding social science studies. The deductive approach looks at phenomena from a general to a specific

point of view, while the inductive approach generally moves from specific to general theory. Researchers who employ deductive reasoning for their quantitative studies believe it is the best scientific method, whereas qualitative researchers believe that inductive reasoning allows the data to relay the story unbiasedly.

3.4.1 Deductive Approach

A deductive approach is the development of hypotheses based on existing or available theories, through which the researcher designs a research strategy and tests the hypotheses. Researchers use the deductive approach to compile a theory or theories using analysed primary data. Deduction moves from a general to a particular phenomenon. For example, a researcher would derive a hypothesis from an existing theory, test the derived hypothesis and then revise the said theory (Azungah, 2018:185).

3.4.2 Inductive Approach

On the other hand, Lee and Lin (2019:23) explain that the inductive research approach pertains to searching for patterns by observing the development of explanations or theories for those patterns through a series of hypotheses. This approach moves from particular to general and is effective for observation-based data in events, subjects, or individual/group cases. This approach is mainly used for qualitative studies.

The abductive approach, also known as abductive reasoning, addresses weaknesses linked with the deductive and inductive approaches.

- **The approach adopted for this study**

A deductive approach was utilised for this study as reasoning starts as general and moves toward specific once data has been collected. Deductive reasoning allows the researcher to examine variable relationships during the study to see if the trend supports the generalisation and then draws a conclusion supported by logical sequence through data analysis (Woiceshyn and Daellenbach, 2018:185). The underlying generalisation for this study is that there is a level of effectiveness that the engagement and organisational commitment of employees has on the organisation. The researcher therefore needs to conclude if the generalisation

holds true or not in the following chapters that will report on the outcome of this study.

3.5 PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH

The three categories or purposes of research are explained below. Briefly, descriptive research aims to describe or define the research topic. Explanatory research aims to explain why particular concepts or phenomena work in a particular way. Exploratory research is usually conducted because of the researcher's quest to understand the topic under investigation on a broader scope, at the beginning of the research project.

3.5.1 Descriptive Research

Descriptive research is a statement of activities as they are present, and the researcher has no control over the variables. When utilising this research purpose, the population or circumstances surrounding the research are methodically and precisely characterised due to its definitive nature that is used for hypotheses evaluation. Researchers use descriptive research to answer the 'what' questions statistically to meet their study objectives. In this way, results are easily attainable and practical implications that stem from the findings can be implemented. This approach provides a straightforward depiction of participant experience and perceptions of the research project, especially when the researcher has minimal theory surrounding the research topic. The descriptive purpose focuses on the research problem's subjective nature and the findings of a project that utilises this purpose reflect terminology that is used in the research question/s. Although this purpose is most suitable to qualitative studies, researchers who pursue a mixed methods approach may utilise it (Doyle, McCabe, Keogh, Brady and McCann, 2020:443). Descriptive research variables need not be linked to casual hypotheses (Ranganathan *et al.*, 2019:34).

3.5.2 Explanatory Research

Causal research, also called explanatory research, assesses the impact of specific changes on various processes and existing norms. This purpose is utilised to examine behavioural causes amongst variables under investigation and analyses relationship patterns of specific problems. The effect that one variable has on the other is revealed by the purpose of casual research.

Explanatory research is characterised by non-spurious association, temporal sequence, and concomitant variation where the validity of variables is determined by the absence of a third variable that may be related to cause and effect of a problem. The cause must occur before the effect so that the research is termed explanatory (Bentouhami, Casas and Weyler, 2021:764).

3.5.3 Exploratory Research

Scholars use exploratory research in a quest for new discoveries. When embarking on this type of quest, the researcher is not aware of the type of problem/problems they might encounter during the study or the problem is known but is still in its introductory stage, therefore the researcher uses this research purpose to determine the problem in its entirety. This research purpose is flexible, unstructured, and unpredictable and open-ended as its basis is on problems that have not been discovered in the past, therefore the researcher is obliged to wait for results that only emerge well into the study (Swedberg, 2020:17).

- **Purpose for research adopted for this study**

This study adopted the exploratory purpose for research given that the primary purpose of a research project that takes the exploratory route is to give a reason why phenomena occur in a particular manner and then predict future occurrences. The characteristic of an exploratory study is a research hypothesis that is specific to the nature of the variable relationships under investigation. This purpose requires probability sampling to enable the researcher to generalise the results to the total population from which the sample was taken. The exploratory purpose is conducive to quantitative studies as data collected is subjected to statistical tests to establish relationship validity as was the practice for this study.

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

Yin (2017:211) explains that a research design is a plan or blueprint for observing and carrying out the research. This blueprint guides the researcher while conducting the study, collecting, and analysing the data effectively and efficiently. Gast and Ledford (2018:89) concur that the research design provides a context for collecting and analysing data and therefore indicates best-suited research methods. According to Kumar (2019:155), the two main functions of a research design are firstly to conduct the study by following previously identified processes

and procedures as well as logistical arrangements then secondly ensure the process and procedure being followed has passed all quality requirements such as validity, reliability, objectivity and accuracy of data and facts.

3.6.1 Quantitative Research Approach

Kumar (2019:105) states that quantitative research is a systematically observed investigation of problems using computation techniques or mathematical, statistical, or numerical data. A structured data collection instrument is used for quantitative research, results that are deducted from these instruments are based on large respondent samples drawn from an even larger population. Quantitative studies can be replicated over time but would still be reliable. According to Gronmo (2019:172), the quantitative research design tries to quantify the problem and understand its prevalence by looking for projectable results for a larger population, which is conclusive and decisive. Quantitative research is most suitable for association investigation and theoretical examination of key constructs as observed by Duthler and Dhanesh (2018:454). Flick (2018:122) adds that this research design is linked to the positivism philosophy with a means to test the objectivity of phenomena through variable relationships. Existing theories are credited using a deductive approach during a quantitative study to prove or counter-argue findings. The main aim of a quantitative study is its search for causality.

For this study, a quantitative research design was used as this method involves variable relationship testing and measuring the effectiveness of variables to be able to track correlations, patterns and the determination of relationship positivity or negativity between the variables. The quantitative design permits the utilisation of numbers for data analysis of items collected via a questionnaire in an unbiased manner. This study takes an objective stance hence it is quantitative in nature. The focus is on numeric unchanging data and convergent reasoning to address the research problem. The researcher utilises numerical patterns to quantify assumptions that arise from variable relationships and to answer the research questions which lead to the attainment of the study's research objective/s. The use of the quantitative design equips the researcher to generate knowledge on the research topic and create an understanding of the phenomena under investigation.

3.7 RESEARCH STRATEGY

This section outlines and explains the research strategy that was adopted for this study.

3.7.1 Survey

According to Bell, Bryman and Harley (2022), surveys allow researchers to gather data from respondents on a large scale efficiently and cost effectively. This strategy is used for quantitative studies. Although this strategy may be time-consuming, it yields accurate results that are of relevance to the topic under investigation. Check and Schutt (2012:160) state that the collection of data from sampled individuals through answering questions is termed survey research. Surveys can efficiently measure several variables concomitantly. Populations are sampled through probability to obtain respondents for surveys. Surveys ordinarily have a questionnaire format, and the careful design of the questions/statements would determine the desired positive outcome of the study. The questionnaire should be pretested before distribution for the main study. It is important to design the questionnaire with the study's objectives in mind and for the questionnaire sections to complement each other with the aim of reaching the set objectives.

This study has employed the survey strategy through the form of a questionnaire for data collection. A pre-determined sample was drawn to respond to the questionnaire items/close-ended questions. The responses were then analysed to seek answers to the study's questions. This strategy is conducive to quantitative studies. Surveys are cost effective and require minimal to no interference from the researcher during the completion of the questionnaire. Data is collected faster through surveys than interviews for example. Data from surveys can be collected in large quantities in a short period, enabling the researcher to analyse the population's behaviour on a broader scale through the sampled respondents to the questionnaire.

3.8 DATA SOURCES

Data from a research project or report can be collected from primary or secondary sources. These sources are explained below.

3.8.1 Primary Data

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018:114), primary data is attained through direct observation of the phenomenon being studied, researched, or collected personally. Primary data are original and directly related to the issue under investigation. This study used a close-ended structured quantitative questionnaire (Appendix E) as a data-gathering instrument to gather primary data.

3.8.2 Secondary Data

According to Hollensen and Eskerod (2022:28), secondary data consists of information and records that already exist and are accessible to the researcher through various publications. Secondary data has a lower bias risk. Acquiring secondary data is less expensive and the researcher spends less time collecting secondary data, allowing the researcher to compare and contrast the data before deciding which to utilise in their study.

Ruan and Zhang (2017:12) explain that secondary data refers to the information collected by individuals or organisations other than the researcher. Secondary data for this study was sourced from online journal articles accessible from the DUT library as well as other scholarly search engines, online textbooks, and other dissertations and theses in higher education repositories.

3.9 TARGET POPULATION

A target population is a group that a researcher seeks to engage to understand its behaviour or stances on a phenomenon under investigation. This group shares similar characteristics that could be of interest to the researcher (Enahoro and Johnny, 2020:57). The target population for this study comprises 250 employees of a chemical manufacturing company in South Africa, the population size was obtained from the payroll department at the company under investigation.

3.9.1 Sampling Defined

Enahoro and Johnny (2020:56) state that sampling is a scientific method of selecting and using a sample that represents a whole/total intending to find answers to questions involving the total population.

Sampling means taking a smaller number from the total population that is representative of or has the characteristics of the total population. The sample is then used as a foundation for predictions and estimations of outcomes of a research study assuming that the outcome is representative of the total population. Bruce and Bruce (2017:92) add that a sample is made up of elements, a population subset is considered for definite inclusion into the study, or a measurements subset drawn from the population from which the researcher is interested.

3.9.2 Sampling Methods

Sampling techniques have two major types, namely, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. With probability sampling, each member of the population has a non-zero, known chance of participating in the study, whereas in non-probability sampling, samples are selected non-randomly and only certain population members have a chance to participate in the study (Dudovskiy, 2018).

3.9.2.1 Probability Sampling Methods

According to Cox (2019:33), sampling techniques have two major types: probability and non-probability. With probability sampling, each member of the population has a definite chance to be included in the study.

Types of probability sampling methods include simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified samples, and cluster samples. The types are explained below.

- According to Cresswell and Creswell (2018:121), in *simple random sampling* all population members are allowed to form part of the required or desired sample without technicalities and are representative of the total population when drawing a simple random sample. This a fair sampling method. The researcher is required to obtain a complete list of the population from which to draw the sample, before conducting the study.
- King *et al.* (2019:211) state that *stratified random sampling* uses isolation methods where the total population is grouped and thereafter a sample is drawn/selected from the groups or strata. It is important that groups do not overlap to avoid selecting a participant twice thereby distorting the sample.

The groups are formed based on unique or shared characteristics. The researcher then selects the sample from each stratum in proportion to the population. Utilising this method increases the external validity of the research study.

- Aspers and Corte (2019:140) explain that a sample from the *systematic sampling* technique is made up of the “nth” population member from a list of the total population. The population is listed, and the researcher may select every 5th member of the population, for example, to build their sample size. Berndt (2020:225) adds that each population unit is afforded an equal chance of selection through the lottery system or the use of random numbers as a selection technique. The author argues that the systematic sampling method is easier compared to simple random sampling since participants are selected evenly across the population.
- Enahoro and Johnny (2020:56) suggest that when utilising *cluster sampling*, the researcher is required to group their audiences into clusters and collect data from each cluster accordingly. In most cases, the clusters occur naturally, for example, a researcher may select universities of technology within a province instead of all higher education institutions. Cluster sampling is feasible, especially when researching within a large population.

3.9.2.2 Non-Probability Sampling Methods

In non-probability sampling, samples are selected non-randomly and only certain population members have a chance to participate in the study (Dudovskiy, 2018).

Types of non-probability sampling methods include purposive sampling, convenience sampling, snowballing sampling, and quota sampling. The types are explained below.

- Malik (2023:1189) explains that *convenience sampling* identifies participants' availability to participate in the research. It is alternatively referred to as accidental sampling based on the sample's proximity, availability or accessibility and willingness to participate in the study. Convenience sampling is economically feasible given that the researcher

uses the available sample and does not need to recruit actively. When utilising this sampling method, researchers assume that the population is homogeneous.

- According to Berndt (2020:226), a *purposive sample* is knowingly selected by the researcher based on their opinion and judgement to fulfil the study's objectives. This sampling method is subjective, judgemental, and selective. The researcher selects a sample that will be favourable to the study and the sample will be of value and produce focussed data that will assist in accurately answering the research questions. Examples of purposive sampling include expert sampling, maximum variation, and typical case sampling. Qualitative researchers prefer this method over probability sampling because this method allows the researcher to justify sample selection based on logic, analysis, and theory.
- Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020:5) state that *snowballing sampling* is the referral of interested participants to a study by current participants, which then makes up the desired sample. This method is suitable and useful for populations that are difficult to identify and hard to reach and allows the researcher to utilise a sample that they would have used had the recruitment been done personally. The researcher need not spend a considerable amount of money when using this method given that the participants recruit each other.
- According to Bhardwaj (2019), *quota sampling* relies on the non-random selection of a predetermined number of units, referred to as a quota. The population is divided into mutually exclusive subgroups or strata, thereafter sample units are recruited until the quota is reached. This method is quick and easy, and the researcher can explore distinctions amongst the sub-groups.

- **Sampling Method used for the study**

Simple random sampling is the most straightforward and pure probability sampling strategy (Cox, 2019:34). In this study, the simple random technique as a probability sampling method was used to select the desired sample given that

this sampling method is well suited to quantitative studies and allows for accurate research findings and is of an unbiased and impartial nature. The researcher used this method given that it is effective when collecting data from a diverse population and assists in obtaining an accurate representation of the total population. The simple random sampling method is cost-effective. This method proved to be efficient because the population was homogeneous and the list from which the sample was drawn, was readily available, thereby saving time.

3.9.3 Sampling Size

A sample size is a group of individuals selected from the total population representing the real population with which the study will be conducted (Cox, 2019:33).

Sekaran and Bougie's (2014:268) computed table for determining the optimum sample size from a given population was used in this study to select the sample. The target population is $N=250$; therefore, a sample size of $n=152$ was drawn as recommended by Sekaran and Bougie table (Appendix I).

3.9.4 Sampling Procedure

This study employed the simple random sampling procedure without replacement. A list of the headcount which is the total population $N= 250$ and is a representation of the sampling frame, was requested from the payroll department. The list was then numbered from 1 to 250 in ascending order, giving each member of the population a number after which the researcher selected random numbers until the desired sample $n=152$ was obtained through the method of lottery as suggested by Mweshi and Sakyi (2020:187). Each number that was selected was struck off the list to avoid selecting the same respondent twice as recommended by dos Santos, du Toit, Faasen, Quesada, Masenge, van Aardt, Wagner, Bryman, Bell and Hirschsohn (2021). The researcher opted for this sampling procedure given that it is fair and helps reduce bias and is a valuable and versatile sampling procedure to allow one to make inferences about the total population.

3.10 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Data can be collected through measurement instruments such as interviews, questionnaires, surveys, direct observation, documents, and records and from

interacting with focus groups (Moises, 2020:80). Salmons (2019:76) states that quantitative data that is collected in a standardised way, is enabled through questionnaires for the data to be coherent and consistent for the analysis. Hence a structured close-ended questionnaire was employed as a measuring instrument for this study.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section looked at the demographic information of the respondents which required the respondent's contract type (fixed contract or permanent); work category, whether the employee forms part of the operational staff or the administrative section of the company; the respondent's gender, age group (the ages are listed in 5 groups ranging from 18 to 25 years to more than 51 years old). The respondents were required to state their race group, marital status, and length of service with the company. The lengths were listed in groups/ranges from 0 to 5 to more than 26 years of service. Lastly, the respondents were requested to indicate their highest education level for demographics. Respondents were required to be 18 years or older and be an organisation employee to participate in this study.

The second section addressed variable A (Employee engagement) and items for this section were adapted from the existing Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) that contains questions which assess or measure the employee's vigour, dedication, and absorption in their job. The UWES scale has 17 items, 5 of which measure vigour, 6 measure dedication, and the last 7 items measure absorption (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004:293). For this study, the researcher utilised 15 of the 17 items as these were more aligned with the current study. All 5 items that measure vigour were utilised, 5 items that measure dedication and 5 items that measure absorption were selected to assist in answering the study's questions.

The third section addressed variable B (Organisational Commitment) and the items were adapted from existing questionnaires such as Allen and Meyer's Organisational Commitment Scale (1996) and the Porter, Steer, Mowday and Boulian (1974) Organisational Commitment questionnaire. The Allen and Meyer scale consists of 17 items that measure commitment in its three forms, namely, affective, continuance and normative commitment. These items are mirrored in Porter, Steer, Mowday and Boulian's (1974) organisational commitment scale.

The researcher opted for 5 items that address affective commitment, 5 that measure continuance commitment and 5 that measure normative commitment. The rationale for selecting the said items was based on the study's objectives.

The fourth section assessed the effectiveness of employee engagement, and the fifth section was envisaged to assess the effectiveness of organisational commitment as set out in the topic of this study. Items for sections D and E were adapted by the researcher using the benefits and outcomes of engaged and committed employees as set out in the literature review chapter of this study to address the objectives and aim of the study as the behaviours and attitude of an engaged and committed employee would give rise to increased productivity, employee motivation, positive energy amongst employees, willingness to go the extra mile to help achieve organisational objectives and positive rapport within the workforce. All these behavioural outcomes positively affect the organisation and its growth, which translates to an increased competitive advantage for the organisation.

The respondents were given the option to choose one of five responses for each statement from the 5-point Likert Scale that was provided in the questionnaire. The responses ranged from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree to Strongly Agree (Likert, 1974:233).

Questionnaires are formalised sets of questions for procuring information or data from respondents. Questionnaires are inexpensive to administrate, and respondents have time to think about their responses to statements/questions as opposed to interviews (Brace, 2018:2). Salmons (2019:76) states that quantitative data that is collected in a standardised way, is enabled through questionnaires for the data to be coherent and consistent for the analysis. A good questionnaire is characterised by simple and easy-to-understand instructions and statements/closed-ended questions, is well-ordered, easy to comprehend, and unambiguous.

