CHAPTER 5
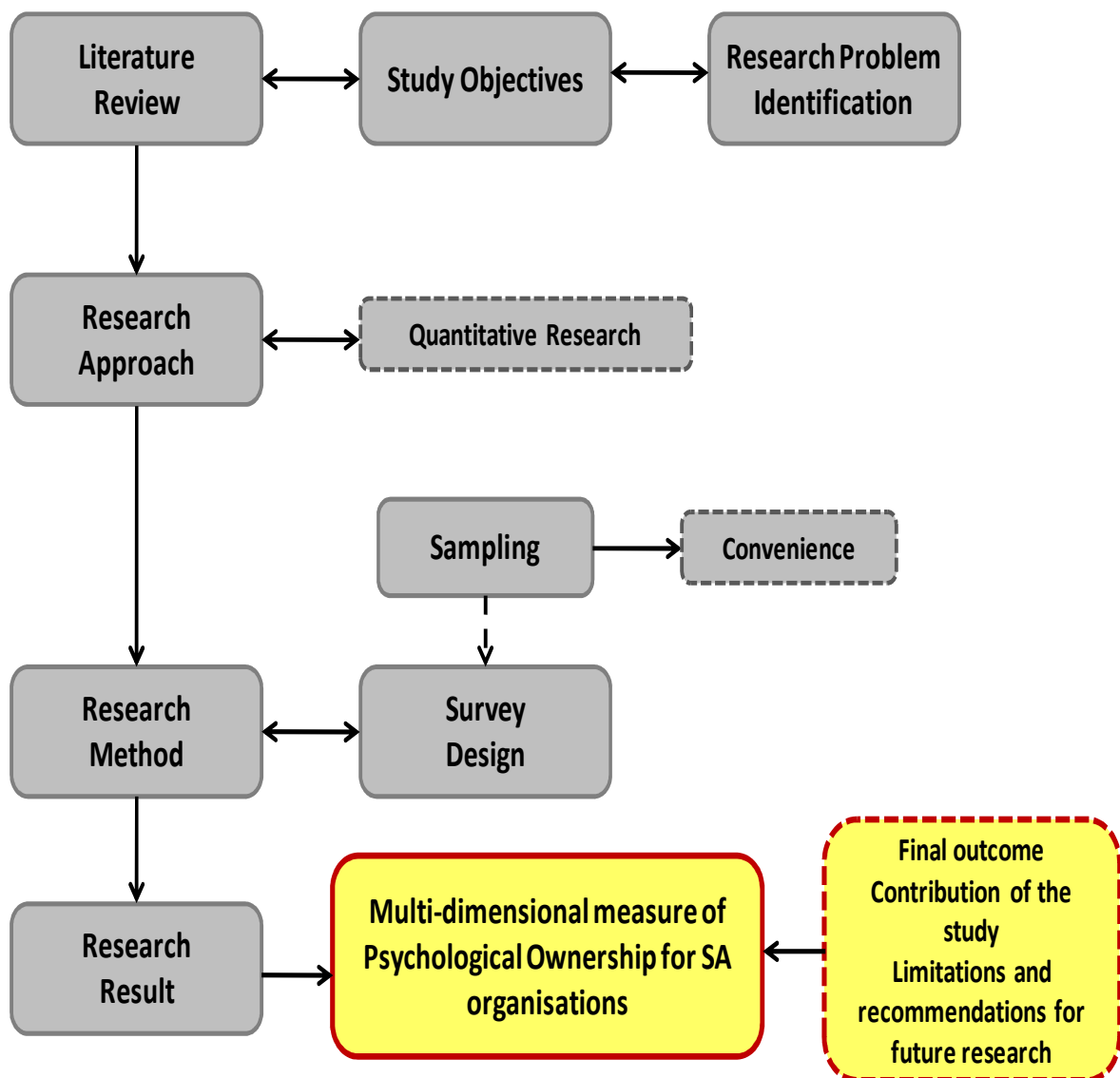
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Now a whole is that which has a beginning, middle, and end.

- **Aristotle**

In this chapter…

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│   Research   │──►│ Multi-dimensional measure of │◄──│    Final outcome   │
│    Result    │   │ Psychological Ownership for SA│   │ Contribution of the│
└──────────────┘   │        organisations         │   │        study       │
                   └──────────────────────────────┘   │   Limitations and  │
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5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this study, following a post-positivist paradigm, the researcher set out to explore and further define the construct of psychological ownership, and to develop and validate an objective, accurate measure of psychological ownership for South African organisations.

