



**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE MODERATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL
SAFETY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB DEMANDS AND JOB
RESOURCES AND INTENTION TO QUIT.**

By

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for the award of the Degree of MPhil in People Management.

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ABSTRACT

Background

Employee turnover has been a major concern for organisations as far as a global competitive advantage is concerned. Amongst the proximal antecedents of turnover, intention to quit has been determined to exhibit the feelings and perceptions of employees concerning alternatives for the possibility of quitting the current employment relationship. Globally, an increasing portion of employees experiences some form of work overload, emotional and technological demands at the workplace, consequential in the feelings of being vulnerable and insecure. The current study, therefore, investigated the moderating role of psychological safety in the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit.

The rationale for the research study

Knowledge as to whether job demand and job resources have implications for employee retention will make it possible for practitioners to devise strategies to ensure that employees' level of intention to quit is reduced. For instance, to ensure that job demands are managed to prevent emotional and physical drain and consequently intention to quit. To ensure that employees are offered access in terms of resources to improve their motivation, and thereby reduce the intention to quit. Moreover, knowledge and consideration of the moderating effect of psychological safety on the relationship between job demands and job resources will allow managers to enhance retention strategies and thus provide assurance for higher organisational productivity.

Aim of the study

The current research study was an exploratory attempt to investigate the moderating effect of psychological safety on the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit. Whereas the existing literature on conservation resources theory provides valuable frameworks for understanding intention to quit, few researchers have investigated how the

intention to quit may be influenced by job demands and job resources, through the mediating effect of psychological safety.

Research Design, Sampling, and realised sample

The cross-sectional study was used in the current research study as a quantitative approach through descriptive statistics to measure the relationship between intention to quit, job demands, and resources, and this associated being moderated by psychological safety. In other words, by applying descriptive statistics, the cross-section design was used in the current study to enable a detailed analysis of the variables in a systematic and standardised manner (Zangirolami-Raimundo, Echeimberg, & Leone, 2018).

This research implemented a structured questionnaire method to get primary data. In other words, the respondents were asked to respond to similar questions in a prearranged manner (Doyle, 2009). A realised sample of $n= 114$ from the central banking environment was obtained using a convenience sampling approach.

Statistical analyses

To statistically analyse data, the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) programme was used. Exploratory Factor Analysis discovered common factors among the items; factor analysis was used to identify common variances. Through direct extraction and rotation methods to improve the interpretation of the factor loadings to reduce ambiguities in the initial analysis. The reliability and validity of the intention to quit, job demands-resources, and psychological safety were assessed through coefficient alpha and factor analysis. In other words, in evaluating the results, the test of reliability data was conducted to determine the Cronbach alpha, which would be acceptable when found to be at a minimum of 0.7 (Taber, 2018). Descriptive and correlational designs were used to provide analysis of data. First to classify and summarise data, and secondly to determine and test for the relationship between intention to quit, job demands-resources and psychological safety as variables of this study

Results

In investigating the association between job demands (work overload and technological demands) and intention to quit, correlation analysis results indicated a weak and negative relationship between technological demand and intention to quit. To determine whether job resources (job autonomy and performance feedback) would be able to predict the intention to quit, the multiple regression model was performed. Although a weak and negative correlation between job resources and intention to quit existed, there was no sufficient evidence that job resources could be a good predictor of intention to quit since the regression model highlighted an insignificant value of 0.411 which is greater than 0.05.

The multiple regression highlighted that when psychological safety was introduced, it was found that combined psychological safety and job demand were good predictors of intention to quit and it was significant at 0.05 since the significance level of the model was 0.03. The multiple regression highlighted that when psychological safety was introduced, it was found that combined psychological safety and job demand were good predictors of intention to quit and it was significant at 0.05 since the significance level of the model was 0.02.

Findings

The findings from the results supported various discussions and studies in the literature and practice, that psychological safety moderates the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit. Further evidence was also found in support of the conservation of resources theory.

Managerial Implications

The results of the present research study embrace a practical implication for organisations in that the findings support the literature suggesting that psychological safety moderates the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit. The findings further contribute to a growing body of knowledge surrounding intention to quit, job demands, job resources, and psychological safety fields of research.

Keywords

Intention to quit; job demands; Job resources; Work overload, technological Demand, Emotional Exhaustion, psychological safety, Performance feedback, Job Autonomy.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary organisations as characterised by the development of robots and artificial intelligence requires a critical reflection of the implications on human and the nature of jobs to adapt to the new business models and accelerated digitalisation (Dean & Spoehr, 2018). This is because, with the integration of technology to meet customer demands, organisations are facing significant changes, such as requiring a limited number of people with an adequate level of expertise in a minimum number of functional areas to meet business objectives. As a result, the surpluses of income from employing people are transferred to investment income (Dean & Spoehr, 2018). Empirical evidence provides that surplus of investment income increases because of the decline in salary levels as employees are insourced on short or long-term contracts to perform functions (Dean & Spoehr, 2018). However, the introduction and implementation of technologies have been highlighted to influence organisations, and the technological effect of human resources has been highly debated by scholars and practitioners (Justin, Bonn, & Haobin, 2019).

Some of the effects include among others, the adverse impact on the established working relationships that are influenced by the replacement of human resources (Justin et al., 2019). In other words, the introduction of artificial intelligence and machines may inherently cause psychological damage to the emotions and feelings of employees as far as a sense of belonging and commitment is concerned in the workplace (Justin et al., 2019). Even though empirical evidence has highlighted the profound impact of technology in automating human cognitive tasks, the risk of losing what predicts and explains some actions is critical as machines cannot communicate, reason, and behave the way humans can (Bolander, 2019). The level of intelligence that technology displays even though significant to the functioning of organisations is fundamentally different from human intelligence. Some of the tasks that can be performed by humans can exceedingly be difficult to be solved by technology, and vice versa (Bolander, 2019).

The majority of jobs need human interaction because some skills and knowledge are extremely difficult to automate. Globally, organisations have to compete for scarce human resources, given that the demand for individuals who possess scarce and hard to come by skills/expertise far outstrips supply, which is referred to as the so-called 'war for talent. Organisations need to, therefore, ensure that they have effective employee retention strategies, policies, and practices in place to ensure that human capital, which is strategically important for success is retained and not lost to competitors. To retain employees, organisations need to minimise the potential threats that are posed by technological advances and establish an atmosphere that promotes internal communication and interaction between the managers and employees(Justin et al., 2019). This is because rapid advancements in technology are increasingly taking over, mainly, menial tasks that have traditionally been done by people, there will always be certain strategically important functions and tasks that robots, artificial intelligence, and robots will not be able to do. As is the case now, people will, therefore, remain key for organizational performance and sustainable success.

Given that people who are highly skilled and can do more than menial tasks are in short supply but in high demand, organisations globally find themselves in a highly competitive labour market. It is therefore imperative for organisations to consider the kind of human competencies such as the ability to operate and collaborate technology as well as the ability to understand the scope and limitations of the operating system in general (Bolander, 2019). This is because certain aspects of human cognition have proven to influence sustainability and competitiveness in the achievement of organisational objectives. Organisations must motivate employee's attitudes to remain in the organisation without contemplation to look for alternative employment; as a result, the challenge remains to retain skilled and knowledgeable employees (Kumar & Mathimaran, 2017). In other words, the retention initiatives require to be enhanced to strengthen employee attitudes and behaviours to eliminate the discomfort that may influence employee's willingness to leave their current employment (intention to quit) which ultimately leads to the intention to leave the organisation permanently (employee turnover).

Employee turnover involves either voluntary or involuntary departure of an employee from the working environment (Olubiyi, Smiley, Luckel, & Melaragno, 2019). To avoid employee

turnover, organisations need to retain employees to ensure that superior performance is maximised (Wulansari & Meilita, 2020). Research indicates that employee turnover significantly affects adversely organisational performance and goals as a result of losing knowledge, culture, and experience due to the departure of the employee (Wulansari & Meilita, 2020). Losing highly skilled employees is expensive in that the organisation would have to recruit and re-skill the new staff members, moreover the costs are associated with the challenge of being unable to complete tasks and projects in team-based work environments (Bonds, 2017). Organisations need to determine the cause of turnover, including the intentions to quit which denotes a lack of interest to continue with the employment relationship as it has great relevance to the reasons why employees would think of quitting a job.

Even though employee turnover, which is regarded as the actual quitting behaviour, provides a concern and interest to practitioners and authors, intention to quit is contended and associated with being a significant determiner of such behaviour (Mansouri, 2007). Job demands and insufficient job resources fall within the aspects that contribute to employees' intention to quit their jobs (Mansouri, 2007). Job resources involve those aspects of the job that relates to physical, social, and organisational functions that enable the achievement of goals (Bon & Shire, 2017). Job demands, on the other hand, relate to the aspects of the job in terms of physical, social, and organisational perspectives that need physical and or psychological effort (Bon & Shire, 2017). In terms of the job demand-resource model, independently the demands of a job may be stressful and deplete employees' energy levels, while the resources associated with the job may stimulate employees' motivation, for instance, personal growth and development (Bon & Shire, 2017). Concerning intention to quit, the job demand and resources provide an assumption that when the organisations fail to provide sufficient resources to employees, the stress levels that relate to the demands of the job are likely to increase, as a result, employees would develop intentions to quit and look for alternative employment.

As emphasised by the job demands-resources model, the job demands and job resources as work characteristics relatively evoke physical and psychological processes (Bon & Shire,

2017). For instance, job resources stimulate personal growth and development as enabling factors that are functional in the achievement of work-related roles. The job resources are likely to enhance the achievement of organisational objectives, consequently leading to positive employee attitudes such as loyalty and commitment and reduced intention to quit. The job demands, on one side, require sustained effort that may influence physical and psychological costs such as strain reaction in terms of stress and burnout associated with emotional exhaustion that may lead to absenteeism and intention to quit the organisation (Bon & Shire, 2017). Research studies validated the traditional models to classify healthy and unhealthy jobs by explaining strain reaction in influencing the imbalance between job demand and resources (Björk, 2016). In other words, the imbalance that was brought by the level of high job demands and low job resources does not only enhance the likelihood of emotional exhaustion and stress but is also noticeable in the form of physiological and psychological disorders. Although various emotional exhaustion, burnout, and stress studies have identified a range of factors that affect physical and psychological aspects, a few have specifically identified psychological safety in bring insight in attempting a balance between job demands-resources (Winefield, 2011).