3.11 PILOT TESTING

De Costa, Crowther, and Maloney (2019:152) state that the purpose of a pilot test is to refine the statements on the questionnaire to ensure that there are no ambiguous statements or biases so that the measuring instrument is ready for

data collection. Conducting a preliminary study assists the researcher in ensuring that the large-scale (main) study will be of high quality. Challenges that may compromise the quality and credibility of the study are identified during the pilot study. According to Viechtbauer, Smits, Kotz, Budè, Spigt, Serroyen and Crutzen (2015:1377) a pilot sample of “at least” 5% of the main sample (n) is ideal. The sample for this study is $n = 152$, therefore $152 \times 5\% = 7.6 = 8$. The 8 respondents requested to participate in the pilot test were not part of the main sample ($n=152$). The pilot study was conducted to enable the researcher to make essential revisions to the questionnaire before conducting the large-scale study. As an outcome of the pilot study, some of the items on the questionnaire were rephrased.

3.12 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection involves gathering and systematically measuring variable information to respond to research questions, test hypotheses, and outcome evaluation (Moises, 2020:80).

3.13 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Before data collection, the researcher requested a letter from the Human Resources Executive permitting the study to be conducted in the organisation. The researcher personally dropped off and collected questionnaires at the different company sites and sent other questionnaires via the company’s inter-region internal mailing system for the respondents who work in the Gauteng, Eastern and Western Cape provinces where the company trades. There was a designated box at the site’s reception area for the respondents to deposit completed questionnaires. The drop box helped to keep the anonymity of respondents. The respondents were requested to return completed questionnaires within three weeks.

According to Stucke (2023), the personal data collection method guarantees high response rates compared to other data collection methods, hence the researcher opted for this efficient method.

3.14 DELIMITATIONS

This study is limited to one manufacturing concern in the chemicals industry, including its distribution branches that are spread across four of the nine

provinces of South Africa. The organisation trades in these four provinces only: KwaZulu Natal, Gauteng, Western Cape and the Eastern Cape. Respondents comprise staff of operational (Production, Logistics, Engineering and Technical) and administrative (HR, Procurement, Sales and Finance).

3.15 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

For a research study to be viable, the measuring instruments used for data collection should be valid and reliable. Reliability is the consistency of the measurement and validity denotes the desired measurement. Validity and reliability are quality concepts of the measuring instrument ensuring that results would be credible, dependable, and transferable (Surucu and Maslakci, 2020:2696).

3.15.1 Validity

According to Salmons (2019:94), validity measures the degree to which a study succeeds in measuring the projected values and the extent to which variances found reflect the true measures and/or differences amongst the respondents. A measuring instrument is valid when it measures what was planned to measure.

Surucu and Maslakci (2020) identified five types of validity: face, construct, criterion-related, formative, and sampling. According to Dudovskiy (2018), face validity is the most basic validity type. Given that the researcher specifies a test as valid because it seems valid (at face value), there is no in-depth scientific justification for face validity. Construct validity involves the assessment of the suitability of the measurement tool, which requires the involvement of a panel of experts that have familiarised themselves with the measure and the phenomena being measured. Hajjar (2018:52) explains that criterion-related validity is comparing test results with the outcome and other assessment criteria previously utilised. Whereas formative validity assesses the measure's effectiveness by providing information or statistics for the improvement of specific aspects of the phenomena. Lastly, sampling validity ensures that the measure covers a vast area within the research by item selection and elements with a specialised pattern based on the aim and objectives of the study (Amah and Sese, 2018:481). For this study, construct and sampling validity was assessed through factor analyses.

According to Bandalos and Finney (2018:98), factor analyses allow the researcher to simplify complex variables or questionnaire items to enable the researcher to explain relationships between the items and/or variables and establish construct validity. Additionally, a factor analysis is a multivariate statistical method for grouping similar items in a questionnaire together based on their characteristics and shared variance. Factor analyses can either be exploratory or confirmatory. Both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were applied for this study to test and validate the items that were set to measure employee engagement and organisational commitment. A factor analysis using principal components with a varimax rotation was applied to the 46 items in the questionnaire. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) of 0.851 and a significant Bartlett's test ($p < 0.001$) indicated that the data was adequate for successful and reliable extraction as depicted in Table 3.1. The rotation converged in 24 iterations to produce the depicted results. The KMO measure suggests that the data was suitable for conducting a factor analysis. According to Shrestha (2021:6), a KMO result between 0.8 to 1.0 indicates that sampling is adequate.

Bartlett's Test result indicates that there are significant correlations between the items or variables, further supporting the reasonable use of factor analysis to uncover underlying relationships in the dataset.

TABLE 3.1: KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

| | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | | ,851 |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Approx. Chi-Square | 4061,219 |
| | df. | 1035 |
| | Sig. | <,001 |

3.15.2 Reliability

Wright and Wallis (2019:92) observe that reliability is the dependability or consistency of an instrument of measurement. An instrument that is deemed

reliable produces the same results when a variable is measured repeatedly under almost the same circumstances.

Reliability can be divided into four categories: test-retest reliability, parallel forms of reliability, inter-rater reliability, and internal consistency reliability (Dudovskiy, 2018). According to Surucu and Maslakci (2020:2707), the test-retest reliability measures reliability that is obtained through conducting the same test more than once, over time using the same sample group. The parallel form's reliability is obtained by conducting the same phenomena assessments with the same sample group using more than one assessment method. Hajjar (2018:49) states that inter-rater reliability measures a set of results from different assessors using the same methods by referring to methods in a subjective manner, whereas internal consistency reliability assesses differences within test items that look at the same construct and produces similar results. An example of internal consistency reliability is the split-half reliability test that is conducted by dividing total items into odd and even halves and thereafter comparing results obtained from both halves.

For this study, the internal consistency reliability category was applied to the research instrument using Cronbach's alpha test. According to Taber (2018:3), a coefficient alpha score = 0,70 or above is acceptable whereas 0.80 or above indicates an excellent reliability score. Table 3.2 reflects the reliability scores of employee engagement and organisational commitment constructs. The reliability scores of the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment are also reflected. The internal reliability of the items in the questionnaire ranged between 0.687 to 0.912.

The employee engagement section had three sub-sections, namely vigour, which returned a score of $\alpha = 0.795$, dedication was recorded at $\alpha = 0.777$, and absorption returned an $\alpha = 0.687$ value. The overall Cronbach alpha score for the employee engagement construct was $\alpha = 0.853$. The organisational commitment section also had three sub-sections, namely affective commitment, which yielded an alpha score of $\alpha = 0.862$, with continuance commitment scoring $\alpha = 0.875$, while normative commitment scored $\alpha = 0.817$. The overall Cronbach alpha score for the organisational commitment construct was $\alpha = 0.912$. The effectiveness of

employee engagement and the effectiveness of organisational commitment sections both returned an alpha score of 0.825 and 0.900, respectively.

In sum, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient scores in Table 3.2 indicate the reliability of the items within each section and subsection of the questionnaire, with higher values suggesting a greater internal consistency of the items. Therefore, the results reflect the quality and reliability of the data collection instrument and the dimensions it aims to measure.

TABLE 3.2: CRONBACH COEFFICIENT ALPHA TEST RESULTS

| Section | Subsections | Number of items | Cronbach's alpha |
|---|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| SECTION B: Employee Engagement | Vigor | 5 | 0.795 |
| | Dedication | 5 | 0.777 |
| | Absorption | 5 | 0.687 |
| | N | 15 | 0.853 |
| SECTION C: Organisational Commitment | Affective Commitment | 5 | 0.862 |
| | Continuance Commitment | 5 | 0.875 |
| | Normative Commitment | 5 | 0.817 |
| | N | 15 | 0.912 |
| SECTION D: Assessing the Effectiveness of Employee Engagement | | 8 | 0.825 |
| SECTION E: Assessing the Effectiveness of Organisational Commitment | | 8 | 0.900 |

3.16 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Fleming and Zegwaard (2018:205-210) advise that researchers should obtain approval for human research ethics from relevant ethical committees prior to data collection to ensure appropriate behaviour by the researcher when dealing with participants or respondents. A gatekeepers' letter (Appendix D) was obtained

from the company executive permitting this study to continue. Ethical clearance number 045/23 was granted by the Durban University of Technology Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) to conduct this study.

Wright and Wallis (2019:94) highlight the most important ethical considerations researchers should adhere to when undertaking research. The researcher needs to obtain consent and ensure that respondents are not deceived; maintain the privacy of possible and actual respondents; the researcher should maintain data confidentiality provided by the individual respondents and ensure they are kept anonymous. Careful attention should be given to how the researcher processes, analyses and reports on data received. The researcher should pay attention to respondent reactions during the data collection process. Due care should be taken concerning the researcher's behaviour and objectivity during the study and regard given to the voluntary nature of the research, giving the respondent a right to withdraw partially or completely from the study.

A cover letter (Appendix B) was written to reassure the respondents to this study that they were protected, and their information was dealt with in a confidential manner that ensured their anonymity. The data was collected in the form of hard copies only and was to be retained for 5 years accessible to the researcher only in a safe location (lockable cabinet) and then after that disposed of by shredding.

3.17 DATA ANALYSIS

Chambers (2018:3) states that data analysis entails editing and reducing collected data into manageable sizes to enable the researcher to summarise and interpret the data for reporting purposes and to be able to track behavioural patterns in the data using statistical techniques. This study employed statistical analysis to data collected. The responses to the close-ended structured questionnaire used as a collection tool were captured into Microsoft Excel to form a data set. Thereafter, the responses were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM-SPSS) Version 29. The data was analysed, and descriptive and inferential statistics were presented. Tests included mean and standard deviation, one-way ANOVA, and independent T-tests. Factor analyses and structural equation modelling were also applied for path testing. The results will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

3.18 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter described the methodology employed and the rationale for its use in conducting the study. It explained how the quantitative research measuring instrument was designed and constructed. The research philosophy, strategy, design, and approach adopted in this empirical study were presented. Data sources consulted and employed for the completion of the study were mentioned. The target population, sampling technique, validity and reliability, ethical considerations, elimination of biases, and data collection methods were also discussed. The delimitations and limitations of the study were outlined. The various data tests and analyses that were conducted were thoroughly explained above. The Cronbach Alpha results that reflect the reliability of the questionnaire were reported in this chapter, and multivariate factor analyses and KMO tests that were run to determine the validity of the measuring instrument were well explained. The next chapter will address the analysis and discussion of the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the research design and methodology used in this study, and this chapter will present findings that stem from an analysis of the responses to a close-ended questionnaire collected using a personal method. The sample for this study was n=152. The researcher collected 145 completed questionnaires, constituting a 95.39% response rate compared to the sample (n=152). Of the 145 questionnaires 10 did not meet the criteria for analysis and were therefore excluded from the study, which rendered 135 questionnaires good for analysis. The statistical analyses were run, and descriptive and inferential statistics are presented below. All analyses used the Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM-SPSS) version 29.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

The study aimed to assess the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at a selected chemicals manufacturing organisation. The objectives set for this study were the following:

- To assess the level of employee engagement and commitment to the company.
- To determine the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at the company.
- To identify antecedents and consequences of employee engagement and organisational commitment.
- To provide recommendations to management based on the findings.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA

Salvatore (2021:1) states that numerical data collection, analysis, presentation, and usage are statistics. Researchers use the inferences to reach decisions and make conclusions based on the outcomes of the analysed statistics. According to Bergin (2018:1), quantitative data analysis assists the researcher in interpreting and summarising numerical results from the close-ended questions to find answers to the research questions and assess variable relationships. Cooksey (2020:21) adds that quantitative data analysis entails the application of specialised statistical formulas to transform raw numerical data from questionnaires to data that can be interpreted and one that tells a story about the population being investigated, answers the research questions, and supports the research hypotheses.

For this study, data collected through a close-ended questionnaire was analysed using SPSS version 29 and is presented below in descriptive and inferential forms. Tables, pie charts, histograms, and bar graphs are also used to depict and illustrate the data respectively.

4.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (FREQUENCIES)

According to Mishra, Pandey, Singh, Gupta, Sahu, and Keshri (2019:67), descriptive statistics comprise statistical procedures that guide a researcher on how to summarise, organise and communicate characteristics that make up data samples. Three categories or types of descriptive statistics are presented in this chapter, namely, the measure of central tendency which is the mean, frequency percentage measures of items or variables, and variations measure which is the standard deviation.

4.4.1 Frequency Distribution

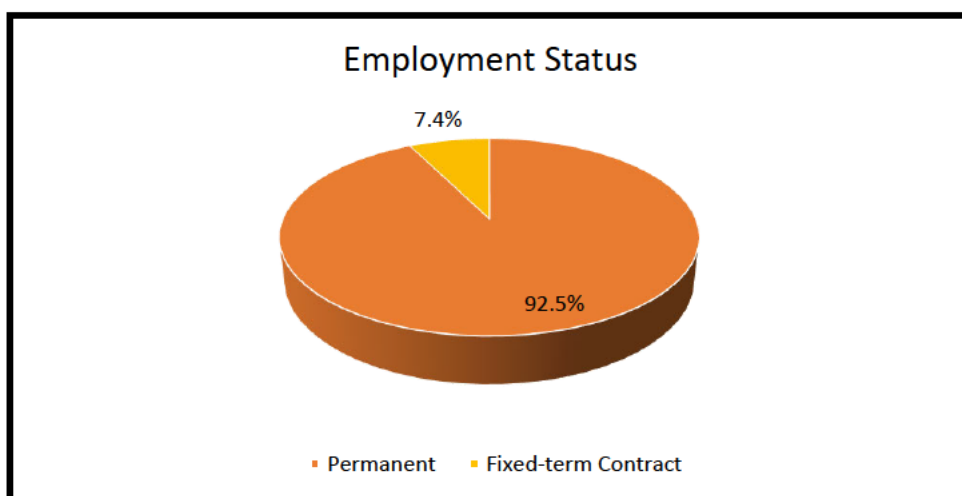
Techel, Müller, and Schweizer (2020:3506) describe frequency distribution as graphical presentations that arrange and show frequency scores to ensure that data are construed in a manner that is easier to comprehend. Frequency distributions can display total frequencies or relevant frequencies, examples of which are percentages, sizes, ratios, and proportions (Techel *et al.*, 2020:3506). The following sub-sections present the biographical data that was collected from the respondents to this study. The biographical characteristics include

employment/contract type, job category, gender, age group, race, marital status, length of service and highest qualification level. A frequency distribution of the biographical data in values and percentile is presented below.

4.4.1.1 Employment Type

The pie chart in Figure 4.1 illustrates the employment status of the respondents. Out of the 135 respondents, 125 are permanently employed accounting for 92.5% of the total sample and 10 are on a fixed-term contract which accounts for 7.4% of the total sample. Temporary employees are normally employed for short-term projects that do not require a lot of training. Some of the respondents that make up the fixed-term contract workforce are in-service trainees who have been placed for experiential learning before they graduate, others are interns who are in training to gain industry experience after they have graduated, and another group is made up of apprentices that are doing their experiential work to obtain their respective trades. According to Hünefeld, Gerstenberg, and Hüffmeier (2020:98), temporary employee's work-related attitudes such as organisational commitment are affected due to a lack of job security and uncertainty because of the nature of the employment contract, adding that employers offer benefits, training and development opportunities and other related benefits to permanent employees as opposed to temporary employed persons. Although these assumptions have been made, employees that are appointed on fixed-term contracts can meet their short to medium-term needs through temporary jobs.

FIGURE 4.1: RESPONDENT'S TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT (N=135)



4.4.1.2 Job Category

There are two job categories in the company, namely operational and administrative. The category that the respondents identified with, is given in Table 4.1. The results reveal that the largest portion of the company's workforce is dedicated to operational duties, given that the core business is manufacturing. A total of 93 employees which represents 68.9% of the total respondents are in the operational category. Some of the departments that fall under the operational banner include production, health and safety, engineering, logistics, and technology/quality control. The individuals that work in these departments are the backbone of the company because they are responsible for the day-to-day core activities that keep the organisation running smoothly. Their tasks are essential to the company's core functions and they are direct contributors to the organisation's bottom line. In contrast, the administrative job category is represented by 42 employees, which accounts for 31.1% of the total. Some of the departments that make up the administration category include human resources, sales, exports, finance, procurement, and information technology. The administration staff plays a crucial role in supporting the company's operations through tasks such as stakeholder relations management, record-keeping, communication, soft and hardware management as well as coordination. They contribute to the efficient functioning of the company behind the scenes.

The above data highlights the importance of a well-balanced workforce. While operational employees form most of the staff complement, it does not take away from the importance of the administrative staff's roles. Liang, Lourie, Nekrasov, and Xia (2021:3) state that a harmonious blend of these two categories is crucial for organisational success given that the support function that is rendered by the administrative staff adds value to the internal customers in the business, whereas the core function performed by the operational team delivers direct value to external customers.

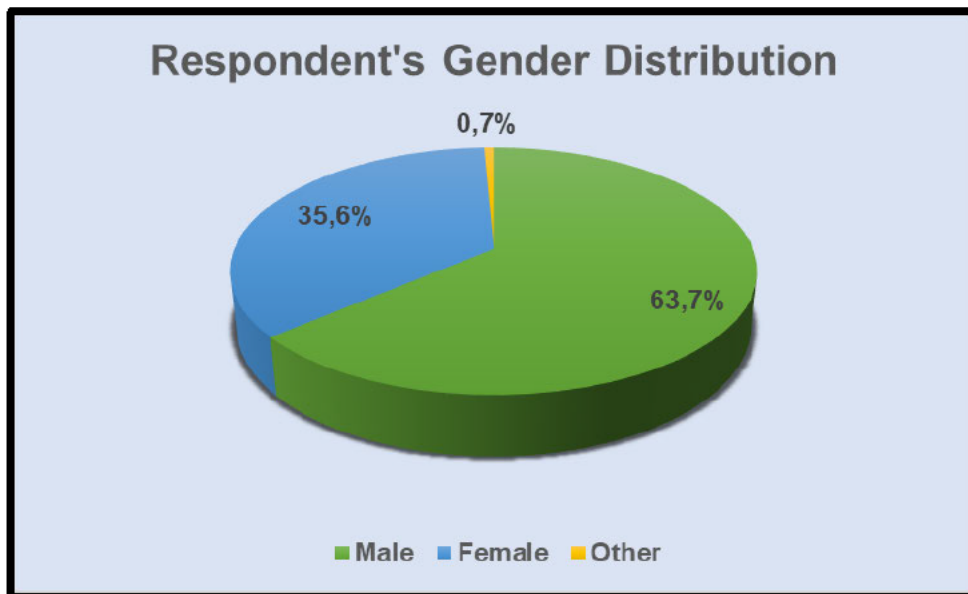
TABLE 4.1: RESPONDENT'S JOB CATEGORY (N=135)

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------|---------|
| Job category | Operational | 93 | 68.9 |
| | Administrative | 42 | 31.1 |
| | Total | 135 | 100.0 |

4.4.1.3 Gender

The respondent's gender given in Figure 4.2 reveal that of the 135 respondents, 86 were male, constituting most of the gender at 63.7% while females comprise 48 employees, making up 35.6% of the sampled data. In addition to male and female employees, one respondent (0.7%) identified with a gender category other than male or female. It can be concluded that the gender representation reflects more males than females because of the nature of the business which is chemical manufacturing. Historically, the chemical manufacturing industry required manual work and hard labour and therefore hiring managers hired more males with the belief that they are physically stronger than their female counterparts (Charles, Hurst, and Schwartz, 2019:308). In the present age, plants are becoming more automated which is opening the industry so that more females are employed to work in the plant or manufacturing lines, given that work that requires physical strength will be minimised. Similarly, findings from Abbey and Adu-Danso's (2022:15) study on Sub-Saharan African countries to determine the effect that gender diversity had on firm productivity, particularly in the manufacturing sectors, revealed that males dominated most firms that were less transformed or automated as an outcome of a social construct about the gendered nature of manufacturing activities. This caused women to steer away from such firms, thereby rendering the dominant gender to be males.

