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ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES ENHANCING POSITIVE JOB ATTITUDES OF EXPATRIATES ON INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

by

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APRIL 2008



DECLARATION

I, Ilze Swarts, declare that the thesis “**ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES ENHANCING POSITIVE JOB ATTITUDES OF EXPATRIATES ON INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS**” which I hereby submit for the degree Ph.D Organizational Behaviour at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and that all the sources that I used or quoted have been indicated with complete references and acknowledgements. This thesis has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

I, Ilze Swarts, declare that the thesis was edited by P.J. Ahrens, BA (Hons.) STD.

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ABSTRACT

ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES ENHANCING POSITIVE JOB ATTITUDES OF EXPATRIATES ON INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

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With increasing foreign revenues, multinational corporations' need for expatriate assignments shows little sign of slowing down. Maintaining an expatriate is a costly and complicated process, and if the expatriate fails in his/her assignment, the expatriate exercise becomes even more costly for all involved. A prominent issue in international staffing literature is the premature return of an expatriate to his/her home country or resignation during or shortly after the foreign assignment. An expatriate may be defined as an employee who works for a firm but is not a citizen of the country in which the firm is located (host-country). However, he is a citizen of the country in which the organisation is headquartered (parent country). Losses and damages resulting from expatriates returning prematurely or resigning during or shortly after a foreign assignment add up to considerable costs. Considering these costs, it is imperative that expatriate assignments are managed effectively.

The above raises the following *research questions*:

- *What is the relationship between job attitudes and expatriate managers' intention to return prematurely from foreign assignments or to resign during or shortly after foreign assignments?*

- *What specific aspects of job attitudes are perceived by expatriate managers' as critical to their adjustment while on a foreign assignment?*

The main aim of this research is an empirical investigation into the variables influencing expatriates' job attitudes and a statistical examination of the relationship between job attitudes and expatriates' intention to quit or return prematurely. The envisioned result is to identify organisational practices that will facilitate expatriate adjustment during a foreign assignment. Successful adjustment will ultimately reduce the number of expatriates returning prematurely and resigning from a foreign assignment, thereby saving multinational corporations considerable expenses.

The research was conducted through self-administered questionnaires. A convenience sample with purposive characteristics, comprising of South African managers on foreign assignments, was used. Response was received from 71 managers. The study relied on descriptive and inferential statistical procedures to analyse the quantitative data and analytical induction to analyse the qualitative data.

The results of the study showed a negative relationship between certain favourable job attitudes and intention to quit a foreign assignment. Using the Spearman's rho test the following correlations proved to be significant: role conflict (-.369), job characteristics (-.391) and co-workers (-.349). Job characteristics (-.107), promotional opportunities (.282) and role conflict (-.312) were identified, using logistic regression, as the variables playing a critical role in the expatriates' decision to quit. The qualitative data analysis added the following critical adjustment aspects: commitment to the vision of the organisation, supportive supervision, organisational support practices, reasonable compensation packages, and realistic expectations.

Based on the variables identified as critical, an organisational best practice framework is proposed. This framework can serve as a managerial guideline for South African multinational corporations to facilitate expatriate adjustment.



DEDICATION

To my husband ***Niel***, and my children ***Daniel and Leana***, for your love and support which fuelled my commitment to this task and whose involvement in this chapter of my life did not allow me to quit.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 seeks to provide the reader with the background and rationale behind the study and clarifies the position of the research study within the topic area. The research problem is identified and refined to workable hypotheses, the objectives for the study are set, the theoretical milieu of the research study is reviewed and available research is cited to substantiate the theory. Throughout this chapter all concepts used in the research study are operationally defined to ensure that the reader has the same understanding as the researcher of the concepts.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

A fundamental shift is occurring in the world economy. According to Hill (2003:4), “the world is rapidly moving away from a situation in which national economies are relatively self-contained entities isolated from each other by barriers, to cross-border trade and investment, over distance, time-zones, and language, and superseding national differences in government regulation, culture and business systems. The world is moving towards a situation in which barriers to cross-border trade and investment are crumbling, perceived distance is shrinking due to advances in transport and telecommunications technology. Material culture is starting to look similar the world over and national economies are merging into an interdependent global economic system”. This process is commonly referred to as globalization. Globalization has resulted in businesses, both large and small, from advanced nations as well as developing nations, expanding internationally.

Globalization can be defined as the shift towards a more integrated and interdependent world economy, fuelled by declining trade barriers and changes in communication, information and transportation technologies (Black, 1999:21). Hill (2003:6) states that globalization has two main components: the globalization of markets and the globalization of production. South Africa and other African countries

are part of these international trends, as they are extensively involved in the process of globalization. Vermeulen (2002:1) argues that South African companies are carving out a reputation for themselves amongst the world's leading multinational companies. As an example, Table 1.1 illustrates how the South African Breweries became a global player.

Table 1.1: South African Breweries becoming a global brewer (SABMiller plc, 2006:4)

<p>The beginning</p> <p>1895 Foundation of South African Breweries and launch of Castle lager</p> <p>1897 Listing on Johannesburg stock exchange</p> <p>1898 Listing on the London stock exchange</p> <p>1910 Expansion into Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia)</p> <p>Acquisitions in South Africa</p> <p>1956 Ohlsson's, Chandlers Union Breweries</p> <p>1975-79 Old Dutch, Whitbreads, Swaziland breweries, beer interests of the Rembrandt Group – attaining 99% market share</p> <p>Regional and product expansion</p> <p>1978-82 Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland</p> <p>First acquisitions in Europe</p> <p>1988 Compania Cercercera de Canarias in Canary Islands</p> <p>1993 Dreher in Hungary</p>	<p>Global growth begins</p> <p>1993 Uganda</p> <p>1994 Angola, China, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia</p> <p>1995 Poland</p> <p>1996 Romania</p> <p>1997 Ghana, Slovakia</p> <p>1998 Russia</p> <p>1999 Movement of primary listing to London Stock Exchange</p> <p>1999 Czech Republic</p> <p>2000 India</p> <p>2001 El Salvador, Honduras, strategic alliance with Castel Group in Africa</p> <p>Creation of SABMiller</p> <p>2002 Purchasing of Miller Brewing Company, USA</p> <p>2003 Acquisition of Peroni, Italy</p> <p>2005 Merger with Grupo Empresarial Bavaria, South America</p> <p>2007: Distribution operations in over 60 countries</p>
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Once trapped within the confines of borders due to political isolation before 1994, South African companies are now ambitiously spreading their wings and finding new territories to bolster revenues and broaden market share. Africa is viewed as the last big investment opportunity, and it is big. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) asserts that the average return on inward investment for Africa as a whole is four times that of the group of developed countries known as G-7 (Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom and United States), and twice that of Asia (Shelley, 2004:11). The G-7 has since expanded to the G-8 with the inclusion of Russia.

There is increasing investment in Africa by South Africa. This trend is likely to increase in the foreseeable future. Examples of South African multinational organisations include: ABSA, Alexander Forbes, AngloGold, Engen, Holiday Inn, Illovo Sugar, MultiChoice, Old Mutual, Shoprite, South African Airways and

SABMiller. The trend of South African businesses expanding beyond their home territory is set to grow, especially considering successful small national operations led by entrepreneurial owner-managers who find the home market too small (Shelley, 2004:24).

Although globalization has opened opportunities for businesses to increase their revenue base by selling around the world and reducing costs by producing in countries where key inputs are cheap, going global is not without problems. Doing business in foreign countries has unique challenges. One of the most challenging aspects is international human resource management. According to Briscoe (1995:20), “international human resource management is increasingly being recognized as a major determinant of success or failure in international business”. Morley and Collings (2004:489) confirm that human resource management is a key concern in multinational corporations as managers of multinational corporations increasingly realize the importance of people management practices to ensure profitability and viability of their business operations. Stroh and Caligiuri (1998:1), through their research on 60 of the world’s top multinational organisations, found that the effective management of the people side of global business does increase global competitiveness.

Rugman and Hodgetts (2003:329) point out that three basic sources of human capital are available to procure staff for international businesses: *parent country nationals* (citizens of the home country of the international business working abroad), *host country nationals* (local citizens working for the international business in the host country) and *third country nationals* (citizens of a country other than either the home country or the host country working for the international business). Most multinational corporations rely on extensive use of parent country nationals (called expatriates for the purpose of this study) to staff their foreign operations in a host country. Expatriation, however, comes at a cost. The cost of sending a South African expatriate overseas on an international assignment was estimated at around R1 million per year in the year 2000 (Carell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx & Van der Schyf, 2000:163). In current June 2007 value (adjusted with the CPIX index), the equivalent value is R 1, 497, 000. Hawley (2005:2) mentions that the relocation cost



alone of an employee and his family to a foreign country can cost a company in the region of R 500, 000.

While organisations may perceive expatriation as an attractive staffing strategy, they face the challenges of successfully managing an expatriate in a foreign country (host country). Breiden (2003:1) states that anecdotes and reports of professional sojourners struggling during their international assignments demonstrate that a transfer abroad can create substantial risks for the expatriate employee as well as for the multinational corporation. Hill (2003:612) and Özbilgin (2005:132) are of the opinion that a prominent issue in international staffing literature is expatriate failure. Multinational corporations are plagued by the persistent problem of significant rates of premature returns of expatriates. Although early return rates of expatriates vary significantly in different companies, in different industries, in different surveys and in different countries (Briscoe & Schuler, 2004:243-244) and the empirical foundation intensively debated by Harzing (1995:458), most literature on expatriate management suggests unacceptable levels of expatriate failure. Literature suggests that between 16 and 40 percent of American employees sent abroad to developed countries return from their assignments early and almost 70 percent of American employees sent to developing countries return home early (Black, 1999:11; Hill, 2003:612). In addition to the failure rates, 30 to 50 percent of the expatriates who stay at their foreign assignments are considered to be ineffective or marginally effective by their organisations (Hill, 2003:612; Usunier, 1998:93). Tung's (1982:68) work suggests that US-based multinationals experience a much higher expatriate failure rate than either Western European or Japanese multinationals. According to Tung (1982:68), European and Japanese multinationals rarely experience expatriate failure rates above 10 percent. The reasons seem to be that Europeans have more exposure to different cultures and languages. In the case of the Japanese, the reason seems to be generally longer adjustment periods accommodated by longer foreign assignments (Briscoe, 1995:56). Naumann, Widmier and Jackson (2000:227) add another dimension to the high early return rates, by indicating that 25 percent of returned expatriates leave the parent company within one year of repatriation.

Virtually every publication on the topic defines and measures *expatriate failure* as the percentage of expatriates returning home before their assignment contracts expire.



Harzing (1995:458) argues that expatriate failure is more complicated than merely returning home before an international assignment contract has expired. He states that high labour turnover during or shortly after international assignments, and expatriates who fail to perform adequately, are (potentially) more damaging to the multinational organisation than those who return prematurely. Briscoe (1995:57) supports this view by stating that although expatriate failure is usually defined in terms of returning home earlier than a contract requires, or termination of employment during or shortly after a foreign assignment, it could also be defined in terms of:

- Poor quality performance in a foreign assignment.
- Personal dissatisfaction of the expatriate or the family with the international experience.
- Inability to adjust to local conditions.
- Not being accepted by the local nationals.
- Inability to identify and/or train a local successor.

Although in agreement with Harzing and Briscoe, the researcher has, for *the purpose of this study*, defined expatriate failure operationally as the premature return of an expatriate from a host country to the home country or labour turnover while on, or shortly after returning from, a foreign assignment.

In South Africa the full extent of the problem is difficult to determine as research houses, on behalf of individual organisations or specific industries, predominantly do most of the research on expatriate failure. The resulting information is confidential or is very expensive to acquire. However, Hawley (2005:1) states that between 25 and 40 percent of South African expatriate managers leave their international assignments early.

In the light of the above, expatriate failure is worth studying as it appears to influence the operations and cost effectiveness of multinational corporations. Literature indicates that a major cause of expatriate failure is related to adjustment problems experienced by the expatriate and/or the spouse and family (Briscoe, 1995:54; Hill, 2003:613; Tung, 1982:51). Factors contributing to the successful adjustment of an

expatriate and his or her family in a foreign country are thus of great significance to multinational corporations. Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991:291) point out that the past decade has seen an increase in research on international adjustment. Unfortunately, most of the research focused on selective aspects of adjustment, while neglecting other important predictors of adjustment. By integrating the theoretical and empirical components of both the international and the domestic adjustment literature, a more comprehensive understanding of international adjustment may be gained. Such a comprehensive framework integrates job and organisational variables with individual and non-work variables as predictors of international adjustment.

Against this background this research study was undertaken to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the adjustment of expatriates on international assignments.

1.3 RATIONALE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The world's leading multinational organisations have learned from bitter experience that procuring staff for foreign operations is a complex business. The cost of sending expatriates abroad is exorbitant, but worse still, the high percentage of expatriates who default on their contracts because of premature return to the home country or resignation during or shortly after the foreign contract, results in enormous cost to the organisation (Vermeulen, 2002:1). The statistics are so high that companies considering foreign expansion are very cautious. It is estimated that the total cost per failure to the parent company can be as high as three times the expatriate's annual domestic salary, plus the cost of relocation, which in turn is affected by currency exchange rates and the location of the foreign assignment (Hill, 2003:612). Although different figures are put forward for different scenarios, Griffin and Pustay (2002:583) claim that the cost of expatriate failure to a multinational can vary from 40 000 US dollars to 250 000 US dollars, including original training costs, moving expenses and lost managerial productivity, but excluding the decreased performance of the foreign subsidiary itself. This means that if the process of expatriating an employee and his or her family goes wrong, it can be a woefully expensive mistake for the multinational corporation. Expatriate labour turnover, often falling in the range of 20 to 50 percent,



is far higher than equivalent domestic labour turnover (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985:39). Labour turnover of expatriate employees worldwide costs American companies in excess of 2 billion US dollars a year. Furthermore, this figure does not include indirect losses in labour turnover such as lost sales, soured relationships, and loss of goodwill (Naumann *et al.*, 2000:228).

In the light of the investment an organisation makes in an expatriate, and the high cost of premature return and labour turnover of expatriates, it is desirable that researchers identify the reasons for these failures. According to Black (1999), Hill (2003) and Tung (1987), the reasons for expatriate failure are:

- Inability of the spouse to adjust.
- Inability of the expatriate to adjust.
- Family-related problems.
- Expatriate's personality and lack of emotional maturity.
- Inability to cope with the international job and heavier responsibilities in a foreign country.
- Difficulties with the new environment.
- Lack of motivation to work in a foreign country.
- Lack of technical expertise.

Research, to find the causes of poor adjustment, has focused mainly on three general issues:

- Selection of the "ideal" expatriate.
 - Development of cross-cultural training programmes.
 - Spouse or family issues.
- (Naumann, 1993a:62)

Black *et al.* (1991:291) argue that the above is true, but does not present a holistic picture. According to Black (1988:277), expatriate adjustment refers to the level of comfort a professional sojourner experiences during the stay abroad. Even though the adjustment of assignees has long been regarded as an all-encompassing concept, empirical support has been obtained to distinguish between three particular



facets of adjustment: general adjustment, work adjustment and interaction adjustment (Black, 1988:277; Breiden, 2003:2). Black *et al.* (1991:291) argue that integrating job and organisational variables with individual and non-work variables as predictors of international adjustment should provide a comprehensive framework for international adjustment. The findings made in a number of subsequent studies have confirmed the multifaceted conceptualisation of expatriate adjustment and has suggested that some degree of interaction exists between work-related and non work-related facets of adjustment (Shaffer, Harrison & Gilley, 1999:557).

Job attitudes are thought to play a key role in the labour turnover process. Domestic studies have generally found that job attitudes are negatively related to turnover, although this relationship is mitigated by intermediate links. Surprisingly, job attitudes which are important antecedents of turnover domestically, have received little attention in international research (Naumann, 1993a:62). Naumann (1993a:62) notes that given the large body of literature that has linked job attitudes to turnover domestically, it is unfortunate that the research examining expatriate job attitudes is almost non-existent, since there appears to be no obvious reason that the relationship between job attitudes and turnover should be weaker in an international context. Research has consistently indicated that a variety of job/task characteristics and organisational characteristics are directly related to employee attitudes and labour turnover (Bluedorn, 1982:135; Cotton & Tuttle, 1986:55). Therefore, according to Naumann (1993a:62), characteristics of expatriates' jobs and organisations are likely to shape their work attitudes. Although a variety of unique international factors may incrementally influence job attitudes during a foreign assignment, many of the variables shaping job attitudes may be relevant for both a domestic as well as an international assignment. Studies by Lee (2005), Lee and Liu (2006; 2007) and Naumann *et al.* (2000) have identified a positive relationship between favourable job attitudes and the tendency to complete a foreign assignment and remain with the multinational corporation.

