

BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED SATISFACTION AND THE IMPACT ON TURNOVER INTENTION ACROSS INDUSTRIES, WINDHOEK

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Abstract

High levels of unemployment in Namibia, skills shortages and the pressure to compete both locally and internationally, require organisations to satisfy basic psychological needs of employees. Basic psychological needs have been identified as critical ingredients for employees to grow, develop integrity and remain healthy (autonomy, relatedness, competence). Turnover intention is a damaging attitude towards the organisation that lasts long after the employee has left. The aim of this study was to assess the relation between basic psychological need satisfaction and turnover intention within the insurance, telecommunication and teaching industries in Windhoek. Employees are less likely to leave an organisation if they experience satisfaction in terms of autonomy, competence and relatedness. A cross-sectional survey design was used, employing questionnaires to collect data on the biographical details, basic psychological need satisfaction and turnover intention of employees in the Khomas region. The sample consisted of an insurance firm (n=85), a telecommunication provider (n=37) and different Governmental Secondary Schools (n=104) in Windhoek. The relationship between basic psychological need satisfaction (as measured by the Work-Related Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale) and turnover intention (as measured by the Turnover Intention Scale) was investigated making use of Spearman's rank order correlation. A negative correlation was found between competence and relatedness [$r = -.15$, $n=226$, $p < .05$]; an insignificant relation between competence [$r = -.01$, $n=226$, $p < .05$] and turnover intention; and between relatedness and turnover intention [$r = .10$, $n=226$, $p < .05$]. When employers and managers know how to ensure satisfying interactions and how they manage employees, provide employees with the necessary autonomy; and improve their perceived levels of competence, a reduction of turnover intention, coupled with other positive work related attitudes, becomes likely.

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Introduction

“The changing and unstable workplace and its profoundly negative impact on employee loyalty, morale, motivation and job security have led to a renewed interest in the motives and values that determine individuals’ psychological attachment to their organisations and occupations” (Coetzee, Schreuder, & Tladinyane, 2007, p. 65). When employees experience negative morale and poor motivation within the workplace, they are likely to leave the organisation. Turnover remains a problem within organisations and this is aggravated by the negative work attitudes experienced by employees within a particular organisation.

Organisations are constantly struggling with the retention of talent, particularly where turnover is costly to the organisation (Soltis, Agneessens, Sasovova, & Labianca, 2013). Due to the constant increase in the number of unemployed people and high numbers of unskilled employees within the job market and skills shortages, some organisations are struggling, and thus cannot cope with the local and regional challenges presented by other organisations within the same industry (Van Schalkwyk, Du Toit, Bothma, & Rothmann, 2010).

If organisations do not attend to the basic psychological needs of employees, the organisation is going to face challenges, such as low productivity, employees that experience low levels of job satisfaction and employees that will eventually leave the organisation (Mor Barak, Nissly, & Levin, 2001). Attending to employees’ needs (basic psychological needs), employees are likely to experience a higher level of autonomy, relatedness, competence, and become more engaged and committed (Janik, 2012; Kovjanic, Schuh, & Jonas, 2013; Stander & Rothmann, 2010; Silman, 2014; Vansteenkiste, Neyrinck, Niemiec, Soenens, De Witte, & Van den Broeck, 2007), reducing feelings of turnover intention and contribute towards the effectiveness of the organisation.

Study Context

Namibia is situated on the south-eastern side of Africa with a population of 2.4 million people, according to the census conducted in 2014 (Trading Economics, 2016), with 1 433 270 people (63.8 per cent) aged 15 years and above while only 990 998 (69.3 per cent) being economically active and 71.9 per cent (712 752) being employed (New Era, 2015). The unemployment rate is close to 40 per cent in the informal sector, and dominated by women (Bösl, 2008). The current unemployment rate of Namibia is 28.1 per cent in 2014, with a record low of 19.5 per cent recorded for 1997 and an ultimate high of 37.6 per cent in 2008.

