

# Chapter 6

## Job Demands-Resources, Person-Job Fit and the Impact on Turnover Intention: Similar Across Professional and Administrative Job-Types?



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**Abstract** The chapter investigated the differences between professional and administrative occupation groups regarding the role workplace psychological factors play in retention. The sample comprised 745 participants (358 from professional occupations and 387 administrative professions). Multi-group structural equation modelling methods were applied. The results showed that all of the correlational relationships were in the expected directions. With regards to the administrative group, overload and emotional load as well as person-job fit and career opportunities were stronger in relation to retention than in the professional group. Whereas communication was also significantly related to retention in the professional group but not in the administrative group. Lastly, similarities between the two groups were found with regards to remuneration as indicator of lower turnover intention, although of less importance compared to other motivational variables. This study indicates the importance of considering the qualitative differences in occupational groups when planning aspects such as retention strategies.

**Keywords** Retention · Turnover intention · Turnover · Administrative job  
Professional job · Job demands-resources

### Introduction

This chapter investigates differences between professional and administrative occupational groups regarding the role of psychological factors in employee retention (i.e. job demands, job resources and person-job fit perception). A brief overview of retention, the defining characteristics of professional and administrative jobs as well as data analysis and discussion are presented. This topic is important as the ability

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to sustain and promote the health of employees is invaluable to organizations especially in times of organizational instability (Dupré and Day 2007). Kossivi et al. (2016) describe employees as the “life-blood of an organization” (p. 261), who continue to provide valuable resources within organizations despite technological advances. Thus, organizations not only recruit new employees but also attempt to retain effective employees (i.e. their talent pool), to uphold their competitive advantage (Kossivi et al. 2016). Retaining high performing employees has been a consistent topic in organization board meetings globally (Scott et al. 2012) and is seen as high priority (Grobler and Grobler 2016). Masoga (2013) concurs by stating that the need to promote employee retention and measure employee turnover is a current challenge for organizations. According to Branch (1998), Dupré and Day (2007) as well as Holtom et al. (2005) improving organizations’ ability to retain talented employees can save organizations from the financial implications, loss of intellectual capital and the loss of organization or institution specific knowledge (Cho and Song 2017). Employee retention also plays a role in: acquisition and development of skilled employees (competitive advantage of an organization Pfeffer 2005); productivity and organizational performance (Batt and Valcour 2003; Herrbach et al. 2004); maintaining critical knowledge and organizational performance (Cho and Lewis 2012; Newman et al. 2014) the lack of labour in critical organizations as well as promoting organizational success globally (Holtom et al. 2008). Furthermore, Dupré and Day (2007) state that it is beneficial for those who make decisions regarding employees to have knowledge on how to increase employee health to hinder turnover intention and retain employees. However, as the factors that influence retention are complex a need exists to investigate the matter of retention further (Kossivi et al. 2016).

## **Theoretical Background**

### ***Retention, Turnover Intention and Person-Job Fit***

Retaining employees is a challenge that organizations face globally (Hom et al. 2012), it refers to an organization’s attempt to encourage talented employees to stay with their organization (Das and Baruah 2013; Mita et al. 2014). Workforce Planning for Wisconsin State Government (2005) adds that retention is a systematic attempt by an organization to develop and nurture an encouraging environment that promote employees’ decision to remain in the organization through policies that consider various needs. Thus, retention is concerned with an organization’s ability to increase an employee’s obligation to continue working in the organization for the maximum possible employment period (Bidisha and Mukulesh 2013; Zineldin 2000). Fitz-enz (1990) states that there are a host of factors that influence employee retention. These factors can range from aspects such as; colleague socialization (Allen and Shanock 2013), management (Kaliprasad 2006), work-life balance,

autonomy, developmental opportunities (Christeen 2015), training opportunities, remuneration (Ghapanchi and Aurum 2011), job satisfaction (Gurpreet 2007; Pourshaban et al. 2015), unsatisfying salary, emotional exhaustion, opportunities for promotion (Harrington et al. 2001), correlation between own beliefs and values with that of the organization (Loan-Clarke et al. 2010), performance prestige (Muir and Li 2014) and various other organizational climate factors (Erasmus et al. 2015) to name a few.