Chapter 1 outlined the need to develop and validate a measure of psychological ownership within the South African context. It explained that such a measure might help organisations to influence employees' performance and assist the organisation to retain its best, most talented staff.

Chapter 2 discussed the relevant literature relating to psychological ownership, and contextualised the concept.

Chapter 3 provided the rationale for the research, and explained the research methodology and strategy.

Chapter 4 presented the results and findings of the research. A measure of psychological ownership was developed and was statistically proved to be a reliable and valid instrument for the measurement of psychological ownership within the South African context.

This chapter (**Chapter 5)** will draw some conclusions about the research conducted and will evaluate the achievement of the research objectives. It will discuss the contribution of the research from a theoretical, methodological and practical point of view, indicate the limitations of the research and make suggestions for future research.

5.2   ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDY OBJECTIVES

The **primary objective** of this study was to develop a multi-dimensional measure whereby psychological ownership of employees could be measured in South African

organisations. As indicated, the SAPOS can be used as both a measuring and a diagnostics tool to determine how, more specifically, positive organisational behaviour conceives psychological ownership.

The pursuit of the primary objective of the study was supported by the setting of several content-related **secondary objectives**:

- To determine what is meant by the construct psychological ownership
- To understand why it is necessary to measure psychological ownership
- To identify the factors that influence and define psychological ownership
- To build on the five-dimensional theory-driven instrument of Avey et al. (2009) to suit the South African context
- To outline the research and steps that are necessary to develop an instrument that will be valid and reliable for South African organisations
- To establish the construct equivalence of this measure for different South African culture groups.

The secondary objectives, discussed in detail in Chapter 2, can be summarised as follows:

- **To determine what is meant by the concept of psychological ownership**

Psychological ownership has been defined as "that state where an individual feels as though the target of ownership or a piece of that target is 'theirs'" (Pierce et al., 2003 p. 86), and according to O'Reilly (2002, p. 10), psychological ownership is "a feeling on the part of employees that they have a responsibility to make decisions that are in the long term interest of the company". According to Pierce et al. (2001), psychological ownership can be directed at a variety of objects (including an organisation, a job, or a work project) and is regarded as a sense of possession of an object whereby the object becomes an extension of the self, closely linked to the individual's identity (Pierce et al., 2001). This research therefore determined that psychological ownership provides an

answer to the question: "What do I feel is *mine*?"

● **To understand why it is necessary to measure psychological ownership**

If organisations could measure psychological ownership, they could possibly manage it for performance impact. This would hold great benefits for the organisation. Pierce et al. (1991), supported by Mayhew et al. (2007), believe that psychological ownership will motivate employees to perform at high levels, including the carrying out extra-role behaviours. According to Bernstein cited in Mayhew et al., 2007 p. 483), "[O]wnership instils a sense of pride in employees and acts as a motivator of greater performance". Evidence for this has also been provided by VandeWalle et al. (1995), who found a significant positive relationship between psychological ownership and extra-role behaviours.

Apart from this, psychological ownership has also been associated with other positive behavioural and social-psychological consequences, such as an increase in commitment (O'Driscoll et al., 2006; VandeWalle et al., 1995), greater accountability (VandeWalle et al.,1995), greater job satisfaction (Avey et al*.,* 2009; Buchko, 1993; Mayhew, et al., 2007; Pierce et al.,1991; Vande Walle et al., 1995; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004) and better organisation-based self-esteem (Avey et al., 2009; VandeWalle et al., 1995; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004), as well as an intention to stay in the organisation (Avey et al*.,* 2009; Buchko, 1993). In this study psychological ownership was positively related to affective commitment and negatively related to turnover intentions.

It is necessary to measure psychological ownership since it is conceptually distinct from organisational commitment, identification, internalisation, psychological empowerment, and job satisfaction, for it describes a unique aspect of the human experience in organisations. Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) provided discriminant validity evidence for the distinctiveness of psychological ownership items from those employed to measure commitment, identification, internalisation, job satisfaction and involvement. Their observation of the unique ability of psychological ownership to predict worker attitudes

and behaviours over and above the effects of demographic characteristics, affective organisational commitment, organisational identification, internalisation, job involvement and job satisfaction is important because it demonstrates the unique contribution of the psychology of possession to the understanding of the individual-organisation relationship.

It is evident from the extant literature discussed in Chapter 2 that it is a major challenge for organisations to keep their best talented staff – especially considering the vast cost involved when valuable people leave the organisation. As Jamrog (2004) states, employees want to work for more than just a pay check. Therefore, it is the organisation's responsibility to create a work environment that engages and retains employees. Chapter 2 discussed various retention strategies and the role that psychological ownership has to play within each strategy.