The study took place within the insurance, telecommunications and teaching industries within the city of Windhoek, Namibia. The insurance industry is mostly managed by foreign companies, which makes it difficult for these organisations to consider and take into account the contextual challenges faced in Namibia (Le Roux, 2015). Many of the employed people in Namibia do not make use of insurance since they lack the necessary education about the importance of insurance. Other factors that also contribute to the low utilisation of insurance are due to unemployment and low income levels (Brockmeyer, 2012). The telecommunications industry being monopolised by the major service providers with limited to no competition, makes it difficult to obtain access to affordable and quality service (Sherbourne & Stork, 2010). The organisation in this study was established in 1992, wholly owned by the government employing 1 223 employees with 190 665 customer. Considering the education sector, there are about 1500 schools in Namibia educating learners from grade 1 to 12. 23 000 Educators want to leave the teaching industry annually due to high work demands, limited resources and lack of incentives to keep qualified teachers in Namibia (Mseyamwa, 2007). Namibia is currently employing 4000 underqualified and unqualified teachers due to a lack of teachers and due to the high rate of turnover. It was also noted that 11.3 percent of the total employed population have no formal education at all and 9.2 percent of the employed population having obtained a certificate, diploma, degrees, teachers training and postgraduate qualifications (New Era, 2015).

Research purpose and objectives

This study aims to assess the relationship between basic psychological need satisfaction and turnover intention of employees within the insurance, telecommunication and education industry. To the researchers' knowledge, a study like this has not been done within the Namibian context and also adds to the limited research in the field of Industrial/Organisational psychology. This study will continue by discussing key literature related to basic psychological need satisfaction and turnover intention, as well as how these variables are related within the world of work. A discussion of the method used will also be discussed, followed by an overview of the participants, measurements used, analyses to make meaning of the data, results will be presented followed by a discussion and some recommendations as well as limitations based on the study.

Literature review

Basic psychological need satisfaction

Basic psychological need satisfaction is defined as comprising the key resources that are essential for employees to grow, their integrity and their health. Ryan & Deci (2000) emphasise the importance of these

three needs for employees in order to prosper and grow. These aspects are needed by the employee for autonomy, relatedness and competence (Kovjanic, Schuh, & Jonas, 2013).

The variable called “Basic psychological needs” has been developed by the self-determination experts, Deci and Ryan (2000). **Autonomy** can be defined as an employee’s experience of choice and psychological freedom to choose and direct work activities. This also has to do with the degree of freedom an employee has within his/her job (See also Greenberg, 2011; Luthans, 2005; Robbins, Judge, Odendaal, & Roodt, 2009; Verstuylf, Vansteenkiste, Soenens, & Boone, 2013). **Relatedness** can be defined as the degree to which the employee needs to be close to others, valued by others, and having a sense of belonging with peers, family or the community at large (Verstuylf et al., 2013). When employees experience feelings of efficiency, and feel capable of reaching their work goals, have the ability to perform their work, belief in having the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviour to effectively complete their work, they are experiencing a sense of **competence** in their work. These components are also vital to a job as explained by the job characteristics model of Hackman and Oldham (1980).

Based on the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1980), when employees experience task identity, task significance, task variety, autonomy and feedback, they are likely to experience higher levels of basic psychological needs satisfaction (Boonzaier, Ficker, & Rust, 2001). Depending on the job characteristics present, employees will experience motivation and a high level of needs satisfaction (Kumar, Abbas, Ghumro, & Zeeshan, 2012). Work resources and support were found to be some of the key factors in enhancing employees’ levels of satisfaction in terms of their basic psychological needs among female employees in South Africa. When employees have the necessary resources to effectively execute their jobs, coupled with the necessary support, employees will increase their levels of perceived competence and relatedness (Marais, de Klerk, Nel, & de Beer, 2014).

Positive work relations and supervisor support normally lead employees to experience higher levels of relatedness, increasing their levels of competence and experiencing good working conditions work and a positive work environment. When employees experience improved working conditions and working environments, these positive emotions will also spill over to the home and vice-versa (Ajala, 2013; Ladebo, 2008; Ladebo, 2009; Mostert, 2009; Okediji, Etuk, & Anthony, 2011; Onyishi & Ogbodo, 2012; Van der Berg & Martins, 2013).

It was found in this research that both male and female employees experienced the same level of autonomy within the organisation under the above-described conditions in the work environment. This is indicative that organisations are becoming more gender sensitive and moving towards gender equity, allowing access to opportunities of growth for both male and female employees (Ojedokun & Idemudia, 2014).

Young teachers within the teaching industry indicated that they prefer having significant autonomy when completing their duties. Older teachers indicated that they would prefer less autonomy since a lack of autonomy was perceived as lacking hierarchical support that leads to frustration. As frustration grows, it may result in teachers resigning due to a lack of hierarchical support (Muller, Alliata, & Benninghoff, 2009).