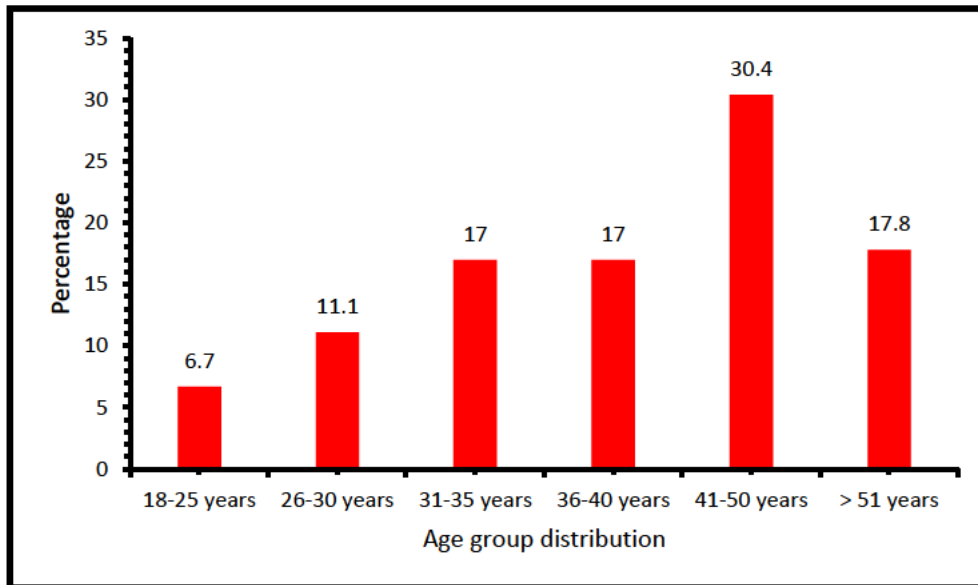
FIGURE 4.2: RESPONDENT'S GENDER DISTRIBUTION (N=135)



4.4.1.4 Age Group

The data presented below demonstrates a diverse age distribution among the respondents. Figure 4.3 illustrates the respondent's age group, and the largest age group is the 41-50 years category, with nearly one-third (30.4%) of the respondents falling into this age range. This suggests that the survey captures insights primarily from individuals in their 40s, who likely have significant work and life experience. However, it is also worth noting that the cumulative percentage of respondents under 50 years old (18-50 years) adds up to 82.2% which indicates that a substantial majority of respondents are relatively younger to middle-aged. According to Sharma, Goel, and Sengupta (2017:148), this diverse age composition can lead to varied perspectives, preferences, and experiences, which can be valuable for analysis and decision-making. These results are in line with Charles *et al.* (2019:308) who found that the manufacturing sector predominantly had employees who were aged between 21 and 55.

FIGURE 4.3: RESPONDENT'S AGE GROUP (N=135)



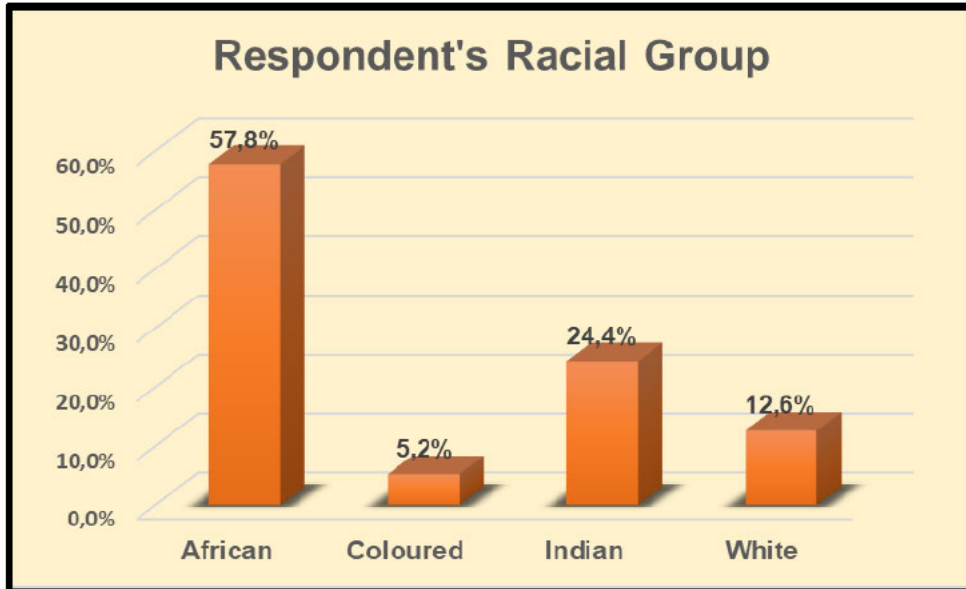
4.4.1.5 Race

The racial groups of the respondents who participated in the questionnaire are shown in Figure 4.4. The data reveals a diverse racial distribution among the respondents, with individuals from various racial backgrounds participating in the study. The African racial group is the most prominent, representing most of the respondents with 78 respondents, constituting a significant majority at 57.8% of the total sample. The Coloured racial group is represented by 7 respondents, making up 5.2% of the sample. There is a small concentration of employees that belong to the coloured race group because the company's main operations happen in the KwaZulu Natal province of South Africa where the African and Indian communities are bigger. According to Statistics South Africa (2023), the Western Cape province is where the Coloured community is dominant. The Indian racial group was represented by 33 respondents, accounting for 24.4% of the sample and the White racial group had 17 respondents, constituting 12.6% of the total sample.

Therefore, it is evident that this diversity in racial representation enriches the dataset and can provide valuable insights into the perspectives and experiences

of individuals from different racial backgrounds regarding engagement and commitment.

FIGURE 4.4: RESPONDENT'S RACIAL GROUP (N=135)



4.4.1.6 Marital Status

Table 4.2 depicts the marital status of those who responded to the questionnaire. The data reveals a diverse distribution of marital statuses among the survey respondents. The largest group are those who are single which accounts for 48.1% of the total percentile, indicating that nearly half of the respondents are not currently married. The married group at 45.9%, while slightly smaller in size compared to the single group, is still significant, highlighting that a substantial portion of respondents are in marital relationships. Additionally, some respondents are divorced (5.2%) or widowed (0.7%), albeit in smaller numbers. These individuals' perspectives and experiences may differ from those who are single or married, and their inclusion in the survey provides valuable insights into the diverse range of life experiences represented. One can therefore conclude that the diversity in marital statuses suggests that the survey captures various and different insights.

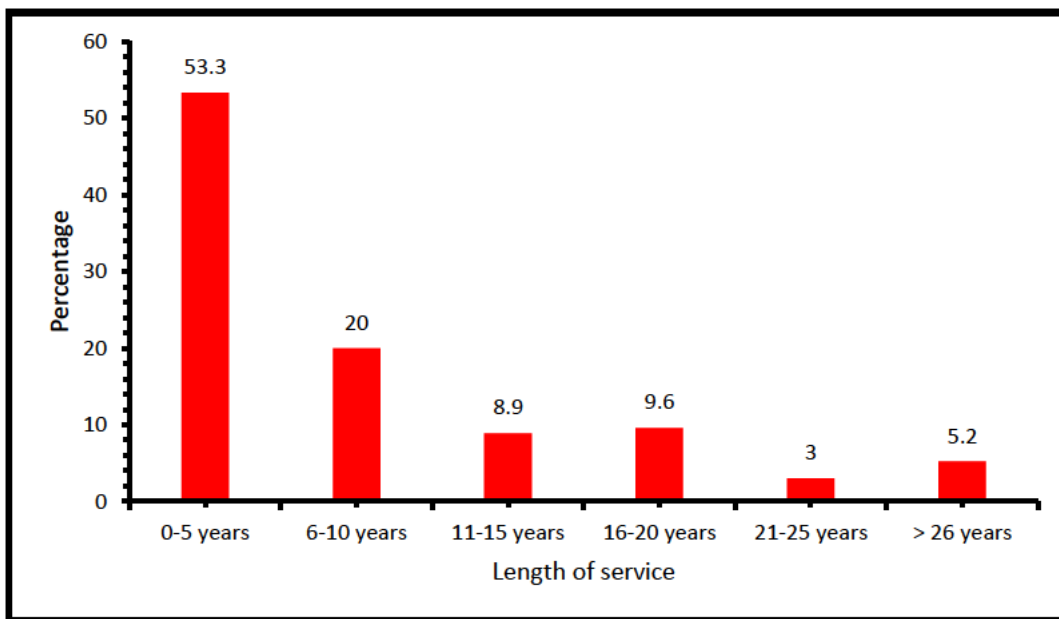
TABLE 4.2: RESPONDENT'S MARITAL STATUS (N=135)

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| Marital status | Single | 65 | 48.1 |
| | Married | 62 | 45.9 |
| | Divorced | 7 | 5.2 |
| | Widowed | 1 | 0.7 |
| | Total | 135 | 100,0 |

4.4.1.7 Length of Service

The length of service of the respondents in the organisation is illustrated in Figure 4.5. The data reveals that most of the employees have spent between 0 to 5 years in the company which accounts for 53.3% of the total. This indicates that the majority of the respondents are relatively new in the organisation due to a recent restructuring. The presence of employees with varying years of service, including those with 6-10 years (20.0%), 11-15 years (8.9%), 16-20 years (9.6%), 21-25 years (3%), and more than 26 years (5.2%), showcases a workforce with a wide range of experience levels. This diversity in experience can contribute to a dynamic work environment where newer employees bring fresh perspectives, and longer-serving employees offer institutional knowledge and expertise. In a study comparing fresh and old employees, conducted by Meymandpour and Pawar (2018:10), the authors state that there is a need for both young and old employees in an organisation as these age groups complement each other. Therefore, one can conclude that the younger age group might bring in contemporary ideas for implementation and the older age group shares the 'tricks of the trade' from the experience they have gained over the years.

FIGURE 4.5: RESPONDENT'S TENURE (N=135)



4.4.1.8 Highest Qualification

There is a diverse distribution of educational qualifications among the respondents as depicted in Table 4.3. The most common educational level is Matric which constitutes 44.4% of the responses, indicating that a significant portion of the workforce has completed their high school education. Additionally, a substantial portion of employees have either obtained a Diploma, a Bachelor's degree, an Advanced Diploma, or a Bachelor of Technology degree (combined 40%). This reflects a workforce with a growing pool of knowledge and skills beyond high school education, with specialised training or expertise in various fields. The presence of employees with Honours degrees or Postgraduate qualifications amounted to 3.7%, and one of the respondents has a Master's degree (0.7%). This distribution of educational qualifications demonstrates that the organisation has, over time, increased the number of employees with higher levels of education and expertise to strengthen its workforce. As noted above, the most common educational level is matric and this was noted in some of the long-serving members and plant workers, one may therefore conclude that entry requirements were not high previously for the other occupations and were not a must for the plant workers given that the operations mostly required manual labour in the past. Chenoy, Ghosh, and Shukla (2019:121) opine that the new-age technology that most manufacturing companies are adopting requires highly

skilled individuals with educational qualifications that meet international standards to enable the company to compete in this technology-infested era.

TABLE 4.3: RESPONDENT’S QUALIFICATION LEVEL (N=135)

| | | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------------|--|-----------|---------|
| Highest Qualification | Below Matric | 15 | 11.1 |
| | Matric | 60 | 44.4 |
| | Diploma/ Bachelor's degree/ Adv. Dip/ B.Tech | 54 | 40.0 |
| | Honours degree/ Post Grad | 5 | 3.7 |
| | Masters | 1 | 0.7 |
| | Total | 135 | 100,0 |

In summary, the descriptive statistics presented above highlighted the demographical spread of the respondents who participated in this study. The following section presents the inferential tests that were run and the subsequent findings.

4.5 FACTOR ANALYSIS

The factor structure and factor loadings of the questionnaire items are summarised in Table 4.4 below. Overall, 11 factors were extracted, accounting for 71.06% of the variance in the data. Items AEEE6, AEE7, AEE8, V1, V2, D2, D4, A4, A5, AC1-AC5, AECO1 and AECO8 were dropped because they cross loaded onto multiple factors or had a single item.

Factor 1 presents items (AEOC2-AEOC7) related to assessing the effectiveness of organisational commitment, which included items such as supporting teammates, identifying with company values, treating the company as one's own, enjoying being part of problem-solving teams, feeling motivated to help the company achieve its goals, and being associated with the company. The variance

extracted for Factor 1 was 30.414. A high variance extracted suggests that these items are strongly related and contribute significantly to the factor.

Factor 2 comprised items (CC1-CC5) linked to Continuance Commitment, which assessed an employee's commitment to the organisation based on perceived costs, sacrifices, and barriers to leaving. The variance extracted for Factor 2 was 9.938. This suggests that these items were related and contributed significantly to the factor.

Factor 3 comprised items (NC1-NC5) related to Normative Commitment, which assessed the employee's commitment to the organisation based on moral or ethical obligations, a sense of duty, and loyalty to the employer. The variance extracted for Factor 3 was 5.361, suggesting that the items were related and contributed significantly to the factor.

Factor 4 comprised specific items (D1, D3, and D5) related to Dedication within the larger construct of employee engagement. The variance extracted for Factor 4 was 4.667. The items were related and contributed significantly to the factor.

Factor 5 comprised specific items (V3, V4, V5) related to Vigor within the larger construct of employee engagement. The variance extracted for Factor 5 was 3.870. The items were related and contributed significantly to the factor.

Factor 6 comprised specific items (AEEE1-AEEE3) related to assessing the effectiveness of employee engagement. The variance extracted for Factor 6 was 3.431. These items were related and contributed significantly to the factor.

Factors 7 (A1-A2) and 8 (A3-A4) included items measuring work absorption, a sub-component of employee engagement. For Factor 7, the variance extracted was 3.081; for Factor 8, the variance extracted was 2.838. The items were related and contributed to their respective factors.

In summary, the data presents multiple factors or constructs, each comprising specific items related to various dimensions of organisational commitment, employee engagement and the assessment of the effect engagement and commitment have on the organisation. The variance extracted values indicate the

proportion of variance explained by each factor in relation to the included items respectively.

TABLE 4.4: CONSTRUCT VARIANCES

| Factor | Construct | Items included | Variance extracted |
|--------|---|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Assessing the effectiveness of organisation commitment (AEOC) | AEOC2-AEOC7 | 30.414 |
| 2 | Continuance Commitment (CC) | CC1-CC5 | 9.938 |
| 3 | Normative Commitment (NC) | NC1-NC5 | 5.361 |
| 4 | Dedication (D) | D1, D3, and D5 | 4.667 |
| 5 | Vigor (V) | V3, V4, V5 | 3.870 |
| 6 | Assessing the Effectiveness of Employee Engagement (AEEE) | AEEE1-AEEE3 | 3.431 |
| 7 | (A) | A1-A2 | 3.081 |
| 8 | (A) | A3-A4 | 2.838 |

Thereafter, a Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied to test for convergent and discriminant validity of extracted factors. Table 4.5 below presents the composite reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs as extracted. According to Hair, Gabriel and Patel (2014:48), convergent validity is the convergence of specific construct indicators that share high common variance proportions, whereas discriminant validity is the representation of a construct and its indicators that are distinct from other constructs that are within the same model. For this study, the criterion that was used to assess convergent validity included standardised loadings, composite reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE). According to Malik (2023:1191), composite reliability (CR) is the measure of internal consistency and reliability of the constructs (factors) in a factor analysis. It indicates how well the

items correlate within each construct and for the CR value to be acceptable, it should range between 0.60 and 0.70. The CR values for this study ranged from 0.754 to 0.905, which are generally considered acceptable. Higher CR values indicate greater internal consistency. Kang and Busser (2018:5) state that Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measures the amount of variance captured by the construct relative to the variance due to measurement error. It assesses convergent validity, indicating how well the items within each construct measure the same underlying concept. The recommended value for AVE is 0.5. In this study, the AVE values ranged from 0.512 to 0.615, which are acceptable as recommended, suggesting that the constructs explain a substantial portion of the variance in their respective items.

According to Ampofo and Karatepe (2021:521), Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) represents the maximum amount of variance shared between a construct and any other construct in the analysis. It assesses discriminant validity, indicating that each construct is distinct from others. For this study, the MSV values were lower than the AVE values for each construct, indicating good discriminant validity. Additionally, the constructs are relatively distinct from each other. MaxR(H) measures the maximum redundancy between a construct and other constructs. It assesses the extent to which items within one construct correlate more with items from other constructs than their own (Ampofo and Karatepe, 2021:521). For this study, the MaxR(H) values are relatively low, indicating that the constructs are not highly redundant with each other.