The literature review, by highlighting the many benefits that employee psychological ownership holds for the organisation, therefore justified the need for a sound measuring instrument of this phenomenon.

● **To identify the factors that influence and define psychological ownership**

There are several factors that influence the emergence of psychological ownership. The potential for the development of psychological ownership resides in both the target and the individual, and its emergence and manifestation is also strongly influenced by situational resources such as structural and cultural aspects. The process by which psychological emerges is associated with a complex interaction between the "roots", the "routes", target factors, and individual factors. Psychological ownership is thus determined by a complex interaction of a number of intra-individual, object-related, and contextual factors. These influential factors have been described in detail in paragraph 2.8.

- **To build on the five-dimensional theory-driven instrument developed by Avey et al. (2009) to fit the South African context**

This research utilised the work by Avey et al. (2009), which was an extension of earlier work by Pierce et al. (2001). Avey et al. developed a five-dimensional measure of psychological ownership, and distinguished between two distinctive forms of psychological ownership: *promotion-orientated* and *prevention-orientated* psychological ownership. The four theory-driven components of self-efficacy; sense of belonging; self-identity; and accountability were identified as dimensions contributing to promotion-orientated psychological ownership, whereas territoriality was identified as a dimension of prevention-orientated psychological ownership. However, according to Avey et al., their measure may not be comprehensive enough to represent psychological ownership. Therefore, they suggested that future theory-building and research might reveal the relationship between psychological ownership and other related concepts.

After a comprehensive review of the literature, this study therefore posited the concepts of *responsibility* and *autonomy* as additional aspects of psychological ownership. Both responsibility and autonomy were conceived as promotion-orientated forms of psychological ownership. The proposed seven-dimensional measure of psychological ownership is displayed in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1:   Theoretical dimensions of psychological ownership
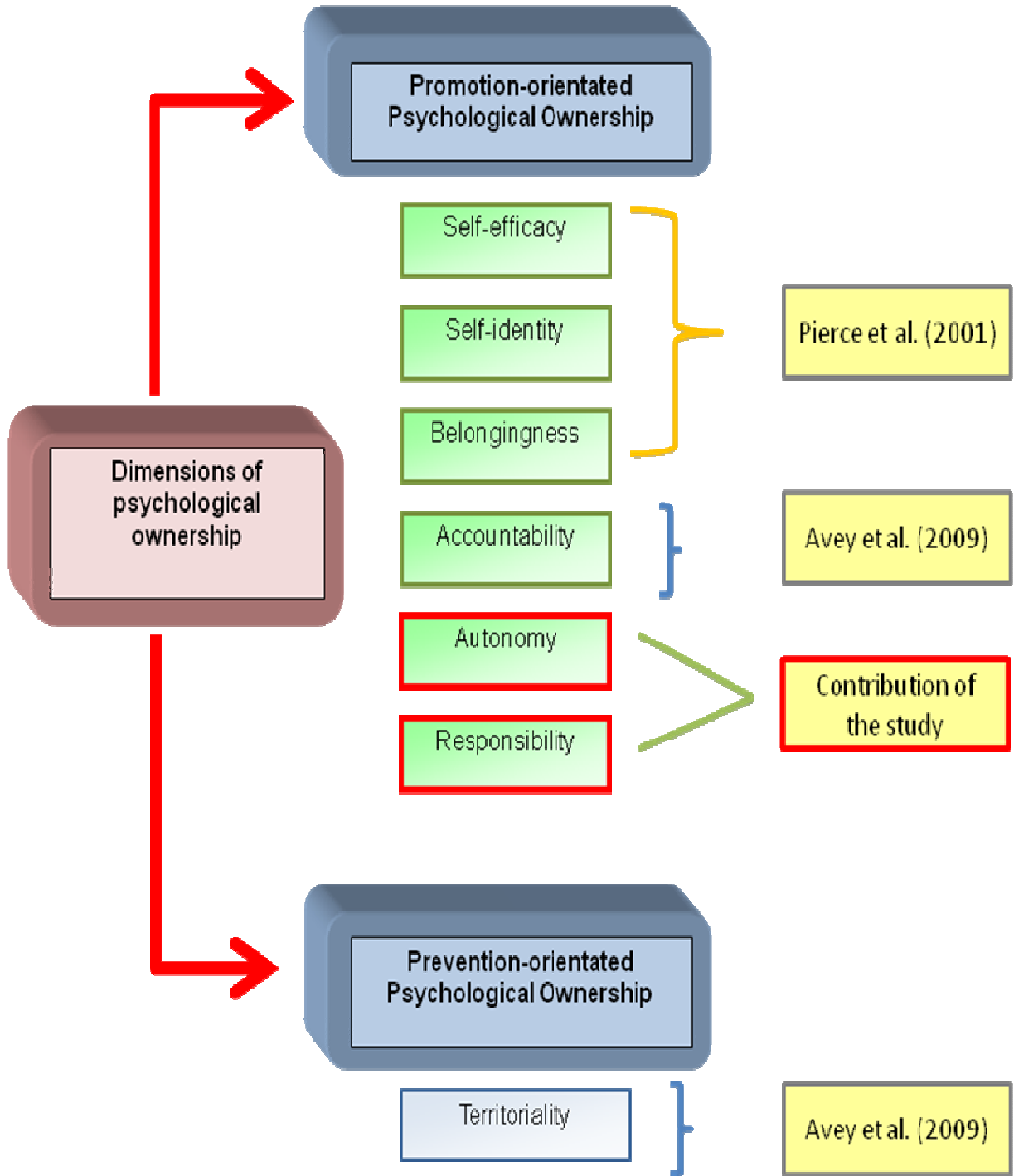
(Author's own)