Employees that have worked in a particular position for some time, tend to experience a higher level of perceived competence and mastery of tasks within the organisation (Mahembe & Chipunza, 2014). Employees are likely to also engage in more challenging tasks, and at the same time experience satisfaction in their work, when they experience competence and mastery of tasks (Mahembe & Chipunza, 2014). Experiencing higher levels of perceived competence also ties into a higher level of commitment from employees, wanting to remain and contribute to the success of the organisation (Rafiee, Bahrami, & Entezarian, 2015). When comparing employees with more years of working experience than those with lesser years of working experience, employees with more working experience were also found to be more engaged in their work (Bezuidenhout & Cilliers, 2011). It was further found that when employees have more working experience they tend to perceive a better fit in terms of their skills and abilities, as well as higher levels of perceived competence (Van Dyk, Coetzee, & Tebele, 2013).

Based on the literature discussed above, the following hypothesis has been developed:

Hypothesis 1: *Basic psychological need satisfaction is experienced differently based on sex, age, marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees.*

Turnover intention

“Turnover intention reflects the (subjective) probability that an individual will change his or her job within a certain time period,” (Sousa-Poza & Henneberger; 2004, p. 113) Turnover is also defined as the change in membership from one organisation to another of an employee (Price, 2001). These employees will no longer be part of the organisation; instead they will be contributing towards the success of another organisation.

Turnover can be defined as the permanent loss of an employee from the organisation, and this person needs to be replaced (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert, & Hatfield, 2011). This definition emphasizes the vacancy caused by turnover, and that there are substantial amounts of costs involved when an employee

decides to leave the organisation. The costs associated with turnover does not only include financial costs but also other costs, such as negative job attitudes and poor morale within the organisation (Zhao, Sun, Cao, Li, Duan, Fan, & Liu, 2012). The financial costs include the costs to advertise these vacant positions, profit losses during the time the position remained vacant, additional costs for hiring temporary workers, or paying out additional income to employees taking over these unattended work roles, costs to conduct the recruitment and selection processes, costs for training and development with a view to fill any possible work development gaps that the new employee might have, and the time required for the new employee to find their feet within the organisation and achieve acceptable levels of performance.

Apart from all the other challenges faced by organisations, employee turnover remains one of the challenges within the organisation (O'Connell & Kung, 2007). It will be ideal to have no turnover within the organisation but turnover are inevitable for all organisations but should be minimised and handled efficiently. At some point in an employee's life they will retire, resign or will be dismissed for breaking organisational rules or for not meeting performance requirements (Rosser & Townsend, 2006).

As part of the negative consequences of turnover, the remaining employees experience negative job attitudes (Soltis et al., 2013). The remaining employees would question why the other employees are leaving and whether the particular organisation is still a viable organisation to work for, or alternatively, do I also need to think about searching for other employment. Turnover also affects organisational effectiveness (Dee, 2002). When employees leave the organisation certain tasks within the organisation need to be put on hold, assigned to another employee who may already be overburdened, or the customers will have to be sent away.

Significant differences were found between gender and the way the employees experienced turnover intention within their respective organisations, with females experiencing higher levels of turnover intention (Chowwen, Balogun, & Olowokere, 2014; Sun et al., 2013; Wai, Dandar, Radosevich, Brubaker, & Kuo, 2014; Xu, 2008; Yuen-Onn, Chia-Guan, Yan-Teng, & Chun-Eng, 2013).

Significant differences were further found between age and turnover intention, with younger employees experiencing higher levels of turnover intention and older employees (close to retirement) experiencing lower levels of turnover intention (Lavoie-Tremblay, Paquet, Duchesne, Santo, Gavrancic, Courcy, & Gagnon, 2010; Martin, 2007; Yin-Fah, Foon, Chee-Leong, & Osman, 2010; Yuen-Onn et al., 2013).

It was found that employees' experienced turnover intention differently based on the different levels of tenure (Martin, 2007; Rosser & Townsend, 2006; Yin-Fah et al., 2010). It was highlighted that new em-

employees and old (in terms of tenure) experience higher turnover intention because they are either adjusting to the new working environment or making plans regarding retirement. Employees with a more averaged tenure tend to be having lower levels of turnover intention. They have settled well into their work roles and are performing to their highest levels of productivity.