Psychological safety is described as the perceptions and willingness to take interpersonal risks by contributing ideas and actions in the working environment (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Psychological safety is an indicator of the factors that can be considered by the organisation in enhancing a competitive work environment. To ensure competitiveness, organisations can therefore need to enhance psychological safety initiatives by influencing the perceptions of employees by diverging and converging the operational aspects through the enactment of psychological safety policies, practices, and procedures. The perceptions in aggregate provide a measure of psychological safety because it is argued to be at the team's level. An understanding of the buffering role of psychological safety will therefore provide a good indication of the working conditions in terms of job demands and resources as well as the employee's intention to quit the organisation.

1.2 Problem statement

The loss of tacit knowledge, strategically important skills, and expertise, as well as disruptions in established relationships, can be a potential obstacle to the achievement of organisational sustainability and competitive advantage when employees voluntarily leave (Giritli, 2020). This is because organisational performance cannot be separated from employee involvement, commitment, and engagement. Organisational performance would be sustainable if strategically needed employees are retained because their loss means that the organisation departs with embedded knowledge, culture, and experience. Contemporary literature indicates that the loss of knowledgeable employees can have detrimental effects directly and indirectly on the financial and social capital strength of organisations (Ngo-Henha, 2017). Empirical evidence has highlighted that when knowledgeable employees leave an organisation, the morale of the remaining workforce is adversely affected due to the disruption in teamwork and delay in work activities in situations where the employee who has left the organisation played a key role (Ngo-Henha, P, 2017).

Although various studies have highlighted the adverse effects that organisations experience when employees leave, the intention to quit is perceived to be an alternative indicator for such behaviour. Intentions, as explained by various researchers, are a strong and significant determinant of actual behaviour (Giritli, 2020). From a research perspective, investigating intentions provides practical merit as once employees have implemented the actual behaviour such as quitting the organisation, gaining insight into their feelings and perspectives before departure might not be easy. Intention to quit is, therefore, defined as an indication of the desire by an employee to leave a particular job (Rusyandi, 2015). The intention to quit construct is a concern for organisations in terms of its negative effects on productivity and efficiency. The concern is extended by the challenge of losing highly skilled employees who may be challenging and costly to replace (Llorente-Alonso & Topa, 2018).

Various researchers have identified multiple variables which influence employee intention to quit (Bon & Shire, 2017). The current study will focus on job demand and job resources to

provide a basis of work characteristics that evoke psychological processes that influence the level of an employee's intention to quit. The job demand-resources model proposes that the psychological experiences in the work environments are subject to the interactions between the presence of job demands and job resources in terms of opportunities for advancement, coaching and mentoring, as well as learning and development provided (Llorente-Alonso & Topa, 2018). The current study provides an extension of the relationship between the job demand-resources model and intention to quit by proposing the moderating role of psychological safety in buffering the negative effects of high stress in organisations. There is a dearth in research empirical investigation on the relationship between psychological safety, intention to quit, job demand, and job resources. In consideration, that past research has recognized the job demand-resources model as one of the leading frameworks to investigate the factors that relate to employees' intentions to quit the organisation, the current study attempts to investigate whether the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety.

The aim of the current research study is, therefore, to investigate the above-mentioned variables in the context of developing countries such as Lesotho because so far the intention to quit, the job demand-resource model, and moderating role of psychological safety have mainly been tested in Western nations. Knowledge development in developing countries is lacking precisely where it may be needed mostly because much research on the variables of the current study has been carried out in more advanced Western countries. This study therefore recognises that there is therefore a tremendous need for research in Lesotho, as one of the developing countries. Moreover, research relating to the human aspects in the different industries, including the financial sector requires to be undertaken by researchers who are capable of understanding the technical aspects in order to make intelligent recommendations for practical decisions in organisations.

1.3 Research objectives

The main objective of the proposed research study was to investigate the relationship between intention to quit, job demand and job resources, and the moderating role of psychological safety among the employees. To investigate the above-mentioned relationships, the following theoretical and empirical subsidiary objectives were formulated:

1.3.1 Theoretical objectives

- Describe intention to quit, job demand, and job resources as well as psychological safety by reviewing existing literature, logical beliefs, and conceptual opinions of practitioners, researchers, and authors.
- Describe the intention to quit, and the moderating role of psychological safety in the context of the job demand-resource model focused on interpersonal, attitudinal, and organisational consequences. Describe the intention to quit using the job demand-resource model with a focus to determine specific demands and resources challenges, risks, threats and to highlight potential action that should be undertaken.
- Make a theoretical contribution to the variables of the proposed research study to establish a further understanding of psychological phenomena unfolding within organisations.

1.3.2 Empirical objectives

- Developed specific predictions about the constructs of the proposed research study by formulating hypotheses on the proposed theoretical/conceptual model.
- The knowledge gathered in the proposed research study provided recommendations that can help organisations to develop more effective strategies and interventions.
- Identified appropriate units of measurements such as scales and indices as well as recognising the tolerable degree for errors, validity, and reliability.

1.4 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been tested:

H1: A positive relationship exists between job demands (work overload, emotional demands, and technology demands) and the intention to quit.

H2: A negative relationship exists between job resources (job autonomy, performance feedback, or technology resources) and intention to quit

H3: The relationship between job demands and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

H4: The relationship between job resources and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

1.5 Rationale of the study

The current research study hopefully contributed to the existing knowledge that related to the possible relationship between intention to quit, job demands, job resources as well as the moderator effect of psychological safety in this relationship. Intention to quit has been highlighted to affect the functioning of organisations and impede progress towards the achievement of work-related goals. It affects adversely the organisational capacity to achieve strategic objectives by reducing creativity and innovation that affects the quality of products and services as well as the motivation level of the remaining employees (Dellie, Biks, Asrade, & Gebremedhin, 2019). Besides, the negative consequences of intention to quit are related to the increased costs that are associated with losing skilled and knowledgeable employees in terms of decreased productivity, recruitment, and training. In other words, organisational productivity decreases when the turnover rates elevate, while the costs of hiring and training new employees accelerate (Justin et al., 2019).

Knowledge as to whether job demand and job resources have implications for employee retention makes it possible for practitioners to devise strategies to ensure that employees' level

of intention to quit is reduced. For instance, to ensure that job demands are managed to prevent emotional and physical drain and consequently intention to quit. To ensure that employees are provided adequate resources to improve their motivation, and thereby reduce the intention to quit. Moreover, knowledge and understanding of the moderating effect of psychological safety on the relationship between job demands and job resources will allow managers to enhance retention strategies and thus provide assurance for higher organisational productivity.

1.6 Conclusion

The current chapter provided the introduction of the current study. An overview of the problem statement, the hypotheses, and the rationale of the study has been presented. Some of the conservations and arguments taking place in the intention to quit, specifically concerning job demands, job resources and psychological safety has been highlighted. The theoretical and empirical objectives that support the overall objectives of the current study were discussed, namely to investigate the moderating role of psychological safety in the relationship between job demands and job resources imbalance and intention to quit. The following chapter presents and assesses the theoretical underpinning, namely conservation of resources theory, as well as the conceptual literature that relates to the independent and dependent variables of the current research study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The intention to quit, job demands, job resources, and psychological safe constructs were firstly examined in a literature review. The relationship between intention to quit, job demands, and job resources and the moderating effect of psychological safety on these constructs were discussed.

2.1 Intention to quit

Intentions are regarded as a vital determinant of actual behaviour and are influenced by an individual's perceptions and judgements (Treglown, Zivkov, Zarola, & Furnham, 2018). Intent or intention represents an attitude and/or cognitions that most likely manifests as behaviour, i.e. intention drives behaviour (Salahudin, Osman, Abdullah, Ramlia, & Lim, 2016). Among various types of employee intention in the workplace, such as buying intention of consumers, intention to quit is one such example. Intention to quit is the best predictor of actual turnover behaviour; as a result, the question is what drives the intention to leave and what are the factors that increase perceived levels of intention to quit compared to those that decrease it?

Intention to quit is defined as the last process in the sequence of the employees' decision to leave the current employment relationship (Treglown et al., 2018). Employee turnover indicated that actual turnover is the result of behavioural intentions (Salahudin et al., 2016). The employee turnover models proposed highlighted that intention to quit is a subject of an individual's deliberate and conscious decision to voluntarily leave the organisation shortly (Steil, Floriani, & Bello, 2019). In other words, intention to quit is the last individual cognitive element before the ultimate decision on quitting and quitting the organisation.

To explain the specific behaviour of voluntarily quitting the workplace, research studies pointed to personal, occupational, and environmental antecedents. For instance, the level of education, family responsibility, gender, and marital status have been extensively researched as key individual factors/antecedents that are significantly related to intention to quit. In the research

study conducted by Ghapanchi and Aurum, (2011), the results indicated a consistent and positive relationship between gender and intention to quit, where males indicated greater intention to quit than females. The results of the same study further verified a significant relationship between the level of education and intention to quit (Ghapanchi & Aurum, 2011).

Moreover, job satisfaction and organisational commitment have been indicated to be occupational antecedents of intention to quit. Empirical evidence highlighted a consistent negative association between job satisfaction and intention to quit, where a higher level of satisfaction is negatively associated with the intention to quit (Choi, Cheung, & Pang, 2014). On the other hand, a higher level of organisational commitment is significantly negatively associated with the intention to quit (Choi et al., 2014). The environmental antecedents have also been investigated to determine the influence on intention to quit. The macroeconomic factors such as employment opportunities and policy, labour market conditions, and the economic development level have been indicated to have a consistent association with the intention to quit (Steil et al., 2019). Moreover, in exploring the association between specific job aspects and intention to quit, high levels of job demands are asserted to increase levels of physical and psychological exhaustion leading to intention to quit (Grau & Heuschmann, 2020).

2.2 Job demand

Modern organisations are characterised by the need to continuously sustain a competitive advantage in their chosen sectors of the economy, meaning that the nature and design of work come with high job demands that are associated with conditions such as workloads and pressure (Hermosilla, Amutio, & Páez, 2016). Job demands are aspects of the work which are related to stress-related factors that are inherent in the job and require a sustained effort, skills, and knowledge to psychically and psychologically be able to perform (Kim & Wang, 2018). In describing the nature of job demands, it is imperative to take into consideration both psychological and physical strain. This is because psychologically, the employees who experience high job demands may be disrupted to concentrate, tolerate and persist in performing tasks. On the other hand, physically, high job demands may be destructive and result in illnesses that otherwise may impede an individual from physically performing the work. In other words,

conditions that are related to high job demands could adversely affect individuals' motivation, well-being, and eagerness to perform the work to the best of their ability. Various occupational studies indicated that the job demands could result in an individual strain which would, in turn, affect the level of performance both at the organisational and individual level (Hermosilla et al., 2016).