Research efforts to identify predictors of expatriate adjustment focus on individual and non-work variables. A more comprehensive view of international adjustment can be gained by integrating job and organisational variables with individual and non-work variables as predictors of international adjustment.



The aim of this research study *is to investigate empirically the variables influencing expatriate managers' job attitudes and to examine the relationships between job attitudes and expatriate managers' intention to return prematurely or resign during or shortly after foreign assignments. The findings should provide a better understanding of the role of job and organisational variables in the expatriate adjustment process. The value of this study will be the identification of organisational best practices that could be used as a framework for solving the problem of job and organisational adjustment that lead to expatriate manager failure. The study will add further value by contributing to the issue of how little, in relative terms, is known about many of the mentioned concepts in the "international" as opposed to the "domestic" context.*

The purpose of this study *is to present the identified practices in an organisational best practice framework, to facilitate expatriate job and organisational adjustment.*

The rationale behind this study *is to investigate previous research findings that job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement (together labelled job or work-related attitudes) are variables in the labour turnover process. Virtually all labour turnover models include job attitudes as predictors of the intention to quit (Naumann et al., 2000: 228).*

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND HYPOTHESIS

The discussion of the background and the rationale of the study, contributes the following to the research problem:

- The early return and labour turnover rates of expatriates are high (Black, 1999; Hawley, 2005; Hill, 2003; Naumann *et al.*, 2000; Özbilgin 2005).
- The costs of failed international assignments are substantial (Griffin & Pustay, 2002; Hawley, 2005; Hill, 2003; Naumann *et al.*, 2000).
- Expatriate adjustment is a multifaceted process that is influenced by many variables (Black *et al.*, 1991).
- Failure to adjust to the foreign country and international circumstances will lead to premature return or labour turnover (Hill, 2003; Tung, 1982).

- Job attitudes, which are important antecedents of labour turnover, have received little attention in international research (Birdseye & Hill, 1995; Black *et al.*, 1991; Lee, 2005; Naumann, 1993a; Naumann *et al.*, 2000).

The above is condensed into the following feasible **research questions**:

- *What is the relationship between job attitudes and expatriate managers' intention to return prematurely from foreign assignments or to resign during or shortly after foreign assignments? and*
- *What specific aspects of job attitudes are perceived by expatriate managers as critical to their adjustment while on foreign assignments?*

The **research problem** is stated as:

- *If a negative relationship between job attitudes and expatriates' intention to return prematurely from foreign assignments or to resign during or shortly after foreign assignments is established; and;*
- *If the specific factors of job attitudes that are perceived by expatriate managers as critical to their adjustment in foreign assignments are known; then;*

[This is the unit of analysis and refers to the phenomenon the researcher wants to investigate.]

- *It could be possible to identify those factors controlled by the multinational corporation, which would facilitate positive job attitudes amongst expatriate managers. If the findings provide sufficient information, the identified factors could be summarized in a framework of organisational best practice – enhancing expatriate managers' job and organisational adjustment.*

[This is the possible end result which the researcher wishes to achieve. This is the contribution of the research to the field of organisational behaviour.]

- *Facilitating positive job attitudes could increase expatriates' chances of completing their foreign assignments and reduce labour turnover, thus saving multinational organisations substantial costs.*

[This is the practical value of this research to organisational society.]

The research problem is designed to examine the relationship between the **independent variables**: *job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement*, and the **dependent variable**: *the intention to leave a foreign assignment prematurely or the intention to resign during or shortly after a foreign assignment*.

The **Hypotheses** guiding the research are:

H1: A negative relationship exists between job satisfaction and the intention to return prematurely from a foreign assignment or to resign during or shortly after a foreign assignment.*

H2: A negative relationship exists between organisational commitment and the intention to return prematurely from a foreign assignment or to resign during or shortly after a foreign assignment.*

H3: A negative relationship exists between job involvement and the intention to return prematurely from a foreign assignment or to resign during or shortly after a foreign assignment.*

*The rationale behind the hypothesised relationships is that they have been derived from existing theories that have already been established in previous research (See Bluedorn, 1982:135; Cotton & Tuttle, 1986:55).

Job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement were measured by the researcher to determine their influence on expatriates' intention to return prematurely or intention to resign from international assignments. A causal relationship was assumed, as a variation in the dependent variable was expected if the independent variables changed. The direction of the relationship was assumed to be negative, as enhanced job attitudes were believed to reduce the intention to return prematurely or the intention to resign during or shortly after an assignment.

1.5 DEMARCATION OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Domestic adjustment literature has focused on pre- and post-entry adjustment variables, especially those related to the job and the organisation, and the mode and degree of adjustment, whereas the international adjustment literature has focused on

individual and non-job variables and on the degree of adjustment. A more comprehensive understanding of international adjustment can be gained by integrating both literatures rather than by simply extrapolating from the domestic adjustment, or only relying on the extant cross-cultural adjustment literature (Black *et al.*, 1991:291).

This research study focused on the job and organisational variables as predictors of international adjustment only, as the aim was to identify the factors controlled by the organisation that could predict expatriate adjustment. A search on the NEXUS database system for current and completed South African research, revealed no records of any South African research directly related to the focus of this study (Online database, accessed on 15/2/2005).

The literature reviewed by Naumann *et al.* (2000:228) indicated that both job/task and organisational characteristics are significantly related to adjustment to a work environment. The amount of energy spent studying job attitudes is implicitly based upon the idea that satisfied workers, at all organisational levels, are important contributors to an organisation's efficacy and ultimately to long-term success. Conversely, dissatisfied workers are implicitly thought to make a smaller contribution to the organisation. According to this logic, one of the major areas of behavioural research has focused on the relationship between job attitudes and employee labour turnover.

Naumann (1993a:62) argued that although domestic literature has vigorously investigated the role of job attitudes in the labour turnover process, the role of job attitudes of expatriates appears to be a major shortcoming in expatriate labour turnover research. This is surprising as there is no reason to believe that the role of job attitudes will be any different in an international corporation from that in a domestic corporation. Three job attitudes seemed appropriate for investigation, as they have received much attention in labour turnover research: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement. The mediating role of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement borrows from the labour turnover model developed by Bluedorn (1982:135). The model posits that organisational, job-related and person-related variables are predictors of job

satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement, and these variables in turn are related to the propensity to leave. The intention to leave/quit is a chief determinant of labour turnover. Since job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement appear to interact in determining intention to leave (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:262), it seems that insight into these three job attitudes can contribute significantly to a more comprehensive understanding of the adjustment process of expatriates.

Figure 1.1 is a schematic integration of both anticipatory and in-country literatures regarding adjustment. The highlighted section indicates *the focus of this study* within this comprehensive framework.

Anticipatory adjustment	In-country adjustment
<div> <p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Previous experience ➤ Accurate expectations ➤ Selection profile ➤ Family support </div> <div> <p>Organisational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Selection mechanisms and criteria ➤ Training and support </div>	<div> <p>Individual skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self orientation ➤ Other orientation ➤ Perceptual skills ➤ Cultural toughness </div> <div> <p>Non-working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Spouse and family ➤ National culture </div> <div> <p>Organisational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organisational culture ➤ Social support ➤ Logistical assistance ➤ Socialisation </div> <div> <p><i>Job/ Task characteristics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Challenging work</i> ➤ <i>Opportunities for growth</i> ➤ <i>Role clarity</i> ➤ <i>Relationships with co-workers</i> ➤ <i>Remuneration</i> </div>

Figure 1.1: Demarcation of the research study

This study will be based upon the perceptual data on adjustment of expatriates as reported by respondents. The issue of non-work variables, individual variables and expatriate selection and training were not examined, as these variables have been extensively researched by other South African researchers.

The scope and process of the research is stated in the following Figure 1.2:

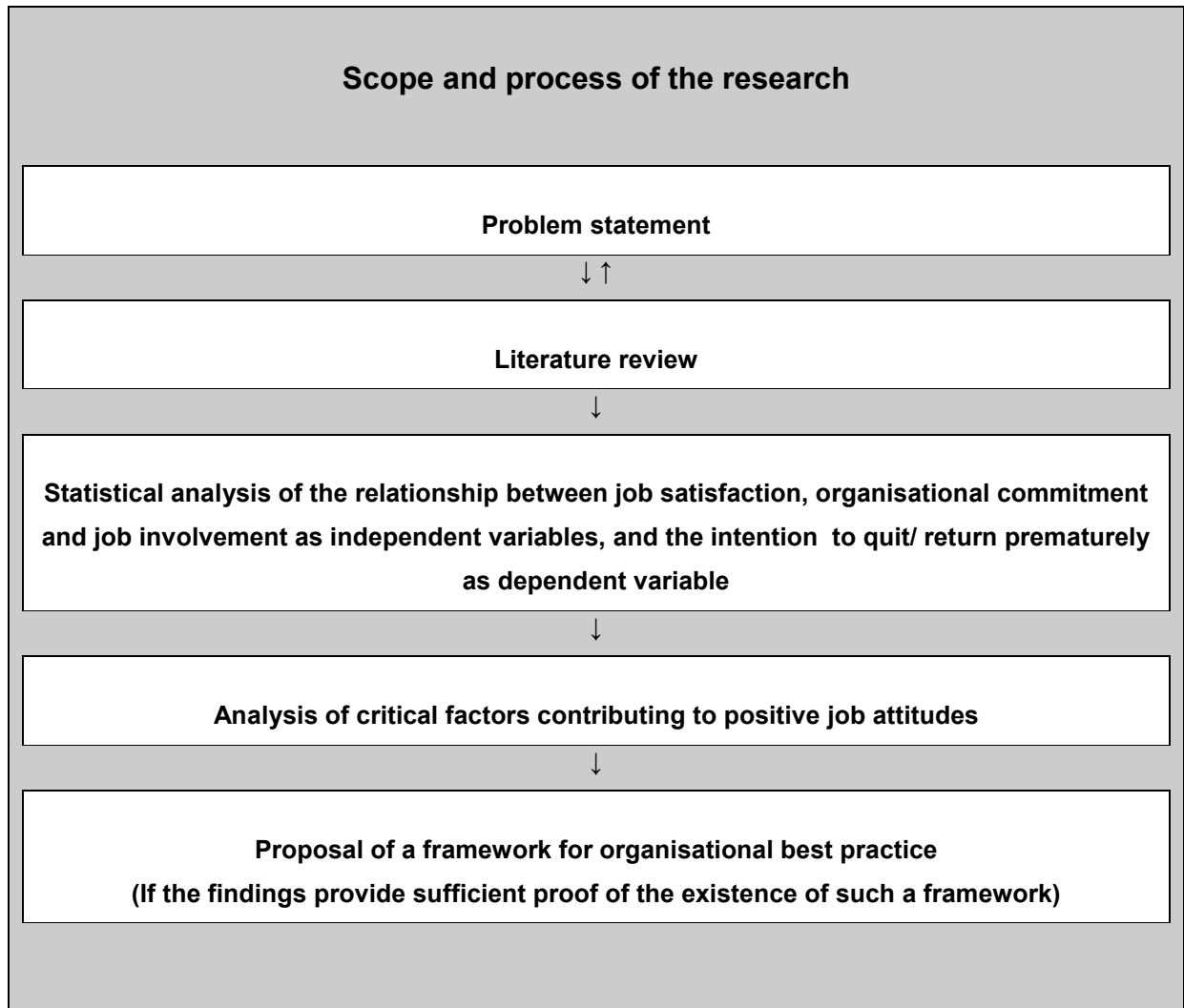


Figure 1.2: Scope and process of the research study

As seen, the study is built on an established body of literature relating to employee labour turnover. Relationships specified for job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement are well established areas in domestic research. The objective is to investigate these elements within an international framework.



1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The **primary objective** of the study is:

- *To investigate empirically, variables influencing expatriate managers' job attitudes; and*
- *To examine statistically, the relationships between job attitudes and expatriate managers' intention to return prematurely from a foreign assignment or to resign during or shortly after a foreign assignment.*

The **secondary objective** of the study is:

- *To propose a framework of organisational best practice that will encourage positive job attitudes of expatriate managers on international assignments. Organisational practices that focus on fostering positive work attitudes should improve the probability of adjustment during foreign assignments, thereby reducing the risk of expatriate failure. The framework should be a guideline and be employed as a control mechanism for South African companies during the adjustment phase of expatriate managers on foreign assignments.*

The results of the study would contribute to the international human resource management body of knowledge and could lead to substantial operational improvements and cost saving for multinational and global corporations, because expatriate failure rates should decrease.

1.7 THEORETICAL MILIEU OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

When comprehension of a phenomenon is sought, a proposition is needed as a point of departure for the research. Section 1.7 serves as the point of departure for this research study. A synopsis of the literature regarding globalization and internationalisation, staffing policies in international human resource management, expatriation and adjustment on foreign assignments will be supplied and the job attitudes relevant to the study will be operationally defined. A more comprehensive discussion of the relevant job attitudes will follow in chapter 2.

In order to provide the reader with a route map through the literature reviews in section 1.7 and chapter 2, herewith an introduction to the propositions to be tested:

- Expatriation is a favourite but expensive staffing strategy in internationalisation.
- Expatriate failure is of great concern for multinational corporations.
- Expatriate failure could be attributed to international adjustment problems.
- A comprehensive understanding of international adjustment can be gained by integrating job and organisational variables; and individual and non-work variables.
- Job attitudes provide clues to an employee's behavioural intentions or inclinations to act in a certain way.
- Specific aspects of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement facilitate positive job attitudes.
- Job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement play a key role in the labour turnover process.
- The behavioural intention to leave or stay seems to be the strongest predictor of actual labour turnover.
- The negative relationship specified between job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement and the intention to leave are well established.

1.7.1 Globalization and internationalisation

Rapid changes are occurring in the global economy. National economies are becoming integrated into a single, global economic system. In today's economic environment, corporations are realizing that, to grow, they are obliged to expand their operations to foreign countries. For business this, in many ways, is the best of times. Globalization has increased the opportunities for organisations to increase their profits by selling around the world (globalization of markets) and reduce costs by producing in nations where key inputs are cheap (globalization of production). Successful international assignments seem to benefit the organisations' reputation and increase profits (Hill, 2003:5, 31). However, managing an international business is very different from managing a domestic business for at least four reasons: (1) countries are different; (2) the range of problems that confront a manager in an international business is wider and the problems themselves more complex than

those that a manager has to confront in a domestic business; (3) managers in an international business must find ways to work within the limits imposed by governments' intervention in the international trade and investment system; and (4) international transactions involve converting money into different currencies (Hill, 2003:31).

Firms progress through five stages as they internationalise their operations: (1) domestic operations; (2) export operations; (3) subsidiaries or joint ventures; (4) multinational operations; and (5) transnational operations. The more advanced the stage, the more human resource management practices need to be tailored to suit diverse cultural, economic, political and legal environments (Briscoe, 1995:23-31; Gomez-Mejia, Balkin & Cardy, 2001:556-558). Firms use four basic strategies (refer to Figure 1.3) to enter and compete in the international environment: an international strategy, a multidomestic strategy, a global strategy and a transnational strategy. Each of these strategies has its advantages and disadvantages. The appropriateness of each strategy varies depending on the extent of pressures for cost reduction and local responsiveness (Black, 1999:21; Hill, 2003:422).