It was found that married employees, having other non-work/family related commitments, tend to be experiencing a lower level of turnover intention when compared to single employees (du Plooy & Roodt, 2013; Weisberg & Kirschenbaum, 1991; Yuen-Onn et al., 2013).

Employees that have excelled in obtaining higher levels of educational qualifications, tend to experience higher levels of turnover intention. It is suggested that employees with higher educational qualifications tend to perceive themselves as more employable and having access to more and better work opportunities outside the organisation (Weisberg & Kirschenbaum, 1991).

Based on the literature discussed above, the following hypothesis has been developed:

Hypothesis 2: *Turnover intention is experienced differently based on sex, age, marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees.*

Turnover intention and basic psychological need satisfaction

When employees are given or allowed the necessary autonomy to execute their jobs with the necessary support when required, their levels of self-efficacy and competence will improve (Muller et al., 2009; Onyishi & Ogbodo, 2012; Rothmann, Diedericks, & Swart, 2013). When employees have good work relations with colleagues and supervisors, they experience a higher than usual level of competence and a greater desire to want to become more engaged in the work roles and they experience it as satisfying (Mahembe & Chipunza, 2014). The more employees are exposed to new tasks, or given the opportunity to impact and choose regarding work activities, they will experience mastery in their work, become more committed and increase their levels of performance (Geldenhuys, Laba, & Venter, 2014; Marques, 2013; Rafiee et al., 2015). When employees become more engaged they normally reduce their level of turnover intention (Du Plooy & Roodt, 2010; Stander & Rothmann, 2010).

Organisational support also has a positive impact on autonomy. The more supportive organisations are towards employees, the more employees feel satisfied in terms of autonomy, and accordingly, become more competent (Brimeyer, Perrucci, & Wadsworth, 2010).

When employees experience satisfaction in terms of autonomy and relatedness, they are less likely to experience high levels of turnover intention. When you are able to decide how to execute your work roles,

having employees and supervisors that are supportive, you are likely to want to remain with that specific organisation (Rothmann et al., 2013). When employees are not experiencing positive employee relations (relatedness), they are likely to experience turnover intention (Mor Barak et al., 2001). Relatedness seems to be one of the key determinants of turnover intention of employees.

Experiencing a high level of autonomy, employees will further become more committed towards the organisation, and tend to remain with the particular organisation (Janik, 2012; Vansteenkiste, Neyrinck, Niemiec, Soenens, De Witte, & Van den Broeck, 2007). When employees experience satisfaction of their basic psychological needs (autonomy, relatedness and competence), they more readily engage in their work (Janik, 2012; Kovjanic et al., 2013; Stander & Rothmann, 2010; Silman, 2014; Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, de Witte, & Lens, 2008; Van Zyl, Deacon, & Rothmann, 2010).

Based on the literature discussed, a relationship exists between basic psychological needs satisfaction (autonomy, relatedness and competence), and turnover intention. Basic psychological need satisfaction impacts positively on other variables, such as organisational commitment and employee engagement, whilst these variables normally have a negative relation to turnover intention (Bezuidenhout & Cilliers, 2011; Rafiee et al., 2015). Basic psychological needs satisfaction is a fairly new research construct within the Namibian context, and the current research indeed attempts to establish a direct link between basic needs satisfaction and turnover intention.

Based on the literature related to basic psychological need satisfaction, and the its relation to turnover intention, the following hypothesis has been developed:

Hypothesis 3: Basic psychological need satisfaction has a negative relation with turnover intention.

Research design

Research approach

A cross-sectional survey design was used, employing questionnaires to collect data on the biographical variables of employees, turnover intention and basic psychological need satisfaction. According to Creswell's (2003) description of cross-sectional design, it is a type of observational study, analysing of data from a population or a representative sample at a particular point in time when the researcher found it appropriate for this study.