Research studies have highlighted that job demands are not always negative, however, job demands might turn into job stressors when the need to meet those demands requires extra effort that results in strain on the employee (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti, & Xanthopoulou, 2007). This is because employees' cognitive and emotional workload arouse fatigue, exhaustion, and burnout, which may influence the level of complaints, psychological disorders, and performance (Bakker et al., 2007). Empirical evidence showed that employees who are confronted with disruptive workloads are most likely to report job strain and burnout. Moreover, the lack of reciprocity in employees' relationship with the demands of their jobs predicts strain and burnout (Bakker et al., 2007). Further exploration of the specific job demand, provides that to reduce job strain and exhaustion, job resources support employees' physical and psychological well-being. Meaning that higher levels of job resources will be associated with lower levels of employee disengagement and intention to quit (Grau & Heuschmann, 2020).

2.3 Job resources

Job resources are associated with physical and psychological job characteristics that are geared towards the achievement of organisational goals (Kim & Wang, 2018). For instance, career growth, procedural fairness, perceived managerial support, and adequate empowerment initiatives. Research studies in the field of organisational behaviour postulate that job resources may buffer the strength of job demands that might influence negative emotional and cognitive stressors such as strain, burnout, and exhaustion (Kim & Wang, 2018). The assumption of the buffering effect highlights that the interaction between job resources and job demands proposes that the association between the negative impact that is brought by strain and burnout is weaker when employees enjoy high job resources. This assumption is consistent with the job demand-

resources model that claims that job resources may buffer the influence of workload on job demand (Jachens & Houdmont, 2019). The assumption is further in agreement with the effort-reward imbalance model, which proposes that rewards such as career opportunities, lucrative salaries, and benefits that exist in organisations may buffer the influence of exerted effort that emanates from the requirements of the job demands (Jachens & Houdmont, 2019).

Job resources influence the level of intrinsic and motivation among employees because they foster opportunities for career growth, learning, and development, which in turn affect willingness to invest capabilities and abilities to perform the work. Various research studies have supported that job resources are regarded as a motivational aspect of the job that can be linked to a variety of outcomes, such as low intention to quit and stronger dedication to one's work. Job resources operate in line with cognitive-energetic/effort-based processes and may energise an employee's mental and psychical resources, leading to high levels of motivation and commitment to the organisation. The current research study posits that outcomes such as psychological safety require to be considered in influencing the cognitive energetic process. This is because, from the psychological safety perspective, individual motivation can have positive effects on internal motivation and prosocial motivation. The combination of job resources and psychological safety can therefore reflect the complexity of motivation in real work practice and can reflect the impact mechanism of the feedback environment on lowering employee intention to stay

2.4 Psychological safety

Contemporary work environments dedicate more resources and time to strengthen their understanding of the employees' role in driving organisational success and effectiveness. A growing body of knowledge on the psychological perspectives that influence employee's behaviour in the workplace has flourished in recent years (Obrenovic, Jianguo, Khudaykulov, & Khan, 2020). Among various psychological perspectives that have been considered, various research studies have been conducted to investigate the implications that psychological safety has in the work environment. Psychological safety is associated with a sense of being able to express feelings freely without anxiety, fear, or negative consequences in a team context

(Dwivedi, 2017). Meaning that, in a team context, psychological safety involves high levels of integration where despite the differences in opinions, a sustained organisational competitive edge can be achieved through enhanced interpersonal trust and mutual respect (Vandekerkhof, Steijvers, Hendriks, & Voordeckers, 2018).

This is because of the level of employees being comfortable to express views without fear of negative judgments by other team members. In other words, psychological safety is imperative to influence cooperation, communication, and shared decision making which are essential elements in facilitating processes that may have an impact on positive behaviours and outcomes in the working environment. Psychological safety has also been found to influence positively required and or necessary employee attitudes that can lead to alterations in behaviour that can contribute to the better individual as well as organisational performance that result in the confidence and feelings of being able to express opinions without fear of judgements (Vandekerkhof et al., 2018).

2.5 Theoretical underpinnings

2.5.1 Conservation of Resources Theory

The Conservation of Resources Theory postulates that individuals strive to protect and retain things that they value most such as health, wellbeing, and meaningful life (Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, & Westman, 2018). In other words, this theory follows an understanding that an individual's cognitions are influenced by the level of perceptions in terms of the need to protect resources to retain them. Following this basis, individually develop powerful biases regarding what motivates them to acquire and retain resources, failing which stress levels may be aggravated in cases where the resources are lost, or where significant effort was exerted to acquire those resources with no success (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Central to the notion of conservation of resources is the motivational perspective that explains human behaviour because resources should be acquired and retained for survival. Thus, people strive to reserve and sustain personal, social, and material resources not only to minimise stress but also to optimise the appraisal of the value gained.

From the conservation of resources perspective, the potential loss of resources has a strong impact on the employee's intention to quit. Specifically, employee's perceptions of job stress influence the psychological, emotional, and physical burden leading to the reduction of positive affect which is a prominent factor in determining the intention to quit (Liu & Chiu, 2020). The positive effect is regarded as a motivational aspect that encourages an individual to alter behaviour to meet their needs (Liu & Chiu, 2020). In consideration of the potential risks of not being able to meet the needs, employees are motivated to evaluate the organisational circumstances to maximise their interests to alleviate the impact of job stress and ultimate decision and intention to quit. For that reason, organisations require to develop initiatives and strategies to retain employees because their loss would mean a waste of resources in terms of financial costs and increased workload to the remaining staff, which may, in turn, encourage other employees to quit (Liu & Chiu, 2020).

In terms of the job demand-resource perspective, conservation of resource theory postulates the idea that job demands represent emotionally challenging situations such as workload, and work pressure which is associated with intention to quit (Van Woerkom, Bakker, & Nishii, 2016). For this reason, conservation of theory suggests that a loss of resources that results from job demands is likely to weaken the eagerness to continue with the existing employment. Thus, employees will strive to protect and maintain resources that enable them to cope with job demands. In other words, when individuals are stressed that the job demands are high and that their resources are depleted, that can lead to stress or emotional exhaustion, which in turn influence the intention to quit (Van Woerkom et al., 2016). To ensure that the individual resources in terms of psychological, physical, and wellbeing are protected to avoid stress, the finite resources such as time, physical, cognitive, or energy available may be used to cope with some job demands to minimise the pressure that results from the job strain. However, in terms of various research studies, coping with stress requires an effort that leads to fatigue and depletion of resources (time and energy) to effectively deal with additional sources of stress. Moreover, not being able to cope with stress suggest individual frustrations that affect physical wellbeing that leads to poor health and other health-related behaviours such as absenteeism, and in turn, intentions of quitting the organisation.

The conservation of resource theory asserts that the more resources that individuals access, the more the chances of being able to gain and preserve others. Thus, employees who enjoy support from organisations are likely to gain valuable work resources. The organisational initiatives that enhance psychological safety as a cognitive state that is associated with the ability to express oneself without fear or the negative cost of self-image have been explained as being able to assist with any stressors faced (Liu & Chiu, 2020). This is because as guided by the conservation of resources, individuals may seek to protect resources to be able to confront the potential risks at the workplace. Psychological safety is considered a unique resource that individuals may attempt to accumulate in an imbalanced relationship between job demands and job resources (Opoku & Choi, 2020). Moreover, as an outcome-related consideration that determines being able to speak up, psychological safety predicts that when the frustrations of the job demand increase, employee voice behaviour is used as a mechanism to freely express thoughts and opinions.

The perception of employee voice in psychological safety is an important element that allows an expression of work-related ideas and is considered as an effective tool in the change management field that emphasizes the need to objectively state affairs, rather than escaping from being genuine (Ayas & Yaşar Uğurlu, 2016). The current study, therefore, assumes that when employees feel psychologically safe, they are likely to engage in an attitude of commitment, which in return may foster intention to stay rather than quitting the organisation. It is because the perceptions of attachment are enhanced by high-quality relationships that are encouraged by psychologically safe working environments.

2.6 The relationship between intention to quit, job demand, and job resources

Intention to quit is a significant dimension of employee turnover (Knudsen, Ducharme, & Roman, 2009). The current research study focuses on intention to quit or the degree to which an employee considers leaving the current employment for multiple reasons (Belete, 2018). First, several researchers have argued that the degree of intention to quit is negatively influenced by perceived support such as supervisory support, recognition, training, and empowerment (Alzayed & Ali Murshid, 2017). On the other hand, intention to quit is positively influenced by the complexity of work in terms of job stress, role ambiguity, and locus of control

(Alzayed & Ali Murshid, 2017). Second, empirical evidence conducted in the hospitality industry explains low wages, shift schedules, and social perception to be among the reasons for intention to quit (Cho, Johanson, & Guchait, 2009). Length of service is also regarded as an alternative influence on intention to quit. The reason being that in consideration of the level of comfort that one already has, and the perception of one's value in the time and effort invested doing the work, the employee tends to look for alternative employment (Grau & Heuschmann, 2020).

Occupational research studies have broadened the scope of theoretical approaches to develop and assess the intention to quit (Alzayed & Murshid, 2017). One of the theoretical approaches correlates intention to quit with the job demand- resource model initiated by (Demerouti, Nachreiner, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2001). In the job demand-resource model, the aspects of work context are categorised into job demands and job resources (De Carlo, Girardi, Falco, Dal Corso, & Di Sipio, 2019). To understand further the effects of turnover intention, this study applies the job demands-resources (JD-R) model with the assumption that organisations can be categorised either positively or negatively in terms of turnover intentions depending on job demands or resources. Specifically, the contribution of the job demand-resource model clusters job resources into work-related resources. This is based on the premise that the more work environments provide job resources to employees, the more they will eagerness to continue with the current employment relationship. On the other hand, the more the job demands, the more employees are likely to have turnover intentions.

The basic assumption for the current study to apply the job demand-resource model is that organisations regardless of their size, location, or financial capacity have specific risks factors associated with job-related stress. The job demands relate to aspects of the job that are associated with physical, social, and organizational costs, such as work pressure, work role conflicts, poor physical working conditions, and complex assignments that may hinder and bring challenges to the work context (Grau & Heuschmann, 2020). Research studies provided indicated that not all job demands are negative; however, they might be stressful when they require high effort that may elicit a negative response such as burnout that usually results from work overload (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Job resources, on the other hand, relate to the aspects of the job that can reduce the impact of job demands. In other words, job resources are

regarded as motivational aspects of the job that strengthens and reinforces positive behaviours when employees are confronted with challenging job demands (Grau & Heuschmann, 2020).