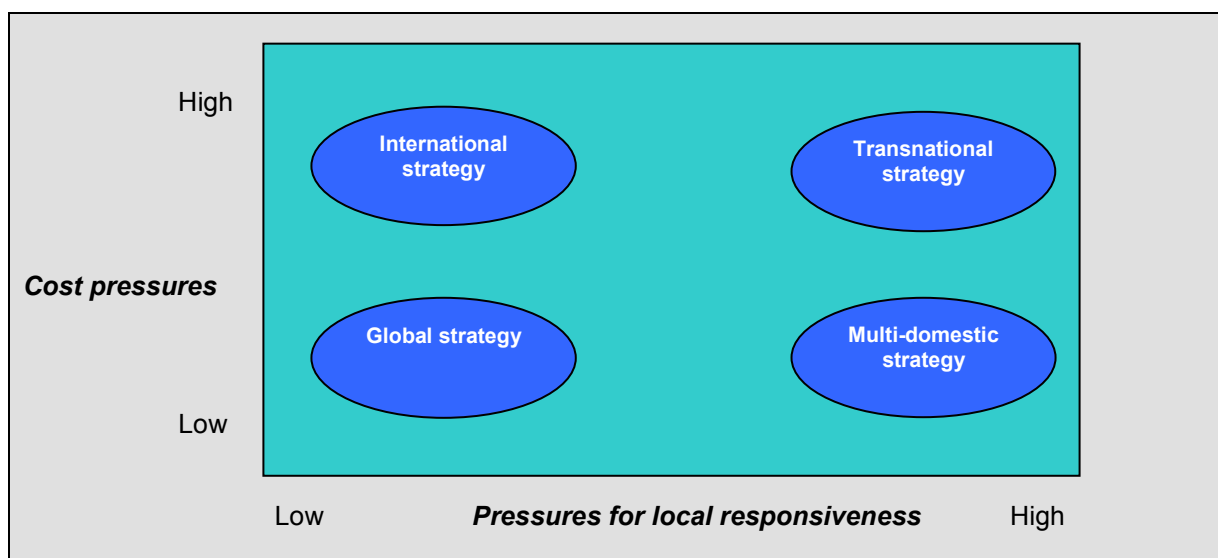


Figure 1.3: Four basic strategies (Hill, 2003:422)

Both globalization and internationalisation have increased the demand for individuals who can function effectively in a foreign environment (Katz & Seifer, 1996:1). According to Malmqvist (2004:26), the mobility of individuals all around the world involves substantial financial and managerial commitment. This investment in human

resources (expatriates) needs to be secured. The process of procuring sufficient human resources is labelled international human resource management. Rugman and Hodgetts (2003:329) define international human resource management as the process of selecting, training, developing and compensating personnel in international positions.

1.7.2 International human resource management (IHRM)

Scullion (in Morley & Collings, 2004:489) comments that international human resource management can be viewed “as the human resource management issues and problems arising from the internationalisation of business, and the human resource management strategies, policies and practices which firms pursue in response to the internationalisation of business”. Although the strategic role of human resource management is complex in domestic firms, it is even more complex in international business. Staffing, training and development, performance evaluation and compensation are complicated by profound differences between countries in their labour markets, culture, legal systems, economic systems, etc. Building a team of employees who can function successfully in multinational organisations requires the human resource management function to deal with a host of issues not typically encountered in domestic settings. According to Briscoe (1995:10-12), Dowling and Welch (in Morley & Collings, 2004:489), international human resource management differs from its domestic counterpart in terms of:

- Being responsible for a larger number of functions and activities. Examples could be international taxation, international relocation, host government relations and language translation services.
- Requiring a broader perspective.
- Becoming more involved in employees' lives.
- Having to change emphasis as the employee mix of parent and host country nationals varies according to different locations and over time.
- Experiencing more exposure to problems and difficulties.
- Coping with diverse external influences.
- Having to accommodate new complexities in decision-making.



Many of the problems encountered by multinational organisations are related to the human resource management department. Success requires human resource management policies and procedures to be congruent with the firms' international strategy as well as the formal and informal structures and controls. Staffing policies, training and development programmes and compensation practices must, therefore, be aligned with the firms' international strategy (Hill, 2003:606-607). Briscoe (1995:41) also emphasises the importance of integrating international human resource management into the strategic management of the multinational corporation. An important component of such integration involves global planning for manpower needs.

Table 1.2 indicates the appropriate staffing policy for each international strategy.

Table 1.2: Comparison of the three major staffing policies (Hill, 2003:611)

Staffing policy	Strategic fit	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ethnocentric	International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Overcomes lack of qualified managers in host nation ➤ Represents one culture ➤ Helps transfer core competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Produces resentment in host country ➤ Can lead to cultural myopia
Polycentric	Multi-domestic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alleviates cultural myopia ➤ Is inexpensive to implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Limits career mobility ➤ Isolates headquarters from foreign subsidiaries
Geocentric	Global and transnational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Uses human resources efficiently ➤ Helps build strong culture and informal management network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ National immigration policies may limit implementation ➤ Expensive

1.7.3 Staffing policies in international human resource management

Staffing policies are concerned with the selection of employees for particular jobs. On one level, this involves selecting individuals who have the skills to do particular jobs, while on another level it is a tool for developing and promoting organisational culture. Organisational culture is defined as a system of shared actions, values and beliefs that develops within an organisation and guides the behaviours of its members (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1997:267). The staffing responsibilities for firms that operate in a multinational environment are very complex. According to Hill (2003:609), three major types of staffing policies exist in international businesses: ethnocentric, polycentric and geocentric (see Table 1.2). Hodgetts and Luthans (2003:483-484) support the three policies mentioned by Hill (2003:609), but add a fourth: regiocentric.

When businesses go global, determining the optimal mix of host-country employees and parent-country employees becomes a critical staffing issue. In managing its overseas subsidiaries, a business can select an ethnocentric, polycentric, geocentric or regiocentric staffing policy. Two staffing policies in international management – the ethnocentric (all key management positions are filled by parent-country nationals) and the geocentric (the best people for key jobs are sought throughout the organisation, regardless of their nationality) – rely on extensive use of expatriate managers (Dessler, 2000:622; Gomez-Mejia *et al.*, 2001:558-559). A polycentric staffing policy requires host-country nationals to be recruited to manage subsidiaries, while parent-country nationals occupy key positions at corporate headquarters (Hill, 2003:610). The regiocentric policy relies on local managers from a particular geographic region to handle operations in and around that area (Hodgetts & Luthans, 2003:484).

An expatriate is an employee who is not a citizen of the country in which the firm is located (host-country), but is a citizen of the country in which the organisation is headquartered (parent country) (Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly & Konopaske, 2006:76; Hill, 2003:607; Mondy, Noe & Premeaux, 1999:625; Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997:32).

The main reasons for using expatriates are:

- Co-ordination and control.
- Transmission of corporate culture (values).
- Transfer of technology.
- Development and transfer of organisational capabilities.
- Organisational learning enhanced.
- Management development.

(Carell *et al.*, 2000:162; Hill, 2003:612-613)

According to Torbiorn (in Furnham, 2004:651), multinationals have three basic motives when posting expatriates to foreign countries:

- The control function (to ensure that operations in other countries are being carried out as planned and to build staff loyalty).
- The know-how function (to provide technological and administrative services).
- The contact/coordination function (to evaluate and transmit salient information between company operations).

Thus, business expatriates have a difficult role because they are required to act in accordance with the expectations of the parent company as well as fulfil local expectations. The two are often incompatible. Problems with these professional roles include unclear, ambiguous or even incompatible expectations on the part of the parent company, communication difficulties, a clash between company and personal interests and values, uncertainty about the future, and problems with adjustment of spouse and family. Collings, Scullion and Morley (2007:199) confirm that the literature highlights a number of well-articulated advantages associated with the deployment of expatriates in the staffing of international subsidiaries and operations. Added to the advantages already mentioned above, a benefit is utilizing people known to the organisation, who have already built a level of trust with the owners. This established relationship addresses issues that result from the separation of ownership and management.



1.7.4 Expatriation

Katz and Seifer (1996:1) are of the opinion that the demand for individuals who are able to function abroad successfully continues to increase as more and more organisations move outside domestic borders to do business in the international arena. Toh and DeNisi (2005:132) also report that multinational companies' need for expatriate assignments shows little sign of abating. According to Morley (2004:359), this situation forces organisations to determine the meaning, the value and the significance of the international assignment for both the organisation and the expatriate. This will lead to more effective management of the expatriate assignee.

Maintaining an expatriate is clearly a costly and complicated process. This cost will vary depending on the inconvenience to the employee, distance from the home country and family obligations. Expenses for relocation may include bonuses for inconvenience, education for children, visits back home and additional expenses to maintain a standard of living equal to home (Carell *et al.*, 2000:163). If the expatriate fails in the assignment, the exercise becomes even more costly. Losses and damages resulting from expatriate failure are both direct and indirect. According to Collings *et al.* (2007:203), direct costs include salary, training costs, and travel and relocation expenses. Indirect costs include the soured relationship with host country organisations and loss of market share. Indirect costs are considered the most significant costs by multinationals as a tarnished reputation in key strategic foreign markets can be extremely detrimental to developing a successful international business. Toh & DeNisi (2005:132) add the following indirect costs: loss of business and productivity, damage to relationships with other employees, customers, suppliers and host government officials, as well as the financial and emotional costs borne by the expatriate and his or her family. The cost involved in a failed international assignment can cost a South African multinational corporation between R 500,000 and R 2,000,000, depending on the expatriates' salary and whether family transfers were involved (Hawley, 2005:2). Failure will incur hidden costs and have an effect on the self-esteem and family situation of the expatriate. Future performance may be severely affected by the failed foreign assignment (Carell *et al.*, 2000:299).

International expatriate failure rates correlate well with South African experiences. Hawley (2005:1) claims that between 25 and 40 percent of South African expatriate managers who are given foreign assignments, end these assignments early, and as much as 50 percent of those who do not return early, function at low levels of efficacy. According to PSG International Compensation (2002), the percentage of South African expatriates who return prematurely from their international assignments is 23 percent. Although more recent statistics for the South African situation could not be found by the researcher, a telephonic conversation with Kevin Hawley, Managing Director of Expatriate Preparation, on 2005-02-16 confirmed that there is no indication that the situation has improved dramatically.

It is clear that although expatriate assignments do offer a number of potential benefits, expatriation is a costly process. It is thus imperative that expatriate assignments are managed effectively. This explains why there are numerous studies on expatriate failure. According to Collings *et al.* (2007:209), the challenges associated with international assignments have resulted in international assignments gaining a degree of critical attention from scholars in the field. It is argued that international organisations and academics need to take a more strategic and holistic view of expatriate management.

The last decade has seen some significant changes in the patterns of global staffing. There appears to be a steady increase in the use of women in international assignments (Tung, 2004:243), an influx of dual-career couples into the potential expatriate candidate pool (Harvey & Buckley, 1998:118) and an increase in alternative forms of international assignments, although there are still a large number of traditional expatriates employed in multinational corporations (Scullion & Brewster, 2001:353). Collings *et al.* (2007:205-207) identify the following alternative forms of international assignments: short-term international assignments, international business travellers, commuter and rotational assignments and global virtual teams.

Swaak (1995:47) asserts that over 90% of the respondents in a survey cited failure to adjust as the key reason for expatriate failure. This correlates with studies done by Tung (1982). Tung asked her sample of multinational managers to indicate reasons for expatriate failure. Consistently problems related to adjustment were cited.

According to Tung (1982:60), these reasons were prevalent among United States, European and Japanese multinationals. Hill (2003:613) states that since Tung's studies a number of other studies have confirmed that adjustment problems remain the major reason for the continuing high levels of expatriate failure. Hawley (2005:2) indicates that similar findings are true for South African expatriates.

Louis (1980:226) discusses the changes, contrasts, and unexpected events during an international assignment of which expatriates must make sense. Expatriates will need to make sense of not only the new organisational facility, but also of the foreign country. The host country may compare favourably to the expatriate's home country, but have different political, economic and monetary systems, a different language, and different norms and standards of behaviour. Expatriate job assignments require adaptation to multiple environments.

Difficulties in expatriate adjustment are related not only to cultural differences, but also to a diffuse feeling of loss in the absence of the familiar home-country habits and context ("homesickness"). Research suggests that the most common reasons for expatriate failure is career blockage, culture shock (the inability of a manager's spouse to adjust to a foreign environment and the manager's own inability to adjust to a foreign environment), lack of pre-departure training, overemphasis on technical qualifications instead of personal abilities and family problems (Gomez-Mejia *et al.*, 2000:561-563).

As the major role player in expatriate failure seems to be adjustment, a critical task for multinational and global organisations is to manage the adjustment process of expatriates efficiently.

1.7.5 U-curve theory of adjustment

The U-curve framework has been used to describe the cross-cultural adjustment process of expatriate employees within a host culture. The U-curve theory (UCT), depicted in Figure 1.4, includes the following four stages: honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment, and mastery stage.

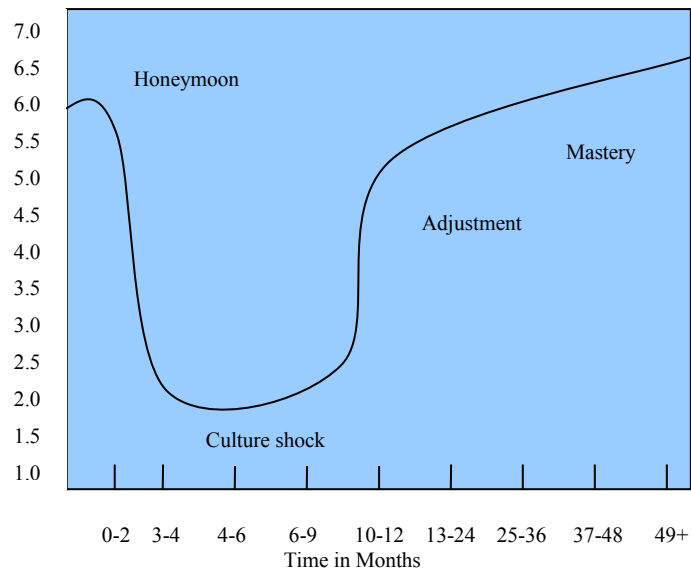


Figure 1.4: The U-curve theory of adjustment (UCT) (Lee, 2005:275)

The **honeymoon stage** occurs during the first weeks after arrival in the host country. Individuals are fascinated by the new and different culture. It is a period of fascination – all the different aspects of the new culture are viewed with interest and curiosity. The first reaction to a new culture is generally a positive one.

When the newcomers start to cope with the real conditions on a daily basis, the second stage begins - the **culture shock stage**. This stage is characterized by frustration and hostility towards the host nation and its people. Culture shock refers to the frustration and confusion, that results from being constantly subjected to strange and unfamiliar cues about what to do and how to get it done. The culture shock does not occur during the early days of the trip. Thus, while many assignments begin positively, the experience soon becomes negative. To be successful the expatriate has to cope effectively with the culture shock. It is a period in which the manager may miss the familiar surroundings of the home office. Simple daily events can fuel stress and dissatisfaction. Being denied access to a favourite snack food or leisure activity because it is unavailable in the host country, for example, can become extremely frustrating. Usunier (1998:89) argues that expatriates experience a loss of oral pleasure because of the absence of their native language and eating and drinking habits in the host country. This affects the overall

satisfaction with the expatriate experience negatively. Inability to cope with the culture shock will inevitably lead to expatriate failure.

In the **adjustment stage** the individual gradually adapts to the new norms and values of the host country therefore the individual is able to act more appropriately than before.

Finally, the **mastery stage** is reached in which the individual is able to function effectively in the new culture. By this stage the expatriate has made reasonable adjustments to the new culture and is able to deal effectively with it. Although this stage seldom reaches the same heights of excitement as the fascination stage, a successful transition implies that the expatriate operates at manageable levels of a normal lifestyle.

(Furnham, 2004:657-662; Gibson *et al.*, 2006:78-76; Lee, 2005:275; Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997:33-34; Usunier, 1998:90)

1.7.6 Factors influencing expatriate adjustment

To get the highest return from the huge investment in expatriate employees, an employer has to maximize the potential for expatriate success. Morley and Flynn (2003:43) assert that expatriates' experiences are impacted by various aspects when they are on international assignments. While several issues are at play during an international assignment, a commonly identified cause of expatriate failure in nearly all literature has been the inability to adjust to the new environment and job by the expatriate and his/her family. Thus, one of the most challenging issues facing international human resources management is managing the successful adjustment of expatriates and their families.

Yavas (2001:61) defines adjustment as "a subjective/psychological state that refers to the changes which individuals actively engender or passively accept in order to achieve or maintain satisfactory states within themselves". Cross-cultural adjustment has been defined as "the degree of psychological adjustment experienced by the individual or the degree of comfort, familiarity, and ease that the individual

experience towards the new environment". Expatriate adjustment (literature also refers to acculturation or adaptation) is a form of cross-cultural adjustment.

Empirical studies in which the international adjustment of expatriate managers was investigated revealed six components of the cross-cultural adjustment process: (a) organisational selection mechanisms; (b) previous overseas experience; (c) training and support programmes; (d) individual skills; (e) non-work factors; and (f) job and organisational factors. The first three dimensions describe issues that exist before expatriates leave their home countries. The remaining three, together with training and support programmes, deal with issues that become relevant after the expatriates arrive at their foreign assignments (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:76-81; Lee, 2005:275).

Hawley (2005:1-2) is of the opinion that successful expatriate contracts start with the selection process. Selection of expatriates does not solely depend on technical competence, but rather on having the profile required to handle a tough assignment. Gibson *et al.* (2006:76) list the factors that increase the expatriate's chance for success as: strong desire to work overseas, knowledge of overseas culture, well-adjusted family situation, complete support of spouse and behavioural flexibility. According to Mendenhall and Oddou (1985:39), four other relevant dimensions that are often related to successful expatriate acculturation, (and should therefore be included in the expatriate selection profile), are: (a) self-orientation, (b) other-orientation, (c) perceptual skills and (d) cultural toughness. Mendenhall and Oddou (1985:39) recommend a multidimensional approach to the selection of expatriates' that could link behavioural tendencies to positive overseas performance.