Research method

Research participants

The participants were sampled from three different industries, namely the insurance, telecommunication and teaching industries. Having good relations with these organisations, the researcher approached the managers to obtain permission to conduct the study. Making use of random sampling, all employees who were available, willing to participate, and able to speak English, were included. The questionnaires were distributed in the Khomas region, targeting an insurance firm (n=85), a telecommunication provider (n=37) and different Governmental Secondary schools (n=104) in Windhoek. It was noted that 59.7% of the sample were female participants, the largest category of employees belonging to the age category of 20-30 years (39.8%); 51% of the sample participants being single, 53% having obtained degrees, and most of the employees have worked for 7 years and more (44.7%); and most coming from the teaching industry (46%). The biographical details of the sample are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Biographical details of sample

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	
Sex:	Male	91	40.3
	Female	135	59.7
Age(in years):	20-30	90	39.8
	31-40	58	25.7
	41-50	64	28.3
	51 and above	14	6.2
Marital status:	Single	117	51.8
	Married	100	44.2
	Divorced	9	4.0
Qualifications:	Grade 12	18	8.0
	Certificate	17	7.5
	Diploma	56	24.8
	Degree	121	53.5
	MA Degree	12	5.3
	PhD	2	0.9
Tenure:	Less than 1 year	20	8.8
	1-2 years	31	13.7
	3-4 years	35	15.5
	5-6 years	31	13.7

	7 years & more	101	44.7
Missing values:		8	3.5
Industry:	Insurance	85	37.6
	Telecom- munications	37	16.4
	Teaching	104	46.0
Total:		226	100

Research instruments

The *Turnover Intention Scale (TIS)* developed by Mitchell et al. (2001) was used to measure turnover intention, which refers to the subjective probability that an employee will leave the organisation within a certain period of time. The TIS is a three item unidimensional scale with a Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). An example of the items in it is “*I frequently think of quitting my job*”. The scale has been found to be reliable, with Takawira (2012) reporting a Cronbach’s alpha of .97, and De Jagger and Gbadamosi (2010) of .70, with both studies being done on academics in South Africa.

The *Work-Related Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction Scale (W-BNS)*, developed by Van den Broeck et al. (2008), was used to measure basic psychological need satisfaction, which refers to employees’ satisfaction in terms of their needs related to autonomy, relatedness and competence within the organisation. The W-BNS is a 16 item scale, with a 5-point response scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). An example of the items in this scale is: “*I really master my tasks at my job*”. The scale has been found reliable elsewhere in the world, with Rothmann et al. (2013) reporting a Cronbach’s alpha of .78 for autonomy, .82 for competence, and .86 for relatedness of managers in the agricultural industry of South Africa. Considering the guidelines provided by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), both instruments show acceptable Cronbach alpha coefficients of above 0.70.

Research procedure and ethical considerations

The different organisations were approached and after permission to conduct the study with the employees was obtained, the participants were approached individually and the purpose of the study was verbally explained to them. All participants were informed about the confidentiality and that they may withdraw from the study at any time. Questionnaires were distributed to the employees and allowed two weeks to complete it. After 4 weeks, all the questionnaires were collected again for capturing and analysis

making use of SPSS (version 24.0). No participant was harmed during the study, all information of the participants was kept confidential and no negative implication came from participating or deciding not to participate in this study.

Statistical analysis

Statistical analysis was conducted through SPSS Version 24.0 (IBM-SPSS, 2016). The data was analysed by making use of descriptive (describe the data), correlational (assess relations between variables) and inferential statistics (make appropriate inferences).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations

Table 2 below shows the descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients and correlations of the measuring instruments. In the present study, the Turnover Intention Scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .75 and the Work related Basic psychological Need Satisfaction scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .83 for BPNS (competence) and .96 for BPNS (relatedness). Based on the guidelines by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), BPNS (autonomy) was excluded from the analysis with Cronbach alpha of -.02.

When assessing basic psychological need satisfaction, using principal axis analysis, six factors recorded eigenvalues above 1.00, however the literature suggest a three factor model. Making use of a six factor model, it explained 6.34 to 29.66 percentage of the variance. It made more sense to make use of a three factor model explaining 64.80% of the cumulative percentage. For BPNS (autonomy) four items loaded significantly (above .3), for BPNS (competence) only four items loaded significantly and for BPNS (relatedness) five items loaded significantly. Assessing turnover intention, one factor structure was found with all three items loading significantly and 67.99 of the variance being explained.