Additionally, person-job fit has also been found to influence job satisfaction and in turn employees' commitment and intention to leave their employment (Kristof-Brown 1996). Person-job fit can be explained as the perception of an employee of how well they fit or match their occupational position in terms of: knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully perform duties expected of them in the position (cf. Cable and DeRue 2002; Edwards 1991; Kristof-Brown 1996). An analysis conducted by Rothmann (2017) on 10 007 randomly selected South African employees from various sectors, confirmed that person-job fit has the largest impact on employee turnover intention. This analysis was specifically more acute for younger age groups (ages younger than 39). See Table 6.1 for the person-job fit and turnover intention of these groups.

A lack of retention efforts by organizations, i.e. not addressing the factors that may influence retention, can lead to or increase employee turnover or turnover intention (Shimp 2017). Turnover intention refers to employees who have decided, or are strongly considering, to quit their job—mentally distancing themselves and lowering their focus and efficiency in their job (Keaveney and Nelson 1993). Thereby making turnover-intention a mediating factor between attitudes affecting employees' intent to quit and quitting (Glissmeyer et al. 2008). Voluntary turnover is the most harmful to organizations due to the prevalence of the voluntary turnover employee to be highly intelligent and skilled (Holtom et al. 2008). Mitiku (2010) categorizes voluntary turnover in terms of dysfunctional (losing employees that are high performers) and functional (losing employees that are below standard or poor performers) voluntary turnover. The cost to organizations of *voluntary* employee turnover can be viewed by considering replacement costs: recruitment, training new personnel, separation costs as well as loss of productivity (Dysvik and Kuvaas 2013; Moynihan and Landuyt 2008). In addition to the financial implications, voluntary employee turnover also leads to operational disruption, poor job attitudes and diminished social capital (Dess and Shaw 2001). For the employee who decides to leave their job, a large amount of energy is spent on the process of finding new employment (Holtom et al. 2008). Additionally, this previous employee also experiences high levels of stress as they cope with the loss of personal relations at their previous job and adjusting to a new routine (Boswell et al. 2005).

**Table 6.1** Person-job fit and turnover intention of these groups

| Age group               | Sub-optimum person-job fit (%) | Turnover intention (%) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 20–29 (career enterers) | 59                             | 36                     |
| 30–39 (career builders) | 53                             | 33                     |

## *Professional and Administrative Occupations*

Muir and Li (2014) highlight the importance of considering job level when discussing retention, as psychological contracts differ across job levels and each level values different company features. Psychological contracts are seen as fair play, obligations, and rights employees believe should be provided to them by the employer in return for work (Grobler 2014). Tung (2016) as well as Zheng and Lamond (2010) supports the importance of job level consideration by also linking psychological contracts with employee turnover intention. Possible differences between professional and administrative job levels were therefore investigated as personnel in upper levels of an organization experience work that is “qualitatively different from work on other organizational levels” (Hambrick et al. 2005, p. 474). A comparison between professional occupations and administrative occupations, as defined by the Office of National Statistics (2010), highlights this difference. A professional occupation is a person, with a degree or equivalent qualification (frequently postgraduate degrees) who has experience and extensive knowledge in engineering, natural sciences, humanities as well as social and human sciences (Office of National Statistics 2010). The Office of National Statistics (2010) refers to persons in professional occupations as those that are concerned with applying their theoretical knowledge, developing or advancing this knowledge through research as well as teaching their knowledge to others. This professional occupation group is classified as a major group under the Standard Occupational Classification and includes the following sub-major groups each with its own minor group and unit groups (i.e. specific job indication) namely; Health Profession (e.g. therapy, nursing and health professionals with jobs such as psychologist, dietician etc.), science, research, engineering and technology profession (e.g. natural, chemical and humanities/social sciences with jobs such as chemist, geologist, historian, scientist, structural and power engineer etc.), teaching and educational profession (e.g. higher, secondary or special needs teaching professionals, includes jobs such as lecturer, teacher etc.), business media and public service professionals (e.g. legal, business, welfare, librarians, quality regulators, media and architect professionals with jobs such as advocate, coroner, accountants etc.) (Office of National Statistics 2010). The administrative and secretarial occupations are referred to as occupations wherein the person with standard, general or vocational training conducts client-oriented administrative duties, clerical secretarial work and general administrative work (Office of National Statistics 2010). Administrative occupations consist of two sub-major groups; administrative occupations and secretarial and related occupations (Office of National Statistics 2010). According to Office of National Statistics (2010) administrative occupations include the following minor groups with related unit groups: Other administrative occupations (e.g. sales administrators, other administrative occupations n.e.c.), administrative occupations: Records (e.g. library clerks and assistants, stock control clerks and assistants, transport and distribution clerks and assistants etc.), office managers and supervisors (e.g. office managers and supervisors), administrative occupations:

Finance (Credit controllers, Finance officers, Bank and post office clerks etc.), administrative occupations: Government and related organizations (e.g. national or local government and Officers of non-governmental organizations) (Office of National Statistics 2010). Secretarial and related occupations consist of the following minor groups with related unit groups; Secretarial and related occupations (e.g. personal assistants and other secretaries, school secretaries, receptionists, typists and related keyboard occupations etc.). Typical work-related tasks for persons in this occupation include;

retrieving, updating, classifying and distributing documents, correspondence and other records held electronically and in storage files; typing, word-processing and otherwise preparing documents; operating other office and business machinery; receiving and directing telephone calls to an organisation; and routing information through organisations (Office of National Statistics 2010, p. 137).

### ***The Job Demands-Resources Model***

Due to the burden of employee turnover on organizations (Holtom et al. 2008; Ton and Huckman 2008), scholars have attempted to determine work characteristics in organizations that may influence an employee's intention to stay in their job (Cho and Song 2017). Concurrently a study by Knudsen et al. (2009) found evidence of turnover intention being influenced by job demands and job resources in upper-level employees in organizations. According to Schaufeli and Bakker (2004), turnover intention results from a job that is characterized by high job demands and low job resources, two aspects that form the base of the Job demands resource model. The JD-R model (Job demands-resources model) or JD-R theory as referred to in more recent studies (Bakker and Demerouti 2008, 2013), is one of the most influential occupational stress models (Schaufeli and Taris 2014), and posits that employee motivation and well-being is affected as the result of the interaction between two categories of workplace characteristics; overt job demands (negative) and job resources (positive) (Bakker and Demerouti 2007; Bickerton et al. 2015; Schaufeli and Taris 2014). Job demands refer to physical and psychological demands that are placed on the individual by their job, for example workplace experiences such as ambiguity and time pressure which can cause health impairment and further lead to negative job and health outcomes (Bakker and Demerouti 2007; Bickerton et al. 2015). Contrastingly, job resources are can be used to minimize job demands, examples being: peer support, autonomy and career opportunities which are aspects that promote positive job and personal outcomes via a motivational process (Bakker and Demerouti 2007; Bickerton et al. 2015; Urien et al. 2017). Dysvik and Kuvaas (2013) found that turnover is influenced by perceived autonomy whereas Jung (2014), found that turnover is negatively

associated with goal setting. Additionally, Ertas (2015) found that turnover intention decreased in jobs that consisted of professional development, job satisfaction, creativity, promotion, pay satisfaction and having a good work group.

The JD-R model postulates that high levels of job resources can increase good outcomes through a motivational process whilst low levels of job resources in combination with high job demands can result in draining the employee's energy through stress (Hu et al. 2011; Urien et al. 2017). However, it is important to note that the JD-R model does not link specific job demands with specific job resources instead the model assumes an overall synthesis of job demands with a similar indicator of job resources (Bakker et al. 2003; Hu et al. 2011). Thus, employee wellbeing and health may be influenced by any job demand and any job resource (Schaufeli and Taris 2014). The JD-R model also assumes two moderating effects; *firstly*, the model assumes that challenging job demands in combination with optimal job resources leads to increased employee work engagement (Bakker et al. 2014). Work engagement refers to employee behaviour that includes absorption, vigour and dedication due to a fulfilling and positive work-related state of mind (Schaufeli et al. 2002) and is strongly related to work commitment and retention (Bakker and Demerouti 2007; De Beer et al. 2012). The *second* assumption places emphasis on the role that job resources play in minimizing the debilitating effects of high job demands on employee well-being (Bakker and Demerouti 2007). According to Jang et al. (2015) employee well-being has been explained by the JD-R model in various organizational contexts such as health, education, manufacturing and human services (Bakker et al. 2003; Delp et al. 2010; Hakanen et al. 2005; Knudsen et al. 2009; Korunka et al. 2009).