Punnett (1997:243) points out that an organisation could enhance the chances of expatriate success by including the spouse in the expatriate process. Substantial research has indicated that spouses are particularly important to the success of the expatriate process. Copeland and Norell (2002:255) state that expatriation can be especially stressful for accompanying spouses, due to competing family responsibilities, social isolation, socio-political constraints, and changes in their social and/ or work status. Brewster and Pickard (1994:2) declare that it is often the spouse's failure to adjust that leads to the early termination of a foreign assignment. Although the role of the spouse is thoroughly debated in literature it seems as if



many organisations still make assumptions about the spouse's willingness to follow. Furthermore, it is known that family life-styles are changing and that the number of dual-career couples is increasing (Harvey & Buckley, 1998:99). Statistics of failed contracts in South Africa indicate that a major percentage (up to 80 percent) of the failures can be attributed to reasons related to the spouse (Hawley, 2005:2). It is thus crucial to include a profile of a suitable spouse in the selection process.

According to Gibson *et al.* (2006:79), once the groundwork for a successful overseas assignment has been laid by choosing expatriates with characteristics associated with expatriate success, the next step is to train and prepare these managers properly for their upcoming assignments. A study by Black and Mendenhall (Brewster & Pickard, 1994:2) found a positive correlation between cross-cultural training and the development of appropriate perceptions towards members of another culture. Training correlates positively with adjustment and there is a positive relationship between thorough preparation and expatriate performance.

Although the value of training has been debated in literature it seems that many expatriates receive no training before they are sent on a foreign assignment and no support while they are on a foreign work assignment (Hill, 2003:617). This view is shared by Toh and DeNisi (2005:132). They found that multinational corporations had a poor record regarding the provision of training for expatriates and their families.

Usunier (1998:92) maintains that when reviewing the modalities of adjustment, it is imperative to identify two main categories: those relating to personal and family life (personal adjustment), and those relating to work and job assignment (work role adjustment).

A recent study by Lee (2005:273) found significant evidence of the important role of job satisfaction. This research concludes that expatriates who are satisfied with their jobs in the host country are likely to adjust more effectively. This study also reveals that job satisfaction during the foreign assignment is a strong predictor of adjustment. Lee (2005:273) adds that expatriate adjustment is enhanced by a high degree of organisational socialization in the host country. Research by Naumann *et*

al. (2000:227) also indicates a positive relationship between favourable work attitudes and the tendency to complete a foreign assignment.

According to Black *et al.* (1991:291), a comprehensive understanding of international adjustment can be gained by integrating job and organisational variables; and individual and non-work variables. Figure 1.5 represents a comprehensive theoretical framework for international adjustment.

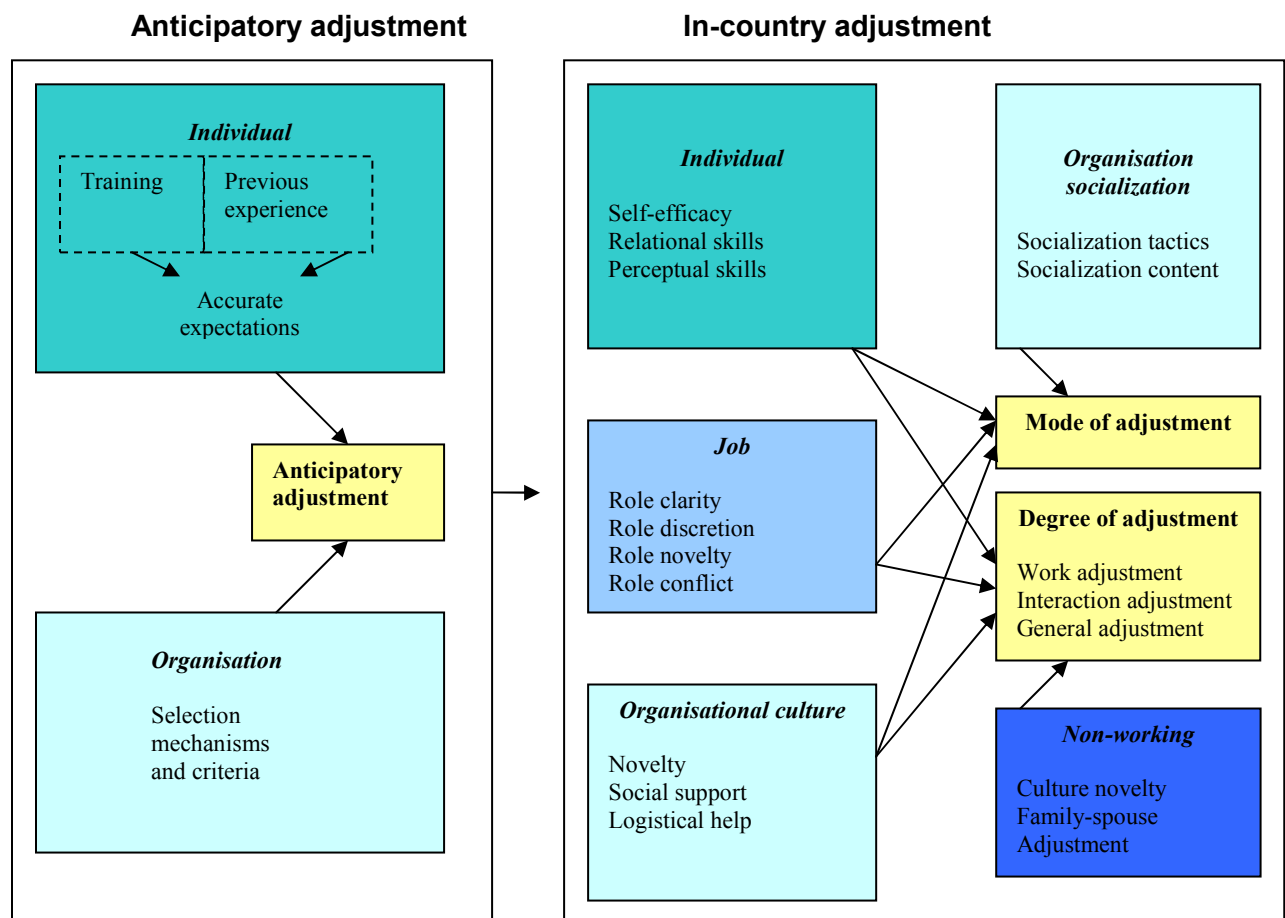


Figure 1.5: Framework of international adjustment (Black, Mendenhall and Oddou, 1991:303)

Research on domestic work assignments has consistently indicated that a variety of job/task characteristics and organisation characteristics are related to employees' job attitudes. Characteristics of expatriates' jobs and organisations are also likely to shape job attitudes during foreign assignments. Although a variety of unique international factors may incrementally influence job attitudes, many of the variables

shaping job attitudes may be the same domestically and internationally (Naumann, 1993a:153). Black (1999:280) confirms the role of job factors in adjustment. Role novelty, role ambiguity, role conflict and role overload are considered adjustment-inhibiting factors that increase the uncertainty, unfamiliarity, unpredictability and uncontrollability of the new work role.

Similar to other frameworks in which the relationship between individuals and various types of settings have been identified, the model of expatriate adjustment rests on the assessment of correspondence between individuals and their respective environments (Breiden, 2003:6). The value of unpacking the concept of adjustment and presenting it as a multi-dimensional concept is confirmed by a study conducted by Morley and Flynn (2003:53).

Expatriate adjustment does not end here. Gibson *et al.* (2006:81) point out that the final phase of adjustment occurs when the expatriate returns to the parent country. The process of being reintegrated into domestic operations is referred to as repatriation. And although it may seem straightforward, repatriation can cause culture shock similar to the shock that occurred when the expatriate originally went overseas. Some critical issues that repatriation training has to deal with are: financial management, re-entry shock and career management. Briscoe and Schuler (2004:65) opine that because repatriation can be as difficult as expatriation, it is as important to manage the repatriation process effectively.

Having successfully adjusted, expatriates find expatriation a developmental experience and report having gained tangible skills that add value to their organisations (Lee, 2005:274). If adjustment is neglected, adjustment problems manifest in stress inside and outside of an expatriate's professional life and lead to an intention to leave the assignment prematurely or to quit the organisation (Yavas, 2001:60).

1.7.7 Job attitudes

Thousands of attitudes exist, but for *the purpose of this study the focus will be on work-related attitudes/ job attitudes only.* (See the reason for this decision in section



1.5 of the chapter – demarcation of the research study) Job attitudes as predictors of labour turnover have been the focus of extensive research. Job attitudes are a central element in virtually all labour turnover models. Conceptual and empirical studies have generally found that job attitudes are negatively related to turnover, although the relationship is moderated by intermediate linkages (Naumann *et al.*, 2000:230). Three job attitudes have received much attention in turnover research: job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job involvement.

What follows is a short discussion of the above three attitudes. A more detailed discussion will appear in chapter 2 of the research report. It is critical to clarify the operational definitions of these job attitudes as they are the variables under investigation. The operational definitions give a precise indication of what the fundamental characteristics of the attitudes are and also indicate how to measure and observe them in order to identify them.

Job satisfaction may be defined as “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences” (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997:98). Job satisfaction can be viewed as an overall attitude or it can be viewed as being multidimensional. For the purpose of this study job satisfaction is viewed as multidimensional. The elements of job satisfaction are classified as: (a) those directly related to job content and (b) those that are part of job context (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:258). The most commonly known five facets of job satisfaction as measured by the Job Descriptive Index are:

- The job itself – responsibility, interest and growth.
- Quality of supervision – technical help and social support.
- Relationships with co-workers – social harmony and respect.
- Promotion opportunities – chances for further advancement.
- Pay – adequacy of pay and perceived equity.

(Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997:99)

Organisational commitment (loyalty) refers to an employee's belief in the organisation's goals and values, desire to remain a member of the organisation and loyalty to the organisation. While job satisfaction may be subject to significant short

term variation, organisational commitment is typically more stable and enduring (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:259).

Job involvement (dedication) is defined as the extent to which individuals identify psychologically with their jobs. It is suggested that, for individuals who display high job involvement, their jobs are important to their self-image because these individuals identify with, and care about, their jobs. Job involvement is more stable and enduring than organisational commitment (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:259).

Attitudes are reasonably good predictors of behaviour. They provide clues to an employee's behavioural intentions or inclinations to act in a certain way. Positive job attitudes help to predict constructive behaviour while negative job attitudes help to predict undesirable behaviour (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:260).

1.7.8 Work-related attitudes as predictors of expatriate adjustment

Neglecting the role of job attitudes in the expatriation process appears to be a major shortcoming of expatriate labour turnover research. Naumann (1993a:56) claims that only a few researchers have linked these attitudes to either withdrawal intentions or actual labour turnover.

Research that was done by Babakus, Cravens, Johnson and Moncrief (1996:33) found that job satisfaction that was related to an intention to leave was preceded by role conflict and role ambiguity. Babakus and his colleagues also found a significant relationship between a lack of organisational commitment and the intention to leave. In addition to the attitudes; job satisfaction and organisational commitment, job involvement has been proved in management literature to be a determinant of the intention to leave (Naumann *et al.*, 2000:229).

Since job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement appear to predict the tendency to leave a foreign assignment early or resign from a multinational corporation these three attitudes will be investigated further in the next chapter.



1.8 CHAPTER LAYOUT

The reporting of the research study is organised in the following manner:

➤ **Chapter 1: The problem and its setting**

The problem and its setting will include the background to the study, the rationale behind and importance of the study, identification of the research problem and hypothesis, the demarcation of the study, the objectives of the study and the theoretical milieu of the study.

➤ **Chapter 2: Literature review**

The literature review will include operational definitions and relevant information regarding job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement. Relevant research will be cited and commented upon while the relationship between job attitudes and the intention to leave, and actual labour turnover will be investigated.

➤ **Chapter 3: Rationale of the research design and method**

The chosen research design and methods will be discussed as well as the reasons for selecting this design and methods. The discussion will include the research approach, type of research design, the measuring instrument, sampling, data management and analysis as well as the validity of the chosen design and methods.

➤ **Chapter 4: Research methodology**

The methodology section will include a description of the respondents and the methods chosen for sampling, data management, data analysis and data interpretation. The reliability of the measuring instrument will also be discussed.

➤ **Chapter 5: Results and findings**

The results section will constitute a discussion on the findings as derived from the data analysis. The main results following from the data analysis will be presented here through tables, graphs and diagrams.



➤ **Chapter 6: Discussion of the findings**

The discussion will include a summary of the findings, an interpretation of these findings, a *proposed framework of organisational practices to facilitate positive job attitudes of expatriates*, conclusions and generalization of the research findings.

➤ **Chapter 7: Final conclusions and recommendations**

The research process will be reviewed and limitations will be identified. The contribution of the study and the implications for South African multinational corporations will be discussed. Suggestions and recommendations will be made for future research in this final chapter.

➤ **Appendix**

An example of the measurement instrument will be included.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter sets the scene for the rest of the research report. As the world economy becomes more global, globalization presents international human resource management challenges to the organisation such as high failure rates and high labour turnover rates during international assignments. This situation brings the following researchable project to the field of organisational behaviour: *“to investigate empirically, variables influencing expatriate managers’ job attitudes and to examine the relationships between job attitudes and expatriate managers’ intention to return prematurely or resign during or shortly after foreign assignments. The findings will provide a better understanding of the role of job and organisational variables in the expatriate adjustment process. The study will add value as the findings will be used to identify organisational best practice to solve the problem of expatriate failure”*.

The researcher has indicated that although adjusting to a foreign assignment is a holistic process, an important aspect to facilitate adjustment is to instil positive job attitudes. The research project explores this under-researched aspect of expatriate adaptation. The topic area is thus expatriate adjustment. The general problem is the high failure rate and high labour turnover rate during international assignments while

the specific research question is the relationship between job attitudes (job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement) and an expatriate's intention to return prematurely or resign during or shortly after the foreign assignment.

In chapter 2, the theoretical foundation of the independent variables: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement, and the dependent variable: the intention to return from a foreign assignment prematurely or the intention to quit will be discussed. Previous related research will also be cited and commented upon, and the relationship between the variables will be investigated.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

It is said that those who conduct research belong to a community of scholars, each of whom has journeyed into the unknown to bring back an insight, a truth or a point of light. What they have recorded of their journeys and findings will make it easier for others to explore the unknown: to help others to discover an insight, a truth or a point of light.

In order to conceive a clear understanding of the research problem a review of the relevant literature is necessary. This research study aimed to investigate empirically variables influencing expatriate managers' job attitudes and to examine the relationships between job attitudes and expatriate managers' intention to return prematurely or resign during or shortly after a foreign assignment. The literature review focuses on **job attitudes** and their key role in the **labour turnover** process.

The *purpose of this chapter* is to review the accumulated knowledge related to attitudes in general as well as the constructs of the job-attitudes: job satisfaction, job involvement and organisational commitment. The behavioural manifestations of job attitudes, the measurement of job attitudes and the researched relationship between job attitudes and labour turnover will also be discussed.

2.2 ATTITUDES

Dawes and Smith (in Kruger, Smit & Le Roux, 2005:151) pointed out that psychologists have found it difficult to formulate an acceptable definition of an attitude, as it is not clear whether an attitude should be considered to be a simple or multiple phenomenon. The simple definition describes an attitude as a favourable or unfavourable feeling towards an object. Supporters of this view are of the opinion that the fundamental component of an attitude is feelings or emotions. An example of the simple definition can be found in Robbins and Judge (2007:74), who state that

attitudes are evaluative statements or judgments – either favourable or unfavourable – concerning objects, people or events. Breckler (1984:1191) views attitudes as a multiple phenomenon, comprising three components: cognition, affect and behaviour. An example of a multiple definition can be found in Gibson *et al.* (2006:104) who define an attitude as “a positive or negative feeling or mental state of readiness, learned and organised through experience, that exerts specific influence on a person’s response to people, objects and situations“. This definition has the following implications: “(1) attitudes are learned; (2) attitudes define our predispositions towards given aspects of the world; (3) attitudes provide the emotional basis of our interpersonal relations and identification with others; and (4) attitudes are organised and are close to the core of personality” (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:104).

Robbins and Judge (2007:74) claim that viewing attitudes as made up of cognition, affect and behaviour, is helpful in understanding their complexity and the potential relationship between attitudes and behaviour. Figure 2.1 illustrates how the three components of an attitude are closely related.