Making use of Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test, sex, marital status, and level of qualification did not recorded a significant difference in relation to basic psychological need satisfaction and turnover intention. Significant differences were recorded for organisation type, age and tenure in relation to basic psychological need satisfaction (competence and relatedness). The findings partly reject *hypothesis 1; Basic psychological need satisfaction are experienced differently based on sex, age, marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees* and reject hypothesis 2 completely; *Turnover intention is experienced differently based on sex, age, marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees.*

Significant differences were recorded regarding organisation type (relatedness, sig. .002), with employees in the insurance industry experiencing higher levels of relatedness (mean = 131.4), followed by telecommunications (mean = 114.9) and the teaching industry (mean = 98.4). Significant differences were also

recorded regarding age (competence, sig. .040), with 20-30 year old employees (mean = 124.7), followed by employees aged 51 and above (mean = 118.0), employees aged 41-50 years (mean = 98.8) and employees aged 31-40 (mean = 90.1). Tenure was also another factor that recorded significant differences (competence, sig. .016), with 7 and more years (mean = 141.7), 5-6 years (mean = 124.9), 1-2 years (mean = 117.0), 3-4 years (mean = 107.6) and less than 1 year of working experience.

Making use of Spearman’s rank order correlation BPNS competence was negatively related to BPNS relatedness [$r = -.15, n=226, p < 0.05$] and turnover intention [$r = -0.01, n=226, p < 0.05$]. BPNS relatedness recorded a positive relation with turnover intention [$r = .10, n=226, p < 0.05$]. This confirms hypothesis 1, *Basic psychological need satisfaction has a negative relation with turnover intention*, a statistically significant relation. The results are displayed in Table 2:

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and Spearman’s rank order correlation

ITEM	TOTAL					
	Mean	SD	α	1	2	3
1. BPNS_COMP	6.18	2.26	.83	-	-	-
2. BPNS_REL	-9.76	339.71	.96	-.15	-	-
3. TURNOVER INTENTION	-52.31	348.14	.75	-.01*	.10	-

* Statistically significant: $p \leq 0,05$

+ Practically significant correlation (medium effect): $0,30 \leq r \leq 0,49$

++ Practically significant correlation (large effect): $r \geq 0,50$

BPNS_COMP = Basic psychological need satisfaction (Competence)

BPNS_REL = Basic psychological need satisfaction (Relatedness)

Discussion

This study aims to investigate whether any of the biographical variables recorded significant differences with regard to basic psychological needs satisfaction as well as turnover intention, and also to assess the relation between basic psychological needs satisfaction and turnover intention. Based on the findings of this study, the sample populations also saw basic psychological needs as three distinct factors (autonomy, competence and relatedness).

Making use of Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test, sex, marital status, and level of qualification did not record any significant difference in relation to basic psychological needs satisfaction and partly negated **Hypothesis 1: Basic psychological need satisfaction are experienced differently based on sex, age,**

marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees. These findings are supported by research done by Ojedokun and Idemudia (2014) that did not find significant differences with regards to sex and autonomy.

In terms of significant differences, organisation type recorded significant differences regarding relatedness. This means that employees within the insurance industry are experiencing significantly higher levels of relatedness (good relations with colleagues and supervisors/managers). Further investigation is required to draw conclusions on this significant difference. Age and tenure recorded significant differences with regard to the competence of employees. This indicates that young educated employees as well as older employees with more working experience, tend to experience a higher level of competence. These findings are also supported by Mahembe and Chipunza (2014), and Van Dyk, Coetzee, and Tebele (2013). Young employees that are educated and employees that have gained working experience have gained the necessary mastery in terms of their work, and have confidence in their abilities to perform their tasks with the appropriate skills, knowledge and behaviour. Having worked for many years, employees are likely to have more skills and confidence in their abilities to execute their jobs.

It was also found that none of the biographical antecedents recorded significant differences with regards to turnover intention, defying **Hypothesis 2: Turnover intention is experienced differently based on sex, age, marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees.** The findings were in contrast with the findings of Chovwen, Balogun, and Olowokere (2014), Sun et al., (2013), Wai, Dandar, Radosevich, Brubaker, and Kuo (2014), Xu, (2008), and Yuen-Onn, Chia-Guan, Yan-Teng, and Chun-Eng (2013) who all found significant differences between males and females regarding turnover intention. The findings of this study are supported by Du Plooy and Roodt (2013), and Martin (2007) who did not find any significant difference between males and females regarding turnover intention. Considering the fact that Namibia is also one of the countries making immense progress in addressing gender inequalities, it seems like the workforce that took part in this study is also benefiting from these strategies. With the affirmative action (employment) act of 1998 of Namibia, employers are required by law to give preferential treatment to prospective candidates that is suitably qualified from the designated groups (racially disadvantaged, women and persons with disabilities). This means that women will also have an equal chance of being hired for the available jobs, standing an equal/fair chance of being promoted based on merit and not on their sex or receiving available rewards within the organisation in relation to satisfactory performance.