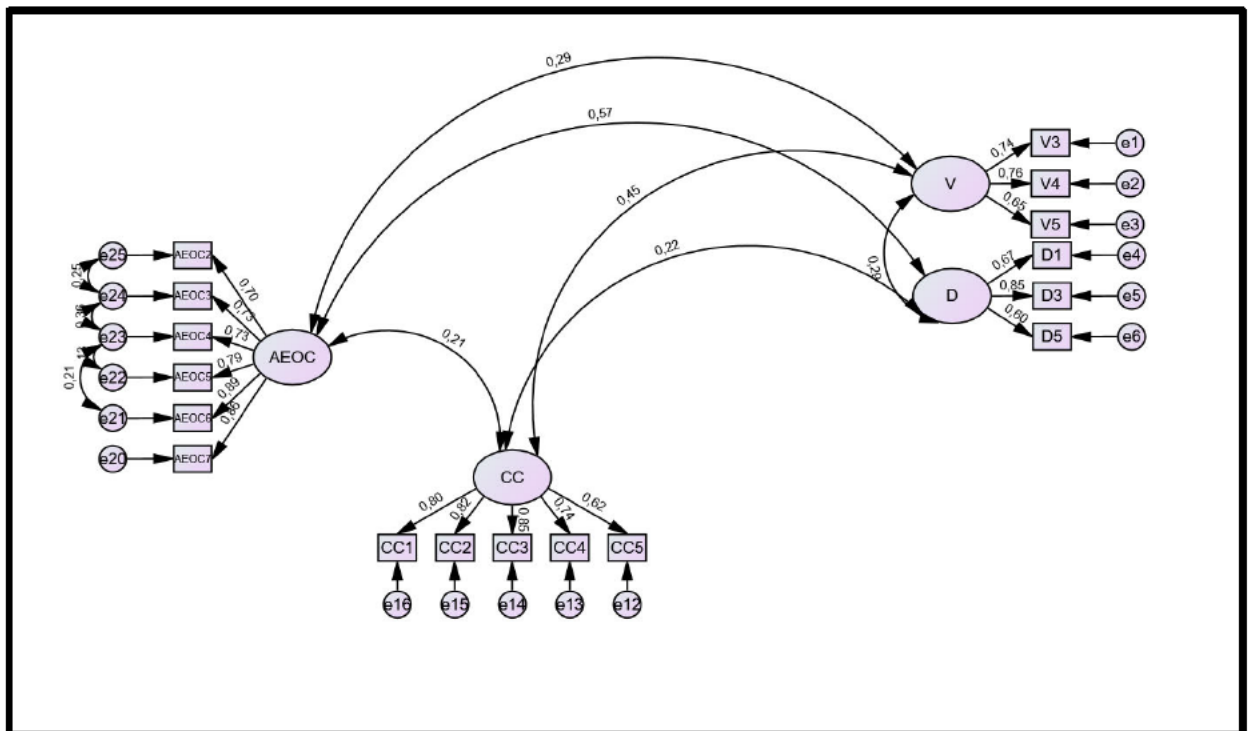
Table 4.5 provides an assessment of construct reliability (CR), convergent validity (AVE), discriminant validity (MSV and MaxR(H)), and the correlations between constructs (D, CC, AEOC, V). Overall, the measures suggest that the constructs in the factor analysis exhibit good reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, with relatively low redundancy and distinctiveness between constructs.

TABLE 4.5: DISCRIMINANT, CONVERGENT AND COMPOSITE VALIDITY OF THE EXTRACTED FACTORS

| | CR | AVE | MSV | MaxR(H) | D | CC | AEOC | V |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| D | 0.754 | 0.512 | 0.325 | 0.802 | 0.715 | | | |
| CC | 0.878 | 0.593 | 0.202 | 0.892 | ,218 | 0.770 | | |
| AEOC | 0.905 | 0.615 | 0.325 | 0.919 | ,570 | ,213 | 0.785 | |
| V | 0.760 | 0.515 | 0.202 | 0.767 | ,286 | ,449 | ,288 | 0.717 |

Figure 4.6 illustrates the factor loading of the extracted factors. Notably, the organisational commitment sub-construct normative commitment (NC) could not be fitted with the model and was dropped. Other constructs with poor reliability were also omitted.

FIGURE 4.6: FACTOR LOADING OF THE EXTRACTED FACTORS



4.6 INFERENCE STATISTICS

According to Cooksey (2020:23), inferential statistical procedures are designed to allow sample statistics that have been observed, to correspond to population parameters through utilising statistical inference rules associated with significance tests. Examples of inferential tests include univariate and

multivariate analysis of variances, t-tests, structural equation models, multiple regression analysis, and discriminant analysis. According to Liu and Wang (2021:266), independent t-tests are conducted to examine the difference between two independent means, and a one-way ANOVA test is conducted to examine the difference between means from two or more independent groups. Guetterman (2019:12) further explains that inferential statistics are a broad category of statistical analysis that assists researchers in drawing conclusions from a sample to a population. Furthermore, the purpose of inferential statistics is to reach a generalisation about the population by examining the sample and it involves inductive reasoning. Inferential statistics provide an understanding of the population's behaviour based on the available sample data with an assumption that the sample shares similar characteristics with the population.

For this study, the inferential tests that were conducted were independent t-tests and bivariate analyses using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

4.7 THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND COMMITMENT TO THE COMPANY

This section addresses research objective one which is to assess the level of employee engagement and commitment to the company. A one-sample t-test was done to determine if there was significant agreement/disagreement on each item. The average agreement score is tested against the central score of '3'. The results are adjudged to be significant when $p < .05$.

The independent t-tests are used for the comparison of two unrelated groups and to determine if the differences in group means are larger than the group variables. On the other hand, the ANOVA was conducted to determine the difference between two or more groups. Additionally, one-way ANOVA and independent T-test were run to examine the relationship between the respondent's demographic characteristics and the employee engagement and organisational commitment constructs. Results that emanate from the t-test and ANOVA are presented below.

4.7.1 The Level of Employee Engagement

The level of employee engagement was assessed through three dimensions namely vigour, dedication, and absorption. T-tests, standard deviation, and significance tests were conducted, and the results are presented below.

4.7.1.1 Respondent's Level of Agreement on the "Vigour Dimension"

Table 4.6 highlights the respondents' level of agreement on the statements measuring the vigour dimension of employee engagement. The mean, standard deviation, and t-value of the responses are presented in Table 4.4 respectively. The results reveal that on average, respondents tend to feel somewhat excited about going to work in the morning (M=3.66; SD=1.038), feel quite energetic while at work (M=3.59; SD=.949), they generally agree that they can work for extended periods without getting tired (M=3.87; SD=1.015), tend to feel mentally resilient in their work environment (M=3.88; SD=.988), and always persevere, even when things do not go well (M=4.21; SD=.795). The low standard deviation measured for all the items (V1-V5) indicates that responses are relatively consistent, with most respondents falling within a similar range of agreement. The p-values are less than 0.001 (indicated as "<.001*"), which suggests that the differences between the sample means, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant. This means that the respondents' agreement with these statements is not due to random chance but represents a real difference.

In sum, the data indicates that, on average, respondents within this survey tend to exhibit a high level of vigour in their work, including feelings of excitement, energy, ability to work for long periods, mental resilience, and perseverance. The low standard deviations and significant p-values suggest that these tendencies are consistent and not likely the result of random variation. These findings are in line with those of Jaya and Ariyanto (2021:312), who found that employees who have vigour show significant physical strength and energy at work and work with persistence even when faced with difficult moments, they show resilience. Gulyani and Sharma (2018:259) agree that an employee who has vigour willingly invests a considerable amount of effort into their job and is persistent in the performance of their duties. Therefore, a vigorous employee is not deterred by challenges but converts the challenges into innovation and thrives.

TABLE 4.6: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE STATEMENTS MEASURING VIGOR (N=135)

| Vigor | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|---|------|--------------|--------|-----|---------|
| When I get up in the morning, I feel excited to go to work. | V1 | 3.66 (1.038) | 40,968 | 134 | <.001* |
| I feel bursting with energy when I am work. | V2 | 3.59 (0.949) | 43,878 | 134 | <.001* |
| I can continue working for long periods at a time. | V3 | 3.87 (0.988) | 45,550 | 134 | <.001* |
| I am mentally resilient at work. | V4 | 3.88 (1.015) | 44,424 | 134 | <.001* |
| I always persevere, even when things do not go well. | V5 | 4.21 (0.795) | 61,571 | 134 | <.001* |

4.7.1.2 Respondent’s Level of Agreement on the “Dedication Dimension”

The respondent’s level of agreement on the statements measuring “dedication” as an employee engagement dimension is highlighted in Table 4.7. The mean scores represent the average responses for each item within the Dedication dimension, and the standard deviations (SD) indicate the extent to which responses vary from the mean. In this context, the higher the mean, the stronger the agreement with the statement, and a lower SD suggests that responses tend to cluster around the mean (Mishra *et al.*, 2019:67). The relatively low standard deviation measured for all the items (D1-D5) suggests that there is a consistent agreement among respondents, with responses clustered closely around the mean. The findings reveal that on average, respondents find their job to be highly meaningful (M=4.38; SD=.732), strongly agree that they enjoy helping their teammates (M=4.56; SD=.654), exhibit a high level of enthusiasm about their job (M=4.36; SD=.739), take pride in the work they do (M=4.42; SD=.796), and feel inspired by their job (M=4.04; SD=1.071). The p-values are less than 0.001 which

suggests that the differences between the sample mean, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant.

To sum up, the data indicates that, on average, respondents who participated in this study exhibit high dedication levels and they find their jobs meaningful, they enjoy helping teammates, they are enthusiastic about their jobs, they feel proud of the work that they produce, and agree that their jobs are inspiring. The low standard deviations and significant *p*-values suggest that these tendencies are consistent and not likely the result of random variation. To support these findings, Barreiro and Treglown (2020:5) state that employees are intrinsically motivated by meaningful work and therefore willingly dedicate themselves to their jobs by showing that they are engaged in the work that they are doing. Additionally, Hairapetian (2020:7) states that dedicated employees are self-determined and will therefore report high levels of engagement as a result. Moreover, Govender and Bussin (2020:19) opine that dedicated individuals tend to positively influence their team members and are willing to assist their colleagues because they understand that they share a common goal and thus behave in this positive manner which boosts team morale and results in more engaged co-workers.

TABLE 4.7: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE STATEMENTS MEASURING DEDICATION (N=135)

| Dedication | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|---------------------------------|------|--------------|--------|-----|---------|
| My job is meaningful. | D1 | 4.38 (0.732) | 69,520 | 134 | <.001* |
| I enjoy helping my teammates. | D2 | 4.56 (0.654) | 80,920 | 134 | <.001* |
| I am enthusiastic about my job. | D3 | 4.36 (0.739) | 68,581 | 134 | <.001* |
| I am proud of the work I do. | D4 | 4.42 (0.796) | 64,539 | 134 | <.001* |
| I am inspired by my job. | D5 | 4.04 (1.071) | 43,873 | 134 | <.001* |

4.7.1.3 Respondent's Level of Agreement on the "Absorption Dimension"

"The Absorption dimension" assesses aspects related to being fully engrossed and absorbed in one's job. Table 4.8 depicts the respondents' level of agreement on the statements measuring absorption as an employee engagement dimension. The data includes mean scores, standard deviations (SD), t-values, degrees of freedom (df), and p-values for individual items within the absorption dimension. Findings reveal that on average, respondents find it somewhat challenging to detach themselves from their jobs, suggesting a moderate level of absorption ($M=3.41$). The standard deviation (1.161) is relatively high, indicating a considerable variability in responses, with some respondents finding it more challenging to detach than others.

In terms of the statement "Time flies when I am working" (A2), the mean score is 4.01, suggesting that respondents, mainly strongly agree that time passes quickly when they are working, indicating a high level of absorption. The standard deviation (1.018) indicates moderate variability in responses, with some respondents experiencing a stronger sense of time passing quickly than others.

The mean score for the statement "I forget everything else around me when I work" (A3) is 3.30, indicating that, on average, respondents agree that they forget everything else around them when they work. This finding suggests a moderate level of absorption. The standard deviation (1.023) is relatively high, indicating variability in responses, with different levels of agreement among respondents.

The mean score for the statement "I feel immersed in my job" (A4) is 3.61, indicating that, respondents relatively feel immersed in their job. The standard deviation of 0.864 suggests some variability in responses, with different levels of agreement among respondents, meaning that there were respondents who felt immersed in their jobs more than others.

The mean score for the statement "I feel happy when I work intensely" (A5) is 3.76, suggesting an average level of agreement amongst the respondents, thus indicating that there is a moderate level of happiness associated with absorption. The standard deviation (0.942) indicates variability in responses, with some respondents experiencing a stronger sense of happiness when working intensely compared to others. Barinua and Deinma (2022:10) also found that an absorbed

employee is happy and focused, thus embodying engagement. Additionally, absorbed employees have a positive mental attitude and resultantly influence colleagues with that positive attitude at work. Overall, the p-values for all the statements (A1-A5) are less than 0.001 (indicated as "<.001*"), which suggests that the differences between the sample means, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant.

It can therefore be concluded that the findings are indicative of the respondent's moderate level of absorption in their work, including experiences such as finding it somewhat challenging to detach from their job, feeling that time passes quickly when working, agreeing to forgetting everything else when they are working, feeling moderately immersed in their job, and experiencing a moderate level of happiness when working intensely. The variability in standard deviations suggests that individual experiences of absorption can vary among respondents. It is therefore evident that employees are less absorbed in than dedicated to, their jobs. It is therefore believed, from the findings, that the lack of absorption may be indicative of a lack of job variation which then renders the employee's job to be 'boring'. One can be dedicated to completing their job but not enjoy the process of doing the actual job. When there is a variety of tasks, it takes away the element of boredom and replaces it with excitement, thereby giving rise to increased absorption levels.

TABLE 4.8: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON THE STATEMENTS MEASURING ABSORPTION AT WORK (N=135)

| Absorption | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|---|------|--------------|--------|-----|---------|
| It is difficult to detach myself from my job. | A1 | 3.41 (1.161) | 34,103 | 134 | <.001* |
| Time flies when I am working. | A2 | 4.01 (1.018) | 45,718 | 134 | <.001* |
| I forget everything else around me when I work. | A3 | 3.30 (1.023) | 37,450 | 134 | <.001* |

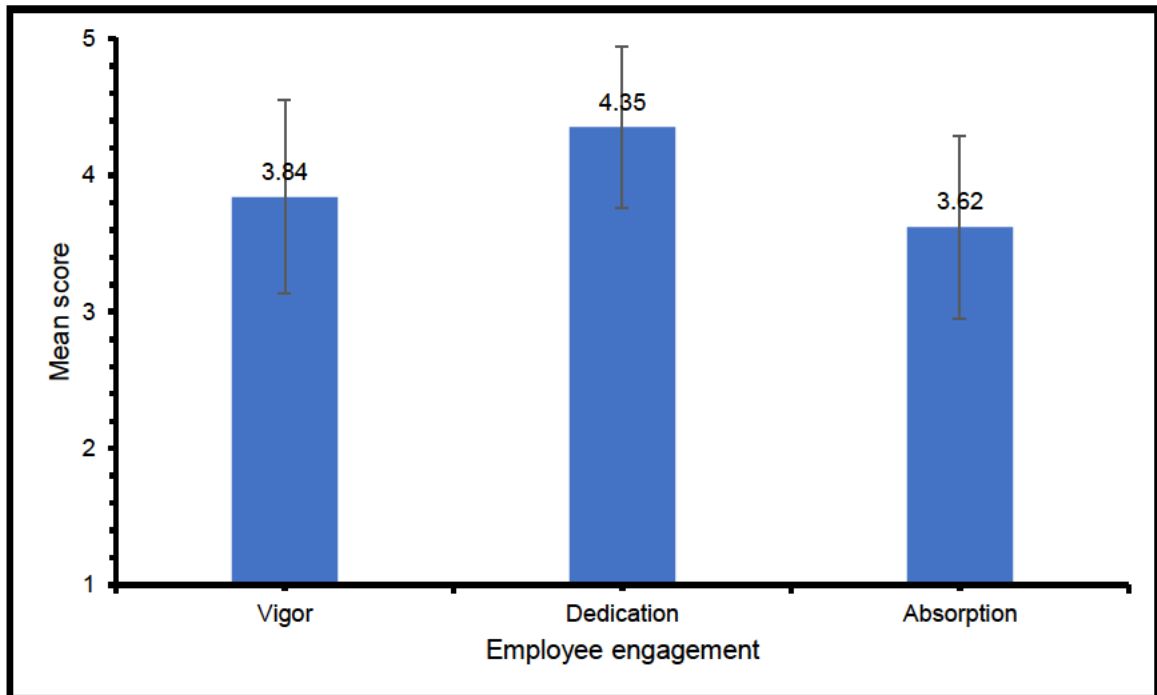
| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|--------------|--------|-----|--------|
| I feel immersed in my job. | A4 | 3.61 (0.864) | 48,626 | 134 | <.001* |
| I feel happy when I work intensely. | A5 | 3.76 (0.942) | 46,317 | 134 | <.001* |

4.7.1.4 A Composite Analysis of Employment Engagement

The mean comparison for each of the dimensions measuring employee engagement in the organisation is shown in Figure 4.7. These values suggest that on average, respondents report a significant level of '*vigour*' (M=3.84), '*dedication*' (M=4.35), and '*absorption*' (M=3.62) in their work. The standard deviation measures suggest that there is relatively low variability in responses, suggesting a high level of agreement among respondents regarding their dedication to their work. For vigour and absorption, there is some variability in responses, indicating that while most respondents report moderate levels of vigour and absorption, there are variations in their experiences of these dimensions of work engagement. Furthermore, temporary employees were found to be less engaged when compared to their permanently employed colleagues. According to Guarnaccia, Scrima, Civilleri, and Salerno (2018:493), this might be due to job insecurity that the temporary employees have, they cannot immerse themselves in or be dedicated to projects when they are not certain whether they would be employed beyond the termination date of the fixed term contract.

In precis, respondents reported higher levels of dedication to their work compared to absorption or vigour. These results are in line with the findings of Saks (2019:30) which revealed that dedication was the strongest predictor of employee engagement consequences when compared to vigour, which was moderately significant, and absorption was the least significant. A similar outcome was observed in Aktar and Pangil's (2018:621) study where the dedication dimension level of employee engagement was found to be higher amongst respondents compared to the vigour and absorption dimensions respectively.

FIGURE 4.7: MEAN COMPOSITE ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT (N=135)



4.7.1.5 The Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics and Employee Engagement

Bivariate analysis using ANOVA and an independent t-test was applied to test the relationship between the respondents' demographic characteristics and the level of agreement on sub-components in measuring employee engagement. The data in Table 4.9 summarises both the ANOVA and independent t-test scores. No difference was observed between the employment status of the respondents and their level of agreement on employee engagement dimensions. Similarly, there was no significant difference between the job category, the highest level of qualification, and respondent's level of agreement on employee engagement sub-concepts.

While no difference was found for vigour and dedication against gender, there was, however, a significant difference measured for absorption ($P=0.049$). The mean value suggests that male respondents ($M=3.71$) significantly agree more than females ($M=3.46$) that they are generally absorbed in their work duties. The ANOVA value suggests that there was significant agreement between age group and vigour ($p<0.001$), dedication ($P=0.041$), and absorption ($P=0.006$). The mean values suggest that older respondents, particularly those whose age is in the

group greater than 51 years, consistently agreed more for each of the sub-sections (vigour, dedication, and absorption) than any other age group, which is an indication that the older age group may be more engaged when compared to the younger group. In line with these findings, Douglas, and Roberts (2020:211) conducted a one-way ANOVA test to examine the differences between age and work engagement and found that employees over the age of 50 had a higher engagement score compared to their younger colleagues. Further findings revealed that the older age group was more dedicated to and absorbed in their jobs, however, there was no significant relationship found between the vigour dimension and age among the respondents.