The inclusiveness and flexibility of the JD-R model makes it the model of choice when conducting research across various work settings (Schaufeli and Taris 2014). Additionally, the overall synthesis of job demands and job resources also supports the use of this model for investigating employee retention for the aim of this chapter.

## Research Method

### *Approach*

A quantitative research method, i.e. a survey within a cross-sectional research design, was used. Data were collected with a non-probability convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling is used when the sample is easily accessible to the researcher for data collection (Muijs 2011). This approach allows for the investigation of correlational data at one-point in time, by means of the most popular form of data collection in quantitative studies; a standardized questionnaire (Muijs 2011).

## *Participants*

A database of 745 participants was extracted for the purposes of this study. The professional group consisted of 358 employees [Male = 190; Female = 168; Black African = 48; White = 168; Coloured = 10; Indian = 12; Other = 1] and the administrative group consisted of 387 employees [Male = 91; Female = 296; Black African = 64; White = 139; Coloured = 30; Indian = 30; Other = 1]. Table 6.2 presents a breakdown of the number of participants from the occupational groups' sub-categories.

**Table 6.2** Participant groups

| Occupational group and sub-categories                            | Number |
|--|--------|
| <i>Professional occupations</i>                                  | 358    |
| Architects, town planners and surveyors                          | 12     |
| Business, research and administrative professionals              | 72     |
| Conservation and environment professionals                       | 3      |
| Engineering professionals  | 24     |
| Health professionals   | 12     |
| Information technology and telecommunications professionals      | 79     |
| Legal professionals  | 11     |
| Librarians and related professionals                             | 2      |
| Media professionals  | 11     |
| Natural and social science professionals                         | 21     |
| Nursing and midwifery professionals                              | 63     |
| Quality and regulatory professionals                             | 24     |
| Research and development managers                                | 3      |
| Teaching and educational professionals                           | 16     |
| Therapy professionals  | 1      |
| Welfare professionals  | 4      |
| <i>Administrative and secretarial occupations</i>                | 387    |
| Administrative occupations: Finance                              | 117    |
| Administrative occupations: Government and related organizations | 10     |
| Administrative occupations: Office managers and supervisors      | 29     |
| Administrative occupations: Records                              | 86     |
| Other administrative occupations                                 | 102    |
| Secretarial and related occupations                              | 43     |

## **Measures**

Scales from the South African Employee Health and Wellness Survey (SAEHWS; Rothmann and Rothmann 2007) were used. *Emotional load* ( $\alpha = 0.71$ ) by four items, e.g. 'Do you have to deal with difficult people at work?'; *Overload*: ( $\alpha = 0.79$ ) by four items, e.g. 'Do you have too much work to do?'; *Supervisor support*: ( $\alpha = 0.84$ ) by three items e.g. 'Can you count on your direct supervisor when you come across difficulties in your work?'; *Colleague support*: ( $\alpha = 0.74$ ) by three items, e.g. 'Can you count on your colleagues when you come across difficulties in your work?'; *Role clarity*: ( $\alpha = 0.70$ ) by three items, e.g. 'Do you know exactly what your responsibilities are?'; *Communication*: ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ) by three items, e.g. 'Is it clear to you whom you should address within the department/organization for specific problems?'; *Remuneration*: ( $\alpha = 0.75$ ) by three items, e.g. 'Do you think you are paid enough for the work that you do?'; All of the above job demands and job resources were measured on four-point Likert scales ranging from Never (1) to Always (4). *Person-job fit*: ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ) by four items was measured with a six-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (6), e.g. 'The requirements of my job match my specific talents and skills.'; Similarly, *Turnover intention*: ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ) by three items, e.g. 'I am actively seeking a job elsewhere.' Employees were asked to indicate their profession as part of the biographical section.