In consideration of the job demand-resource model, the current study hypothesises that job demand will be positively associated with intention to quit and that an association between job resources and intention to quit will be negative. Based on the arguments above, the following hypotheses were formulated.

H1: A positive relationship exists between job demands and the intention to quit.

H2: A negative relationship exists between job resources and intention to quit

2.7 The moderating role of psychological safety on the relationship between intention to quit, job demand, and job resources.

To lower the level of employee intention to quit, organisations are actively involved in initiatives to build employee trust and a sense of safety as a precondition and guarantee to influence employees' intention to stay, rather than quitting. This is because organisational costs that relate to psychological welfare such as trust and safety are substantial in terms of sickness, absence, and intention to quit. In other words, the costs that are associated with absenteeism, sickness, turnover, and intention to quit will continue to rise, hence labour legislation in some countries put emphasis on employers to take appropriate action against workplace conditions that distract psychological well-being. Psychological safety has been outlined as an antecedent to working conditions that relate to psychological well-being. Psychological safety relates to employees' perception of being safe to voice opinions freely without any rejection or punishment, in turn, enhance performance and be motivated to stay and work in the organisation for a longer period. The assumption is that in high psychological safety environments, there is greater safety in the form of freedom that enhances psychological well-being that results from confidence and fearless employees due to the absence of psychologically damaging actions of others.

A further assumption is that the functions of psychological safety can be understood by augmenting the job demand-resource (JD-R) model. This is based on the notion that in high psychological safety work environments, policies, practices, and procedures are developed with the cognisance of the negative effect of job demands to ensure deviation from exposing

employees to stressful working conditions. Job demands, which may require sustained and excessive psychological and physical effort, provide pressure for organisations to afford employees with the opportunities to recover them from being overwhelmed, exhausted, and health impaired. The physically and emotionally demanding nature of the job has been proposed to increase the risk of intention to quit, which is associated with low employee satisfaction, exhaustion, and burnout (Grau & Heuschmann, 2020).

Empirical evidence indicates that high job demands can have negative implications for psychological safety outcomes because the stress that comes with those demands disrupt employee's perception of psychological safety (Obrenovic et al., 2020). However, research literature highlighted that initiatives that are geared towards influencing employee's attitudes and perception of psychological safety could lead to modified employee behaviours when feels safe enough to express their views (Obrenovic et al., 2020). As a result, psychological safety initiatives positively influence employee performance and job involvement, which in turn to stay with the current employer. In other words, when the employees' perceptions of psychological safety are enhanced, they are likely to report more endurable job demands, which leads to high involvement, commitment, and low levels of intention to quit (Obrenovic et al., 2020).

The core underpinnings of the job demands-resource model are based on the notion that the adverse impact of job demands on employees and the organisation is likely to decrease when adequately mitigated by job resources (Ghezzi, Probst, & Petitta, 2020). Excessive job demands accrue negative impact of undesirable organisational outcomes, while at the same time indicating the important role of job resources in shaping employee behaviour positively. Consistently, the findings of research studies demonstrate the facilitating effects of job resources in terms of the impact of the challenge and autonomy of work have on employee attitudes, for instance, commitment, engagement, and dedication (Kirk-brown & Dijk, 2016). The results further reveal the impact of job resources on employee behaviour such as the intention to quit (Kirk-brown & Dijk, 2016). The reasons that influence the positive impact of job resources on employee attitudes and behaviour are based on the principle that they are intrinsically motivating because they can fulfil basic human needs such as autonomy, relatedness, and competence. In other words, when employees are satisfied with the job

resources provided, they are likely to respond by being more committed to the organisation and have fewer feelings of intention to quit.

Notwithstanding the findings of research studies that highlighted that there is a relationship between job resources and intention to quit, questions remain whether other constructs can affect this association. For instance, differences have been found in the perceptions of psychological safety where the relationship between intention to quit and job resources were moderated by psychological safety (Kirk-brown & Dijk, 2016). The justification provided was that psychologically safe work environments provide confidence to employees, as they can overcome feelings of being insecure at work. Moreover, pervasive feelings of being less fearful are likely to enhance the motivational mechanism that the translation of job resources into decreased levels of intention to quit. However, this does not necessarily mean that challenges do not manifest in organisations that enhance psychological safety, rather employees have demonstrated to spend less time in negative behaviours to protect themselves but engage in more required and productive behaviours. The reason being that behaviours that are associated with reduced fear are associated with interpersonal risk-taking such as the ability to address the challenges and failure by being able to openly discuss them and at the same have an opportunity to learn from the mistakes (Kirk-brown & Dijk, 2016).

Over and above being able to address work challenges, and promoting employee experience through enhanced learning, the perceptions of psychological safety have been linked to the possibility of eagerness to stay in the working environment. Psychological safety has been indicated to moderate the relationship between job resources and intention to quit. Among the approaches to the psychologically safe work environment is to operationalise regulations, policies, and procedures against bullying and harassment to protect employees from psychological and social risk (Kirk-brown & Dijk, 2016). The institution of psychological safety measures in organisations is necessary to enhance positive behaviours such as trust and respect. As a result, psychological safety is conceptualised as a moderator variable in the relationship between job resources, job demands, and intention to quit in the current research study.

Given the above, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H3: The relationship between job demands and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

H4: The relationship between job resources and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

2.8 Conclusion

The current chapter reviewed and presented literature on the constructs of the current research study, namely intention to stay, job demands, job resources, and psychological safety. The following views of various researchers regarding the above-named constructs have been discovered from the literature reviewed. Firstly, the relationship between intention to quit, job demand, and job resources; higher levels of intention to quit have been associated with lower levels of perceived support from supervisors and co-workers as well as lower levels of autonomy in performing work roles (Grau & Heuschmann, 2020). Secondly, the moderating role of psychological safety on the relationship between intention to quit, job demand, and job resources; psychological safety is determined to influence positively the psychological health challenges that are associated with emotional exhaustion and work pressure that results from the job demands (Kirk-Brown & Van Dijk, 2016). On other hand, literature provides that when organisations provide more job resources the feelings of intention to quit are likely to be decreased to higher levels of positive affect towards their organisation, particularly in the presence of the perceptions of psychological safety that enhances the feelings of trust in the working environment(Kirk-Brown & Van Dijk, 2016).

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The chapter on research methods in the current study provided information on the reasons for choosing the research designs preferred. The information on the criteria for including the participants and how they were sample was provided. The instruments chosen for data collection were described as well as procedures followed to carry out the current research study. The methods used to analyse data and the ethical issues followed were discussed.

3.1 Research design and approach

The cross-sectional study was used in the current research study as a quantitative approach through descriptive statistics to measure the relationship between intention to quit, job demands, and resources, and this associated being moderated by psychological safety. In other words, by applying descriptive statistics, the cross-section design was used in the current research study to provide a detailed analysis of the variables in a systematic and standardised manner (Zangirolami-Raimundo et al., 2018).

3.2 Measuring instruments

This research used a structured questionnaire method to obtain primary data. In other words, the respondents were asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order (Doyle, 2009). The questionnaire method was used because it is known to allow data to be collected from a large number of people, which, in turn, ensures data gathered to be more reliable. The questions that were asked from the questionnaire of the current study were compiled from existing questionnaires of intention to quit, job demand-resource, and psychological safety as well as biographical information. The questionnaires were emailed and some hand-delivered to the respondents.

3.2.1 Biographical information

A biographical information questionnaire was developed by the researcher to solicit data about the demographic characteristics, including gender, tenure, and educational level.

3.2.2 Intention to quit questionnaire

The intention to quit the instrument is aligned to the six-item turnover intention questionnaire that was developed and validated by (Bothma, & Roodt, 2013). The turnover intention questionnaire measured the employees' intention to quit the organisation on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Several research studies have reported reliability measurement of the 6-item turnover intention questionnaire where factor analysis procedures highlighted item coefficient loading ranging between 0.73 and 0.81 (Bothma, & Roodt, 2013). Moreover, principal axis factoring with varimax rotation for the turnover intention questionnaire revealed an extraction of a single factor with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.80$). The reliability of the 6-items turnover intention scale were also confirmed by Bonds (2017) to provide analysis in the financial management field on the factors that are associated with turnover intentions. The results confirmed a reliability coefficient of 0.833, meaning that the internal consistency reliability of questionnaire items was confirmed. (Bonett & Wright, 2017).

The ten items turnover intention scale was also used to determine the turnover intention of call center employees who served the external employees in the United States. The results revealed a reliability score of .80 for the turnover intention (Bonds, 2017). This, therefore, indicates that the turnover intention scale was able to measure an employee's level of turnover intention or the intention to quit, which is the desire of employees in leaving the organisation. This is because Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.80 reports a high-reliability rating of the scale indicating a higher probability of increased chances of turnover intentions (Bonds, 2017)

3.2.3 Job demand-resource questionnaire

The scales in the Evaluation of Work Questionnaire (QEEW) guide the job demand-resource questionnaire in the current study. This is because; the QEEW has previously been used and

validated in the theoretical models that investigated the design of jobs concerning work characteristics (Van Veldhoven, Prins, Van der Laken, & Dijkstra, 2016). Concerning the job demand-resource model, the QEEW provides a basis to reveal the effect that work characteristics have on the employees. For instance, the JD-R model assumes that work characteristics that may affect employees can be categorised into job demand and job resources on the basis that jobs that are poorly designed (job demands) would lead to mental and physical exhaustion. On the other hand, motivational jobs (job resources) may lead to positive workplace behaviours such as high commitment and engagement (Van Veldhoven et al., 2016).

The job demands were assessed by two measures, which are workload and emotional demands. In consideration of the time restrictions, the pace and amount of work that requires to be done are referred to as workload. The effort that an employee exerts to manage personal emotions and contextual relationships at work represents the emotional demands. The employees in the Central Bank of Lesotho consist of a wide variety of different types of jobs, and workload, emotional demands as well as work-life balance were assumed generalizable across different types of work. In terms of the QEEW, workloads and emotional demands were assessed and measured with a 5-point scale that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). For instance, I have too much to do (workload) and my work puts me in emotionally upsetting situations (emotional demands).