- **To outline the research and steps that are necessary to develop an instrument that will be valid and reliable within the South African context**

A summary of the survey research design that was conducted in this study is presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1:   Survey research design

Description	The survey was quantitative in nature and aimed to present a sample that was representative
Design classification	Empirical research was conducted that collected primary data that was numeric and allowed the researcher medium control.
Key research questions	The research was exploratory and descriptive.
Design types	A cross-sectional survey was conducted because data was collected at one point in time.
Application	The survey was conducted in organisations within the South African context.
Meta-theory	The study was associated with the post-positivist meta-theory and variable analysis.
Conceptualisation	The survey was theory-driven.
Sampling	Non-probability sampling was used.
Mode of observation	Data was collected by means of structured electronic questionnaires and by distributing hard copies.
Analysis	Descriptive and inferential statistics were used.

In this particular study, non-probability sampling was employed, specifically, heterogeneity sampling, which is a type of purposive sampling. The population from which data was obtained was employed professional, highly-skilled and skilled individuals in South African organisations in both the private and public sectors.

The measure of psychological ownership (SAPOS) was developed by following the steps for scale development as suggested by DeVellis (2003), Hinkin (1998), and Spector (1992). These steps were explained in detail in Chapter 4 and summarised in section 4.3.

- **To establish the construct equivalence of this measure for different South African culture groups.**

Construct equivalence of the SAPOS were determined by using exploratory factor analysis and target (Procrustean) rotation. The factor loadings of the different race groups were rotated to a joint common matrix of factor loadings. After target rotation had been carried out, factorial agreement was estimated using Tucker's coefficient of agreement (Tucker's phi). The Tucker's phi coefficients for the Black and White respondents were all acceptable (>.90). suggesting that the four factors of the SAPOS were equivalent for the two race groups.

In order to determine the differences between the mean scores of the different groups with regard to their biographical characteristics, independent sample *t*-tests and the analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique were conducted. Differences existed between groups with regard to their ethnic grouping, gender, registration with a professional board, age, educational level, sector in which their organisation operated, level in the organisation and number of years working in their current position. However, in most cases medium practical significance was established between the groups. Contrary to common belief, no significant differences were found to exist between the number of years employees had been working in their current organisation and the dependent variables. This was interesting since, according to Matilla and Ikävalko (2003), ownership is long lasting by nature and it usually (in real life) does not occur as a phenomenon of short duration.

5.3   CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

5.3.1 Contribution from a theoretical perspective

- In terms of the taxonomy of Colquitt and Zapata-Phelan (2007) to estimate a study's theoretical contribution, this study has contributed to a moderate level of theory building by supplementing existing theory. According to Whetten (1989), in

a typical study of this nature a new construct or variable is added to existing theory in order to describe "how" a relationship or process unfolds. A five-dimensional theory-driven measure of psychological ownership was developed by Avey and colleagues (2009). This study expanded on their theoretical model by adding two promotion-focused aspects, namely *Autonomy* and *Responsibility.*