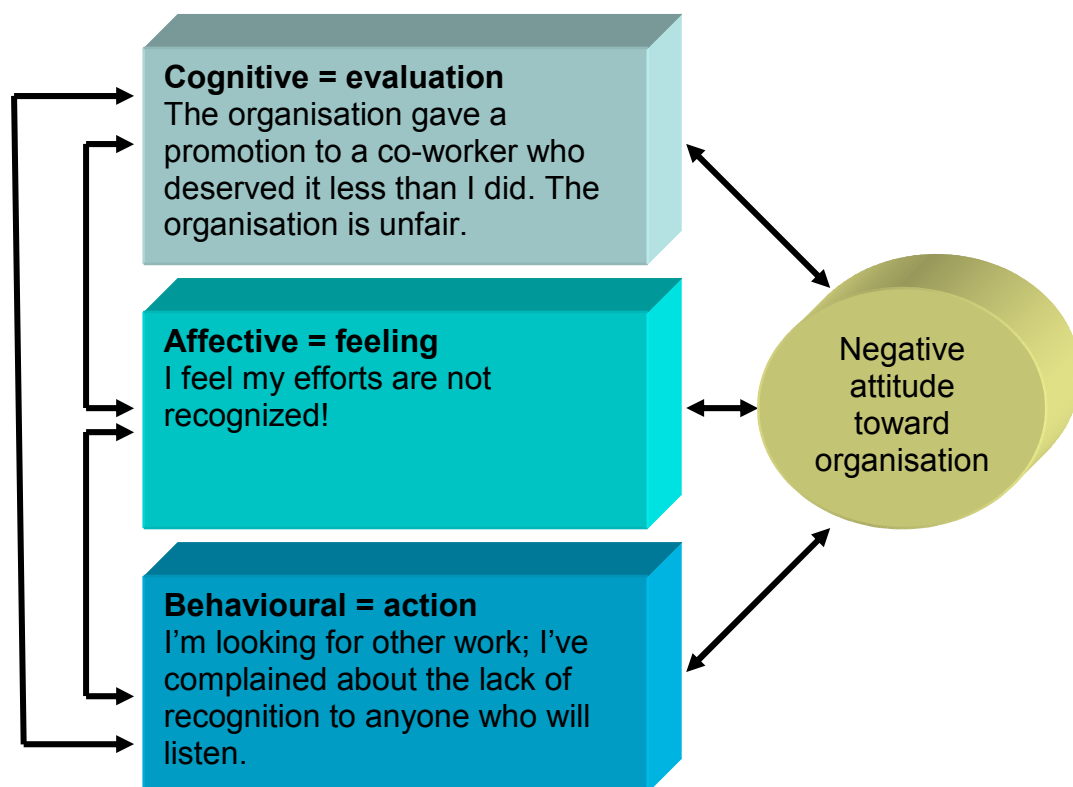


Figure 2.1: The components of an attitude (Robbins and Judge, 2007:75)

In this example, an employee did not get a promotion he thought he deserved; a co-worker got it instead. The employee's attitude towards this situation is illustrated as follows:

- **Cognitive** (the employee thought he deserved the promotion).
- **Affective** (the employee feels his efforts are not recognized).
- **Behavioural** (the employee is looking for another job).

Robbins and Judge (2007:74) argue that although we often think that cognition causes affect which then triggers behaviour, in reality these components are often difficult to separate. As Rosenberg (in Gibson *et al.*, 2006:105) states: "cognition, affect and behaviour determine attitudes and attitudes determine cognition, affect and behaviour". Werner (2007:62) adds that knowledge of the three components is useful when measuring or trying to change attitudes.

According to Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:60) and Werner (2007:61), attitudes are influenced by values. Values are principles or standards that we adopt as behavioural guidelines for all situations. Attitudes reflect our response to a specific situation, object or person therefore attitudes focus on specific people or objects. Conversely values have a more general focus (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998:136). Recognising employees' efforts is a value; your positive or negative feeling about your job because of the recognition you receive is an attitude. It is important to remember that an attitude, like a value, is a hypothetical construct i.e. one never sees, touches or actually isolates an attitude. Attitudes are inferred from the things people say – their opinions and what they do – their behaviour (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997:60). Attitudes can be stable or unstable. Werner (2007:62) contends that stable or central attitudes are very closely linked to our values therefore they are less likely to change, whereas unstable or peripheral attitudes are more likely to change as our experiences and knowledge expands. Cook and Hunsaker (2001:181) support this view by stating that some attitudes are persistent and enduring whereas other attitudes, like all other psychological variables, are subject to change. Baron and Byrne (1991) maintain that general and weak attitudes do not predict behaviour clearly, while specific and strong attitudes or attitudes that are very important to someone, predict behaviour much more reliably.

Figure 2.2 shows attitudes accompanied by antecedents and results. According to Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:60), the belief and value antecedents in the figure form the cognitive component of an attitude. Beliefs represent ideas about someone or something and the conclusions people draw about them. “My job lacks responsibility” is a belief shown in the figure. The beliefs may or may not be accurate. “Responsibility is important” is a corresponding aspect of the cognitive component, which reflects an underlying value. The affective component of an attitude is a specific feeling regarding the personal impact of the antecedents. This is the actual attitude itself, such as “I don’t like my job.” The behavioural component is an intention to behave in a certain way based on your specific feelings or attitudes. This intended behaviour is a result of an attitude and is a predisposition to act in a specific way, such as “I’m going to quit my job.”

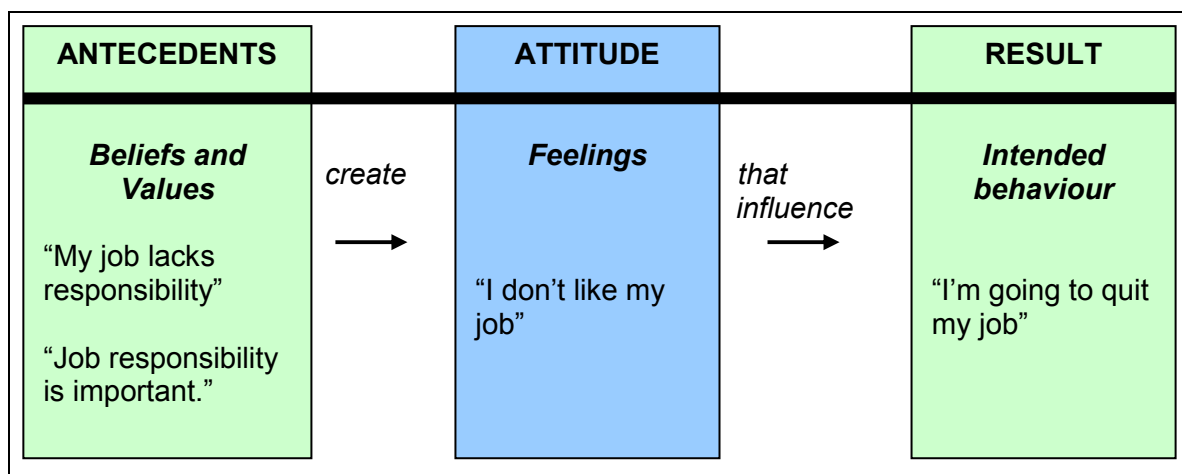


Figure 2.2: A work-related example of the three components of an attitude (Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn, 1997:61)

Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:60) argue that the link between attitudes and behaviour is tentative. Although an attitude results in intended behaviour, this intention may or may not be carried out in a given situation. Even though attitudes do not always predict behaviour, the link between attitudes and potential or intended behaviour is important for managers to understand. It is not uncommon to hear concerns expressed about someone’s “bad attitude”. These concerns typically reflect displeasure with the behavioural consequences with which the bad attitude is associated. Unfavourable job attitudes can result in costly labour turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and even impaired physical or mental health. Therefore one

of the manager's responsibilities is to recognize attitudes and to understand both their antecedents and their potential implications.

According to Robbins and Judge (2007:75), research has generally concluded that people seek consistency among their attitudes, and between their attitudes and their behaviour. When individuals seek to reconcile divergent attitudes and align their attitudes and behaviour, they appear rational and consistent. When there is an inconsistency, forces are initiated to return the individual to a state of equilibrium in which attitudes and behaviour are consistent. This can be done by altering either the attitudes or the behaviour, or by developing a rationalization for the discrepancy (Kruger *et al.*, 2005:158).

In 1957 Leon Festinger proposed the theory of cognitive dissonance (Lahey, 2007:622). This theory attempts to explain the link between attitudes and behaviour. The term cognitive dissonance refers to any incompatibility that an individual might perceive between two or more of his or her attitudes, or between his or her behaviour and attitudes. For example, an expatriate manager might be dissatisfied with his or her job (attitude), yet not decide to quit his or her job (behaviour). Festinger predicts that such an inconsistency results in discomfort and a desire to reduce or eliminate it by (1) changing the underlying attitude; (2) changing future behaviour; or (3) developing new ways of explaining or rationalizing the inconsistency (Cook & Hunsaker, 2001:182; Elliot & Devine, 1994:382). The degree to which people will attempt to create consistency will be determined by the importance of the elements creating dissonance, the degree of influence the individual believes he or she has over the elements, and the magnitude of the rewards that may be involved in dissonance. If the element creating dissonance is relatively unimportant, the pressure to correct this imbalance is not significant. The degree of influence that individuals believe they have over the element will have an impact on how they will react to dissonance. If they perceive dissonance as something over which they have no control, they are unlikely to be receptive to attitude change. While dissonance exists, it can be rationalized and justified. Rewards also influence the degree to which individuals are motivated to reduce dissonance. High rewards accompanying high dissonance tend to reduce the tension inherent in dissonance. The rewards act to reduce dissonance by increasing the

consistency side of the individual's balance sheet. These moderating factors suggest that, just because individuals experience dissonance, they will not necessarily move directly towards consistency, that is, towards elimination of dissonance. If the issues underlying the dissonance are of minimal importance; if an individual perceives that the dissonance is externally imposed and is substantially uncontrollable or if rewards are significant enough to offset the dissonance, the individuals will not be under great pressure to reduce the level of dissonance. The greater the level of dissonance (after the moderating factors are taken into account) the more likely it is that the individual will change behaviour. (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:106; Lahey, 2007:622-623; Robbins & Judge, 2007:76-77).

In the proceeding discussion, the researcher has presented the debate that **attitudes affect behaviour**. Robbins and Judge (2007:77) claim that early research work assumed that attitudes were causally related to behaviour, i.e. that the attitudes that people hold, determine how they behave. Common sense, too, suggests a positive relationship between attitudes and behaviour. However, in 1969, this assumed relationship between attitudes and behaviour (A-B) was challenged by Wicker (Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2003:75). Based on an evaluation of a number of studies that investigated the A-B relationship, Wicker concluded that attitudes were unrelated to behaviour or, at best, only slightly related. More recent research has demonstrated that attitudes significantly predict future behaviour and confirms Festinger's original belief that the relationship can be enhanced by taking moderating variables into account (Kraus, 1995:58; Sutton, 1998:1317).

Robbins and Judge (2007:78) identified the most powerful moderators as: (1) the importance of the attitude; (2) its specificity; (3) its accessibility; (4) whether there are social pressures; and (5) whether a person has direct experience with the attitude. Important attitudes are ones that reflect fundamental values, self-interest or identification with individuals or groups that a person values. Attitudes that individuals consider important tend to show a strong relationship to behaviour. The more specific the attitude and the behaviour, the stronger the link between them. For instance, asking someone specifically about her intention to stay with the organisation for the next six months is likely to predict turnover for that person more accurately than if you asked her how satisfied she was with her pay. Attitudes that



are easily remembered are more likely to predict behaviour than attitudes that are not accessible to memory. Interestingly, you are more likely to remember attitudes that are frequently expressed. Discrepancies between attitudes and behaviour are more likely to occur where social pressures to behave in certain ways hold exceptional sway. Finally, the attitude-behaviour relationship is likely to be much stronger if an attitude refers to something of which the individual has direct personal experience.

Another view is that that **behaviour influences attitudes**. Robbins *et al.* (2003:75) report that although most attitude-behaviour studies yield positive results, researchers have achieved still higher correlations by pursuing another direction – looking at whether or not behaviour influences attitudes. In this view, called the self-perception theory, when asked about an attitude toward some object, individuals often recall their behaviour relevant to that object and then infer their attitude from their past behaviour. Self-perception theory, therefore, makes sense of an action that has already occurred rather than as a device that precedes and guides action. Contrary to the cognitive dissonance theory, attitudes are just casual verbal statements. When people are asked about their attitudes and they don't have strong convictions or feelings, self-perception theory says they tend to create plausible answers (Robbins & Judge, 2007:78-79; Robbins *et al.*, 2003:75). The self-perception theory is well supported. While the traditional attitude-behaviour relationship is generally positive, the behaviour-attitude relationship is as strong. This is particularly true when attitudes are vague and ambiguous. If you have had few experiences regarding an attitude issue or have given little previous thought to it, you will tend to infer your attitudes from your behaviour. However, when your attitudes have been established for a while and are well defined, those attitudes are likely to guide your behaviour (Tybout & Scott, 1983:474).

Another approach to job attitudes is the **social learning approach** developed by Albert Bandura (Furnham, 2004:303). According to Albert Bandura, people acquire new behaviour by imitating role models (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:161). Olson and Zanna (1993:117) state that the origins of most attitudes are obvious: "We learn them directly from our personal experiences and we learn them from others". Baron and Byrne (1991) are also of the opinion that attitudes and behaviour are formed through

observation and imitation of other people's behaviour, as well as a result of direct personal experiences. According to Furnham (2004:304), social learning theory claims that employees use other people as sources of information for selecting appropriate attitudes and behaviours. Employees' attitudes, at least in part, are thus copied from, reflected or modelled on the attitudes of other co-workers. By observing co-workers, workers form their attitudes towards the organisation, the job as a whole and specific job facet. People perceive certain co-workers, usually those with similar jobs and interests, or those who are believed to be successful or powerful, as role models, and base their own attitudes on what they believe theirs to be. The theory claims that job satisfaction is not determined internally, but externally. Several studies conducted by Weiss (Furnham, 2004:304) examine the social learning of work attitudes. Weiss and Shaw found that subjects who overheard positive comments during task execution had more favourable attitudes after performing the task than did those who overheard negative comments (Weiss & Shaw, 1979:126). Precisely how long these positive attitudes last is not known, nor are the causes, of the various individual differences that Weiss and Shaw observed, known. Social learning appears, though, to be a means by which people develop attitudes.

From the above debates, it can be concluded that employee attitudes are important to organisations as they are reasonably good predictors of behaviour. They provide clues to an employee's behavioural intentions or inclinations to act in a certain way. Positive job attitudes help to predict constructive behaviour while negative job attitudes help to predict undesirable behaviour. When attitudes are negative, they are a sign of underlying problems and a contributory cause to forthcoming difficulties in an organisation, whereas management desires favourable attitudes as they tend to be connected with some of the positive outcomes that managers want.

2.3 JOB ATTITUDES

Furnham (2004:204) argues that because work is such an important part of people's lives, quite naturally people have strong, complex and diverse attitudes towards it. Most of the research in organisational behaviour has been concerned with three attitudes related to one's job and the organisation: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement (Robbins & Judge, 2007:79; Werner, 2007:334).

These work-related attitudes contain positive or negative evaluations that employees hold about aspects of their work environment. As attitudes are important in organisations because of their behavioural component, it makes sense to try to understand these attitudes. A job attitude that is currently attracting attention from researchers is perceived organisational support. This attitude will be mentioned briefly as it is not part of the stated research question in this study, but it does have an influence on expatriate adjustment.

2.3.1 Job satisfaction

Rayton (2006:139) noted that job satisfaction has been the most heavily researched job attitude over the last fifty years. This resulted in job satisfaction being a primary concept in most work behaviour and motivation theories (Smucker & Kent, 2004:27). When people speak of employees' attitudes, more often than not they mean job satisfaction. In fact, the two are frequently used interchangeably. Locke (in Naumann, 1993a:62) defines job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". Spector (1997) states that job satisfaction can be considered a global feeling about the job (univariate concept) or a related constellation of attitudes about various aspects or facets of the job (multidimensional concept). Werner (2007:334) points out that job satisfaction is a measure of the feeling towards work of a specific individual rather than that of a group of workers. A person with high job satisfaction reveals positive attitudes towards the job, while one who is dissatisfied with his or her job reveals negative attitudes towards the job.