Job resources were represented by two measures, namely autonomy, social and technological support. Autonomy has been revealed by various research studies as a way of inducing employee behaviour in terms of promoting creativity and innovativeness in work performance (Burcharth, Cabral, & Horizonte, 2017). Research on autonomy highlights that employees are more productive when they perceive themselves to have a choice on accomplishing given tasks (Burcharth et al., 2017). Social support is regarded as the level of help available to an employee from colleagues and managers (Burcharth et al., 2017). In other words, when an employee believes that the working environment is helpful, the feeling of mutual obligations are enhanced due to the perceptions of being cared for, loved, and valued (Burcharth et al., 2017). Autonomy and social support will be assessed and measured on a 5-point scale that ranges from 1 (strongly

disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) developed from the QEEW. For instance, “I have freedom in carrying out my work activities (autonomy), “I can count on my colleagues for help when I come across difficulties at work” (social support).

The QEEW scales have been used in research studies to measure job resources and job demands based on four assumptions. Firstly, jobs that are not well-designed influence employees’ levels of burnout, exhaustion, health problems, and stress. Secondly, job resources are motivational, and the perception of their presence influences positive workplace behaviours such as commitment, and low levels of intention to quit. Thirdly, job resources have a buffering effect on job demands. Lastly, the strength of job resources emanates from the presence of job demands. As validated by various research studies, the JD-R model as assessed by the QEEW revealed a positive relationship between job demands and emotional exhaustion, on the other hand, a positive and significant association was found between job resources and professional efficacy (Van Veldhoven et al., 2016). Based on the QEEW information that investigated the JD-R model, empirical evidence further highlighted the direct impact of job resources such as autonomy and skills development on the level of organisational commitment and work motivation (Van Veldhoven et al., 2016).

3.2.4 Psychological safety questionnaire

The current study adopted a 7- item psychological safety scale developed by Edmondson (1999) to measure team psychological safety. In a study that was conducted based on a convenience sampling approach to test hypotheses, different groups with diverse industrial backgrounds provided meaningful interpersonal contexts for studying psychological safety, and the Cronbach’s alpha was found to be 0.81 at the group level (Deng, Leung, Lam, & Huang, 2019). In a research study undertaken to investigate the role of psychological safety in linking transformational leadership and individual learning behaviour, the 7-item psychological safety scale reported the Cronbach’s alpha of 0.786 for items that evaluated individuals’ feelings on being able to express opinions at work (Zaman & Maha, 2020).

The 7-item scale was used in the current study to measure psychological safety by instructing the participants to rate each item using a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly

agree). For instance, “When I make mistakes in this group, it is often held against me” and “my team members can bring up problems and tough issues”. The questions were formulated on the thought that the participants share a mutual understanding upon which the team context allows employees to feel safe to take risks through interactions and common experience (Deng, et al., 2019). The current study, therefore, adopted the Edmondson (1999) psychological safety scale with an assumption that there is considerable similarity across psychological perceptions of employees in the Central Bank of Lesotho to justify the aggregation of psychological safety.

3.3 Sampling

To protect the findings from the random error that the researcher cannot control, a larger number of participants was chosen by the convenience sampling method. The convenience sampling method is a non-probability research method where the researcher engages participants to be part of the research in terms of their availability and accessibility (Elfil & Negida, 2019). This method was found to be a suitable choice because the researcher is currently employed in the Central Bank of Lesotho. As a result, it was easier to access the sample participants, which saved research costs and time.

To ensure that the sample was representative and adequate to yield valid and reliable data, Raosoft Sample Calculator was used to determine the sample size required. As guided by Raosoft Sample Calculator, the sample of 185 employees would suffice given the population of 352 (<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.htm/>)

Table 1: Raosoft sample size calculator

<p>The level of margin of error that can be accepted is 5%.</p> <p>The confidence level needed is 95%</p> <p>The population size is 352</p> <p>The response distribution is 50%</p>	<p><input type="text" value="5"/> %</p> <p><input type="text" value="95"/> %</p> <p><input type="text" value="352"/></p> <p><input type="text" value="50"/> %</p>	<p>The margin of error predicts the level of error that can be tolerated or accepted. The sample size of the current study was 114, which indicates a lower margin or error.</p> <p>The amount of uncertainty was tolerated at a 95% confidence level.</p> <p>A total of 352 respondents were chosen as the population for the current study.</p> <p>The results are expected to obtain 50% of the responses for each question in the sample data</p>
<p>A sample size of 185 was recommended</p>	<p>185</p>	<p>185 is the recommended number that the completed questionnaires will be valid to obtain data.</p>

<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.htm/>

The formula is provided below, (<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.htm/>).

$$x = Z(c/100)2r (100-r)$$

$$n = Nx/ ((N-1) E^2 + x)$$

$$E = \text{Sqrt} [(N - n) x/n (N-1)]$$

A total of 114 completed questionnaires were returned, and Tables 2 and 3 below provide a summary of the demographic sample.

Table 2: Demographics of the sample (n =114)

Domain	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Gender			
	Female	70	61.4
	Male	43	37.7
	Transgender	1	0.9
Highest level of qualification			
	COSC/ Matric	1	0.9
	Certificate/ diploma	15	13.2
	First undergraduate degree/diploma	17	14.9
	First postgraduate degree/diploma	25	21.9
	Master’s degree	52	45.6
	Doctorate	1	0.9
	Other	3	2.6
Current role level			
	Non-managerial/ non-supervisory	45	39.5
	Supervisor/Team Leader	24	21.1
	Middle Management	22	19.3
	Senior Management	20	17.5
	Executive	2	1.8
	Specialist	1	0.9
Employment Status			
	Permanent	87	76.3
	On contract	27	23.7

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of the sample-Nominal variable (n =114)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Age	25	60	39.52	37	7.262	0.718	0.480
Years employed in the organisation	1	30	8.54	8	5.202	1.193	2.027
Years in current position	1	18	4.80	3	3.447	1.502	2.8459

Out of the 185 participants that this study anticipated obtaining data from, 114 completed questionnaires were returned from the 300 that were issued. According to Table 2, the gender identity of the sample demonstrated that the majority (61.4%) of the respondents were females from 70, whereas 37.7% (43) and 0.9% (1) were males and transgender respectively. As illustrated by Table 3, the findings revealed 39.52 average age (mean) of the sample with the youngest of 25 and the oldest of 60, with a standard deviation of 7.262. The mode of the group that is most frequent age was found to be 37, and the skewness was shown as 0.718, and in terms of the normal distribution, data were moderately skewed to the right as if falls between 0.5 and 1.

Arguably, a higher level of education and or experience is required mostly for managerial positions in the organisations, however, in the current study, the sample indicated that most respondents occupied non-managerial/non-supervisory roles (39.5%), followed by 19.3% of respondents that occupied middle management positions. The results further highlighted that the majority of the respondents held postgraduate qualifications and had a Master's degree and first postgraduate degree/diploma with 45.6% and 21.9 respectively. Based on the frequency results in Table 3, the responses for years of employment in the organisation provided a mean of 8.54, the standard deviation of 5.202, the skewness of 1.193, and the kurtosis of 2.027. The mode was 8, meaning that most employees were employed in the same organisation for 8 years. In terms of the current findings, 1 year was the minimum, while 30 years determined the maximum period of the respondents' employment in the organisation. The findings also

highlighted 18 years to be the maximum period for years in the current positions with 1 year being the minimum. The majority of the respondents have employed on a full-time permanent basis (76.3%), while 23.7% were employed on a contractual basis.

3.4 Data Analysis

The statistical analyses were carried out with the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) programme to analyse data. Before testing the hypotheses of this study, the factor structure of the variables was evaluated through the Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFA). CFA was used to allow the researcher to test hypotheses and determine if the relationship exists between the variables of the current study and their underlying latent constructs (Kline, 2013). In other words, the knowledge and application of theory and empirical evidence would postulate the pattern of the relationship for the hypotheses to be tested statistically. Specifically, CFA relied on the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to determine the adequacy of the model fit to the data, as well as to verify the hypothesized relationship between intention to quit, job demand, and job resources as moderated by psychological safety. To do this, the chi-square test was used to indicate the variance between expected and observed covariance matrices, meaning that the value that would be close to zero indicated a difference (Kline, 2013). Moreover, when the chi-square is close to zero, the probability level should be more than 0.05 (Kline, 2013).

The reliability and validity of the intention to quit, job demands-resources, and psychological safety were assessed through coefficient alpha and factor analysis. In other words, in evaluating the results, the test of reliability data was conducted to determine the Cronbach alpha, which would be acceptable when found to be at a minimum of 0.7 (Taber, 2018). Cronbach alpha is explained as one of the critical statistics used in research to test multiple item measurements and imperative to develop the scales that are intended to measure constructs that are related to attitudes and perceptions (Taber, 2018). Furthermore, to discover common factors among the items, factor analysis was used to identify common variances through direct extraction and rotation methods to improve the interpretation of the factor loadings to reduce ambiguities in the initial analysis (Taber, 2018).

To further test the hypotheses, a descriptive and correlational design was used. Descriptive statistics were used to provide an analysis of data by classifying and summarizing data, through means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations of each construct. For correlational design, the multiple regression analysis was used to determine and test for the relationship between intention to quit, job demands-resources, and psychological safety as variables of this study.

3.5 Ethical and data privacy consideration

In an endeavour to ensure that the current research study was conducted in a responsible and ethically accountable manner, the following ethical considerations were made:

- To seek permission from the management of the Central Bank of Lesotho to gather information from the employees as participants in the current research study.
- To commence the proposed research study after ethic clearance has been granted by the Faculty of Commerce in Research Committee

- To inform the participants about the intention and purpose of conducting this study. Through the oral presentations and by a covering letter, the participants were requested to voluntarily take part in the research. The covering letter provided a brief background on the aim of the current research study and provided the instructions that guide the completion of the questionnaire.

- To ensure that confidentiality of information provided by the participants was maintained. The participants were not requested to disclose their names or any other information that could identify them personally. Moreover, the findings of the results were aggregated in the research report.

- To ensure that any information relating to the current research study is not withheld from the participants to deceive them.

- To acknowledge the contributions and work of other authors and or researchers.

- To not in any way physically or emotionally harm the participants

3.6 Conclusion

The chapter presented the research methods that were applied in the current research study. The following aspects were discussed, namely, research design, sample, data gathering procedure, and instruments as well as ethical considerations that were taken to carry out the current research study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The current chapter provides a report of the results of data analysis. The analysis of such data considered to investigate the moderating role of psychological safety in the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit. In the context of the hypotheses of the current research study, the data gathered was screened to discover common factors among items. The analysis of data was carried out with the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) programme. Confirmatory Factor Analysis to determine the relationship between variables of the current research study, and the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to determine the adequacy of the model fit of the data, and to verify the hypothesized moderating role of psychological safety into the relationship between intention to quit, job demand and job resources. The reliability and validity of the constructs were also assessed through coefficient alpha and factor analysis.