For the racial group, the ANOVA value suggests that the respondents only differ in their agreement on dedication ($P=0.016$). The mean value suggests that Coloured ($M=4.64$) respondents experience more dedication than any other racial group. For the length of service, the level of the agreement only differs for vigour ($P=0.019$) with the mean value suggesting that respondents within the 21-25 years tenure ($M=4.35$) show more vigour. Similarly, Ajibola (2019:160) found that employee tenure influenced employee engagement, adding that employees who'd worked longer than 7 years were more engaged when compared to new employees.

For marital status, the ANOVA value suggests that there was significant agreement between the respondent's status, and the level of agreement for vigour ($P=0.039$), dedication ($P=0.011$), and absorption ($P=0.028$). The mean values suggest that married respondents showed more vigour ($M=4.03$) while divorced respondents exhibited more dedication ($M=4.63$), and absorption ($M=4.06$). These results are almost like those of Vuong and Suntrayuth (2019:1643) who found that married employees were less engaged compared to single employees. On the contrary, Nguyen and Tran (2021) found that married employees were more engaged in jobs compared to unmarried employees, adding that married employees had more responsibilities at home compared to unmarried colleagues but were found to be more engaged than their unmarried counterparts.

Like the current study's findings, Aftab, Shah, and Khan (2020:2) conducted a study where the dominant gender was male but found that females were more engaged and committed compared to their male colleagues when data scores were collated and analysed. In the same vein, the dominating gender in Shukla, Adikhari, and Singh (2015:70) study was female and those females were found to be more engaged compared to the male gender and this was attributed to an observation that most of the respondents were female and team leaders were predominantly female so the abundance of the gender could have affected the engagement levels inevitably.

Regarding race groups, Łaba and Geldenhuys (2016:109) found that there was no significant relationship between race and employee engagement and commitment, however, race moderated the relationship between the variables. Sharma, Goel, and Sengupta (2017:149) concluded a study on work engagement and employee demographics and found that employees who had higher levels of education (Postgraduate) were more engaged in their work compared to others.

TABLE 4.9: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES (N=135)

| DEMOGRAPHICS | VIGOR (V) | | DEDICATION (D) | | ABSORPTION (A) | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| | <i>M (Mean)</i> | <i>SD (standard deviation)</i> | <i>M (Mean)</i> | <i>SD (standard deviation)</i> | <i>M (Mean)</i> | <i>SD (standard deviation)</i> |
| Employment status | | | | | | |
| Permanent | 3,8416 | 0,72925 | 4,3360 | 0,60354 | 3,6256 | 0,67727 |
| Fixed-term Contract | 3,8600 | 0,48120 | 4,5600 | 0,32387 | 3,5000 | 0,59815 |
| <i>t value</i> | <i>-0.078</i> | | <i>-1.935</i> | | <i>0.569</i> | |
| Sig. | <i>0.938</i> | | <i>0.073</i> | | <i>0.571</i> | |

| Job Category | | | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| Operational | 3,8688 | 0,71657 | 4,3269 | 0,58887 | 3,6774 | 0,60002 |
| Administrative | 3,7857 | 0,70868 | 4,4095 | 0,59420 | 3,4810 | 0,79641 |
| <i>t</i> value | 0.626 | | -0.753 | | 1.585 | |
| Sig. | 0.532 | | 0.453 | | 0.115 | |
| Gender | | | | | | |
| Male | 3,9186 | 0,67240 | 4,3581 | 0,57894 | 3,7140 | 0,60394 |
| Female | 3,7167 | 0,77386 | 4,3500 | 0,61816 | 3,4583 | 0,75169 |
| Other | 3,4000 | . | 4,0000 | . | 2,8000 | . |
| <i>F</i> ratio | 1.444 | | 0.181 | | 3.078 | |
| Sig. | 0.240 | | 0.835 | | 0.049 | |
| Age | | | | | | |
| 18-25 years | 3,5333 | 0,52915 | 4,0667 | 0,72111 | 3,1556 | 0,49777 |
| 26-30 years | 3,4667 | 0,72375 | 4,2933 | 0,46517 | 3,4400 | 0,74527 |
| 31-35 years | 3,6609 | 0,76142 | 4,2696 | 0,51384 | 3,4174 | 0,52540 |
| 36-40 years | 3,5739 | 0,71682 | 4,1304 | 0,57083 | 3,4783 | 0,51430 |
| 41-50 years | 4,1122 | 0,69145 | 4,4732 | 0,62890 | 3,8146 | 0,67437 |
| > 51 years | 4,1667 | 0,43606 | 4,5833 | 0,53703 | 3,8833 | 0,76196 |
| <i>F</i> ratio | 4.923 | | 2.395 | | 3.419 | |
| Sig. | <0.001 | | 0.041 | | 0.006 | |
| Race | | | | | | |
| African | 3,7564 | 0,74809 | 4,2857 | 0,39761 | 3,5205 | 0,61946 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|--------|---------|
| Coloured | 3,6000 | 0,56569 | 4,6364 | 0,43144 | 3,7429 | 0,37796 |
| Indian | 4,0364 | 0,68091 | 4,2824 | 0,80330 | 3,7515 | 0,79220 |
| White | 3,9647 | 0,59681 | 4,2857 | 0,39761 | 3,7412 | 0,70981 |
| F ratio | 1.655 | | 3.584 | | 1.265 | |
| Sig. | 0.180 | | 0.016 | | 0.289 | |
| Length of service | | | | | | |
| 0-5 years | 3,7111 | 0,70082 | 4,3167 | 0,56444 | 3,4833 | 0,61598 |
| 6-10 years | 3,7333 | 0,82462 | 4,3333 | 0,60511 | 3,7037 | 0,68471 |
| 11-15 years | 4,0167 | 0,58750 | 4,3667 | 0,47354 | 3,8500 | 0,67217 |
| 16-20 years | 4,3385 | 0,49251 | 4,3692 | 0,78250 | 3,7538 | 0,54866 |
| 21-25 years | 4,3500 | 0,37859 | 4,4000 | 0,71181 | 3,6500 | 1,36015 |
| > 26 years | 4,1143 | 0,52735 | 4,7143 | 0,58716 | 3,9714 | 0,78680 |
| F ratio | 2.806 | | 0.586 | | 1.480 | |
| Sig. | 0.019 | | 0.711 | | 0.201 | |
| Highest level of qualification | | | | | | |
| Below Matric | 3,9600 | 0,54090 | 4,3867 | 0,59745 | 3,6400 | 0,50256 |
| Matric | 3,9000 | 0,72859 | 4,3800 | 0,59569 | 3,7467 | 0,67785 |
| Diploma/ Bachelor's degree/ Adv. Dip/ Btech | 3,7407 | 0,74290 | 4,2778 | 0,57811 | 3,4407 | 0,65517 |
| Honours degree/ Post Grad | 3,8000 | 0,72111 | 4,6400 | 0,69857 | 3,8400 | 0,98387 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| Masters | 4,4000 | . | 4,8000 | . | 3,8000 | . |
| F ratio | 0.625 | | 0.697 | | 1.6890 | |
| Sig. | 0.645 | | 0.595 | | 0.156 | |
| Marital status | | | | | | |
| Single | 3,6831 | 0,72963 | 4,1877 | 0,60712 | 3,4523 | 0,62578 |
| Married | 4,0323 | 0,68252 | 4,5000 | 0,53806 | 3,7355 | 0,69450 |
| Divorced | 3,7143 | 0,47409 | 4,6286 | 0,50897 | 4,0571 | 0,53807 |
| Widowed | 3,4000 | . | 4,0000 | . | 3,8000 | . |
| <i>F ratio</i> | 2.870 | | 3.848 | | 3.125 | |
| Sig. | 0.039 | | 0.011 | | 0.028 | |

4.7.2 Assessing the Level of Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment is a psychologically inclined association between the employee and the organisation that makes the employee stay with the organisation as a way of commitment (Mukanzi and Senaji, 2017:1). The level of organisational commitment was assessed through sub-components such as affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. T-tests, meant to determine standard deviation and significance tests, were conducted to assess the organisational commitment variable, and the results are presented below.

4.7.2.1 Affective Commitment

According to Hamadamin and Atan (2019:1), affective commitment reflects an employee's emotional attachment, identification with and enthusiasm for their current employer. Table 4.10 presents respondent's level of agreement on the statements measuring Affective Commitment, which is a dimension of organisational commitment. The data includes mean scores, standard deviations (SD), t-values, degrees of freedom (df), and p-values for individual items within the Affective Commitment dimension. The affective commitment was measured

with 5 items (AC1-AC5). It is worth mentioning that the higher the mean, the stronger the agreement with the statement, and a lower SD suggests that responses tend to cluster around the mean.

The result reveals that on average, respondents express a moderate level of willingness to spend their entire career at their current employer (M=3.50; SD=1.298). However, the respondents agreed that they have a strong sense of belonging to their current employer, which indicates a high level of emotional attachment to the company (M=3.64; SD=1.200). Furthermore, findings reveal that the company has a moderate level of personal meaning to the employee, which reflects the level of emotional attachment (M=3.53; SD=1.151) to the organisation. The respondents moderately agree that their current employer's problems are their own, indicating a sense of shared responsibility (M=3.33; SD=1.183), and moderately agree that they would stay with their current employer even if it were not doing well financially, which represents a strong commitment despite challenges (M=3.30; SD=1.133). The standard deviation measured for all items is relatively high, suggesting variability in responses, with some respondents being more affectively committed than others. The p-values are less than 0.001 (indicated as "<.001*"), which suggests that the differences between the sample means, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant. This means that the respondents' agreement with these statements is not due to random chance but represents a significant difference.

Succinctly, the data indicates that, on average, respondents to the questionnaire exhibit a moderate to strong level of affective commitment to their current employer. This includes emotional attachment, a sense of belonging, personal meaning, shared responsibility, and a willingness to stay despite financial challenges. However, there is variability in responses, suggesting that individual experiences of affective commitment can vary among respondents. Findings from a similar study by Mukanzi and Senaji (2017:8) that examined affective commitment levels of employees, revealed that there was a positive relationship between affective commitment and perceived management support. The authors concluded that employees reciprocate management support by way of affective commitment to the company through emotional attachment. This is because managers are the driving force of the organisation, hence the employee

behaviour in reciprocation to management behaviour. Amah and Oyetunde (2019:4) opined that affective commitment is the most effective dimension of organisational commitment compared to the continuance and normative dimensions, adding that when employees are affectively committed to the organisation, it reflects commitment based on free will and not one that is affected by external circumstances.

TABLE 4.10: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON STATEMENTS MEASURING AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT (N=135)

| Affective commitment | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|---|------|-----------------|--------|-----|---------|
| I would be happy to spend the rest of my career at my current employer. | AC1 | 3.50 (1.298) | 31,298 | 134 | <.001* |
| I feel a strong sense of belonging to my current employer. | AC2 | 3.64 (1.200) | 35,290 | 134 | <.001* |
| This company has a great deal of personal meaning to me. | AC3 | 3.53 (1.151) | 35,660 | 134 | <.001* |
| I feel that my current employer's problems are my own. | AC4 | 3.33 (1.183) | 32,655 | 134 | <.001* |
| Even if this organisation was not doing well financially, I would stay. | AC5 | 3.30 (1.133) | 33,790 | 134 | <.001* |

4.7.2.2 Continuance Commitment

Singh (2018:483) states that continuance commitment reflects an employee's commitment to stay with their current employer because leaving would involve significant costs or sacrifices. Table 4.11 depicts the level of agreement on the statements measuring Continuance Commitment, which is a dimension of organisational commitment. The data includes mean scores, standard deviations

(SD), t-values, degrees of freedom (df), and p-values for individual items within the Continuance Commitment sub-concept. The results reveal that on average, respondents express a moderate level of fear regarding the potential impact on their career if they were to leave their current employer (M=3.18; SD=1.245). The respondents moderately agree that leaving their current employer would involve a considerable sacrifice, indicating a sense of commitment due to perceived sacrifices (M=3.32; SD=1.170). There is also a moderate agreement level that leaving the current employer would disrupt too much of their life, implying a sense of commitment due to potential disruptions (M=3.31; SD=1.162), and a moderate agreement level still, that the employee cannot leave their current employer because they perceive few alternative options, which indicates a sense of commitment due to limited alternatives (M=3.21; SD=1.242). Findings further revealed that there was a general disagreement that it would be difficult for the respondent to adapt to a new workplace, suggesting that the respondent would easily adapt to a new work environment when they left the current employer (M=2.78; SD=1.238). Rameshkumar (2020:110) reported a similar result that there was a non-significant positive impact on employee's continuance commitment to the organisation, meaning that employees would move to other companies as soon as they experienced dissatisfaction with their current employer. Another study that examined the relationship between continuance commitment and family work conflict (FWC) reported that employees that had high FWC equally had high and significant levels of continuance commitment, meaning that because their family life was impacted by their jobs, they would move from their current employer as soon an opportunity availed itself (Mukanzi and Senaji, 2017:8).

The standard deviation for all the items (CC1-CC5) is relatively high, suggesting variability in responses. In all measured items, the p-values are less than 0.001 (indicated as "<.001*"), which indicates that the differences between the sample means, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant. This result concludes that the respondent's agreement or disagreement with the statements is not due to random chance but represents a genuine difference.

Overall, the results indicate that respondents to the questionnaire exhibit a moderate level of continuance commitment to the current employer. This includes

a moderate level of fear about career consequences, a perception of significant sacrifice, potential life disruptions, limited alternatives, and challenges in adapting to a new workplace if they were to leave, in general. However, there is variability in responses, suggesting that individual experiences of continuance commitment can vary among respondents.

TABLE 4.11: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON STATEMENTS MEASURING CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT (N=135)

| Continuance commitment | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|--|------|-----------------|--------|-----|---------|
| I am afraid of what could happen to my career if I left my current employer. | CC1 | 3.18 (1.245) | 29,654 | 134 | <.001* |
| Leaving my current employer would require considerable sacrifice. | CC2 | 3.32 (1.170) | 32,967 | 134 | <.001* |
| Too much of my life would be disrupted if I left my current employer now. | CC3 | 3.31 (1.162) | 33,108 | 134 | <.001* |
| I cannot leave my current employer because alternatives are scarce. | CC4 | 3.21 (1.242) | 30,070 | 134 | <.001* |
| It would be hard for me to get used to a new workplace. | CC5 | 2.78 (1.238) | 26,073 | 134 | <.001* |

4.7.2.3 Normative Commitment

Statistical results for the statements relating to Normative Commitment, which is another dimension of organisational commitment, are presented in Table 4.12. According to Uriesi (2019:58), normative commitment reflects an employee's sense of duty, obligation, and loyalty to their current employer. The analysed data

presented below includes mean scores, standard deviations (SD), t-values, degrees of freedom (df), and p-values for individual items within the Normative Commitment sub-construct. The findings reveal that on average, respondents agree that it would not be right to leave their current employer at present (M=3.43). The standard deviation (1.249) is relatively high, suggesting variability in responses, with some respondents feeling a stronger sense that it would not be right to leave than others.

The mean score measured for the statement “I am proud to tell people that I worked for my current employer” suggests that respondents, on average, express pride in telling others that they work for their current employer, indicating a sense of loyalty and pride (M=3.90). The standard deviation (1.051) indicates variability in responses, with some respondents feeling a stronger sense of pride in their employer than others.

The mean score measured for the statement “I have a sense of obligation to the people of my current employer” indicates that in a general sense, respondents agree that they have a sense of obligation to their current colleagues, reflecting a commitment based on peer duty (M=3.61). The standard deviation (1.120) suggests variability in responses, with some respondents feeling a stronger sense of obligation than others.

Additionally, the mean score measured for the statement “My current employer deserves my loyalty” indicates that respondents, strongly agree that their current employer deserves their loyalty, indicating a high level of normative commitment (M=4.07). The standard deviation (1.055) indicates variability in responses, with some respondents feeling a stronger sense of loyalty deserved by their employer than others. According to Mukanzi and Senaji (2017:9), employees who have management support, report high levels of normative commitment as the employee feel that it is their moral duty to remain with the company because they receive support. However, the same study found that family work conflict was negatively related to normative commitment, meaning that employees would opt to leave their employment because of the imbalance in their work versus their families.

Furthermore, the mean score measured for the statement “It would not be right to break the relationships I have built in this company” reflects that, on average, respondents agree that it would not be right to break the relationships they have built in their current company, reflecting a commitment to maintaining relationships (M=3.99). The standard deviation (1.026) suggests variability in responses, with some respondents feeling a stronger sense of not wanting to break relationships than others.

In all items (NC1-NC5), the p-values are less than 0.001 (indicated as "<.001*"), which suggests that the differences between the sample means, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant. These results denote that the respondent's agreement with the statements measuring normative commitment is not due to random chance but is different.

Briefly, the findings reveal that there is a moderate to strong level of normative commitment to their current employer. This includes a sense of duty, pride, obligation to colleagues, a belief that their employer deserves loyalty, and a commitment to maintaining relationships. However, there is variability in responses, suggesting that individual experiences of normative commitment can vary among respondents. These findings are supported by Pieters and Auanga (2019:159) who found that normative commitment had a positive relationship with employee engagement and concluded that employees are likely to remain in an organisation that is fair and consequently work towards that company's achievement of goals.