It is evident from the research conducted that the dimensions of *Autonomy* and *Responsibility,* added to the comprehensiveness of the psychological ownership scale developed by Avey and colleagues (2009), will very probably increase employee retention. Assigning employees the ownership of a task and making them realise that they have control gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment that enhances job satisfaction and leads to a sense of responsibility (Pierce et al., 2001). Such measures will therefore increase psychological ownership, since a strong relationship exists between job satisfaction and promotive psychological ownership (r = .536) and responsibility and promotive psychological ownership (r = .614), as has been established in this particular study and supported by several other researchers (Avey et al., 2009; Coghlan, 1997; Mayhew et al., 2007; Pierce et al., as cited in VandeWalle, 1995; Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). Employees who feel like owners of the organisation believe that they have the right to influence the direction of the organisation and that they have a "deeper responsibility" than those who do not feel ownership (Rogers & Freundlich, 1998). Various researchers (Brass, 1985; Tanaka & Yamauchi, 2000; Yamauchi et al., 1999; Pierce et al., 2004) found a relationship between autonomy and control, control and psychological ownership, and this study found a strong positive correlation (r = .757) between autonomy and promotive psychological ownership.

- This study examined significant relationships between promotive psychological ownership and several other important individual-level outcomes in organisations. Pierce et al. (2001) proposed that psychological ownership would be associated with positive behavioural and socio-psychological consequences.

According to O'Driscoll et al. (2006), psychological ownership should be associated with the type of organisational attachment that Meyer and Allen (1991) refer to as affective commitment. As anticipated, and in accordance with empirical research findings by Avey et al. (2009), Mayhew et al. (2007), and O'Driscoll et al., this study found a positive relationship ($r = .642$) between promotion-orientated psychological ownership and affective commitment.

Van Dyne and Pierce (2004) proposed that feelings of possession of the organisation and thus psychological ownership would enhance satisfaction and provide the context in which job satisfaction is rooted. They further argued that when employees feel possessive toward the organisation (they have influence and control at work, intimate knowledge about the organisation, and feel they have invested themselves in their organisational roles), they should experience high levels of satisfaction, which in turn should influence job satisfaction. This study confirmed a positive correlation ($r = .536$) between promotion-orientated psychological ownership and job satisfaction. Empirical evidence for a positive relationship between psychological ownership and job satisfaction was provided by Avey et al. (2009); Buchko (1993), Mayhew et al. (2007), Pierce et al. (1991), VandeWalle et al. (1995), and Van Dyne and Pierce (2004).

Buchko (1993) states that ownership may influence employee behaviours mainly through its effect on the intention of the employee to remain in the organisation. As expected and confirmed by Avey et al. (2009), turnover intentions were negatively related to promotive psychological ownership ($r = -.376$).

Employee commitment and job satisfaction are likely to be all the more sought-after employee attitudes in tomorrow's organisations, and if turnover intentions are low, the possibility of retaining employees in organisations increases.

- As earlier stated, when constructing psychological evaluation instruments psychologists must always consider the social and cultural diversity present in

socio-economic and political environments such as that in South Africa (Claassen, 1997). In South Africa, measuring instruments are in general adopted directly from overseas (Foxcroft, 1997) and even adaptations of these instruments still tend to ignore the fundamental cultural differences in South Africa. The existence of the newly developed psychological ownership measure named the South African Psychological Ownership Questionnaire (SAPOS) contributes to the body of knowledge by filling the void for such a measurement instrument for South African organisations.

5.3.2 Contribution from a methodological perspective

This study has presented a multidimensional measure evidencing substantial reliability and acceptable construct validity. Construct validity is made up of four components, namely face validity, convergent validity, discriminant validity and nomological validity.

5.3.2.1   Face or content validity

The SAPOS displays face or content validity. This conclusion is based on the following:

- A comprehensive literature study provided the basis for the theoretical constructs that were measured, as well as for the items that were developed in this regard.
- An adequate number of items were included in each of the SAPOS dimensions.
- The items included in the SAPOS for statistical refinement were regarded as relevant, clear and comprehensive by subject matter experts.

5.3.2.2   Convergent validity

Convergent validity was estimated by looking at the factor loadings, the amount of variance explained, and reliability.

- According to Hair et al. (2006), factor loadings of .30 and .40 are minimally acceptable, but should be .50 or higher for practical significance. Except for two factor loadings of .456 and .470, all other factor loadings of the 35-item SAPOS were well above .50, illustrating convergent validity.

- The average percentage of variance extracted among a set of construct items is a summary indicator of convergence (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and should be .50 or greater to suggest adequate convergent validity. The four factors of the SAPOS, comprising 35 items, explained 57.37% of the total variance, indicating adequate convergent validity.

- Reliability is also an indicator of convergent validity. In this study, Cronbach's alphas for the subscales were highly satisfactory, ranging between .776 and .939 and well above the .70 cut-off (Hair et al., 2006; Cortina, 1993), indicating adequate convergence or internal consistency.