The descriptive and correlational analysis was performed to classify and summarise data accordingly as well as to determine the relationship between the constructs by using multiple regression analysis.

4.1 Assessment of data for analysis

4.1.1 Factor analysis

To determine whether the sample size of the current study was adequate, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test in SPSS, which measures how data is suited for factor analysis, was used. Various researchers highlighted that to be able to use the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) the sample size for further factor analysis should ideally be 100 or larger (Chan & Idris, 2017). According to the results of the current study, the sample size is 114, which was deemed adequate. In terms of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), the sample size is sufficient when the value falls between 0.7 and 0.8 (Ul Hadia, Abdullah, & Sentosa, 2016). As shown by Table 4,

the KMO test results for the current research study were 0.78 and indicated that the sample was adequate. The results of Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated the significance level of 0.000 and regarded substantial and acceptable because the significance value is below 0.05 (Effendi, Mohd, Khairani, & Adnan, 2019). As shown in Table 1, both the KMO Test and Bartlett's test of sphericity provides a sufficient basis for factor analysis model, meaning that the KMO test whose value is 0.78 (> 0.7), and Bartlett's test of sphericity (Bartlett = 1097.724; $p = 0.000$) provides that factor analysis could be adequately employed in the current research study.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.780
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1097.724
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

To conduct factor analysis, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) provided in SPSS was performed for the job demand and job resources scale using a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation method and Kaiser Normalization as shown in Table 5. The EFA was done to verify and determine the existence of unique patterns and or relationships of items of each factor by providing the scoring.

Table 5: Patten Matrix

Components/ Factors	Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha
Performance Feedback	1. I am provided with direct feedback on how well I am doing my work	.970	.918
	2. I am given the opportunity to check on how well I am doing my work	.929	
	3. I receive sufficient feedback on the results of my work	.896	
	4. My line manager/supervisor informs me about how well I am doing my work	.885	
	5. I receive sufficient information to understand the purpose of my work	.598	
Work Overload	1. I have too much work to do.	.903	.875
	2. I must be in a hurry	.898	
	3. I work under unrealistic time pressure.	.892	
Technological Demand	1. My work demands of me to perform tasks by using information technology	.925	.855
	2. My supervisor expects me to utilise information technology to perform tasks	.885	
	3. My colleagues expect me to utilise information technology to perform tasks	.833	
Job Autonomy	1. I can decide on the content of my work activities by myself	.940	.769
	2. I have influence over how I carry out my work activities	.883	
	3. I can decide how my work is executed on my own	.786	
	4. My colleagues inform me about how well		
	5. I have influence over my pace of work	.333	

loadings > 0.3, reliability > 0.7

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization

To identify the latent variables or constructs, the factor analysis as shown in Table 5 was conducted to explain the practical significance of each underlying factor. The factor loading was considered acceptable when the value is 0.3 (Samuels, 2016). Any item loadings that did not above 0.3 were therefore removed and the analysis re-run. In terms of the current research

study, there were initially 6 factors for job demand and job resources, with 14 items and 11 items respectively. Based on the results of the factor analysis, all items under the factors of technological resources (job resources) and emotional demands (job demands) loaded below 0.3, and could not be retained for further analysis. The results further revealed that 1 item (*my colleagues inform me about how well I am doing my work*) under performance feedback (job resource), and 2 items of the workload under job demand, which are “*I must work very fast*” and “*I must work extra hard to complete something*” loaded below 0.3 and were therefore removed. As shown by Table 2, 16 out of 25 items have remained from the four factors, 2 for job resources (Performance feedback and job autonomy), and 2 for job demand (work overload and technological demand) respectively.

To present the summary of reliability estimates to verify the results found in the Rotated Component matrix regarding the relationships of the job demand and job resources, the Cronbach’s Alpha for all components are larger than 0.7, meaning that they reveal high reliability for the measurements (Hair, Hult, Ringle, Christian & Sarstedt, 2014). In terms of the results of the current research study, the Cronbach’s Alpha for the components of job demands, namely, work overload (.875) and technological demand (.855) are higher than 0.7 meaning that reliability analysis is confirmed. The Cronbach’s Alpha for the components of job resources, namely, performance feedback (.918) and job autonomy (.769), and the reliability was obtained. The results further confirmed the reliability of the intention to quit (0.928).

The reliability test was also conducted on the mediating construct (psychological safety), on a five-point scale, the psychological safety scale with 7 items did not obtain the reliability outcome. To achieve reliability for psychological safety, item 1 (*If I make a mistake in my team, it is held against me*), item 3 (*my team members sometimes reject others for being different*), and item 5 (*It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help*) were recoded. The recoding was done because the current research study found all items to be important as they are all measuring the same construct, except that the above-mentioned items were asked in a negative direction, and were therefore recoded to ensure that all the items have a positive direction. After recoding some items, the results for psychological safety improved to .664, indicating that the reliability was achieved.

4.2 Results from descriptive statistics

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics

		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Intention to quit	114	1	5	3.25	1.329
Job autonomy	114	1	5	3.19	1.143
Performance feedback	114	1	5	3.39	1.194
Work overload	114	1	5	3.35	.968
Technological demand	114	1	5	4.25	.735
Psychological safety	114	1	5	3.52	1.285

According to the descriptive statistics provided in Table 6, on the job demand-resource, psychological safety, and intention to quit scales ranging from 1 to 5, technological demand provides the perceptions of employees to be over the midpoint ($M= 4.25$, $SD=0.735$). The findings indicate that employees embraced technology to support mechanized workflow to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in their work roles. The results further highlighted that performance feedback ($M=3.39$, $SD=1.194$) was above the midpoint, indicating that employees expect the managers to provide feedback on the work done, and would probably positively reciprocate by being more committed to the organisation, and likely to score low on the intention to quit.

The average score for work overload ($M=3.35$, $SD=0.968$) was just above the midpoint. As interpreted on a five-point Likert scale, the mean score for workload highlighted that the respondents indicated the ability to accept the demands that are inherent in the work roles. Moreover, the participants of the current research study indicated that they have freedom and influence in planning and executing their work as highlighted by the results for job autonomy which were also just above the midpoint ($M= 3.19$, $SD= 1.143$). In terms of psychological safety, the results were also above the midpoint ($M= 3.52$, $SD= 1.285$), indicating employees have perceptions that the working environment is safe to take interpersonal risks, ensure mutual

trust and respect for competence of the team members. In as far as, the intention to quit is concerned; the findings showed that the mean was 3.25 and standard deviation 1.329, and was above the midpoint of the scale.

4.3 Relationship between the constructs

To determine the inter-correlations among the independent and dependent variables, Table 7 contains numbers for each possible correlation, including the correlations of the variables among each other. Under the components of job demand, data highlighted a weak and negative relationship between work overload ($r = -.076$, $p \leq 0.01$) and intention to quit, meaning that the current research study reserves the judgement to conclude if workload may lead to intention to quit because the evidence is insufficient. Technological demand, the other component of job demand, was observed to have a negative and weak association with the intention to quit ($r = -.085$, $p \leq 0.01$). In the context of technological demand, employees are subject to cope and meet the requirements of technology, in the current study the results are insufficient to determine if the technological demands influence employee's intention to quit the organisation

On the components of job resources, performance feedback ($r = -.090$, $p \leq 0.01$) and job autonomy ($r = -.111$, $p \leq 0.01$) were observed to have a negative and weak association with the intention to quit. Psychological safety, which is the mediating variable in the current research study, was found to have a negative and significant relationship with the intention to quit ($r = -.258^{**}$, $p \leq 0.01$). The findings that relate to the mediating variable were determined to be valuable in the current study to demonstrate the influence of psychological safety on employees 'experience and perception of the working environment in improving the positive attitude of lowering intention to quit and retention outcomes

Table 7: Inter-correlations of variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Intention to quit		-				
2. Performance feedback	-.090					
3. Work overload	-.076	-.090				
4. Technological demand	-.085	.328**	-.383**			
5. Psychological Safety	-.258**	.351**	.154	.043		
6. Job autonomy	-.111	.304**	-.391**	.987**	.014	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.5 Hypothesis testing

4.5.1 Hypothesis 1: A positive relationship exists between job demands (work overload, and technology demands) and the intention to quit.

To investigate a positive relationship between job demands (work overload and technological demands) and intention to quit, the results of correlation analysis indicated a weak negative relationship between technological demand and intention to quit ($r = -.084$, $p > 0.05$). A weak and negative association between the above-mentioned constructs was observed to be insignificant since the P-value was greater than 0.05. In the same vein, the relationship between work overload and intention to quit was regarded as weak and negative. To verify the correlation results, the multiple regression model was performed to determine whether job demand (technological demand and work overload) would be able to predict the intention to quit as shown in Table 5. Although a weak and negative correlation between job demand and intention to quit exists, there is no sufficient evidence that job demand would be a good predictor of intention to quit since the regression model highlighted an insignificant value of 0.310 which is greater than 0.05. Job demand was therefore found to predict 2.1% of the variation in intention to quit.

The above-provided results, therefore, highlighted that the current research study rejected hypothesis 1 as there was not sufficient evidence as shown by the P-value that was greater than 0.05.

Table 8: job demand and Intention to quit.

Variables	Std. Beta	t-value	t. Sig	F-value	F. Sig	R squared
(Constant)		.000	1.000	1.184	.310	0.021
Technological demand	-.133	-1.311	.192			
Work overload	-.127	-1.246	.215			

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to quit

b. Predictors: (Constant), Job overload, Technological demand

The findings as depicted by Table 5 further revealed that job demand did not have an association with intention to quit ($\beta=0.310$, $t=1.000$) as the t statistics <1.96 indicate no significant relationship.

4.5.2 Hypothesis 2: A negative relationship exists between job resources (job autonomy and performance feedback) and intention to quit

In investigating the indirect relationship between job resources and intention to quit, the results found a negative relationship between performance feedback and intention to quit ($r = -.090$, $p > 0.05$). A weak and negative association was found between job autonomy and intention to quit ($r = -.111$, $p > 0.05$). To verify correlation results, the standard multiple regression analysis as shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Job resource and Intention to quit.

		Std.B	t-value	t.Sig	F-value	F.Sig	R-square
1	(Constant)		.000	1.000	.896	.411	.016
	Performance feedback	-.062	-.628	.531			
	Job autonomy	-.092	-.936	.351			

a Dependent Variable: Intention to quit

b Predictors: (Constant), Job autonomy, Performance feedback

The multiple regression model was performed to determine whether job resources (job autonomy and performance feedback) would be able to predict the intention to quit as shown in Table 9. Although a weak and negative correlation between job resources and intention to quit existed, there was no sufficient evidence that job resources could be a good predictor of intention to quit since the regression model highlighted an insignificant value of 0.411 which

is greater than 0.05. Job resources were therefore found to predict 1.6 % of the variation in intention to quit.