TABLE 4.12: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON STATEMENTS MEASURING NORMATIVE COMMITMENT (N=135)

| Normative commitment | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|--|------|--------------|--------|-----|---------|
| I do not feel it would be right to leave my current employer right now. | NC1 | 3.43 (1.249) | 31,901 | 134 | <.001* |
| I am proud to tell people that I work for my current employer. | NC2 | 3.90 (1.051) | 44,064 | 134 | <.001* |
| I have a sense of obligation to the people of my current employer. | NC3 | 3.61 (1.120) | 37,514 | 134 | <.001* |
| My current employer deserves my loyalty. | NC4 | 4.07 (1.055) | 44,852 | 134 | <.001* |
| It would not be right to break the relationships I have built in this company. | NC5 | 3.99 (1.026) | 45,225 | 134 | <.001* |

4.7.2.4 A Composite Analysis of Organisational Commitment

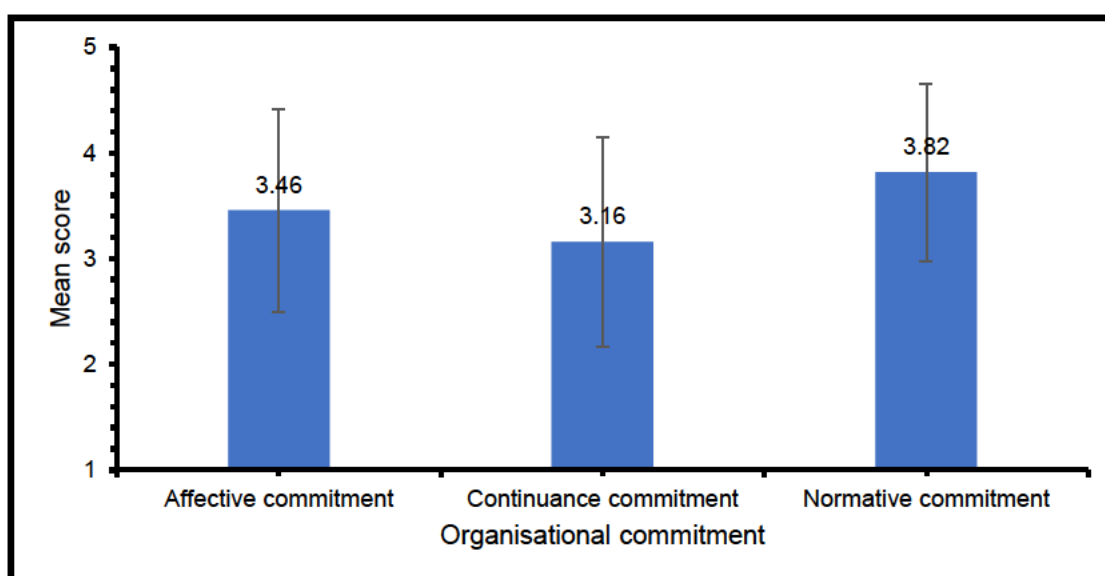
The mean comparison for each of the sub-components measuring organisational commitment is illustrated in Figure 4.8. The mean value suggests that respondents exhibit moderate levels of Affective Commitment (emotional attachment), Continuance Commitment (perceived costs and barriers), and Normative Commitment (moral and ethical obligation). For Affective Commitment and Continuance Commitment, there is variability in responses, suggesting that while most respondents have moderate levels, individual experiences can vary. For Normative Commitment, there is also variability in responses, but the mean score indicates a stronger sense of moral and ethical obligation and loyalty compared to the other dimensions.

In sum, respondents reported a higher level of agreement on normative commitment (M=3.82) compared to affective and continuance commitment, meaning that respondents remain with the current employer due to a sense of moral duty to the employer followed by commitment because they have affection for the company and lastly, other employees commit because alternatives are scarce but would leave as soon as they got the chance to.

The current study's outcome concurs with Nguyen, Le, Tran, Tran, Nguyen, and Nguyen (2020:8) who concluded a study on the impact of organisational commitment on employee motivation and found that employees had a high level of affective commitment when there was transparency between the company and the employee and when the company devised and communicated the employee's development plan early on in the employee's tenure. This increased the employee's affective commitment toward the organisation. Regarding continuance commitment, the study found that employees would not have the urge or reason to exit the company if management created a working environment that was satisfactory and fair to the employees. The environment includes acknowledging and rewarding employees for a job well done, be it in a monetary manner or otherwise, and considering employee input in decision making. Furthermore, it was reported that employee's level of normative commitment increased when managers created an encouraging, friendly, and harmonious working environment and maintained healthy working relationships with their subordinates (Nguyen *et al.*, 2020:8).

FIGURE 4.8: MEAN COMPOSITE ANALYSIS OF ORGANISATIONAL

COMMITMENT (N=135)



4.7.2.5 The Relationship Between Demographic Characteristics and Organisational Commitment

Bivariate analysis using ANOVA and Independent t-test was applied to test the relationship between the respondent's demographic characteristics and the level of agreement on dimensions measuring organisational commitment. The data in Table 4.13 summarises both the ANOVA and independent t-test scores. There was no difference observed between the employment status of the respondents and their level of agreement on organisational commitment sub-constructs. Similarly, there was no significant difference between the job category, gender, and respondent's level of agreement on organisational commitment dimensions.

However, the ANOVA value suggests that there was significant agreement between age group and affective commitment ($p < 0.001$), continuance commitment ($P = 0.009$), and normative commitment ($p < 0.001$) respectively. The mean values suggest that older respondents, particularly those in the age group greater than 51 years consistently agreed more for each of the subsections than any other groups.

In addition, for the racial group, the ANOVA value suggests the respondents differ in their agreement on affective commitment ($P = 0.010$) and normative commitment ($P = 0.005$) but not on continuance commitment. The mean value suggests that Indian respondents agreed more on affective commitment

($M=3.89$) and normative commitment ($M=4.18$) when compared to other racial groups. For length of service, respondents differ by their level of agreement on affective commitment ($M=0.006$), continuance commitment ($M=0.004$), and normative commitment ($M=0.038$). The mean value measured suggests that respondents who have worked longer than 25 years for the organisation exhibit affective commitment ($M=4.89$), continuance commitment ($M=4.26$), and normative commitment ($M=4.69$) compared to respondents in the other tenure groupings.

The findings further reveal that for the highest level of education, the ANOVA value reflects that the respondents differ in their agreement only on continuance commitment ($P=0.003$). The mean value suggests that respondents with master's degrees agreed more on continuance commitment.

Finally, for marital status, the ANOVA value shows that there was significant agreement between the respondent's status and the level of agreement for affective commitment ($P=0.005$), and normative commitment ($p<0.001$). The mean values suggest that widowed respondents showed more agreement on these two dimensions (affective and normative).

The findings of the current study mirror those Al-Jabari and Ghazzawi (2019:95) who reported that older employees (45 years and older) had the highest affective commitment towards the organisation they worked for, while employees between the ages of 23 to 45 had the high normative commitment and the youngest group aged 23 and below showed a higher level of normative commitment. These findings implied that the younger group merely committed to the organisation as a means to grow their careers as opposed to the older age groups who committed because they felt a need to, due to the affection they had for the company as well as the moral duty they felt compelled to show to the organisation that had afforded them employment. Furthermore, the findings indicated a higher commitment level among females compared to males. Additionally, married respondents reported higher commitment compared to unmarried employees who participated in the study. According to Huang, Ma, and Meng (2018:350), older employees are more likely to show higher levels of commitment to the organisation while younger

employees are more engaged than their older colleagues. These findings are in line with the current study.

TABLE 4.13: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES (N=135)

| DEMOGRAPHICS | AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT (AC) | | CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT (CC) | | NORMATIVE COMMITMENT (NC) | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | <i>M (Mean)</i> | <i>SD (standard deviation)</i> | <i>M (Mean)</i> | <i>SD (standard deviation)</i> | <i>M (Mean)</i> | <i>SD (standard deviation)</i> |
| Employment status | | | | | | |
| Permanent | 3,4480 | 0,99268 | 3,1488 | 1,01247 | 3,7840 | 0,85179 |
| Fixed-term Contract | 3,6000 | 0,32660 | 3,3000 | ,64807 | 4,2600 | 0,47188 |
| <i>t</i> value | <i>-0.481</i> | | <i>-0.464</i> | | <i>-1.742</i> | |
| Sig. | <i>0.632</i> | | <i>0.644</i> | | <i>0.084</i> | |
| Job Category | | | | | | |
| Operational | 3,4366 | 1,01978 | 3,2688 | 1,01703 | 3,7591 | 0,87355 |
| Administrative | 3,5095 | 0,81952 | 2,9190 | 0,88902 | 3,9524 | 0,74547 |
| <i>t</i> value | <i>-0.408</i> | | <i>1.921</i> | | <i>-1.243</i> | |
| Sig. | <i>0.684</i> | | <i>0.057</i> | | <i>0.216</i> | |
| Gender | | | | | | |
| Male | 3,5186 | 0,99759 | 3,3209 | 1,01855 | 3,8488 | 0,82601 |
| Female | 3,3667 | 0,89474 | 2,9083 | 0,85747 | 3,7750 | 0,87190 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------|--------------|---------|------------------|---------|
| Other | 2,8000 | . | 1,4000 | . | 3,4000 | . |
| <i>F ratio</i> | 0.621 | | 4.498 | | 0.243 | |
| Sig. | 0.539 | | 0.013 | | 0.785 | |
| Age | | | | | | |
| 18-25 years | 3,0667 | 0,48990 | 2,6667 | 0,86023 | 3,2667 | 0,77460 |
| 26-30 years | 3,0667 | 0,85746 | 3,3200 | 0,80285 | 3,5600 | 0,79355 |
| 31-35 years | 2,7391 | 0,84946 | 2,6783 | 0,96623 | 3,4348 | 1,08653 |
| 36-40 years | 3,1391 | 0,92919 | 2,9391 | 0,85373 | 3,5478 | 0,63020 |
| 41-50 years | 3,8439 | 0,85383 | 3,3805 | 1,07220 | 4,1317 | 0,68645 |
| > 51 years | 4,1917 | 0,66589 | 3,5417 | 0,91076 | 4,2833 | 0,62113 |
| <i>F ratio</i> | 11.020 | | 3.214 | | 6.114 | |
| Sig. | <0.001 | | 0.009 | | <0.001 | |
| Race | | | | | | |
| African | 3,2974 | 0,98231 | 3,2308 | 1,03902 | 3,6231 | 0,88800 |
| Coloured | 2,9429 | 0,94315 | 2,3714 | 1,17999 | 3,6286 | 0,35456 |
| Indian | 3,8909 | 0,83230 | 3,1879 | 0,88167 | 4,1818 | 0,57742 |
| White | 3,5765 | 0,83929 | 3,1059 | 0,78777 | 4,0941 | 0,90310 |
| <i>F ratio</i> | 3.974 | | 1.666 | | 4.551 | |
| Sig. | 0.010 | | 0.177 | | 0.005 | |
| Length of service | | | | | | |
| 0-5 years | 3,2167 | ,85234 | 2,8972 | 0,89316 | 3,6833 | 0,85035 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| 6-10 years | 3,5481 | 1,13489 | 3,3037 | 0,97566 | 3,7704 | 0,86238 |
| 11-15 years | 3,8000 | 0,80904 | 3,3333 | 1,16411 | 4,0667 | 0,58049 |
| 16-20 years | 3,5846 | 0,97796 | 3,3692 | 1,07656 | 3,8462 | 0,72642 |
| 21-25 years | 4,0000 | 1,16619 | 3,8000 | 0,93808 | 4,2500 | 1,11206 |
| > 26 years | 4,4857 | 0,39761 | 4,2571 | 0,53807 | 4,6857 | 0,50143 |
| <i>F</i> ratio | 3.461 | | 3.721 | | 2.443 | |
| Sig. | 0.006 | | 0.004 | | 0.038 | |
| Highest level of qualification | | | | | | |
| Below Matric | 3,6933 | 0,93462 | 3,3733 | 1,03335 | 3,7867 | 0,79450 |
| Matric | 3,6000 | 1,05958 | 3,4100 | 1,00063 | 3,9400 | 0,81785 |
| Diploma/ Bachelor's degree/ Adv. Dip/ B.Tech | 3,2074 | 0,83052 | 2,8852 | 0,88646 | 3,6593 | 0,86842 |
| Honours degree/ Post Grad | 3,6000 | 0,69282 | 2,2000 | 0,24495 | 4,0000 | 0,77460 |
| Masters | 4,4000 | . | 4,6000 | . | 4,8000 | . |
| <i>F</i> ratio | 1.784 | | 4.260 | | 1.218 | |
| Sig. | 0.136 | | 0.003 | | 0.306 | |
| Marital status | | | | | | |
| Single | 3,1569 | 0,94571 | 3,0954 | 0,99002 | 3,5323 | 0,89182 |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|---------|--------|---------|--------------|---------|
| Married | 3,7548 | 0,91717 | 3,2839 | 0,97681 | 4,1000 | 0,66849 |
| Divorced | 3,6000 | 0,73030 | 2,6000 | 1,04563 | 3,9714 | 0,95519 |
| Widowed | 3,8000 | . | 3,6000 | . | 4,0000 | . |
| <i>F</i> ratio | 4.538 | | 1.237 | | 5.447 | |
| Sig. | 0.005 | | 0.299 | | 0.001 | |

4.8 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AT THE ORGANISATION

This section addresses the second research objective which is to determine the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at the company. One-sample t-test was done to determine if there was significant agreement/disagreement with each item as presented on the questionnaire. The average agreement score is tested against the central score of '3' to determine if it differs significantly from '3'. The results are adjudged to be significant when $p < .05$.

4.8.1 Assessing the Effectiveness of Employee Engagement

The effect that employee engagement has on the company is presented in this section. This effect determines whether an engaged workforce is beneficial to the company. The findings in Table 4.14 reveal that on average, respondents agree that they can effectively manage their work-related stress ($M=4.20$; $SD=.731$) and agreed that their productivity had increased in the last 6 months (6 months were calculated from the date of participation in this study and prior) due to employee engagement ($M=4.02$; $SD=.859$). The respondents further agree that their customer service has improved in the last 6 months because of employee engagement ($M=3.99$; $SD=.846$) and mutually agree that they complete their projects on time due to employee engagement ($M=4.23$; $SD=.743$). There was a strong agreement to the item that assessed that they are willing to use their skills and knowledge for the benefit of the company ($M=4.57$; $SD=.641$), similarly, the respondents strongly agree that they enjoy collaborating with others to achieve company goals ($M=4.49$; $SD=.645$). Respondents agree that they have

contributed to the company's growth through employee engagement (M=4.34; SD=.755) and agree that they feel empowered to provide feedback to their manager because of employee engagement (M=4.30; SD=.907). The standard deviation measured for all items is relatively low, suggesting that respondents tend to have consistent perceptions of the effectiveness of employee engagement. In all items measured, the p-values are less than 0.001 (indicated as "<.001*"), which suggests that the differences between the sample means, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant. This means that the respondent's agreement with these statements cannot be attributed to random chance but to a real difference due to the presence of differing views, values, and opinions.

To summarise the above findings, the respondents to this study showed positive perceptions of the effectiveness of employee engagement. They feel capable of managing stress, believe their productivity and customer service have improved, complete projects on time, are willing to use their skills for the company's benefit, enjoy collaboration, feel they have contributed to company growth, and feel empowered to provide feedback to their managers. However, there is some variability in responses, reflecting individual differences in perceptions and experiences. Not neglecting the variability in responses as noted, there is a consensus on the items measuring the effectiveness of employee engagement to the organisation which indicates that the organisation generally benefits from employee engagement in customer service, problem-solving, project implementation and management, knowledge sharing and collective contribution toward the attainment of organisational goals and strategy achievement. The study found that employees are generally more engaged in jobs than they are committed to the organisation, hence the high consensus on items measuring the effectiveness of employee engagement in the company. It can therefore be concluded that employee engagement is effective for the organisation and its growth. These findings contradict those in Sahni (2019:294) where employee engagement was lower than organisational commitment, although the overall results of employee engagement were positive due to communication, social relationships at the working place, a balance between the employee's personal and work life, and related factors. However, Jung, Song, and Yoon (2021:10)

found that organisations benefited from engaged staff when projects were done in teams as this reduced workplace loneliness among the employees and fostered peer relationship building and cohesion which led to quality outcomes. In agreement, Uddin, Mahmood, and Fan (2018:60) found that team performance positively affects employee engagement levels adding that an engaged employee is more likely to commit to the organisation.

TABLE 4.14: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON STATEMENTS MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT (N=135)

| The Effectiveness of Employee engagement | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|--|-------|-----------------|--------|-----|---------|
| I can manage my work-related stress. | AEEE1 | 4.20 (0.731) | 66,759 | 134 | <.001* |
| My productivity has increased in the last 6 months. | AEEE2 | 4.02 (0.859) | 54,389 | 134 | <.001* |
| My customer (internal/external) service has improved in the last 6 months. | AEEE3 | 3.99 (0.846) | 54,714 | 134 | <.001* |
| I complete my projects timeously. | AEEE4 | 4.23 (0.743) | 66,184 | 134 | <.001* |
| I am willing to use my skills and knowledge to benefit the company. | AEEE5 | 4.57 (0.641) | 82,826 | 134 | <.001* |
| I like to collaborate with others to achieve company goals. | AEEE6 | 4.49 (0.645) | 80,872 | 134 | <.001* |
| I have contributed to this company's growth. | AEEE7 | 4.34 (0.755) | 66,826 | 134 | <.001* |
| I feel empowered to provide feedback to my manager. | AEEE8 | 4.30 (0.907) | 55,059 | 134 | <.001* |

4.7.2 Assessing the Effectiveness of Organisational Commitment

This section assessed the effect employee commitment has on the company. This effect determines whether a committed workforce is beneficial to the company. The data in Table 4.15 shows that on average, respondents strongly agree that they strive for quality when performing their work tasks because of their organisational commitment (M=4.53). Respondents selected that they strongly agreed when they were asked if they support their teammates in project implementation, reflecting their commitment to teamwork and collaboration (M=4.49). Furthermore, they strongly agree with the statement "I identify with the company's values", this was due to their commitment to the organisation and what it stands for (M=4.36). The respondents strongly agreed that they treat the company as if it were their own, reflecting a high level of ownership and commitment (M=4.25), and strongly agree that they feel motivated to help the company achieve its strategic goals, further reflecting their commitment to the company's success (M=4.47). Most respondents strongly agree that they like being associated with the company, reflecting a positive image for the company and their commitment to the organisation's brand (M=4.33), and they agreed that their job is satisfying and therefore would commit to the organisation (M=4.17). The standard deviation measured for all items is relatively low, suggesting strong agreement among respondents regarding their assessment of the effectiveness of organisational commitment. In all cases, the p-values are less than 0.001 (indicated as "<.001*"), which suggests that the differences between the sample means, and the hypothetical population mean are statistically significant. This means that the respondent's agreement or disagreement with these statements is not random but represents a real difference.

A similar study by Sahni (2019:294) on employee commitment and its effects on the quality of work life in the organisation reported that there was a positive effect on the organisation when employee commitment was high, adding that the employee's decision to remain with the company positively impacted the company. This positive impact was fuelled by the availability of growth opportunities for the employee and quality work-life balance, which influenced organisational commitment. In Uddin *et al.* (2018:60), it was reported that positive job evaluation contributed to employee's decision to commit to the organisation,

and this leads to valuable contributions from the employee which enhances the employee's knowledge based on the company and understanding of their teammates which then ultimately leads to the augmented team and organisational performance.

In summary, the findings reveal a strong and positive perception of the effectiveness of their commitment to the organisation. The effectiveness was measured through responses to statements that demonstrate a commitment to quality work, support for teammates, alignment with company values, ownership mentality, enthusiasm for problem-solving teams, motivation to contribute to strategic goals, positive association with the company, and general job satisfaction. However, there is some variability in responses, reflecting individual differences in experiences and perceptions. It is evident from the above findings that respondents to this study are mostly committed to the organisation and the company reaps benefits such as the quality output of tasks, employees that live the company values and are enthusiastic about their jobs which denotes employee commitment and subsequently leads to profitability and competitive advantage. Although there was a positive outlook on individual items measuring the effectiveness of organisational commitment to the company, overall findings reflect that employee commitment to the organisation is rather low when compared to the engagement index.