## **Analysis**

In terms of reliability the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was considered for each of the scales. Then, multi-group latent variable modelling methods were used to create a research model. Estimation was conducted with the Robust Maximum Likelihood estimator to guard against parameter bias due to potential non-normality of the data. To consider the fit of the model, the traditional Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) and Root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) were used. Given sufficient model fit the correlations between the variables and also the regressions were considered to answer the research questions. Specifically, the significance, direction and size of the standardised beta coefficients in the groups would be used to investigate similarity.

## **Results**

### **Model Fit**

The multi-group structural equation model executed successfully and presented the following fit statistics for the measurement model:  $\chi^2 = 1116.59$  [Contribution



from each group: Professional = 536.481 and Administrative = 580.113],  $df = 513$ , CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.90 and RMSEA = 0.05. The CFI, TLI and RMSEA were all acceptable (Van de Schoot et al. 2012).

## *Correlations*

Table 6.3 presents the correlation tables for the variables in each other groups from the structural equation modelling. The correlation table of both groups show that all of the relationships are in the expected directions as the job resources and person-job fit were negatively correlated with turnover intention. Therefore, there were no counter-intuitive signs in any of the significant relationships. Noteworthy, is that the correlation between overload and emotional load is higher in the Administrative occupation group ( $r = 0.73$ ; large effect) compared to the Professional group ( $r = 0.58$ ; large effect). Furthermore, the relationship between turnover intention with person-job fit and career opportunities was also higher in the administrative group (large effects) compared to the professional group (medium effects).

## *Path Analysis*

The structural path model showed the following adequate fit indices:  $\chi^2 = 1422.13$  [Contribution from each group: Professional = 681.22 and Administrative = 740.91],  $df = 705$ , CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.90 and RMSEA = 0.05. The structural model revealed interesting results (see Table 6.4). Specifically, emotional load was shown to not significantly contribute to explained variance of turnover intention in the professional occupations, but had a significant positive relationship in the administrative group ( $\beta = 0.66$ , SE = 0.26;  $p = 0.012$ ). Interestingly, overload did not have a significant regression to turnover intention in either of the groups ( $ps > 0.05$ ), even though approaching significance in the administrative group ( $p = 0.065$ ). In terms of the job resources, communication had a significant negative relationship to turnover intention in the professional group, even though being a borderline case ( $\beta = -0.52$ , SE = 0.26;  $p = 0.048$ )—but was not significant in the administrative group ( $p = 0.637$ ). Remuneration was significantly negative related to turnover in both groups. Furthermore, person-job fit was also significantly negatively related to turnover intention in both groups, with a higher value in the professional group ( $\beta = -0.39$ , SE = 0.09;  $p < 0.001$ ) compared to the administrative group ( $\beta = -0.25$ , SE = 0.09;  $p = 0.005$ ).