The above-provided results, therefore, highlighted that the current research study accepted hypothesis 2 because there is a negative relationship between job resources and intention to quit.

4.5.3 Hypothesis 3: The relationship between job demand and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

The correlation between psychological safety and intention to quit was performed as shown in Table 7, and the result found a significant and negative relationship between psychological safety and intention to quit ($r = -.258^{**}$, $p \leq 0.01$).). To investigate the mediator role of psychological safety on the relationship between job demand and intention to quit, he model to find its impact and the model summary was ran using process v3.5 by Andrew F. Hayes while coefficients were computed using multiple regression; while coefficient and ANOVA were computed using multiple regression. The multiple regression highlighted that when psychological safety was introduced, it was found that combined psychological safety and job demand were good predictors of intention to quit and it was significant at 0.05 since the significance level of the model was 0.03 as shown by ANOVA results in Table 10. The results as shown in Table 11 further predicted 11.2% of the variation in intention to quit. The study, therefore, accepts that the null hypothesis that psychological safety mediates the relationship between job demand and intention to quit.

Table 10: Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.3347	.1120	.8607	3.4378	4	109	.010

Table 11: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.727	3	2.909	3.069	.031
	Residual	104.273	110	.948		
	Total	113.000	113			

a Dependent Variable: Intention to quit

b Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Safety, Technological demand, Job overload

4.5.4 Hypothesis 4: The relationship between job resources and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

Using the process v3.5 by Andrew F. Hayes while coefficients were computed using multiple regression, further analysis revealed that all the components of job resources, namely job autonomy and performance feedback showed a significant association. Meaning that the results as shown in Table 12 significantly indicated that jointly, psychological safety and job resources were a good predictor of intention to quit as explained by 9.22% of the variation in intention to quit. The current research study, therefore, accepts the null hypothesis that psychological safety mediates the relationship between job resources and intention to quit.

Table 12: Model summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.3036	.0922	.9159	11,3720	1	112	.0010

Table 13: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
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1	Regression	9.003	3	3.001	3.174	.027
	Residual	103.997	110	.945		
	Total	113.000	113			

a Dependent Variable: Intention to quit

b Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Safety, Job autonomy, Performance feedback

The multiple regression highlighted that when psychological safety was introduced, it was found that combined psychological safety and job demand were good predictors of intention to quit and it was significant at 0.05 since the significance level of the model was 0.02 as shown by ANOVA results in Table 13.

4.6 Conclusion

The current chapter presented the quantitative analysis results to address the problem statement, objectives, and hypotheses. The accuracy of the data was examined before the testing of hypotheses was done. The components of job demand and job resources were assessed by using principal component factor analysis and the items that were poorly loaded were removed. The adequacy of the sample size was also measured by Kaizer-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), and the sample size of 114 was assessed to analyse the factors. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) to determine the degree of variance in each item. Reliability and validity of the constructs were also assessed and the threshold of Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.7. and for all constructs that exceeded the threshold of Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.7. Multiple regression was also conducted to assess the significance of hypothesized relationships and the results were presented as follows:

Table 14: Summary of results concerning the hypotheses

Reference	Descriptive	Status
Hypothesis 1	A positive relationship exists between job demands (work overload, emotional demands, and technology demands) and the intention to quit.	The null hypothesis was rejected, and a conclusion was made that there is a negative relationship between job demands and intention to quit
Hypothesis 2	A negative relationship exists between job resources (job autonomy, performance feedback, or technology resources) and intention to quit	The null hypothesis was accepted, and a conclusion was made that there is a negative relationship between job resources and intention to quit
Hypothesis 3	The relationship between job demands and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety	The null hypothesis is accepted, and a conclusion is made that there is a relationship between job demands and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety
Hypothesis 4	The relationship between job resources and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety	The null hypothesis is accepted, and a conclusion is made that there is the relationship between job resources and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Researchers have considerably explored evidence on the prevalence, nature, and impact of intention to quit in the workplace. The intention to quit, which relates to a conscious process to deliberately leave the organisation is little understood in the context of effective organisational measures that can be explored to prevent it to minimise the costs associated with the impact of actual turnover. A concern for organisations on the issue of intention to quit is based on the premise that organisational performance depends on the commitment and dedication of employees and willingness to perform and continue to work for the organisation (Halawi, 2018). The present study investigated the mediating role of psychological safety in the relationship between job demand, job resources, and intention to quit.

5.1 Summary of results

The first hypothesis inquired into the relationship between job demand and intention to quit in the organisations. The results of the tested hypotheses linking them to the literature in the relevant field were discussed below.

5.1.1 Hypothesis 1: A positive relationship exists between job demand (work overload, and technology demands) and the intention to quit.

The hypothesised relationship on the association between job demand, job resources, and intention to quit was discussed in the current research and adding weight to the growing body of evidence on their impact of intention to quit in the working environment. On the relationship between job demand and intention to quit, the components of work overload and technological demand had a negative and weak relationship with intention to quit. Various authors and practitioners consider work overload to be one of the most critical and considered factors that affect employees' loyalty, commitment, and intention to quit in the organisation (Shahzad, Shah, Waseem, & Bilal, 2020). This is because work overload is often associated with burnout and exhaustion, which negatively affect factors such as work-life balance and health, and consequently inversely influence the level of commitment and positively influence the level of intention to quit (Shahzad et al., 2020).

The results of the current research, however, have found a negative relationship between work overload and intention to quit. The findings of the current study were found to be consistent with the findings that highlighted that work overload was found in previous researches to be able positively to influence work-related stress and work-life imbalance, and negatively influenced job satisfaction leading to reduced intention to quit (Salehudin, 2014). Despite a large number of findings that supported the positive relationship between work overload and intention to quit, the results of the study conducted highlighted that stress does play an arbitrator role between work overload and turnover intentions (Qureshi, Iftikhar, & Abbas, 2013). The results indicated that even in the presence of work overload, reduction may lead to lower levels of intention to quit.

The other component of job demand, technological demand also correlated negatively with the intention to quit. The results were consistent with other empirical evidence that suggested a negative relationship between the use of technology in the organisation, and the levels of psychological detachment from work (Sandoval-reyes, Acosta-prado, & Sanchís-pedregosa, 2019). These findings reinforce the findings of the current research study and support the idea that the use of technology suggests increases the intensity of daily work, leading to a higher level of speed required with more tasks to cover and less response time available. As a result, by being able to carry out work roles outside the physical and traditional work environment, technological demand contributes to higher levels of agility, dynamism, and accessibility (Sandoval-reyes et al., 2019). Therefore allowing employees to connect and commit to their work roles, and ultimately lowering the intention to quit.

5.1.2 Hypothesis 2: A negative relationship exists between job resources (job autonomy and performance feedback) and intention to quit

The second hypothesis highlighted that there was a negative relationship between job resources and intention to quit. The null hypothesis was accepted and a deduction was made that the resources must be increased in the organisations to reinforce employee commitment, loyalty and to prevent the attitudes that may influence intention to quit. The current study, therefore, provides a proposition that the lower level of employee intention to quit is mainly a response

to the allocation of resources, which ultimately relate to the individual coping mechanism to commit and being loyal to continue with the existing employment relationship. The components of job resources (performance feedback and job autonomy) investigated in the current research study had a negative relationship with the intention to quit. Various authors and practitioners highlight performance feedback as an important managerial behaviour that influences organisational competitive advantage positively (Chin, Idris & Tuckey, 2019).

The findings of the current study are consistent with other researches, for instance, Chin et al., (2019) pointed out that performance feedback is positively fulfilling, and linked to job resources. The study conducted by Gillet and Vandenberghe (2014) indicated that employee engagement is stimulated through transformational leadership and that through supervisory coaching and performance feedback, employees are more likely to commit to the organisation. Among the types of job resources, retaining employees and lowering intention to quit was found to be a form that future research should consider transformational leadership that translates into development-focused leadership, where performance feedback acted as a resource that enhances employee development, and in return, benefit the organisation (Chin et al., 2019).

Job autonomy as another component of job resources was also found to have a negative relationship with the intention to quit. The current research study contributes to the research on job resources and intention to quit, by demonstrating that job autonomy can reduce employee intention to quit the organisation. These findings are consistent with the results of the research conducted by Dysvik & Kuvaas (2013), where the test hypothesis indicated that the presence of the employee perception of job autonomy leads to a lower intention to quit. The results of the above-mentioned study further indicated that a higher level of supervisor support led to job autonomy and that job autonomy minimised the presence of an intention to quit (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2013). The perceptions of job autonomy are assumed to assist employees to knowledge and skills without feelings of being controlled, confined, or constraint by others. In other words, the freedom to determine the way the work roles are performed increases employees' motivation and self-determination. High levels of job autonomy indicate that more resources are available to employees to decide the pace and effort of performing their work roles, on the

other side, low levels of job autonomy indicate less freedom for employees to decide how they complete their work roles (Vui-yee & Yen-hwa, 2020). The presence of job autonomy does not hinder maintenance and accumulation of resources, but instead, provides the latitude for employees to handle work-related demands. Meaning that employees experience greater gain in resources as their knowledge or energy resources are recognised. Sufficiency in resources, in terms of their ability to control and determine their work roles, lowers their level of intention to quit.

5.1.3 Hypothesis 3: The relationship between job demand and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

The null hypothesis 3 argued for the moderated model where psychological safety moderated the relationship between job demand intentions to quit. The hypothesis assumed that psychological safety would lower the intention to quit through its relationship with job demand. Meaning that when the organisations enhance psychological safety initiatives to the employees who are concerned about the inherent job demands that would probably lead to emotional exhaustion and or burnout, the psychological safety initiatives would lower employees' intention to quit. The findings of the current research study found full support for the hypothesis, meaning that the hypothesis was accepted. Psychological safety has been shown in other research studies to be an antecedent to working conditions that affect psychological health that is likely to affect the decision to either quit or stay in the organisation (Winefield, 2011).

The concept of psychological safety is derived in part from the idea that external factors influence the working conditions which may affect an employee's willingness to continue or quit the current employment relationship. The decisions taken by organisational leadership in reacting to such external factors determine psychological safety. For instance, the pressure of being globally competitive may influence organisational decisions to introduce systems that could be detrimental to employees' levels of emotional exhaustion and burnout. By using this principle, the current study believes that working conditions (job demands) derive from organisational initiatives such as psychological safety that would influence the level of intention to quit in the organisations.