TABLE 4.15: RESPONDENTS LEVEL OF AGREEMENT ON STATEMENTS MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS OF ORGANISATIONA COMMITMENT (N=135)

| The effectiveness of organisational commitment | Item | Mean (SD) | t | df | p-value |
|---|-------|-----------------|--------|-----|---------|
| I strive for quality when performing my work tasks. | AEOC1 | 4.53 (0.721) | 72,935 | 134 | <.001* |
| I support my teammates in project implementation. | AEOC2 | 4.49 (0.645) | 80,872 | 134 | <.001* |
| I identify with this company's values. | AEOC3 | 4.36 (0.665) | 76,258 | 134 | <.001* |
| I treat this company like it were my own. | AEOC4 | 4.25 (0.853) | 57,934 | 134 | <.001* |
| I like to be part of a problem-solving team. | AEOC5 | 4.44 (0.739) | 69,745 | 134 | <.001* |
| I feel motivated to help the company achieve its strategic goals. | AEOC6 | 4.47 (0.710) | 73,068 | 134 | <.001* |
| I like being associated with this company. | AEOC7 | 4.33 (0.771) | 65,190 | 134 | <.001* |
| My job is satisfying. | AEOC8 | 4.17 (0.989) | 48,992 | 134 | <.001* |

4.8.3 Fitness of the Model

The conceptual framework that was proposed for this study, was subjected to various tests to determine its fitness and significance to this study. The model's overall fit was assessed by multiple fit criteria given in Table 4.16. The goodness of fitness indices are as follows: chi-square = 170,679; document frequency df = 112; measurement of consistency $p < .001$; $\chi^2 / df = 112$; collection minimum

document frequency $\text{cmindf}=1.566$; comparative fit index $\text{CFI}=0.947$; Tucker-Lewis's index $\text{TLI}=0.933$; incremental fit index $\text{IFI}=0.948$ and root mean square error of approximation $\text{RMSEA}=0.065$. In line with Shi, Lee, and Maydeu-Olivares (2019), all criteria met the recommended values of the measurement model, which suggests that the model has acceptable fitness.

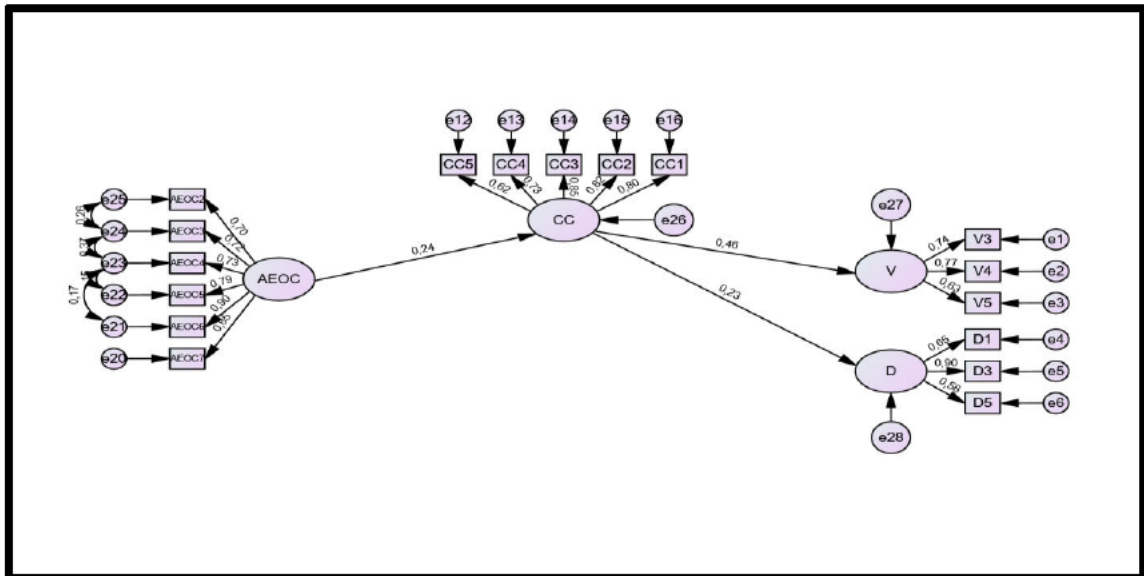
TABLE 4.16: MODEL FITNESS INDICES FOR THE EXTRACTED FACTORS

| Fit Indices | Fit values | Criteria |
|--------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| χ^2 / df (p-value) | 1.566(<.001) | <5 |
| IFI | 0.948 | >.9 |
| CFI | 0.947 | >.95 |
| TLI | 0.933 | >.95 |
| RMSEA | 0.065 | <.08 |

4.8.4 Path Estimate of the Model

The measurement model was then converted into a path model that shows the relationship between the latent variables. An SEM was applied to test relationships that exist among the latent variables and their dimensions. The resulting SEM with estimated standardised relationships is given in Figure 4.9. The goodness of fitness indices are as follows: chi-square = $\chi^2 = 207.395$; $\text{df} = 112$; $p < .001$; $\chi^2 / \text{df} = 1.852$; $\text{CFI} = 0.917$; $\text{IFI} = 0.900$; $\text{IFI}=0.900$ and $\text{RMSEA} = 0.080$, which suggests that the measurement model is acceptable. According to Guarnaccia, Scrima, Civilleri, and Salerno (2018:492), a model is adequate when the CFI is greater than or equal to 0.90 and the RMSEA is less than or equal to 0.80. It is noteworthy that some variable dimensions returned unusable values and were therefore dropped, resulting in the current model as illustrated in Figure 4.9.

FIGURE 4.9: SEM MODEL



Note: $\chi^2=207.395$, $df=112$, $cmindf=1.852$, $CFI=0.917$, $TLI=0.900$, $TLI=0.900$, $IFI=0.919$, $RMSEA=0.080$

4.9 A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

In sum, the set objectives for this study were generally met. The level of engagement is higher than that of organisational commitment among the employees, nevertheless, the current levels are acceptable. It was found that the organisation benefited from the engagement and commitment of its employees, therefore employee engagement and organisational commitment were effective for the company.

Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement and organisational commitment were identified, outlined, and explored. Furthermore, the antecedents and consequences were explained as per the objective. Lastly, recommendations based on the findings of this study will be presented in Chapter 5, thereby fulfilling the final objective of the study.

Responses to the items measuring the level of employee engagement showed that employees had more dedication for their jobs followed by vigour and lastly absorption. These results mean that employees are more emotionally inclined to their jobs than they are physically and cognitively inclined. Furthermore, they take pride in delivering results that are above standard and are enthusiastic about their jobs. They are involved in their tasks and find their jobs significant and inspiring.

Regarding the level of organisational commitment of the employees, findings reveal that respondents to the questionnaire had more normative commitment, followed by affective commitment, and lastly continuance commitment. These findings can be interpreted to mean that employees mostly commit to the organisation as a sense of obligation toward the company for the opportunities that the company has afforded the employees and the commitment is therefore reciprocal due to the feeling that the employee is indebted to the company. This shows that employees are loyal to the company and feel it is only right that they commit themselves to the organisation as this is morally and ethically correct.

When assessing the effectiveness that employee engagement and organisational commitment have on the organisation, findings reveal that the company stands to benefit from engaged and committed employees through the level of agreement and consensus on the items that measure the effectiveness of the constructs on the organisation. There were positive perceptions recorded in both sections (EEE and EOC) although some variability in responses was recorded, reflecting differing views on certain measurement statements. The different views are acceptable, given that employees experience the company differently. It is important to note, however, that on average there was a positive agreement level on items measuring the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment within the organisation.

The conceptual model was tested, and the overall fit indices were acceptable, which renders the model significant for use in this study. Notwithstanding that there were components of the variables that could not fit into the model and were therefore dropped, the model is still significant.

Therefore, the following objectives that were set for this study were met.

- To assess the level of employee engagement and commitment to the company.
- To determine the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at the company.
- To identify antecedents and consequences of employee engagement and organisational commitment.

4.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter sought to analyse and interpret data collected through close-ended questionnaires to answer questions and meet the study's objectives. The data was analysed using IBM-SPSS version 29, and the findings were presented in bar graphs and tables. Descriptive statistics that addressed the demographic characteristics of the respondents and inferential statistics that addressed the variable relationships and findings were presented, respectively. T-tests and one-way ANOVA were conducted to address variances in respondents' level of agreement with items in the questionnaire and to interpret what the findings meant. Although there are variances in responses due to individual experiences, the mean composite analysis for employee engagement reflects that respondents have a high level of dedication, which denotes the respondent's involvement in task implementation, followed by vigour which is the employee's physical efforts that they exert onto their tasks and lastly absorption, which reflects the respondent's focus on their job which leads to attachment to the job.

On the other hand, for the organisational commitment variable, the mean composite suggests that respondents have a high level of normative commitment, meaning they are committed because they want to and feel a sense of obligation to commit to the organisation, followed by affective commitment which denotes their level of affection towards the company and lastly continuance commitment which means that respondents have remained with the company because of lack of alternatives or the sacrifice it would take for them to move to a new employer. Therefore, overall, employees are dedicated to their jobs and commit to the company to fulfil an obligation or a moral duty. The following chapter concludes this study, and useful recommendations will be made based on the findings and suggestions for future studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter encompassed the analysis and interpretation of the results of this study. This chapter will provide a conclusion and provide practical recommendations based on the findings. A synopsis of the principal findings related to the constructs of employee engagement and organisational commitment, along with the implications of these constructs on the organisation, will be delineated below. Furthermore, suggestions for potential future research will be put forth.

Employee disengagement and lack of commitment are detrimental to the organisation as they hinder the ability to leverage the advantages of a productive workforce. An engaged and committed workforce is essential for maintaining competitiveness, motivation, and the successful accomplishment of organisational goals. Employees who feel unsupported may not perform at their best, leading to potential negative impacts on the company in terms of productivity or financial loss.

In today's business landscape, organisations need to prioritise employee well-being and effectively manage behaviours such as employee engagement and organisational commitment. These behaviours directly influence the overall operation of a business, as employees are its most valuable asset. When employees believe that the company values their well-being, they are more likely to actively engage in their work and demonstrate commitment to the organisation.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at a selected chemicals manufacturing organisation. The study initially provided an overview of the structure and thereafter, a thorough review of the literature that underpins the employee engagement and organisational commitment constructs was presented. After this, a quantitative

design for data collection was employed, where 135 out of 145 close-ended questionnaires were captured and analysed. Before the large-scale study, a pilot test was conducted with 8 respondents to assist the researcher to fine-tune the data collection tool and the outcome of the pilot led to the amendment of some of the items in the questionnaire. The study followed the positivist philosophy, and deductive approach and adopted the exploratory purpose.

According to the outcome of the study, the set objectives have generally been met. The study found that on average, employees at the company are engaged in work and committed to the organisation, although results reveal that engagement levels are higher than commitment levels. This was particularly noted through the length of service demographic, where the majority (53.3%) of the respondents have been with the company for five years or less. Furthermore, it was observed within the age group demographic that the workforce consists of older employees as opposed to younger employees, with the largest group falling within the 41 to 50-year-old category.

The antecedents and consequences of the employee engagement and organisational commitment constructs were reviewed and presented in Chapter 2 of this study, thereby fulfilling the second objective. The t-test and ANOVA were run, and the outcome of the analyses revealed that for the most part, the organisation benefited from the employee's engagement and commitment to the company which denotes that employee engagement and commitment are effective to organisational growth and success. To achieve the last objective, recommendations will be presented in the subsequent section based on the outcomes of this study.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations will be provided for management consideration and implementation to help the organisation cultivate an engaged and committed workforce. Additional suggestions will be provided based on insights from biographical data, aiming to benefit the company. It is crucial to note that engaged and committed employees tend to exhibit higher performance levels, leading to increased profitability, enhanced organisational image, and ultimately, sustained growth.

5.3.1 Management Support in Enhancing Engagement and Commitment

This study found that employees were generally more engaged than they were committed to the organisation. Factors that may affect an employee's commitment include the employee's career path, confidence, or the lack thereof, management or leadership types and styles, the presence or absence of rewards and recognition for a job well done. An employee engages in their job and commits effortlessly to reciprocation when these factors are taken into consideration by the employer. The organisation then benefits through increased profitability, talent retention, enhanced productivity, positive employee experience that makes employees uphold the organisational brand and image, satisfied employees, decreased turnover levels, and accelerated organisational growth.

Managers and supervisors can further enhance engagement and commitment as follows.

5.3.1.1 Increasing Employee Absorption

Findings from this study revealed that the absorption dimension of employee engagement was relatively low ($M=3.84$). This low absorption level means that respondents were not entirely focused on their jobs. Gulyani and Sharma (2018:259) recommend that management should find ways or come up with strategies to make the job more interesting and exciting so that employees do not find it difficult to absorb themselves in their jobs. According to Jaya and Ariyanto (2021:312), increased absorption levels during engagement result in increased employee performance because absorption helps the employee to be more thorough and serious in their job which then improves work quality and contributes to the achievement of set goals and targets.

Therefore, to increase overall employee engagement levels, management can implement the following to assist the workforce:

- Set productivity goals or metrics – this will assist the workforce to focus on a current task to accomplish and reach the set goal and attaining the metric.

- Communicate clear performance and productivity expectations during task delegation to alleviate uncertainty and eliminate task ambiguity.
- Create a positive, motivating, and conducive working environment to allow employees to thrive as they will not be concerned with their surroundings but rather focus fully on the task at hand (Larasati and Hasanati, 2019:390).
- Limit distractions during project implementation by postponing non-urgent and less important tasks and rescheduling them for later.
- Ensure that the employees are properly skilled to perform their tasks by offering on-the-job learning from more experienced peers or managers and booking employees on courses that will add to their skills.
- Provide the employees with the required tools and support to perform their jobs. When employees are properly trained and have the required resources available, they will focus on the completion of the job instead of losing time and being concerned about the lack of resources (Arifin, Nirwanto, and Manan, 2019:7).
- Encourage employees to take short breaks in between tasks so that they are relaxed and can refocus and then be absorbed in the next task.

5.3.1.2 Providing a Conducive Working Environment

Given the moderate level of disagreement to items that measured employee commitment to the organisation, such as the willingness of the employees to spend the rest of their careers at the company which had a mean of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 1.298. Nienaber and Martins (2020) state that an employee's work environment, which includes the organisational culture, climate and working conditions, denotes the employee's motivation, involvement, participation, engagement in and commitment to their jobs and the organisation. When the working environment is conducive, the employee becomes satisfied with their job and therefore commits to the organisation and the organisation consequently benefits from this behaviour (Nienaber and Martins, 2020). It is therefore recommended that management champions a welcoming, fun, and

engaging working environment that would foster commitment. Ways to build a conducive working environment can include but are not limited to:

- Promoting a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Be custodians of work-life balance
- Encouraging open and honest communication
- Driving collaboration and positive and strong team spirit

5.3.1.3 Utilising HRM Practices

Human resources management (HRM) practices such as employee participation, performance feedback, career advancement, job security, training, and career development as well as rewards and receiving recognition for a job well done, contribute significantly to why an employee would choose to commit to an organisation. Through the commitment, the organisation, therefore, enjoys the benefits of employees who are engaged in pertinent organisational activities and are committed to attaining organisational goals by way of reciprocation to the effective implementation of the HRM above practices. Therefore, managers and HR practitioners should ensure that their people strategies include implementation plans for training their staff, recognition awards, career pathing, performance appraisals, and management/employee/peer feedback sessions.

5.3.1.4 Investing in Employees to Gain Competitive Advantage

As revealed by the findings that recorded a positive perception of items measuring the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment, the company stands to benefit from an engaged and committed workforce. Notably, respondents to this study appear to be more engaged in their jobs than they are generally committed to the organisation. Therefore, to gain and retain its competitive advantage, the organisation should invest in its employees and the investment could be through management support and initiatives that ensure the quality of work life and a work-life balance. Employee engagement is positively and significantly related to having a work-life balance and organisational commitment as recommended by (Sahni, 2019:286; Marseno and Muafi, 2021:5).

In sum, committed employees are a source of competitive advantage for any firm that competes in diverse, global, and technology-infested industries such as the chemicals manufacturing industry. Therefore, employers ought to be cognisant of the fact that a dynamic business that will strive against the odds of the ever-changing economy needs to invest in its employees. The investment could be through management support and related initiatives, it need not be financial only. The return on investment for the company would be in the form of a determined, productive, proactive, and committed workforce.

5.3.1.5 Providing Growth and Development Opportunities

Management in organisations should ensure that their employees are engaged and subsequently commit to the organisation, through practices such as the provision of meaningful work tasks, growth, and development opportunities as well as training programmes. These will in turn benefit the organisation when the employee imparts the acquired skills onto their daily tasks thus resulting in a return on investment (Pieters and Auang, 2019:142).

This study found that employees are willing to impart the skills and knowledge acquired from learning or experience to their colleagues and collaborate on projects to attain a common goal. Therefore, this willingness must be preserved and met with support from management. More knowledge sharing should be encouraged, and the knowledge should be managed as it could become the company's intellectual property. This knowledge can then be reviewed to help innovate processes or procedures.

5.3.2 Value Employees to Keep Them Engaged

Madan (2017:50) asserts that employers should diligently strive to foster engagement among their workforce. This can be achieved not solely through competitive pay and benefits, which primarily influence attraction and retention rates, but also by cultivating a work environment where employees feel valued, appreciated, supported by management, and included in decision-making processes. Furthermore, Aujla and McLarney (2020:12) recommend that managers within organisations should consistently seek ways to maintain high levels of commitment and engagement among employees, particularly during periods of change within the company. This proactive approach helps to mitigate

any negative impact on the workforce stemming from changes made without the input of employees.

Chopde, Singh, and Pande (2019:2) add that, for employees to be engaged, their leaders must ensure that employee efforts are aligned with the company strategy by clearly communicating the company's strategy, approach, and mission as well as the direction that the company is headed.

The workforce will feel valued and empowered in the following ways:

- When they are allowed to participate in decision-making that directly affects their jobs.
- Teamwork and collaboration are always encouraged.
- Leaders assist their team members to grow and develop by planning their career paths and investing in training programmes and courses that will add value to the employee's career and professionalism.
- Employees who perform beyond the required standard are recognised and rewarded accordingly.
- They are given autonomy and control over how they complete their tasks.
- Employees are offered mentorship and or coaching for guidance and support.