According to Cohrs, Abele and Dette (2006:364), theoretical conceptualizations on the determinants of job satisfaction can be divided into a situational approach, a dispositional approach and an interactionist approach. According to the situational approach, job satisfaction reflects certain characteristics of the job (favourable job characteristics should lead to higher job satisfaction). In the dispositional approach, job satisfaction is a function of individual dispositions. Some individuals will have higher job satisfaction than others, irrespective of working conditions. Situational and dispositional approaches are not mutually exclusive because they are integrated into the interactionist approach, conceptualizing the interplay between situational and

dispositional variables. The interactionist approach is better known in literature as the person-job fit approach. This approach concludes that for different persons, different situational characteristics inspire job satisfaction (Schneider, 2001:141).

An obvious example of the situational approach is the 'Job Characteristics Model' of Hackman and Oldman. This model concludes that job satisfaction depends on five core job characteristics: task identity, task significance, skill variety, autonomy and feedback (Robbins & Judge, 2007:227). A meta-analysis study conducted by Fried and Ferris (1987:287) shows that the five job characteristics relate significantly to job satisfaction. The dispositional approach is supported by results that suggest job satisfaction is moderately stable over time and across job changes (Staw & Ross, 1985:57). This is influenced by individual variables, such as personality (Judge, Bono & Locke, 2000:237). Positive correlations have been found by Judge and Bono (2001:80) with the core self-evaluations (self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, internal locus of control and emotional stability). These are conceptualized as feelings about the self that have a general effect on emotional reactions to the environment. Judge and his colleagues (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002:530) found interesting correlations between job satisfaction and the 'Big Five personality factors' - neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Lahey, 2007:460). In a meta-analysis by Judge *et al.* (2002:538) neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness emerged as unique predictors of job satisfaction.

Salanick and Pfeffer (1978:224) claim that job attitudes are developed through interaction with other workers within the context of the work environment. Furnham (2004:297) states that the context of the work environment is multidimensional, with the major constructs being job/task characteristics, organisational characteristics and personal characteristics.

- **Job/ task characteristics.** Aspects such as overall workload, skill variety, autonomy, feedback and the physical nature of the work environment.
- **Organisational characteristics.** Aspects such as the reward system (the perceived equity of pay and promotions), supervision and decision-making practices, and perceived quality of supervision.



- **Personal characteristics.** Aspects such as personality, self-esteem, ability to tolerate stress and general life satisfaction probably determine job satisfaction.

The interaction of these constructs collectively results in an environment unique to a particular organisation and set of employees (Lee & Liu, 2006:754). Job attitudes (the variable under study during this research project) may thus result from the characteristics of the expatriate (the population in the study) in conjunction with the job/task characteristics and organisational characteristics.

Kreitner and Kinicki (1998:206-207) note that five predominant models of job satisfaction specify its causes:

- **Fulfilment of needs.** These models propose that satisfaction is determined by the extent to which the characteristics of a job allow an individual to fulfil his or her needs.
- **Discrepancies.** These models propose that satisfaction is a result of met expectations. Met expectations represent the difference between what an individual expects to receive from a job and what he or she actually receives. When expectations are greater than what is received, a person will be dissatisfied. In contrast, the model predicts that individuals will be satisfied when they attain outcomes above and beyond expectations.
- **Value attainment.** Satisfaction results from the perception that a job provides opportunities for fulfilment of an individual's important work values. Managers can thus enhance employee satisfaction by structuring the work environment and its associated rewards and recognition to reinforce employees' values.
- **Equity.** In this model, satisfaction is a function of how "fairly" an individual is treated at work. Satisfaction results from one's perception that work outcomes, relative to inputs, compare favourably with a significant other's outcomes/inputs.
- **Trait and genetic components.** Some employees appear to be satisfied in a variety of job circumstances, whereas others always seem dissatisfied. The trait/genetic model is based on the belief that job satisfaction stems from both personal traits and genetic factors. As such, this model implies that stable individual differences are just as important in explaining job satisfaction as are characteristics of the work environment.

Since the purpose of this study is to identify factors, related to the job and the organisation, that may predict job satisfaction, two dimensions of the work environment – job/task characteristics and organisational characteristics needed to be investigated. Although the third dimension (dispositional approach) of the work environment – personal characteristics – does not receive attention in this research study, it is worthwhile to mention the role of personality in attitudes.

Furnham (2004:296-298) argues that it seems self-evident that there should be major individual differences in job satisfaction. Gibson *et al.* (2006:104) assert that attitudes are an intrinsic part of a person's personality. The issue of, whether personality (and other individual differences) is a main factor, or interacts with the job to produce job satisfaction, comes to mind (Judge & Larsen, 2001:67). Furnham (2004:296) presents the following equation: $JS = f (P*J*PJE*E)$. JS = Job satisfaction, P = Personality, J = Job characteristics, PJF = Person-job-fit and E = Error. The equation implies that:

- If it can be shown that some personality types are more satisfied (or dissatisfied) irrespective of the nature of the job, presumably the main effect of personality accounts for a good deal of the variance.
- If it can be shown that some jobs cause their incumbents to be more satisfied (or dissatisfied) irrespective of the personality (skills, abilities, etc.) of the incumbents. The main effect of the job probably accounts for a good deal of the variance.
- If it can be shown that a particular fit (or misfit) between a person (personality) and the job (demands) leads to particular sources of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The interaction between person and job is presumably the major source of the variance.

Unfortunately, the equation is made somewhat more complicated by the fact that both personality and job satisfaction are multidimensional. There will be considerable debate on whether the P or J factor accounts for the bigger percentage of the variance. Steel and Rentsch (1997:873) support the role of personality by arguing that the expression of job satisfaction seems to be a relatively stable individual trait even across different job situations. The dispositional model of job satisfaction states

that people who are satisfied with one job tend to be satisfied with other jobs as well over a long period of time (Judge & Larson, 2001:67; Judge *et al.*, 2000:237). Strumpher, Danana, Gouws and Viviers (1998:99) identify a positive but complex correlation between negative and positive dispositions and the various components of job satisfaction.

According to Naumann (1993a:63), job satisfaction is not an univariate concept, but rather a multidimensional concept. Job satisfaction has been conceptualized as satisfaction with various dimensions of the job, but the number of dimensions differs significantly. Depending on the particular theorist one reads or the measures that one adopts, there may be varying numbers of dimensions of job satisfaction, although the dimensions are related. Kreitner and Kinnicki (1998:206) supply the following examples:

- Researchers at Cornell University developed the widely-used Job Descriptive Index (JDI) to assess one's satisfaction with the following five job dimensions: the work itself, pay, promotions, co-workers and supervision (Smith, Kendall & Hulin, 1969).
- Researchers at the University of Minnesota conclude there are 20 different dimensions underlying job satisfaction. These dimensions are rated on a standardized scale and then added up to create an overall job satisfaction score (Weiss, Davis, England & Lofquist, 1967).
- Hackman and Oldman identify five core job characteristics that are associated with job satisfaction: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback from the job (Hackman & Oldman, 1975).

It is clear that job satisfaction is influenced by many different factors. This implies that a person can be relatively satisfied with one aspect of his or her job and dissatisfied with one or more other aspects of the job. If a person is satisfied with most of the factors that he or she considers relevant, the person will experience job satisfaction.

While numerous dimensions have been associated with job satisfaction, the following in particular are crucial characteristics (Schleicher, Watt & Greguras, 2004:165):

- **The job itself.** The extent to which the job provides the individual with stimulating tasks, opportunities for learning and personal growth, and the opportunity to be responsible and accountable for results.
- **Promotional opportunities.** The opportunities for promotion and advancement in the organisation, not necessarily associated with hierarchical progress in the organisation, but including opportunities for lateral movement and growth.
- **Supervision.** The ability of the supervisor to provide emotional and technical support and guidance with work-related tasks.
- **Co-workers.** The extent to which fellow workers are technically, emotionally, and socially supportive.
- **Working conditions.** The extent to which the general work context facilitates job satisfaction. The context may refer to psychological as well as physical conditions.
- **Pay.** The remuneration received and the degree to which this is viewed as equitable compared to that of another person in a similar position within or outside the organisation.

As seen from the above debate, job/task characteristics play a major role in job satisfaction. Two organisational behaviour researchers, Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham, played a central role in developing the job characteristics approach (Hackman & Oldman, 1975:159-170). According to Kreitner & Kinnicki (1998:202–209), these researchers tried to determine how work can be structured so that employees are internally (or intrinsically) motivated. Internal motivation occurs when an individual is “turned on to one’s work because of the positive internal feelings that are generated by doing well, rather than by being dependent on external factors for the motivation to work effectively.” These positive feelings propel a self-perpetuating cycle of motivation shown in Figure 2.3. Research overwhelmingly demonstrates a moderately strong relationship between job characteristics and satisfaction (Morley & Heraty, 1995:56-63). A study by Morris (1996:59-60) of managerial, technical and professional employees in manufacturing, services and government also indirectly

support the job characteristics model. Managers are likely to find noticeable increases in the quality of performance after a job redesign programme. Results from 21 experimental studies revealed that job redesign resulted in a median increase of 28% in the quality of performance (Kelley, 1990:191-208). Two separate meta-analyses support the practice of using the job characteristics model to help managers reduce absenteeism (Fried & Ferris, 1987:287) and labour turnover (McEvoy & Cascio, 1985:342). These results are supported by studies conducted by Glick, Jenkins and Gupta (1986) and Loher, Noe, Moeller and Fitzgerald (1985).

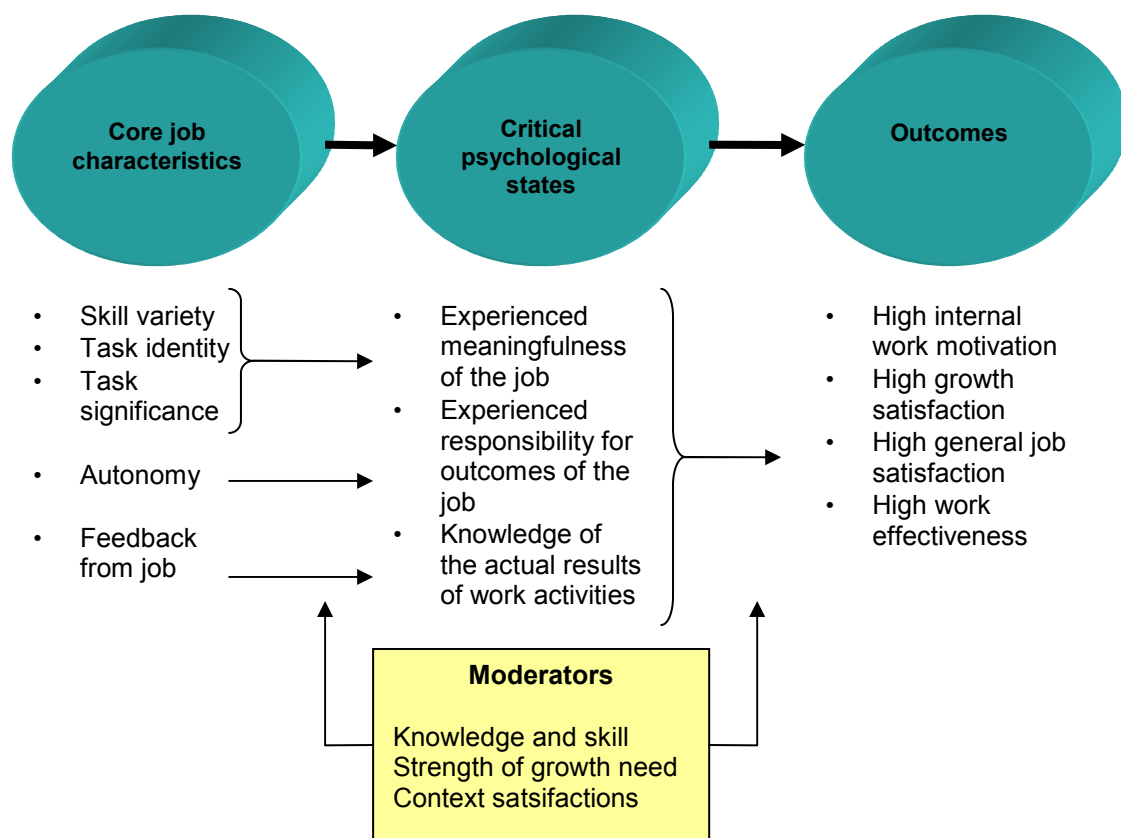


Figure 2.3: The job characteristics model (Robbins and Judge, 2007:227)

Robbins and Judge (2007:226-228) and Smit and Cronje (1999:326-328) describe the major components of the model as follows:

- **Experienced meaningfulness.** The individual must perceive his work as worthwhile and important.
- **Experienced responsibility.** The individual must believe that he/she is solely accountable for the outcomes of his/her efforts.



- **Knowledge of results.** The individual must be able to determine, on some fairly regular basis, whether or not the outcomes of his/her work are satisfactory.

These psychological states generate internal work motivation. Moreover, they encourage job satisfaction and perseverance, because they are self-reinforcing. If one of the three psychological states is ignored, motivation wanes. In general terms, core job dimensions are common characteristics found to a varying degree in all jobs. These psychological states are fostered by the presence of five core job dimensions. Three of the job characteristics combine to determine experienced meaningfulness of the job. Experienced responsibility is elicited by the job characteristic of autonomy, while knowledge of results is fostered by the characteristic of feedback.

- **Skill variety.** The extent to which the job requires an individual to perform a variety of tasks that require him or her to use different skills and abilities.
- **Task identity.** The extent to which the job requires an individual to perform a whole or completely identifiable piece of work. In other words, task identity is high when a person works on a product or project from beginning to end and sees a tangible result.
- **Task significance.** The extent to which the job affects the lives of other people within or outside the organisation.
- **Autonomy.** The extent to which the job enables an individual to experience freedom, independence and discretion in both scheduling and determining the procedures used to complete the job.
- **Feedback.** The extent to which an individual receives direct and clear information about how effectively he or she is performing the task.

As seen in Figure 2.3, the object of this approach is to promote high internal motivation and increase job satisfaction by designing jobs that possess the five core characteristics (Hackman & Oldman, 1976:250). Robbins and Judge (2007:228) and Kreitner and Kinicki (1998:203) report that Hackman and Oldham devised a self-report instrument to assess the extent to which a specific job possesses the five core characteristics. With this instrument it is possible to calculate a motivating potential score for a job. The **motivating potential score (MPS)** is a summary index that

represents the extent to which the job characteristics foster internal work motivation. Low scores indicate that an individual will not experience high internal work motivation from the job. Such a job is an obvious choice for job redesign. High scores reveal that the job is capable of stimulating internal motivation.

The **motivating potential score** (MPS) is computed as follows:

$$\text{MPS} = \frac{(\text{Skill variety} + \text{Task identity} + \text{Task significance})}{3} \times \text{Autonomy} \times \text{Feedback}$$

Judging from the equation, since MPS equals zero when autonomy or feedback is zero, it could be said that both autonomy and feedback are more important respectively in determining the motivational potential of a job. Not all people may want enriched jobs (Reif & Luthans, 1972:30). Hackman and Oldham incorporated this conclusion into their model by identifying three attributes that have an effect on how individuals respond to jobs with a high MPS. Hackman and Oldham proposed that people will respond positively to jobs with a high MPS when (1) they have the knowledge and skills necessary to do the job; (2) they have high growth needs; and (3) they are satisfied with various aspects of the work context, such as pay and co-workers (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998:204). Robbins and Judge (2007:228) conclude that overall, it appears that jobs that have the intrinsic elements of variety, identity, significance, autonomy and feedback are more satisfying, and generate higher performance than that generated by people in jobs that lack these elements.

Given that organisational factors obviously contribute to job satisfaction, the question may be asked: “Which organisational practices lead to higher job satisfaction?” Locke (in Furnham, 2004:298) identified practices to increase job satisfaction on eight job counts (See Table 2.1). Kinnie, Hutchinson, Purcell, Rayton and Swart (2005:9) argue, though, that in terms of satisfaction with human resource practices and commitment to the organisation, “one size does not fit all”. Their research findings pose a challenge to the universalistic model of human resource management and have implications for those seeking to design practices that will improve organisational commitment and job satisfaction.

According to Herzberg job satisfaction depends on one set of conditions, whereas job dissatisfaction depends on an entirely different set of conditions. Although it is possible to think of satisfaction and dissatisfaction as two extremes on a single continuum, they are determined by different factors. It may be more helpful to consider them as two separate factors. From this the two-factor theory of motivation developed. The two factors are the dissatisfiers and satisfiers, the hygiene factors and motivators, or the extrinsic and intrinsic factors, depending on who is discussing the theory (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:138). Herzberg maintains that the factors that give rise to job dissatisfaction and are related to job context are labelled hygiene factors, and factors that give rise to job satisfaction and are related to the job content are labelled motivators (Smit & Cronje, 1999:311). Table 2.2 illustrates the differences between the two types of factors as described by Herzberg’s theory.