Psychological safety reflects management priorities, for instance, where the impact of job demands in terms of the required physical, cognitive and emotional effort exerted by employees needs to be minimised. This is because high job demands that are not well managed for employees to recover and be able to perform will lead to emotional and physical exhaustion and health impairment, resulting in intention to quit. In the presence of psychological safety, the results of the current research study assumed that psychological safety is negatively related to job demands, and the expectation is that high psychological safe working environments allow managers to be cognizant of the negative impact of job demands. The current research study further expects psychological safety as a form of organisational resource to influence the context of job demands because it is plausible that without psychological safety initiatives, the organisation could lead to poorly designed job demands. For instance, work overload and pressure may exist due to a lack of policies, processes, practices, and standards that are aimed towards maintaining job demands at managerial levels.

The absence of psychological safety initiatives in organisations may lead to increase pressure for employees to hide emotions rather than to freely express what they feel. Hiding of employee's feelings may occur where employees have developed feelings and perceptions that they are not listened to, and that their psychological well-being is ignored, as result the fear to be expressed is enhanced, and hence intention to quit. Additionally, in moderating the relationship between job demands and intention to quit, psychological safety will enable employees to cope with the demands of the job, through the provision of relevant supportive initiatives such as the opportunity to debrief following challenging experiences. In high psychological safety organisations, the impact of job demands may be reduced by the capacity of employees to cope through initiatives such as psychological safety. As supported by the Conservation of Resource (COR) theory highlighted in chapter 2 of the current research study, employees tend to conserve and accumulate resources such as freedom to speak and raise opinions, leading to outcomes like coping better. In a high psychological safety context, increased coping capacity may reduce the impact of job demands, and reduce the likelihood of intention to quit. Linking job resources to job demands is therefore substantial to minimise the impact of intention to quit.

5.1.4 Hypothesis 4: The relationship between job resources and intention to quit is moderated by psychological safety

The fourth hypothesis examined the moderating role of psychological safety on the relationship between job demand and intention to quit. Multiple regression results presented evidence that psychological safety moderates the relationship between job resources and intention to quit, and the null hypothesis was therefore accepted. In terms of this hypothesis, psychological safety triggers the motivational pathway indicated by the job demand-resource model. Psychological safety is expected to foster growth as determined by the initiatives and efforts taken by organisational management to set the tone by establishing priorities to enhance the team's experience of being free and engaging in risk-taking behaviours that are necessary to improve performance and learning (Van Woerkom et al., 2016). A supporting working environment that would assist employees to take control over their work roles by providing them with the freedom to make mistakes and develop new skills is expected to enhance a positive psychological safety context.

Building from the foundational work of psychological safety as highlighted in chapter 2 of the current research study, the argument provided is that psychological safety flows from the priority that the management gives to the psychological health of the employees. The political will of organisational management through policies, practices, and procedures would favour good communication, feedback systems, and what job resources are required to enable the achievement of work and personal-related objectives. Supplying the required job resources such as job autonomy and performance feedback would also indicate management support and concern in enhancing the psychological safety of employees. Additionally, the cross-links between psychological safety, job resources, and intention to quit are supported in the current study. For instance, lack of job resources may lead to psychological health challenges influenced by lack of opportunities to cope with emotional exhaustion and stress that are brought by the job demands, ultimately influencing intention to quit. In a nutshell, psychological safety moderates the relationship between job resources and intention to quit, by

offsetting the impact of low individual resources, and this could be done by supplying resources in other areas such as recognition through compensation programs (Deng et al., 2019).

5.5 Theoretical contribution

The current research study made important theoretical contributions to the management of people literature in terms of the moderating effect on the relationship between job demands, job demands, and intention to quit. In particular, research was boosted on the conservation of resources theory, where it was applied in various strands of the literature to enhance the content of this study. The conservation of resources theory explained the outcomes of stress that can influence the feelings of intention to quit in the organisations. For instance, employees experiencing high job demands may believe that they cannot successfully perform their work roles. Consequently, may put more pressure on the organisation to invest more resources to enhance their motivation to perform and be committed to the organisation.

The conservation of resources theory proposes that high job demands lead to emotional exhaustion and burnout, which may require more resources to be engaged to remove the negative “state of being” that includes unwanted behaviours such as anxiety, dissatisfaction, and intention to quit. The conservation of resources theory holds that individual motivation is a result of the ability to maintain and accumulate resources (Adil & Baig, 2018). The current research study proposed that to explain the negative state that would lead to intention to quit, positive state in terms of provision of job resources is imperative, for instance, psychological safety as a moderator on the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit.

5.6 Practical contribution

The findings of the current research study are consistent with previous research that confirms that psychological safety initiatives could enhance job resources and lower the intention to quit. The underlying concept of psychological safety is that management should prioritise the initiatives to communicate, involvement in decision making to enhance psychological health that would lead to low levels of employee’s intention to quit. Even though job demands may have an impact on the employees’ well-being, the measurement of psychological safety can be

useful for enhancing management practices that would influence employee commitment, loyalty, and eagerness to continue with the current employment relationship (Opoku & Choi, 2020). Given that organisations are becoming more concerned to minimise the impact of high job demands to promote healthy working conditions, the current research study proposes that psychological safety initiatives play a balancing role in enhancing job resources. Critiques on the current practices of job demands suggest that much focus is on the individual other than the working conditions, as result, this study believes that psychological safety as a form of job resources would be able to remedy this challenge. Managers should be informed about the important role of psychological safety in organisations.

5.7 Limitations of the study

The focus of the current study was to investigate the moderating effect of psychological safety on the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit. Even though the objectives were achieved, the study has recognised some limitations.

The current research study used cross-sectional data to provide a detailed analysis of the variables in a systematic and standardised manner to determine the relationship between the variables. However, the challenge is that from the cross-section data, the causal conclusions of the variables could not be drawn from the correlations. Moreover, quantitative data was used to achieve the objectives and to answer the research question of the current research study. Even though it was observed to be accurate and valuable as determined by the reliability and validity of the scales, qualitative data was, however, not conducted to gain a deep understanding of the suggested interventions that could decrease the intention to quit.

For collecting data, a self-rating questionnaire was administered to participants of the current study. The aim of using the self-rating questionnaire was to get large participants from the sample quickly and without much effort and financial cost. Nevertheless, some limitation on the use of a self-rating questionnaire has been considered in the current research study. The main limitation is the possibility of getting invalid answers, in that the participants may not answer the questions truthfully, especially those questions that they may regard as sensitive. This means that the respondent may respond in a socially acceptable manner, hence the

responses may be considered bias, the concept known as social desirability bias (Caputo, 2017). Moreover, regardless of the question, a participant may choose to respond in a certain manner. For instance, employees may be more likely to respond to “agree” regardless of the content of the question. A further challenge of using a self-rating questionnaire might be an understanding of the items, which leads to the risk of getting different interpretations of what the questions mean. In consideration that the questionnaire in the current study was highly structured, the structure may influence the participants to respond in a manner that did not match their perceptions, feelings, and views, this is because structured questions might reflect the preconception of the researcher (Caputo, 2017).

5.8 Recommendation for future research

This research depended exclusively on a self-report questionnaire to gather information. The self-report data may have the possibility for common method variance and social desirability bias. For instance, respondents may consciously or unconsciously report experiences that they may consider to be socially accepted or preferred. Stander and Rothmann (2009) mentioned persistent criticism to construct validity in a case where authors entirely depend on the use of self-report measures. Future studies can, therefore, consider selecting over and above self-report questionnaires, a combination of focus groups, and individual interviews to afford access to different aspects on the phenomenon of the mediating effect of psychological safety on the relationship between job resources, job demands, and intention to quit.

As the limitation on the use of quantitative research as a singular research methodology was adopted in the current study was highlighted, it is imperative for future research to consider the use of qualitative data to confirm the opinions of the respondent about the variables of the current study. This is because the additional comments and opinions of the respondents can clarify further views, perceptions, and feelings to provide a larger volume of information to draw from and identify potential trends relating to the variable of this study. Moreover, only employees in a single central banking environment were approached to participate in the current research study, the question of whether the identified trends can be generalized to other financial institutions is questionable. As a result, the current study suggests that a different

working environment should be used to determine further understanding of the variables of this study. For instance, future research can further incorporate the possibility of other constructs in moderating the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of this study. Moreover, future research could also pay attention to other types of job demands and job resources, other than the ones identified in this study.

5.9 Conclusion

In understanding the moderating effect of psychological safety on the relationship between job demands, job resources, and intention to quit, critical conditions were drawn in the current study. For instance, there is a dearth of research conducted on the mediating effect of psychological safety, on the relationship between job demand, resources, and intention to quit, particularly in the context of Lesotho. This study has therefore made an important contribution to the literature on the constructs of the current study in the context of Lesotho, and provided a view that organisations need to explore other than the traditional retention strategies, psychological perspectives that can be associated with attraction and retention of employees.

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CENTRAL BANK OF LESOTHO
BANKA E KHOLO EA LESOTHO

GOVERNORS OFFICE

CBL/fnc/GOV/8/G/GOV

22 February, 2021

Mrs. Malinda Serobanyane
P. O. Box 0204
Maseru West 105
LESOTHO

Dear Mrs. Serobanyane,

**RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION IN THE CENTRAL BANK OF
LESOTHO**

I refer to your letter on the above subject.

I wish to inform you that your request to collect data in the Bank for your studies has been granted. As discussed with you, it is important that there is no mention of the Central Bank of Lesotho in the study report and the results be used for academic purposes only.

I wish you success in your studies.

Yours sincerely,

A R. Matlanyane (*Ph.D.*)
GOVERNOR

Signature Removed



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U.C. Commerce Faculty Office

17 02 2021

Malinda Serobanyane
School of Management Studies
University of Cape Town
REF: REC 2021/02/007

THE MODERATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB DEMANDS AND RESOURCES IMBALANCES AND INTENTION TO QUIT

We are pleased to inform you that your ethics application has been approved. Unless otherwise specified this ethical clearance is valid until 28-Feb-2022.

Your clearance may be renewed upon application.

Please be aware that you need to notify the Ethics Committee immediately should any aspect of your study regarding the engagement with participants as approved in this application, change. This may include aspects such as changes to the research design, questionnaires, or choice of participants.

The ongoing ethical conduct throughout the duration of the study remains the responsibility of the principal investigator.

We wish you well for your research.

2021.02.17
19:16:04 +02'00'

Signature Removed

Jacques Rousseau
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