5.3.2.3   Discriminant validity

Examination of the variance-extracted estimates confirmed discriminant validity within the model, because the variance-extracted estimates exceeded the square of the inter-factor correlations when the variance-extracted percentages for any two constructs were compared with the square of the correlation estimate between the two constructs.

5.3.2.4   Nomological and criterion-related validity

- Promotive psychological ownership was positively correlated with affective commitment and job satisfaction, and negatively related to turnover intentions. These results provided evidence of criterion-related validity.

- Further evidence of construct validity indicated differences between groups with regard to their ethnic grouping, gender, registration at a professional board, age, educational level, sector in which their organisation operates, level in the

organisation and number of years working in their current position and the specific dimensions underlying the concept of psychological ownership.

5.3.2.5   Construct equivalence

● Construct equivalence was used to compare the factor structures of the SAPOS for the two race groups. Tucker's phi coefficients for the Black and White groups were acceptable (>.90), therefore suggesting that the four factors of the SAPOS were equivalent for these two race groups. However, due to the small representation of the Indian (4.80%) and Coloured (3.40%) respondents construct equivalence could not be determined for all cultural groups. Further research needs to be conducted among a broader spectrum of cultural participants.

We can thus conclude that Human Resource managers and Industrial and organisational psychologists can use this instrument with confidence to gather reliable and valid data about employees' psychological ownership toward their organisation in South Africa. Developing this measure opens the door for more research and understanding surrounding the influence of individual differences on psychological ownership.

5.3.3 Contribution from a practical perspective

• In today's "war for talent", and to assist organisations in retaining their most valuable employees, the SAPOS can be used to understand if and how different people interpret psychological ownership. Specifically, the extent to which employees feel like an owner over a target will be reflected in whether the employees feel that they identify with the organisation, have a sense of responsibility toward the organisation and feel that they have control over their work environment. This study also provided support for the view that line managers and

human resource practitioners should be aware that different demographic groups have different needs that can influence their psychological ownership.

- The SAPOS provides Human Resource managers and Industrial and organisational psychologists with the opportunity to look at individual differences more closely. The instrument would be particularly valuable for understanding how individual differences influence employees' psychological ownership, specifically in a multi-cultural society such as South Africa. For example, individuals as such face increasingly complex challenges in constructing and maintaining their identities. In a world where employees are prone to working longer hours, under inflexible arrangements, within several different organisations, and in multiple jobs or careers, it is more and more challenging for them to create and maintain a positive identity (Robberts & Dutton, 2009). A further challenge is for the individual to adapt to the multi-cultural organisation which has resulted from the implementation of affirmative action as a compensatory measure for previous deprivation in South Africa (Watkins, 1995). Multi-cultural work teams raise questions regarding similarities and differences between the meanings that different groups give to psychological ownership; therefore further studies should be conducted to explore how different cultures interpret this identity.

- The instrument could serve as a diagnostic tool that will allow Human Resource professionals and managers to determine employees' psychological ownership toward their organisation and specifically focus on those dimensional areas that are weak and in need of attention. Understanding an individual's psychological ownership will provide insight into the degree to which an organisation will retain their talented staff.

- The results of this study also suggest that the unique emphasis of psychological ownership on possession might increase managers' understanding of and ability to predict employee commitment, satisfaction and intention to stay in the organisation.

5.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Hair et al. (2006) recommend that if the sample size is large enough, the sample could randomly be split into two subsets, as was done in this study. However, Hinkin (1988) suggests that it is necessary to use several independent samples in scale development, due to the fact that results of many multivariate techniques can be sample-specific. It is therefore suggested that although the sample was collected from professional, highly-skilled and skilled employees in various South African organisations in both the private and public sector, the instrument should be tested on another independent sample.

- Although the sample size was of ample size to conduct a factor analysis, this does not necessarily mean that the sample was representative of the general population. The sample comprised 418 White (60%) and 284 Black people (40%), which included 24 Coloured and 34 Asian people. Further research needs to be conducted among a broader spectrum of cultural participants, as this could have an influence on the manner in which questions have been interpreted.

- The sample was collected from professional, highly-skilled and skilled employees in various South African organisations in both the private and public sector and therefore the SAPOS cannot necessarily be generalised to other countries than that reflected in the sample population.

- A cross-sectional design was used and therefore it was not possible to control for confounding variables.