Table 2.2: Herzberg’s two-factor theory (Smit and Cronje, 1999:312)

Satisfiers/Motivators/Intrinsic	Dissatisfiers/Hygiene factors/Extrinsic
Needed to build high level of job satisfaction (related to job content)	Needed to maintain a level of no dissatisfaction (related to job context)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Feeling of achievement ➤ Meaningful work ➤ Opportunities for advancement ➤ Increased responsibility ➤ Recognition ➤ Opportunities for growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pay ➤ Status ➤ Job security ➤ Working conditions ➤ Fringe benefits ➤ Policies and procedures ➤ Interpersonal relations

Herzberg’s theory has been so severely criticized that it is surprising that it has withstood the test of time. It is still popular with managers as a potential applied approach to motivation (Lacey, 1994:6-8). The managerial implication of Herzberg’s theory is apparent: to prevent low performance, high absenteeism and high labour turnover, managers should make drastic changes by adding hygiene factors and motivators to the job. Herzberg puts forward job enrichment as a way to build satisfiers into the job content (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:141). According to Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:93), Herzberg’s point of view is well summarized in the following statement: “If you want people to do a good job, give them a good job to do”.

So far we have assumed that all people have the same concerns. A study by Silverthorne (1992) on work motivation across Chinese, American and Russian cultures, identified significant differences in the motivational factors impacting on employees. The Chinese sample reported job security and good wages (identified as hygiene factors by Herzberg), as their top motivators. The American sample reported appreciation for work done and “feeling in” on things (identified as motivators by Herzberg) as their top motivators. The Russian sample reported promotion and growth in the organisation as well as “feeling in” on things (identified as motivators by Herzberg as their top motivators).

Considering the work of Hofstede, Hui (in Furnham, 2004:661) concludes that managers from different countries and cultures are likely to have different concerns. Foley, Ngo and Loi (2006:38) confirm that different cultural types affect work-related attitudes, as individuals with different cultural values may have different goals, expectations and needs at work (See Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: Concerns of managers in different countries (Furnham, 2004:661)

<p>Managers in <u>low-collectivism</u> countries place much emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ contribution to society ➤ independence at work ➤ influence in the organisation
<p>Managers in <u>moderate-collectivism</u> countries place much emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ independence at work ➤ job status ➤ meaningful job
<p>Managers from <u>high-collectivism</u> countries place much emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Benefits, vacation, sick leave, pension, insurance, etc. ➤ Fellow workers who are pleasant and agreeable ➤ Job security ➤ Pay input ➤ Recognition for doing a good job ➤ Work conditions



Measured in different ways and within various employment settings, job satisfaction has been consistently identified as an important predictor of work behaviour. Many behavioural researchers have investigated the sources of job satisfaction.

Scott (2006:131) summarizes some of the major sources of job satisfaction: “Being female, married and having good health have all been associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. A positive relationship between age and job satisfaction is a common finding, although there has been debate as to whether it is linear or U-shaped. Race seems less useful in predicting job satisfaction and distinctions in job satisfaction among workers with varying educational backgrounds are unclear. It has been demonstrated that education translates into high earnings and upward mobility, but its correlation with job satisfaction is usually negative. A possible explanation is that people who have received advanced education have higher job expectations, which if unfulfilled result in diminished satisfaction with the job”.

Job satisfaction is also produced by certain workplace conditions. For instance, having flexibility and control over one’s work activity is connected to higher job satisfaction levels. A direct correlation between wages and job satisfaction has not been found. However, workers tend to measure their earnings and benefits in relation to their peers or the market’s “going rate”, and the correlation between perceived equity of a job’s economic returns and job satisfaction is positive. In a study conducted by Witt and Nye (1992:910), employees perceive a significant correlation between fairness of pay and promotions and job satisfaction. Several studies link elevated job satisfaction levels to a senior position, receptivity to job training, perceived opportunity for advancement and job tenure.

2.3.2 Organisational commitment

Lee and Goa (2005:377) comment that in the past two decades the construct organisational commitment has commanded an impressive amount of scholarly attention. It has been heavily researched as an important variable affecting job outcomes such as turnover, job effort and performance.

Mowday, Porter and Steers (in Lee & Goa, 2005:377) describe organisational commitment as “the relative strength of a person’s identification with the values and goals of the organisation and loyalty to the organisation”. Although this description of organisational commitment, or other versions of it, appears frequently in literature, researchers are not in agreement over a definition of organisational commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001:299; Suliman & Isles, 2000b:71). Meyer and Herscovitch (2001:299) indicate that the definition of organisational commitment depends on the approach to commitment that one adheres to. They state that organisational commitment can be conceptualized as either unidimensional or as multi-dimensional.

Examples of unidimensional approaches can be found in the work of: Blau (1985a), Brown(a) (1996) and Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979). Examples of multi-dimensional approaches can be found in the work of: Angle and Perry (1981), Jaros, Jermier, Koehler and Sincich (1993), Mayer and Schoorman (1992), Meyer and Allen (1991) O’Reilly and Chatman (1986) and Penley and Gould (1988).

According to Robbins and Judge (2007:80), most researchers support the approach that organisational commitment is a multi-dimensional construct. Table 2.4 presents a summary of multi-dimensional models of organisational commitment appearing in literature and illustrate the dimensions of organisational commitment identified by each model.

Table 2.4: Dimensions of organisational commitment within multi-dimensional models (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001:304)

Authors	Dimensions of organisational commitment	Description of the dimension
Angle and Perry (1981)	Value commitment Commitment to stay	Commitment to support the goals of the organisation. Commitment to retain organisational membership.
O’Reilly and Chatman (1986)	Compliance Identification Internalization	Instrumental involvement for specific extrinsic rewards. Attachment based on a desire for affiliation with the organisation. Involvement predicated on congruence between individual and organisational values.



Penley and Gould (1988)	Moral Calculative Alienative	Acceptance of and identification with organisational goals. A commitment to an organisation which is based on the employee's receiving inducements to match contributions. Organisational attachment which results when an employee no longer perceives that there are rewards commensurate with investments; yet he or she remains due to environmental pressures.
Meyer and Allen (1991)	Affective Continuance Normative	The employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation. An awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation. A feeling of obligation to continue employment.
Mayer and Schoorman (1992)	Value Continuance	A belief in and acceptance of organisational goals and values and a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation. The desire to remain a member of the organisation.
Jaros, Jermier, Koehler and Sincich (1993)	Affective Continuance Moral	The degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an organisation through feelings such as loyalty, affection, warmth, sense of belonging, fondness, pleasure, and so on. The degree to which an individual experiences a sense of being locked in place because of the high cost of leaving. The degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an organisation through internalization of its goals, values and missions.

From Table 2.4 it is evident that there is some disagreement on the dimensionality of organisational commitment. The multidimensionality of organisational commitment reflects its highly complex nature. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001:303) are of the opinion that differences among the multi-dimensional frameworks in table 2.4, stem from different motives and strategies during the development phase of the framework. Another reason is the different foundations on which the frameworks were built. As all the forces that attribute to the variables associated with the different forms of commitment co-exist in an organisation, it can be assumed that the types of commitment can also co-exist. It is important to realize that the various dimensions of organisational commitment are not mutually exclusive. An employee can foster one or any combination of the aspects of commitment.

The most popular multi-dimensional approach to organisational commitment is that of Meyer and Allen. In 1984, Meyer and Allen introduced the dimension of continuance commitment to the already existing dimension of affective commitment. As a result, organisational commitment was regarded as a bi-dimensional concept that included an attitudinal aspect as well as a behavioural aspect (Meyer & Allen, 1984:372). In 1990, Meyer and Allen added a third component, normative commitment, to their two dimensions of organisational commitment. They concluded that organisational commitment as a form of psychological attachment has the following three forms: affective, continuance and normative (Meyer & Allen, 1991:61). Meyer and Allen (1991:67) define affective commitment as “an employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation”, continuance commitment as “commitment based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organisation”, and normative commitment as “an employee’s feeling of obligation to remain with the organisation”. Each of these three dimensions represents a possible description of an individual’s attachment to an organisation. Meyer and Allen (1991:61) argue that one of the most important reasons for defining different forms of organisational commitment is that they have very different implications for behaviour.

➤ **Affective commitment**

Meyer and Allen (1991:67) argue that an individual will develop emotional attachment to an organisation when he/she identifies with the goals of the organisation and is willing to assist the organisation in achieving these goals. They further explain that identification with an organisation happens when the employee’s own values are congruent with organisational values and the employee is able to internalize the values and goals of the organisation. In addition there are a psychological identification- and a pride of association with the organisation. Shore and Tetrick (1991:637) claim that in affective commitment there is a positive interaction between the individual and the organisation because both have similar values. Abbott, White and Charles (2005:549) confirm the link between work values and affective commitment. Employees build affective and normative commitment by aligning their own values to the perceived values of their current organisation. This is more likely to happen when the organisation’s values embrace prosocial clusters

such as vision and humanity. Jaros *et al.* (1993:954) indicate that affective commitment can be associated with feelings of loyalty, affection, warmth, belonging, fondness and pleasure. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001:310) report that affective commitment has been found to correlate with a wide range of behavioural outcomes such as labour turnover, absenteeism, job performance and organisational citizenship behaviour.

➤ **Continuance commitment**

Continuance commitment is based on Becker's side bet theory. The theory posits that as individuals remain in the employment of an organisation for longer periods, they accumulate investments, which become costly to lose the longer they remain (Meyer & Allen, 1984:372). These investments include time, job effort, organisation-specific skills that might not be transferable, costs of leaving the organisation that discourage seeking alternative employment, work friendships and political deals. Meyer and Allen (1991:67) describe continuance commitment as a form of psychological attachment to an organisation that reflects the employee's awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation. This then forms the employee's primary link to the organisation and his/her decision to remain with the organisation is an effort to retain the benefits accrued. Continuance commitment develops because of any action or event that increases the costs of leaving the organisation. This is true only when the employee recognizes that these costs have been incurred. Meyer and Allen summarize these actions and events in terms of two sets of antecedent variable: investments and employment alternatives. Romzek (1990:649) describes this type of attachment as a transactional attachment. He argues that employees calculate their investment in the organisation according to what they have put into the organisation and what they stand to gain if they remain with the organisation. In addition to the fear of losing the investment, individuals develop continuance commitment because of a perceived lack of alternatives. A perceived lack of alternatives occurs when an employee starts to believe that his/her skills are not marketable or that he does not have the skill required to compete for positions in the field. Such an employee would feel tied to his current organisation. Unlike affective commitment, which involves emotional attachment, continuance commitment reflects a calculation of the costs of leaving versus the benefits of

staying. Continuance commitment thus refers to the state in which the employee feels bound to the organisation because the costs (financial, social and emotional) are so great that he/she has no option but to commit (Kamfer, Venter & Boshoff, 1994:2).

Calculative commitment refers to an employee's intention to remain in an organisation, based on the recognition of costs and benefits. In a sense, an employee becomes bound to a firm not because he/she identifies with the latter or shares its norms and values, but because he/she cannot find better alternatives (Penley & Gould, 1988:46). This type of commitment is identical to the notion of continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991:67).

➤ **Normative commitment**

“Normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel they ought to remain with the organisation” (Meyer & Allen, 1991:67). Randall (1990:361) regards normative commitment in terms of the moral obligation the employee develops after the organisation has invested in him/her. They argue that when an employee starts to feel that the organisation has spent either too much time or money developing and training him/her, such an employee may feel an obligation to stay with the organisation. O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell (1991:487) on the other hand define and measure normative commitment in terms of values. They argue that congruence between an individual's and organisation's values leads to the development of organisational commitment. In support of this view are Mayer and Schoorman (1992:673) who describe value commitment as an employee's acceptance of an organisation's goals and values. Jaros *et al.* (1993:955) refer to normative commitment as moral commitment. They emphasize the difference between moral commitment and affective commitment. Moral commitment reflects a sense of duty, or obligation or calling to work in the organisation and not emotional attachment. They describe it as the degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an organisation through internalization of its goals values and missions. This type of commitment differs from continuance commitment because it is not dependent on the personal calculations of invested costs.



According to Allen and Meyer (1990:14), normative commitment may develop as a result of the psychological contract between an employee and the organisation. A psychological contract refers to the beliefs of the parties involved in a two-way relationship regarding their reciprocal obligations (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:122). Meyer and Allen (1997) also refer to the possible role that early socialization experiences may have in the development of normative commitment. Socialization refers to the process by which organisations bring new employees into the organisational culture (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:41). They suggest that socialization can carry with it all sorts of messages about the appropriateness of particular attitudes and behaviours within the organisation. Amongst these attitudes could be the idea that employees owe it to the organisation to continue employment. Meyer and Allen (1997) assume internalization to be the process involved in the development of normative commitment during the early days of assuming employment with an organisation. They reason that through a complex process involving both conditioning and role modelling, individuals can develop normative commitment. Meyer and Allen (1997) also suggest that normative commitment develops on the basis of a particular investment by the organisation in an employee, which the employee finds difficult to reciprocate. For example, if an organisation paid an employee's tuition, the employee may feel uncomfortable and indebted. Given the norms of reciprocity, the employee could develop feelings of obligation to the organisation as he/she tries to rectify the imbalance. Cultural and individual differences exist in the extent to which people will internalize reciprocity norms therefore the extent of organisational investment will lead to feelings of indebtedness.

Meyer, Becker and VandenBerghe (2004:994) point out that the three forms of commitment have different bases for development. "The primary bases for the development of affective commitment are personal involvement, identification with the specific organisation and value congruence. Normative commitment develops as a function of cultural and organisational socialization and the receipt of benefits that activate the need to reciprocate. Continuance commitment develops as the result of accumulated investment and side bets that will be lost if the employee quits as well as a lack of alternative employment options".

Meyer and Herscovitch (2001:317-319) propose a general model of workplace commitment, incorporating all aspects outlined in the previous discussions. See Figure 2.4.

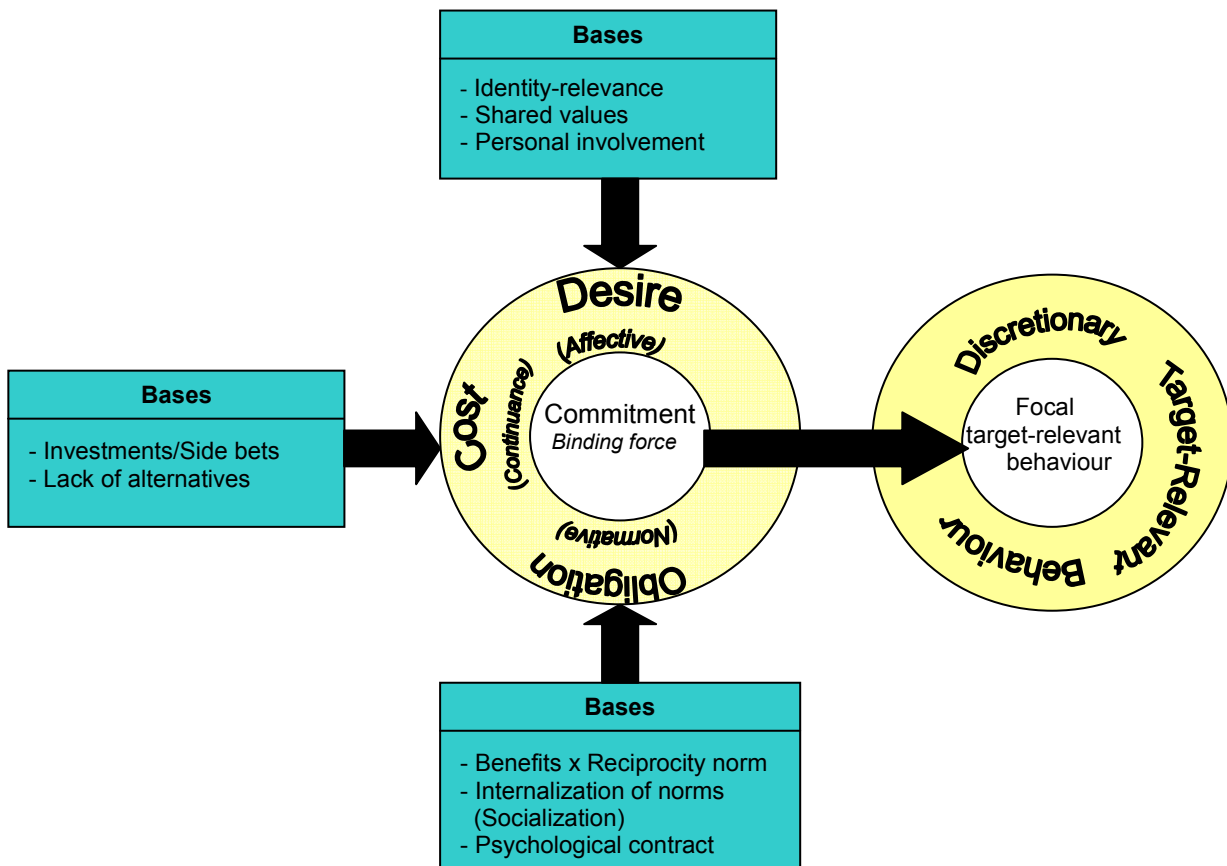


Figure 2.4: A general model of workplace commitment (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001:317)

Another model that has generated considerable research on organisational commitment, is the model developed by O'Reilly and Chatman. O'Reilly and Chatman (1986:493) also support the notion that organisational commitment should be seen as a multidimensional construct. They base their multidimensional approach on the assumption that commitment represents an attitude toward the organisation, and that various mechanisms can lead to the development of attitudes. They argue that commitment can take three distinct forms: compliance, identification and internalization. They believe that compliance will occur when attitudes and corresponding behaviours are adopted in order to attain specific rewards. Identification will occur when an individual succumbs to influence to establish or maintain a satisfying relationship. Lastly, internalization will occur when the attitudes

and behaviours that one is encouraged to adopt are congruent with one's own values.