Mensele and Coetzee (2014); Lewin and Sager (2010) recorded the similar results to the present study, with no significant differences between different age groups and how they perceive turnover intention.

Considering the high level of unemployment within Namibia, it could be that employees are trying to retain their positions because of the limited job market in Namibia, which makes alternative jobs scarce and over-applied for.

Du Plooy and Roodt (2013), Weisberg and Kirschenbaum (1991), Yuen-Onn et al., (2013), found significant differences between marital status and turnover intention. The opposite was true for the participants of this study: no significant relation was found between turnover intention and marital status. Namibians are also influenced by Western ideologies, some having a more individualistic perspective. Literature found that some employees could experience lower levels of turnover intention due to family or spousal commitments; however, this is no significant difference recorded for this sample (married or single). It could be that the employees in the sample perceive their own (individualistic) needs as equally important as those of married employees' (collectivistic/family) needs: not only looking out for the best interest of the spouse (family), but also looking out for your own (individualistic) needs.

Contrary to the findings of Weisberg and Kirschenbaum (1991), no significant differences were found between the different educational qualifications of employees and their levels of turnover intention. With Namibia having one of the highest levels of unemployment (28.10 in 2014 and 29.60 in 2013), it could be that finding a job or an alternative job is quite difficult for the uneducated, semi-educated, or even the highly educated. Studies by Martin (2007), Mor Barak et al. (2001), Rosser and Townsend (2006), and Yin-Fah et al. (2010) found significant differences between tenure and turnover intention, contradicting the findings of this study that did not find any significant difference. Literature indicates that employees with lower levels of tenure tend to experience higher levels of turnover intention, and it is perceived that these employees are still settling into the organisation and finding their feet within the organisation. Even though the findings of this particular study are not significant, a similar pattern becomes evident considering that employees having worked for the organisation between 5-6 years, and 7 years and more experience the lowest level of turnover intention. It could also be that employees are simply remaining with these organisations due to the high levels of unemployment within the country.

This study partially confirmed ***Hypothesis 3: Basic psychological need satisfaction has a negative relation with turnover intention.*** The more employees' basic psychological needs are satisfied, the lower their level of turnover intention. These findings were also confirmed by Rothmann, Diedericks and Swart (2013). When exposed to more challenging tasks, and with the necessary support from management and colleagues, employees would also improve their perceived levels of competence becoming more committed towards the work they do and increasing their levels of performance within the organisation (Brimeyer, Perrucci, & Wadsworth, 2010; Du Plooy & Roodt, 2010; Geldenhuys, Laba, & Venter, 2014; Stander &

Rothmann, 2010). Having a significant level of relatedness with colleagues and management of the organisation, being able to ask colleagues for guidance or work related advice, and experiencing a sense of comradeship, is likely to also reduce turnover intention (Janik, 2012; Marques, 2013). Feeling competent in their abilities to execute work duties and receiving the necessary praise for a job well-done, they are also likely to experience lower levels of turnover intention. Experiencing satisfaction with regards to basic psychological needs satisfaction, employees would also experience higher levels of autonomy, resulting in higher levels of self-efficacy and competence concerning their work. The more the needs for autonomy, relatedness and competence are satisfied within organisations, the more likely employees will want to remain within the organisation and contribute to the effectiveness of the organisation (Silman, 2014; Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, de Witte, & Lens, 2008).

Practical implications

The findings are important for managers and employers with regard to job design, employee motivation and employee retention. O'Connell and Kung (2007) indicated that turnover intention is a problem that will be faced by organisations for generations to come and, apart from the negative job attitudes it creates for employees that remain in the organisation (Soltis et al., 2013), it also influences the overall functioning of the organisation (Dee, 2002). Attending to key issues regarding job design, employees will become more motivated and want to remain with the organisation.

With constant changes in the world of work, it is important for employers to find ways to increase employees' morale, motivation and loyalty towards the organisation. When employees experience positive emotions towards the organisation, they are more likely to want to remain with the organisation and increase profits (Coetzee et al., 2007). With constant pressure to perform nationally and internationally, scarce skills and the increasing number of unemployed people, organisations need to attend to employees' needs, otherwise they will lose the war on talent retention (Van Schalkwyk et al., 2010; Mor Barak et al., 2001).