- Common method bias Self-reports were used, which limit the responses of the participants to the items used in the scale and do not capture the richness and variety of the responses that are possible.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Although the findings were encouraging, it should be kept in mind that scale validation is an ongoing process. Continued refinement of the SAPOS is thus suggested. Modifications could include the addition or deletion of items as discussed hereunder.

According to Hair et al. (2006), there is no theoretical maximum that caps the number of items per factor. However, they warn against the use of scales that contain more than 12 items, since this makes the analysis more complex and may often lead to problems in providing evidence of uni-dimensionality. Therefore the researcher would suggest that the *Identification* dimension, currently consisting of 16 items, be revised. Results of the exploratory factor analysis revealed that the South African sample interpreted the items originally defined as *self-identity* and *sense of belongingness* as one concept, which was labelled *Identification*. The researcher decided to retain these items as part of one dimension because these constructs seem to be very similar and because, according to Lee (as cited in Edwards, 2005, p. 210), supported by Ashforth and Mael (1989, p. 21), identification involves a "sense of belongingness" and "the perception of oneness or belongingness".

However, according to Avey et al. (2009), although the underlying principle of ownership may be manifested in both self-identity and belongingness, they should remain distinct yet related constructs. Therefore the current researcher suggests continued refinement of the so-called *Identification* dimension.

Self-efficacy items should be reviewed, because this concept formed a central part of the psychological ownership concept and should be looked at again. Although ten items were written to capture the dimension of self-efficacy, none of these items survived the stages of scale development. The items either cross-loaded or loaded on dimensions which were theoretically inconsistent with the factor.

Self-efficacy is concerned with specific judgement of one's capability and competence (Sternberg, 2001), and it seems that the sample group did not interpret the questions as such, but rather interpreted some of the questions as part of their responsibility. According to Bandura (1995, p. 5), "a host of factors, including personal, social, and situational ones, affect how efficacy-relevant experiences are interpreted". Therefore people's presumptions about their abilities; the alleged complexity of the tasks; the amount of effort devoted; their physical and emotional state at the time; the amount of outer support they receive; and the situational conditions under which they perform will influence the extent to which performance accomplishments will change perceived efficacy.

According to Urban (2006, p. 3), cultural embeddedness has an effect on "the way in which efficacy beliefs are developed, the purpose to which they are put, and the social structure arrangements through which they are best exercised". Different sources of information influence self-efficacy. These sources of information are relatively persuasive, depending on a person's cultural values (Earley, 1994). In his study, Urban (2006) found differences in the mean values between Indian, Black and White respondents with regard to their general self-efficacy. The levels of self-efficacy of Indians are at the highest level, followed by Blacks and then Whites at the lowest level. Therefore, a cultural contingency approach is suggested for further research on self-efficacy.

- The study focused on the positive aspects of psychological ownership although, according to prior research (Pierce et al., 2001; Robinson & Bennett, 1995), a "dark side" of psychological ownership does exist. In this study, as in the study conducted by Avey et al. (2009), a negative side of psychological ownership, namely *Territoriality,* was acknowledged as a preventative form of psychological ownership. The role of more destructive forms of psychological ownership needs to be further explored. For example, South African organisations have to face the challenge of integrating and managing a very diverse workforce (Vorster, Olckers, Buys & Schaap, 2005), which will lead to organisational change. To ensure the productivity

and effectiveness of organisations, "it is necessary to get from a heterogeneous work force the same productivity, commitment, quality and profit which the organisation received from the old homogeneous work force without artificial programmes, standards, or barriers" (Roosevelt, 1990, p. 109). Dirks et al. (1996), in their psychological theory of change, argue that psychological ownership could provide insight into the reasons why and the conditions under which individuals either promote and resist change. It is important to take note that the state of psychological ownership, while potentially latent within each individual, is not equally strong across individuals, targets, and situations, since it is determined by a complex interaction of many intra-individual, object-related and contextual factors (Pierce et al., 2003).

Future research is needed to uncover when psychological ownership leads to positive consequences and when the consequences are more likely to be negative. As discussed in the literature study, the cultural aspects of a social context will have a significant influence on the phenomenon of psychological ownership (Pierce et al., 2003). This is in the first place because, according to Erez and Early (1993), a tight connection exists between psychological ownership and the concept of self. The concept of self is consequently in part socially imposed and influenced by culture. Secondly, psychological ownership is partially "learned" through socialisation practices, which again are culturally determined.

Culture, which is reflected in customs, norms, traditions and beliefs in society, shapes the individual's self-concept and values with regard to control, self-expression, self-identity and ownership. Therefore, as suggested by Pierce et al. (2003), culture will influence all the elements of the psychological framework: the construct of self, the motives, the paths, targets, individuals, and the process. A qualitative dimension to the research might be valuable and could enhance knowledge on the key issues that may influence psychological ownership in a diverse multi-cultural environment.