5.3.3 Promoting Gender Equality in the Company

The male gender dominated the study by 63.7% while female respondents made up 35.6% of the study. This is an indication of gender non-equality in the gender split. Therefore, It is recommended that the organisation put plans in place to employ more females because the respondent demographics revealed that there are more males than females in the organisation. The manufacturing industry has been male dominated historically; however, organisations that belong to this industry can devise recruitment strategies to assist them in achieving a better employment equity outlook regarding gender equality in their plants or factories. One of the ways that companies can close the gender gap is to fill future vacant positions with suitably qualified and experienced female incumbents. Mahomed

(2023:1) reported that the manufacturing sector, which is one of the economic sectors in South Africa was identified amongst others by the Minister of Employment and labour (Minister Thulas Nxesi) to plan, implement, and report on numerical gender targets over five years to equalise genders in the workplace and for these targets to be in proportion to the economically active population (EAP) demographics as set out by the Minister. Therefore, the company should put plans in place to adhere to the provincial and national targets set out.

5.3.4 Upskilling of Employees

It was noted from the findings that most employees only had Grade 12/Matric as a highest qualification, it is therefore recommended that the organisation source suitable and related courses to upskill the workforce so that they are eligible for future growth opportunities within the organisation. Rahayu, Rasid, and Tannady (2019:86) proved that training, career development, and career management significantly affect employee commitment. Additionally, Achim, Ismail, and Mohsin (2020:89) concluded that training and development opportunities positively impact employee commitment levels to their organisation. Their study further found that most respondents said they would commit to the organisation if they were afforded effective learning and development opportunities and attended programmes specific to their jobs for skill enhancement.

5.4 PROPOSED FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study was limited to a single chemical manufacturing company within the chemicals industry of South Africa. Future studies could broaden their scope to encompass multiple companies within the same sector, to compare data trends and patterns across various organisations.

Furthermore, the absence of inquiries to assess management's perceptions of the constructs under examination means that a comparison between employee and managerial viewpoints was impossible. To address this gap, future research may consider incorporating seniority levels as a demographic variable and including specific questionnaire items tailored towards managers. Such additions could prove valuable in assessing the extent of management's influence on employee engagement and organisational commitment, given their pivotal role in shaping the company's strategic direction.

This study employed a quantitative design, future researchers may employ a qualitative design to achieve more detailed outcomes. Furthermore, the close-ended questionnaire could not allow the researcher to probe for clarity. It is therefore recommended that a similar study be conducted in the future but utilising a mixed methods design to obtain different results and observe behavioural changes over time, as well as to gain an in-depth understanding of the respondent's experiences.

Furthermore, future researchers may wish to conduct a qualitative study to determine antecedents and consequences of specific behaviours and gain insight into various work relationships that impact the outcome of constructs under investigation.

This study contributes significantly to the current body of literature by examining the impact of employee engagement and organisational commitment within an organisation. Furthermore, HR professionals, team leaders, and managers can leverage the insights provided in this study to cultivate a more engaged and committed workforce, ultimately benefiting the organisation.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INFORMATION



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: The Effectiveness of Employee Engagement and Organisational Commitment at a selected Chemicals Manufacturing Company in South Africa

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Precious Zinhle Mkhize, Post Graduate Diploma: HRM

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr Pauline Ngo Henha/Eyono, PhD

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study: Good day, I am a second year Master of Management Science: HRM student and would like to kindly invite you to participate in this research study.

“Research is a process of systematic inquiry that entails collection of data; documentation of critical information; and analysis and interpretation of that data/information, in accordance with suitable methodologies set by specific professional fields and academic disciplines”.

The purpose of this study is to research and assess the effectiveness of employee engagement and organisational commitment at a chemical manufacturing concern trading in South Africa and suggest recommendations for practical implementation by the organisation’s management based on the analysis of the results once the study has been concluded. You are welcome to direct any questions or concerns that you may have, to the researcher at any point.

Outline of the Procedures: The aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of employee engagement and organizational commitment at the selected organization. Respondent’s demographic data will aid the study to reach its objectives that seek to determine the effectiveness of the aforementioned employee behavioral factors. You will be requested to complete a structured close-ended questionnaire that will take about 15 minutes of your time. The questionnaire will be hand delivered to you and upon completion, you will be required to deposit into a box that will be provided at your site. The data collected will be screened and all completed, and error free questionnaires will be captured and analyzed, and results will be reported accordingly. There are approximately 152 respondents that will be sampled to participate in this research. Participation in this study will not cause any harm to you as a respondent. You are welcome to withdraw from the study at any point should the need arise.

Benefits: There will not be a direct benefit to the respondents, however, dependent on the outcome of the study and recommendations, the respondents may benefit through the implementation of practical recommendations in the workplace.

Remuneration: Respondents will not be paid for participating in this study.

Costs of the Study: Respondents will not be expected to cover any costs towards the study. The researcher will fund the study.

Confidentiality: The questionnaires are completed anonymously, and the researcher and her statistician are the only persons who will see the results of the questionnaires. The researcher will not have knowledge of which scores belong to which participants as aggregate scores will be analyzed. At no time will any identifying information be reported in the presentation of the research.

Results: The results that stem from the data analysis will be presented in the dissertation and submitted to the Durban University of Technology where the researcher is registered.

Research-related Injury: The study will not cause any harm whatsoever since it is not injury related.

Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings: The data that will be collected will be in the form of hard copies only. After the analysis and reporting, the data will be retained for 5 years in a sealed box accessible to the researcher only in a safe location (lockable cabinet) and then thereafter disposed by shredding. Electronic data that will be captured and analysed via Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel will be stored in a password protected folder and deleted and purged after five years from the conclusion of the study.

Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries: The researcher, Precious Mkhize (M: 0733715960), my supervisor, Dr Pauline Eyono (M: 0836708065), or the Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Acting Director: Research and Postgraduate Support on researchdirector@dut.ac.za

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF CONSENT/REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE



**Faculty of Management Sciences
Department of Management**

Telephone: 031-713 0614
Cell: 0733715960
Email: zinhlep01@gmail.com
Date: 1 August 2023

Durban University of Technology
PO Box 1334
DURBAN
4000

Dear Participant

ASSISTANCE: QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION

I am a registered student at the Durban University of Technology Faculty of Management Sciences in the Department of Human Resource Management. I am currently pursuing a Master's in Management Science specialising in Human Resource Management. My topic is titled: **The Effectiveness of Employee Engagement and Organisational Commitment at a selected Chemicals Manufacturing Company in South Africa**. To successfully complete the latter part of my research, the secondary component deals with the empirical investigation. This involves the completion of a structured close ended questionnaire. You have been identified as one of the respondents that formed the sample for this study.

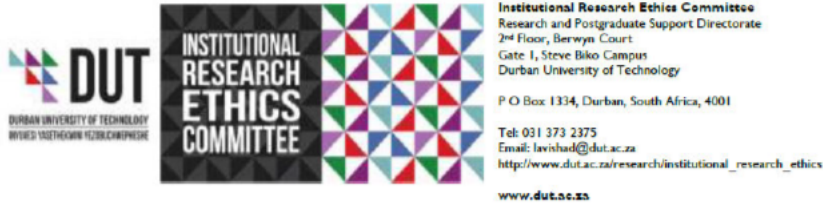
I shall be most grateful if you could please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me by the **22nd of August 2023**. I will plan to pick up the questionnaire from respondents who are on-site. The questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete and only requires you to tick the relevant pre-coded response in an objective manner. Your participation is voluntary, and you are at liberty to withdraw from answering this questionnaire at any time. Please rest assured that your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and no names will be divulged to any third party. The collated responses will be only used for statistical analysis. A summary of the main findings will be sent to you on completion of the project.

Your co-operation in assisting me with this important component of my study is highly appreciated and I look forward to a speedy return of the completed questionnaire. Please answer all the questions and do not leave any question or Likert scale statement blank. I have included a brief explanation of the key terminology relating to the concepts below to assist you when completing the questionnaire. If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above email address or via my cell phone. I take this opportunity to thank you once again for your kind assistance in completing this questionnaire in an informed and objective manner.

Sincerely

Precious Mkhize
Cell: 073 371 5960

APPENDIX C: IREC APPROVAL



16 August 2023

Mrs P Z Mkhize
M1382
Nyala Road
Kwa-Mashu
4360

Dear Mrs Mkhize

The Effectiveness of Employee Engagement and Organisational Commitment at a selected Chemicals Manufacturing Company in South Africa
Ethics Clearance Number: IREC 045/23

The DUT-Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your final data collection tool for review.

We are pleased to inform you that the data collection tool has been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

In addition, the DUT-IREC acknowledges receipt of your gatekeeper permission letter.

Please note that **FULL APPROVAL** is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the DUT-IREC according to the DUT-IREC SOP's.

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the DUT-IREC as outlined in the DUT-IREC SOP's.

It is compulsory for a student or researcher to apply for recertification on an annual basis. The failure to do so will result in withdrawal of ethics clearance. It is the responsibility of the researcher and the supervisor to apply for recertification.

Please note that you are required to submit a Notification of Completion of Study form together with an abstract to the DUT-IREC office on completion of your study.

Yours Sincerely

Prof J K Adam
Chairperson: DUT-IREC

APPENDIX D: GATE KEEPERS LETTER



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Kwa-Zulu Natal, 3610
PO Box 392, Pinetown, 3800

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10 August 2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter serves to confirm that permission has been granted to Precious Mkhize, ID:8809010452080, employee number 682 to conduct research in the company, NCS South Africa (Pty) Ltd to fulfill the requirements of her Master of Management Science specializing in Human Resource Management Degree. Permission has not been granted for the company name to reflect in the study.

For further information, please contact the Human Resources Department on the details above or email sharon.richards@ncs.za.com

Yours faithfully

Sharon Richards
Human Resources Executive

APPENDIX E: QUESTIONNAIRE

ANNEXURE B

The Effectiveness of Employee Engagement and Organisational Commitment at a selected Chemicals Manufacturing Company in South Africa

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:

1. Please select ONLY ONE response with a tick ✓ for each question.
2. Answer ALL the pre-coded questions in this section.
3. Please DO NOT leave any question blank.

1. Please indicate your employment type:

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|---|
| 1.1 | Permanent | 1 |
| 1.2 | Fixed-term Contract | 2 |

2. Please indicate your job category:

| | | |
|-----|----------------|---|
| 2.1 | Operational | 1 |
| 2.2 | Administrative | 2 |

3. Please indicate your gender:

| | | |
|-----|--------|---|
| 3.1 | Male | 1 |
| 3.2 | Female | 2 |
| 3.3 | Other: | 3 |

4. Please indicate your age group:

| | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| 4.1 | 18-25 years | 1 |
| 4.2 | 26-30 years | 2 |
| 4.3 | 31-35 years | 3 |
| 4.4 | 36-40 years | 4 |
| 4.5 | 41-50 years | 5 |
| 4.6 | > 51 years | 6 |

5. Please indicate your race:

| | | |
|-----|----------|---|
| 5.1 | African | 1 |
| 5.2 | Coloured | 2 |
| 5.3 | Indian | 3 |
| 5.4 | White | 4 |
| 5.5 | Other: | 5 |

6. Please indicate your marital status:

| | | |
|-----|----------|---|
| 6.1 | Single | 1 |
| 6.2 | Married | 2 |
| 6.3 | Divorced | 3 |
| 6.4 | Widowed | 4 |

7. Please indicate your length of service:

| | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| 7.1 | 0-5 years | 1 |
| 7.2 | 6-10 years | 2 |
| 7.3 | 11-15 years | 3 |
| 7.4 | 16-20 years | 4 |

| | | |
|-----|-------------|---|
| 7.5 | 21-25 years | 5 |
| 7.6 | > 26 years | 6 |

8. Please indicate your highest level of qualification:

| | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 8.1 | Below Matric | 1 |
| 8.2 | Matric | 2 |
| 8.3 | Diploma/ Bachelor's degree/ Adv. Dip/ B.Tech | 3 |
| 8.4 | Honours degree/ Post Grad | 4 |
| 8.5 | Masters | 5 |
| 8.6 | Doctorate | 6 |

PTO/...3

SECTION B: Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the level of employee participation and commitment to fulfil organisational values. It is the dedication of the employee, good and effective skills in leadership, coupled with senior management support that determines employee engagement.

This section will assess your level of engagement toward your job at the company.

| |
|---|
| <p>INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please select ONLY ONE response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below. 2. Answer ALL the pre-coded statements in this section. 3. Please DO NOT leave any statement blank. |
| <p>KEY: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree</p> |

| | | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|-----|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| | Vigor | | | | | |
| 9. | When I get up in the morning, I feel excited to go to work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | I feel bursting with energy when I am work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | I can continue working for long periods at a time | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | I am mentally resilient at work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. | I always persevere, even when things do not go well | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Dedication | | | | | |
| 14. | My job is meaningful. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. | I enjoy helping my teammates. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. | I am enthusiastic about my job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | I am proud of the work I do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. | I am inspired by my job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Absorption | | | | | |
| 19. | It is difficult to detach myself from my job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. | Time flies when I am working | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. | I forget everything else around me when I work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. | I feel immersed in my job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. | I feel happy when I work intensely | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PTO/...4

SECTION C: Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment is a psychologically inclined association between the employee and the organisation that makes the employee stay with the organisation as way of commitment.

This section will assess your level of commitment to the company.

| |
|---|
| <p>INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please select ONLY ONE response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below. 2. Answer ALL the pre-coded statements in this section. 3. Please DO NOT leave any statement blank. |
| <p>KEY: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree</p> |

| | | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| | Affective Commitment | | | | | |
| 24. | I would be happy to spend the rest of my career at my current employer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. | I feel a strong sense of belonging to my current employer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. | This company has a great deal of personal meaning to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. | I feel that my current employer's problems are my own. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. | Even if this organisation was not doing well financially, I would stay. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Continuance Commitment | | | | | |
| 29. | I am afraid of what could happen to my career if I left my current employer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. | Leaving my current employer would require considerable sacrifice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 31. | Too much of my life would be disrupted if I left my current employer now. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 32. | I cannot leave my current employer because alternatives are scarce. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 33. | It would be hard for me to get used to a new workplace. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Normative Commitment | | | | | |
| 34. | I do not feel it would be right to leave my current employer right now. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. | I am proud to tell people that I work for my current employer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 36. | I have a sense of obligation to the people of my current employer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 37. | My current employer deserves my loyalty. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 38. | It would not be right to break the relationships I have built in this company. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

PTO/...5

SECTION D: Assessing the Effectiveness of Employee Engagement

This section will assess the effect employee engagement has on the company. This effect determines whether an engaged workforce is beneficial to the company.

| |
|---|
| <p>INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please select ONLY ONE response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below. 2. Answer ALL the pre-coded statements in this section. 3. Please DO NOT leave any statement blank. |
| <p>KEY: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree</p> |

| | | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 39. | I can manage my work-related stress. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 40. | My productivity has increased in the last 6 months. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 41. | My customer (internal/external) service has improved in the last 6 months. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 42. | I complete my projects timeously. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 43. | I am willing to use my skills and knowledge to benefit the company. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 44. | I like to collaborate with others to achieve company goals. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 45. | I have contributed to this company's growth. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46. | I feel empowered to provide feedback to my manager. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SECTION E: Assessing the Effectiveness of Organisational Commitment

This section will assess the effect employee commitment has on the company. This effect determines whether a committed workforce is beneficial to the company.

| |
|---|
| <p>INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please select ONLY ONE response with a tick ✓ for each Likert Scale statement below. 2. Answer ALL the pre-coded statements in this section. 3. Please DO NOT leave any statement blank. |
| <p>KEY: SD = Strongly Disagree; D = Disagree; N = Neutral; A = Agree; SA = Strongly Agree</p> |

| | | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|-----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 47. | I strive for quality when performing my work tasks. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 48. | I support my teammates in project implementation. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 49. | I identify with this company's values. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 50. | I treat this company like it were my own. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 51. | I like to be part of a problem-solving team. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52. | I feel motivated to help the company achieve its strategic goals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 53. | I like being associated with this company. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 54. | My job is satisfying. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

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Prof P. Moodley

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email: Samantha.matesa@gmail.com

Date: 14 August 2024

Re: Editing Masters Dissertation: PZ MKHIZE – 20913530 POST EXAMINATION

This serves to confirm the dissertation entitled, *The Effectiveness of Employee Engagement and Organisational Commitment at a Selected Chemicals Manufacturing Company in South Africa* was proofread and edited according to the examiners' request.

Should you have further queries in this regard, please get in touch with me using the contact details given.

Yours Faithfully

.....
Prof P. Moodley

(PhD Communications (UNIZUL), Master of Arts (UNIZUL), Honors Communication Culture and Media Studies- Cum Laude (UKZN), Bachelor of Arts (UNISA)

Associate Professor, Department of Strategic Communications,

Faculty of Humanities, University of Johannesburg

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APPENDIX I: SEKARAN AND BOUGIE SAMPLING TABLE

| N | S | N | S | N | S |
|------------|------------|------|-----|--------|-----|
| 30 | 28 | 280 | 162 | 1500 | 306 |
| 40 | 36 | 290 | 165 | 1600 | 310 |
| 50 | 44 | 300 | 169 | 1700 | 313 |
| 60 | 52 | 320 | 175 | 1800 | 317 |
| 70 | 59 | 340 | 181 | 1900 | 320 |
| 80 | 66 | 360 | 186 | 2000 | 322 |
| 90 | 73 | 400 | 196 | 2200 | 327 |
| 95 | 76 | 420 | 201 | 2400 | 331 |
| 100 | 80 | 440 | 205 | 2600 | 335 |
| 110 | 86 | 460 | 210 | 2800 | 338 |
| 120 | 92 | 480 | 214 | 3000 | 341 |
| 130 | 97 | 500 | 217 | 3500 | 346 |
| 140 | 103 | 550 | 226 | 4500 | 354 |
| 150 | 108 | 600 | 234 | 5000 | 357 |
| 160 | 113 | 650 | 242 | 6000 | 361 |
| 170 | 118 | 700 | 248 | 7000 | 364 |
| 180 | 123 | 750 | 254 | 8000 | 367 |
| 190 | 127 | 800 | 260 | 9000 | 368 |
| 200 | 132 | 850 | 265 | 10000 | 370 |
| 210 | 136 | 900 | 269 | 15000 | 375 |
| 220 | 140 | 950 | 274 | 20000 | 377 |
| 230 | 144 | 1000 | 278 | 30000 | 379 |
| 240 | 148 | 1100 | 285 | 40000 | 380 |
| 250 | 152 | 1200 | 291 | 50000 | 381 |
| 260 | 155 | 1300 | 297 | 75000 | 382 |
| 270 | 159 | 1400 | 302 | 100000 | 384 |

Source: Sekaran and Bougie. (2014:268). (Adapted)