**Table 6.3** Correlations

| Variables  | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     | 7     | 8.    | 9     | 10   |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| <i>Group 1: Professional occupations (n = 358)</i>   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 1. Emotional load                                    | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 2. Overload  | 0.58  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 3. Colleague support                                 | -0.26 | -0.07 | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 4. Supervisor support                                | -0.38 | -0.10 | 0.47  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 5. Role clarity                                      | -0.40 | -0.09 | 0.59  | 0.69  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |      |
| 6. Communication                                     | -0.29 | 0.00  | 0.51  | 0.59  | 0.84  | 1.00  |       |       |       |      |
| 7. Remuneration                                      | -0.38 | -0.23 | 0.18  | 0.26  | 0.21  | 0.22  | 1.00  |       |       |      |
| 8. Career opportunities                              | -0.29 | -0.04 | 0.36  | 0.39  | 0.42  | 0.54  | 0.31  | 1.00  |       |      |
| 9. Person-job fit                                    | -0.31 | -0.03 | 0.24  | 0.29  | 0.45  | 0.33  | 0.16  | 0.36  | 1.00  |      |
| 10. Turnover intention                               | 0.41  | 0.14  | -0.29 | -0.39 | -0.33 | -0.41 | -0.41 | -0.38 | -0.47 | 1.00 |
| <i>Group 2: Administrative occupations (n = 387)</i> |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 1. Emotional load                                    | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 2. Overload  | 0.73  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 3. Colleague support                                 | -0.43 | -0.24 | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 4. Supervisor support                                | -0.52 | -0.27 | 0.36  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| 5. Role clarity                                      | -0.50 | -0.07 | 0.35  | 0.73  | 1.00  |       |       |       |       |      |
| 6. Communication                                     | -0.48 | -0.16 | 0.40  | 0.68  | 0.72  | 1.00  |       |       |       |      |
| 7. Remuneration                                      | -0.29 | -0.11 | 0.17  | 0.30  | 0.25  | 0.36  | 1.00  |       |       |      |
| 8. Career opportunities                              | -0.40 | -0.12 | 0.22  | 0.38  | 0.36  | 0.48  | 0.53  | 1.00  |       |      |
| 9. Person – job fit                                  | -0.24 | -0.02 | 0.23  | 0.31  | 0.43  | 0.39  | 0.32  | 0.50  | 1.00  |      |
| 10. Turnover intention                               | 0.46  | 0.10  | -0.23 | -0.37 | -0.42 | -0.38 | -0.41 | -0.51 | -0.47 | 1.00 |

## Discussion

This chapter explored the differences between professional and administrative occupations based on certain workplace psychological factors in employee retention in the context of the JD-R model. Job resources and person-job fit were found to negatively relate with turnover intention in both professional and administrative occupations, in line with expectations (see Schaufeli and Taris 2014). Additionally, four noteworthy differences between the two occupations were noted.

*Firstly*, the correlational relationships of overload and emotional load with turnover intention were higher in the administrative group than in the professional group. Role overload is often due to the scarcity of certain resources and can lead to burnout (Yip et al. 2008), whereas emotional load occurs when a person feels overwhelmed by work demands (Khan 2011) and is also implicit in the formation of burnout (Grandey 2003). Furthermore, in line with the general trend of our results, Khan (2011) found that secretarial jobs (administrative occupation) experience their work as more demanding than that of superiors and can only be conducted effectively by possessing the necessary abilities, skills and knowledge regarding their job. Thereby also emphasising the importance of person-job fit. In terms of the regression model, emotional load explained a significant amount of variance in turnover intention. The interaction between emotional exhaustion and

**Table 6.4** Regression results for the multi-group research model

| Structural path                           | Professional |      |       | Administrative |      |       |
|---|--------------|------|-------|----------------|------|-------|
|   | $\beta$      | SE   | p     | $\beta$        | SE   | p     |
| Emotional load → Turnover intention       | 0.19         | 0.12 | 0.123 | 0.66*          | 0.26 | 0.012 |
| Overload → Turnover intention             | 0.02         | 0.11 | 0.817 | 0.42           | 0.23 | 0.065 |
| Colleague support → Turnover intention    | -0.11        | 0.08 | 0.151 | 0.03           | 0.07 | 0.654 |
| Supervisor support → Turnover intention   | -0.22        | 0.14 | 0.124 | -0.08          | 0.15 | 0.588 |
| Role clarity → Turnover intention         | 0.61         | 0.35 | 0.083 | 0.07           | 0.26 | 0.782 |
| Communication → Turnover intention        | -0.52*       | 0.26 | 0.048 | 0.07           | 0.14 | 0.637 |
| Remuneration → Turnover intention         | -0.22*       | 0.08 | 0.004 | -0.14*         | 0.07 | 0.044 |
| Career opportunities → Turnover intention | 0.04         | 0.09 | 0.687 | -0.13          | 0.10 | 0.213 |
| Person-job fit → Turnover intention       | -0.39*       | 0.09 | 0.001 | -0.25*         | 0.09 | 0.005 |

Notes  $\beta$  = Standardised beta coefficient; SE = Standard error;  $p$  = Two-tailed statistical significance; \* = significant

work environment characteristics are key role players in the JD-R model (Alarcon 2011; Bakker and Demerouti 2007) and may account for differences between these occupational groups. It is not hard to imagine that administrative occupations may face difficult clients, colleagues and superiors in the everyday workings of the organization—as they form an integral support function often being the first point of contact with clients and internal managers/supervisors—increasing their emotional load.