Organisations and managers can create job satisfaction by addressing employees' level of basic psychological needs as these are defined as key nutriments for growth, integrity and health of employees (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Jobs need to be designed in such a way that employees experience task identity, task significance, task variety, autonomy and feedback (Boonzaier et al., 2001). Through these job characteristics components, employees will experience higher levels of satisfaction in terms of autonomy, relatedness and competence as well as high levels of motivation (Kumar et al., 2012).

Ensuring that the necessary resources and support are available, employees will experience above average levels of competence and relatedness (Marais et al., 2014). Organisations need to make the necessary resources available for employees to complete the work associated with the necessary support from supervisors and colleagues when assistance or guidance is required.

Employers should ensure that the organisational environment is conducive, with positive relations amongst colleagues, associated with supervisory and collegial support (Ajala, 2013; Ladebo, 2008; Ladebo, 2009; Mostert, 2009; Okediji et al., 2011; Onyishi & Ogbodo, 2012; Van der Berg & Martins, 2013). They should implement a mentoring system to ensure that employees have a senior person to go to when advice and guidance are needed. Regular team building activities in order to ensure good group cohesion should be part of organisation strategy and long term planning.

Managers and employers need to understand the key role the factors discussed play in enhancing employees' levels of basic psychological needs satisfaction. When employers and managers know how to ensure fruitful interactions and how they manage and interact with employees, it will already be a positive way to improve basic psychological need satisfaction and reduce turnover intention, coupled with other positive work related attitudes. Alternatively, or simultaneously, employees could be consulted in decision making, giving them the necessary autonomy to decide how to execute their work tasks, whilst receiving the necessary support and guidance, where needed (Brimeyer et al., 2010; Muller et al., 2009; Onyishi & Ogbodo, 2012; Rothmann et al., 2013). The more employees increase their skills and mastery of tasks, the more they will want to become more engaged in their work and also attempt more challenging work activities (Geldenhuys et al., 2014; Marques, 2013; Rafiee et al., 2015; Mahembe & Chipunza, 2014). When employees become more engaged, they identify with the organisation and want to remain with the organisation (turnover intention) (Stander & Rothmann, 2010; Du Plooy & Roodt, 2010; Mor Barak et al., 2001; Janik, 2012; Kovjanic et al., 2013; Silman, 2014; Van den Broeck et al., 2008; Van Zyl et al., 2010).

Limitations and recommendations

Some of the employees did not complete the questionnaires in full and other employees seemed to have rushed during the completion of the questionnaires. Some participants in the different industries were reluctant to participate, making the sample slightly smaller in comparison to the other industries. Most of the participants make use of English as their second or third language; many did not understand the term "tenure", resulting in incomplete responses for that item.

In future the participants should be given more time to complete the questionnaires and research assistants should be employed to emphasise the importance of complete and the effective completion of the questionnaires. Since some of the participants did not understand the term “tenure”, the researcher should explain this and other items which may cause confusion, in full, or include synonyms, or both.

Conclusion

The study made use of cross-sectional survey design, collecting data with the use of questionnaires. On **Hypothesis 1**, organisation type, age and tenure, significant differences were recorded regarding basic psychological needs satisfaction, partially supporting **Hypothesis 1: Basic psychological need satisfaction is experienced differently based on sex, age, marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees**. Hypothesis 2 was rejected, *Turnover intention is experienced differently based on sex, age, marital status, qualifications obtained and tenure of employees*.

A negative relation was recorded between basic psychological need satisfaction (competence) and turnover intention. Basic psychological need satisfaction (relatedness) recorded a weak relation with turnover intention.

Based on these findings, it is evident that organisations and managers need to enhance the components of basic psychological needs satisfaction (autonomy, relatedness and competence) to reduce turnover intention within the organisation. Through this process employees would want to remain with the organisation and work towards the attainment of the organisational goals.

Further research is needed to develop tools within the Namibian context, and the sample size could also be increased in order to improve the confidence in the study. Future research could also be done focusing on performance and some of the job attitudes within the Namibian context.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Ms. N. Mbabi, Ms. L. Simango and Ms. P. Naholo for the data collection.

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