In this particular study the fact that the sample comprised 40% black and 60% white participants definitely had an influence on how psychological ownership was interpreted. Although the initial theoretical model of psychological ownership comprised six promotive psychological ownership dimensions, namely self-identity, self-efficacy, sense of belonging, accountability, responsibility and autonomy; the results of the South African sample only show three promotive psychological ownership dimensions, namely identity, responsibility and autonomy, as displayed in Figure 5.2. It might be that the White respondents that account for 60% of the sample do have the perception that due to EE and BEE they are losing control over their environment as well as over people and that they've lost their right to have a voice in the workplace due to the implementation of EE and BEE. However, this was not tested and needed to be further investigated.

Figure 5.2:   Dimensions of the South African Psychological Ownership Questionnaire (SAPOS)
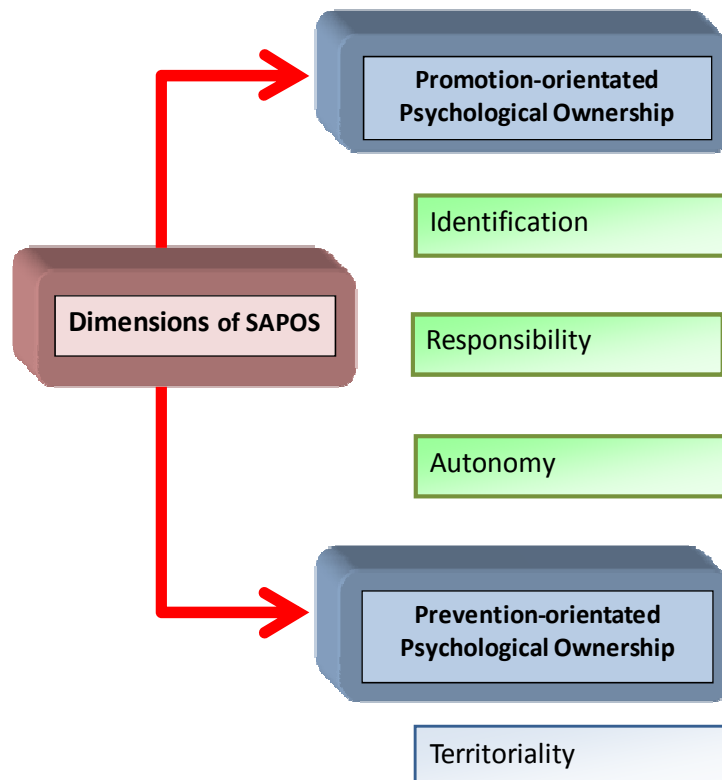
- According to Cooper and Denner (1998, p. 563), to attempt to integrate the concept of culture with psychological theories is an "abstract, disputed, and inherently irresolvable process", yet doing so is critical to theory building and understanding of multi-cultural societies.

- In this study strong positive relationships were found between promotion-orientated psychological ownership and affective employee commitment and job satisfaction, and a negative relationship between promotion-orientated psychological ownership and turnover intentions. Future research could look at the relationship between psychological ownership and other workplace attitudes.

- Psychological ownership is a complex phenomenon. Further studies should investigate the role that additional antecedents such as locus of control and individualism may play in explaining the underlying motives of psychological ownership.

5.6. FINAL CONCLUSION

The key contribution of this study has been the development and testing of a multi-dimensional measure of psychological ownership that can be used in South African organisations. The results provide psychometric support for this multidimensional measure of psychological ownership (SAPOS). Furthermore, the results show that psychological ownership does make a difference; these differences are reflected in employee social-psychological states (organisation commitment and satisfaction) and in employee behaviour (intention to stay in the organisation). The instrument indicated that differences exist between groups with regard to their ethnic grouping, gender, registration with a professional board, age, educational level, sector in which their organisation operates, level in the organisation and number of years working in their current position.

If a sense of psychological ownership for the organisation can be created among employees, especially those in skilled and professional positions, by addressing the factors as measured by the SAPOS, organisations could become enhanced workplaces, ensuring sustainable performance and staff retention, which are especially valuable in uncertain economic times.

The researcher would like to conclude with the following quotation by Rudmin (1994):

> "Mine" is a small world…It is deceptive in its power and importance…It controls our behavior, but we rarely notice, as we move about our world restricting ourselves to narrow walkways and to those places for which we have keys .