*Secondly*, even though not significant in the structural model, the correlations between career opportunities and person-job fit in relation to turnover intention were found to be higher in the administrative occupation group. Career opportunities provided by organizations are seen as a highly valued career resource (Lu et al. 2016) and can greatly impact an employee's career decisions (Kraimer et al. 2011; Weng and McElroy 2012; Weng et al. 2010). Similarly, Salamin and Hom (2005) found promotions and increased salary to be negatively associated with turnover. Lu et al. (2016) state that employees who are highly employable may experience lower turnover intention as they believe that the career opportunities made available to them is in line with their future career goals, whereas their turnover will result in loss of these career goals. In terms of person-job fit, persons in administrative occupations have shown lower job fit. For example, Truss et al. (2013) found that secretaries' role content was experienced by the majority as negative and that less than 30% experienced their job as utilizing their full set of skills. This is in line with person-job fit; the extent to which a job's requirements match the individual's abilities. Additionally, Truss et al. (2013) also state that those working in the secretarial occupation have a strong desire for a change of status and their contribution to the organization goals, an aspect that has not changed sufficiently in the last decade, which can be seen as the second component of person job fit namely; needs-supply (for example psychological desires and the

need for recognition or decision-making latitude [Cable and DeRue 2002; Muchinsky and Monahan 1987]).

*Thirdly*, the regression model showed that communication explained a significant amount of variance in turnover intention in the professional group, but was not in the administrative group. Bakker et al. (2005) explained that job resources such as social interaction, supervisor relationship and feedback combats burnout as well as increases employee retention (Kim and Stoner 2008). Positive communication can also reduce job and role stress in professional occupations (Kim and Lee 2009). Similar findings have also been shown for administrative occupations (Nichols et al. 2016).

*Lastly*, the finding in the regression model that remuneration is important in retaining employees for both occupational groups is well established in literature (Akeyo and Wezel 2017; Brien et al. 2017; Larkin et al. 2016; Nawaz and Pangil 2016; Yang 2014). However, it is important to note that despite the role remuneration plays in retention, literature is also clear that it is not the sole motivator for turnover intention, e.g. Singh and Loncar (2010) found that job satisfaction for example was more crucial in retaining nurses. This is in line with the motivational theory of Herzberg (1966), indicating remuneration as a hygiene factor which becomes more important as a consideration for employees when it becomes problematic or absent as opposed to motivational factors when remuneration is present. In the current findings, it also had the lowest importance in the structural model of all the significant results.

## Conclusion and Implications for Retention

This study has highlighted differences between work environment characteristics in different occupational groups with regards to turnover intention. Therefore, it is important to consider that different occupations have different needs with regard to support with job demands and job resources that impact their perceptions regarding turnover intention and thus their ultimate retention. Organizations should proactively investigate the job demands and job resources that are problematic and optimal in departments in order to address them and thereby increasing the likelihood of retaining talent. This can be done by implementing organizational diagnostic surveys which are valid and reliable—preferably with norm groups for the context. Person-job fit was also shown to be important in both occupational groups, not only should recruitment and selection be considered important but recent research has indicated that work engagement precedes person-job fit—and work engagement is most strongly predicted by job resources (De Beer et al. 2016), emphasising their importance. In terms of future studies, it is recommended that further investigation into the differences in other occupational groups be undertaken as it is highly likely that different dynamics could be evident given more complexity and the addition of additional occupational groups.

## Summary

In this chapter, the authors provided insight into the dynamics of job demands-resources, person-job fit and turnover intention in administrative and professional occupations. Findings from this study highlight the importance of differences in occupational groups when considering aspects of turnover intention —by addressing the differences in importance of job demands, job resources and person-job fit.

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