Angle and Perry's (1981:4) model makes the distinction between value commitment and commitment to stay. This model is based on the results of a factor analysis on items in the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers and Porter. Mowday *et al.* (1979:226) mention three characteristics of organisational commitment: "(1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organisation's goal and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; and (3) a strong intent or desire to remain with the organisation". Within this approach, the factors associated with commitment include positive work experiences, personal characteristics and job characteristics while the outcomes include increased performance, reduced absenteeism and reduced employee turnover. Although the approach of Mowday and his colleagues to organisational commitment is generally considered a unidimensional measure, Angle and Perry's analysis reveals two factors underlying the OCQ – one is defined by items addressing willingness to stay (commitment to stay) and the other by items addressing support for organisational goals (value commitment). The work of Angle and Perry shows similarities to the work of Mayer and Schoorman. Mayer and Schoorman (1992:673) also suggest two dimensions, which they label continuance commitment (desire to remain) and value commitment (willingness to exert effort). Although there are similarities between the dimensions of organisational commitment identified by Angle and Perry (1981) and Meyer and Allen (1991), there is one important difference: Meyer and Allen's dimensions of commitment differ primarily in terms of the mind-set that binds the individual to the organisation, although all three dimensions have the same behavioural consequences. In contrast, Angle and Perry's make the distinction between the dimensions in terms of behavioural consequences and not mind-sets. Continuance commitment is presumed to be associated with the decision to stay or leave an organisation while value commitment is associated with the exertion of effort towards the attainment of organisational goals (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001:306-307).

The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) of Mowday, Steers and Porter will be used in this research study, instead of the questionnaire developed by Meyer and Allen, for the following reasons:

- The dimension, commitment to stay, is measured by the OCQ. The intention to quit is the dependent variable in the study.
- The OCQ views the dimension of commitment from the perspective of behavioural consequences and not mind-sets. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the behavioural intention to quit and organisational commitment.

Researchers of organisational commitment have tried to determine what the link is between what an organisation offers and the employee's experiences that influence the development of organisational commitment once the individual has membership in an organisation. As a result, a lot of empirical research has focused on the variables associated with organisational commitment. Examples of empirical research studying antecedents of organisational commitment are: Balfour and Wechsler (1996), Blau and Boal (1989), Luthans, Baack and Taylor (1987) and Mathieu and Zajac (1990). Mowday *et al.* (1979:224) have grouped the factors that may lead to greater organisational commitment into three major groups. According to them commitment depends on (1) personal factors; (2) organisational factors; and (3) non-organisational factors. Each of these categories of factors may contribute to the development of the different dimensions of organisational commitment to varying degrees.

➤ **Personal factors**

An analysis of the organisational commitment literature reveals a long list of demographic factors that are traditionally associated with commitment. Variables that may be significant are personal characteristics such as age, tenure, gender, family status and educational level (Thornhill, Lewis & Saunders, 1996).

Mathieu and Zajac's (1990:171-194) meta-analytic study involving 41 samples and 10 335 subjects, shows a statistically significant positive correlation of .20 ($p < .01$)

between age and affective organisational commitment. Allen and Meyer (1990:1-18) also studied the relationship between age and affective commitment. They obtained a statistically significant positive mean correlation of .36 ($p < .05$) between age and affective commitment. According to Mathieu and Zajac (1990:171-194), age has been a positive predictor of commitment for the following reasons: (1) As workers age, alternative employment options generally decrease making the current job more attractive (2) Older workers may have more commitment because they have a stronger investment and longer history with the organisation than younger workers. As far as gender is concerned, the reports are inconsistent. Mathieu and Zajac (1990:171-194) in a meta-analytic study of 14 studies with 7420 subjects involving gender and organisational commitment obtained a mean correlation of $-.089$ between organisational commitment and gender. Ngo and Tsang (1998:251) support the view that the effects of gender on commitment are very subtle.

Trimble (2006:349) indicates that tenure is used in the organisational literature to refer to the number of years that a person is formally associated with an organisation as an employee. Trimble's finding is that tenure in the organisation is a stronger predictor of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention than age. This implies that organisational intervention strategies should be focused on those who are recent additions to the organisations, rather than on young recruits only. Trimble (2006:358) argues that two reasons exist for tenure being such an important factor in determining job satisfaction and organisational commitment. (1) Those who are dissatisfied leave, consequently they are no longer around to complain or express negative attitudes about the organisation. The longest-term cohort is by definition composed of "stayers". (2) The longer a person participates in an organisation, the greater the bond that is formed and the stronger the person identifies with the organisation. Mathieu and Zajac (1990:171-194) reviewed 38 samples and found a positive link between organisational tenure and affective commitment. They report an overall weighted mean correlation of $r = .17$ ($p < .01$). Allen and Meyer (1990:1-18) indicate that an analysis of organisational tenure shows a mild curvilinear relationship with organisational commitment. They show that middle tenure employees exhibit a lower measured commitment than new or senior employees. Colbert and Kwon (2000:484) establish a significant relationship ($r = .11$,

$p < .05$) between tenure and organisational commitment. Employees with a longer tenure have a higher degree of organisational commitment than their counterparts.

➤ **Organisational characteristics**

Meyer and Allen (1991:67) suggest “that affective commitment develops as the result of experiences that satisfy employees’ need to feel physically and psychologically comfortable in the organisation”. These experiences include those that lead to a perception of support from the organisation. Employees who perceive a high level of support from the organisation are more likely to feel an obligation to repay the organisation in terms of affective commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991:67). Organisational characteristics such as structure, culture and organisational level policies, which can create perceptions of organisational support, will probably induce organisational commitment. The idea that organisational policies are related to affective commitment has some support in organisational commitment literature (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Finegan (2000:149) maintains that perceived organisational values – the values that the employee believes the organisation holds - do to some extent predict employees’ level of commitment. However, different value types predict different commitment components. Finegan (2000:149) suggests that organisations may be able to increase affective and normative commitment through promoting the values of humanity (e.g. courtesy and co-operation), vision (e.g. creativity and openness), benevolence, self-direction and universality. Schwartz and Bardi (2001:268), consistent with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, argue that benevolence, self-direction and universality are values that meet fundamental human needs. Maslow’s theory suggests that these values are related to the higher-order need of self-actualization at the top of the need hierarchy. If organisations paid more attention to higher-order values, employees would experience improved work environments and opportunities, organisations would experience better employee commitment and performance and possibly society would in general experience improved corporate ethics (Finegan, 2000:165).



➤ **Other characteristics**

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), once an employee realizes that moving to a new organisation will result in the forfeiture of benefits, the employee may decide to remain with the current organisation rather than lose the investment. Such an employee develops continuance commitment as he/she stays with the organisation as the result of a calculated decision rather than an eagerness to remain. Investment can take any form and may be either work or non-work related. Romzek (1990:651) suggests that organisations can easily convince employees that they have made a big investment in the organisation. He opines that organisations only need to offer opportunities and working conditions that are competitive with other prospective employers. Typically, investment factors include promotion prospects, development of work group network performance bonuses and the accrual of leave, sick leave, family-friendly policies and retirement benefits. If these cannot be easily matched by prospective employers, the organisation's employees will remain "stuck" in the organisation even though they are no longer optimally effective.

The other hypothesized antecedent of continuance commitment is the employment alternative. Meyer and Allen (1997) suggest that an employee's perception of the availability of alternative employment will be negatively linked to continuance commitment. Furthermore employees who think they have viable alternatives will have weaker continuance commitment than those who think their alternatives are limited. The availability of alternative employment does not influence continuance commitment on its own (Iverson & Buttigieg, 1999:307) as it may often work in conjunction with the extent to which family factors limit or enable an employee's ability to relocate or take up a new job.

The commitment that an employee shows to an organisation has consistently been found to be related to critical workplace behaviours. The nature and direction of the relationships are complex and depend on context and the variables under consideration (Mathieu & Zajack, 1990:171). The form of commitment (affective, continuance and normative) also influences the nature and direction of the relationship (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002:20). According to Meyer *et al.* (2002:20), although affective and normative commitments can be seen



as distinct factors, they have consistently been found to be positively linked. Both affective and normative commitment have been shown to be predictors of positive organisational behaviour, including increased work performance and satisfaction, tenure and attendance. Continuance commitment on the other hand has been found to be unrelated to affective commitment and negatively related or unrelated to positive organisational behaviours. The only similarity among the three components of commitment appears to be related to lower turnover intention or withdrawal cognition. (Abbott *et al.*, 2005:532). Finegan's work provides further evidence that continuance commitment is a fundamentally different construct from affective commitment as Finegan maintains that continuance commitment is related to workplace values other than affective and normative commitment (Finegan, 2000:149-169). A meta-analysis conducted by Tett and Meyer (1993:259-293) reveals a significant and strong relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Managers are advised to increase job satisfaction in order to elicit higher levels of commitment.

Commitment to the organisation is not the only type of commitment in the workplace that underpins behaviour (Redman & Snape, 2005:301). Meyer *et al.* (2004:993-994) are of the opinion that commitment goes beyond organisational commitment therefore employees may be committed to multiple targets – or foci, for example commitment towards management (supervisor), occupation, career, profession, co-workers (team), customers and unions. Becker (1992:232) supports this notion by stating that individuals may experience commitment to multiple foci, which could predict a range of attitudes and behaviours. Becker (1992:240) shows that commitment to top management, supervisors and work groups is distinguishable from commitment to the organisation as a whole, and that commitment to these foci predicts job satisfaction, withdrawal cognitions and organisational citizenship behaviour over and above global commitment. Subsequent studies have confirmed the existence of multiple commitments and their significance as predictors of employee attitudes and behaviour (Becker, Billings, Eveleth & Gilbert, 1996; Bishop & Scott, 2000; Neubert & Candy, 2001; Reichers, 1985). The findings of Becker *et al.* (1996:464) have shown that employees' commitment to their supervisors is more strongly associated with performance than commitment to the organisation. Irving, Coleman and Cooper (1997:444) provide evidence that the three-component model

of organisational commitment (affective, continuance and normative) is generalizable over the different foci of commitment.

There is reason to believe that the concept of commitment may be less important to employers and employees than it once was. The unwritten loyalty contract that existed 30 years ago between employees and employers has been seriously eroded. Similarly the notion of employees staying with a single organisation for most of their career span has become increasingly rare. This suggests that organisational commitment is probably less important as a work-related attitude than it once was. In its place we could expect something akin to occupational commitment to become a more relevant variable because this reflects today's fluid workforce more accurately (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993:538). Occupational commitment is loyalty to one's profession rather than to a specific organisation (Corcoran, 2003:13). A company engineer might perceive himself as an engineer first, and then as a member of the specific organisation. Cetin (2006:79) states that occupational commitment requires three conditions: (1) commitment to the purpose of the occupation; (2) beliefs in the values of the occupation and acceptance of them; and (3) showing an effort to maintain membership with the occupation.

Meyer *et al.* (2004:994) compare the definitions of motivation and commitment and reveal obvious similarities. Both are described as energizing forces with implications for behaviour. Motivation is described by Pinder (1998:11) as "a set of energetic forces that originates both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behaviour, and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration". Commitment is described by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001:301) as "a force that binds an individual to a course of action that is of relevance to a particular target". This implies that motivation is a broader concept than commitment and that commitment is one among a set of energizing forces that contribute to motivated (intentional) behaviour (Meyer *et al.*, 2004:994). The implication is that the literature of organisational commitment and work motivation can be integrated into a single theory. Refer to the work of Meyer and colleagues (2004) for the integration.



2.3.3 Job involvement

The construct job involvement, a more recent addition to organisational behaviour literature, is accorded much less attention than job satisfaction and organisational commitment. According to O'Driscoll and Randall (1999:199), a primary differentiation in the literature on work commitment is between the commitment to the job (referred to as job involvement) and commitment to the organisation (referred to as organisational commitment). Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:99) explain the difference between the concepts by indicating that high job involvement means identifying with one's specific job (dedication), while high organisational commitment means identifying with one's employing organisation (loyalty). Corcoran (2003:15) indicates that job involvement is often referred to as job commitment or job attachment.

According to Blau (1985b:19), job involvement refers to the extent to which a person identifies psychologically with his/her job and considers his/her performance level as a reflection of self-worth. A person with a high level of job involvement will have a strong sense of "belonging" in the specific job, and will want to perform well. Individuals who possess high job involvement consider their jobs as being important to their self-image because they identify with and care about their jobs. Kanungo (1982:341) asserts that an individual's psychological identification with a particular job depends on the saliency of his/her needs (both intrinsic and extrinsic) and the perceptions that he/she has about the need-satisfying potential of the job. Job involvement tends to be a function of a person's present situation, and to what extent the present job can satisfy a person's present needs. Pinder (1998:11) adds that a person is involved in his job if he/she actively participates in it, holds it as a central life interest, perceives performance as central to his/her self-esteem and sees performance as congruent with his/her self-concept.

Job involvement, work involvement and employee involvement are not the same. Work involvement is a normative belief about the general value of work in one's life and is the result of one's past cultural conditioning and socialization. Employee involvement (also known as worker participation) is defined by Newstrom and Davis (1997:229) as the mental and emotional involvement of employees in group

situations that encourage them to contribute to group goals and share responsibility for them. A closely related concept is psychological empowerment, which is employees' belief in the degree to which they impact on their work environment, their competence, the meaningfulness of their job, and the perceived autonomy in their work (Spreitzer, 1995:1442).

High levels of job involvement and psychological empowerment are positively related to organisational citizenship and job performance (Chiu & Tsai, 2006:520; Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin & Lord, 2002:93). In addition, high job involvement has been found to be related to reduce absenteeism and lower resignation rates, although it seems to predict staff turnover more consistently than absenteeism, accounting for as much as 16% of the variance in turnover (Blau & Boal, 1987:290; Blau & Boal, 1989:115). A meta-analysis conducted by Brown(b) (1996:235-255) demonstrates that job involvement is moderately related to job satisfaction. Managers are thus encouraged to foster a satisfying work environment to encourage employees' job involvement. Blau and Boal (1989:123) note that job involvement is a more stable and enduring attitude than organisational commitment as differences in job involvement may flow from experiences early in the individual's socialization process including early educational experiences and parents' work ethics.

2.3.4 Perceived organisational support (POS)

Perceived organisational support (POS) is the degree to which employees believe the organisation provides them with required support, values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986:500). Employees perceive their organisation as supportive if rewards are deemed fair, if employees have a voice in decisions, and if their supervisors are seen as supportive (Rhoades, Eisenberger & Armeli, 2001:825). Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro (1990:51) observe a positive relationship between affective commitment and perceived organisational support. Shore and her colleagues (Shore & Tetrick, 1991:637; Shore & Wayne, 1993:774) have also found a strong positive relationship with affective commitment, but a lack of correlation between support and continuance commitment. A study by O'Driscoll and Randall (1999:197) has confirmed that perceived organisational support is strongly associated with higher

levels of job involvement and affective commitment. Given that organisations typically want employees to exhibit high levels of both these behaviours, provision of support is clearly a desired mechanism for enhancing positive job attitudes.

The above discussions on the constructs job satisfaction; organisational commitment and job involvement conclude that specific aspects related to one's job and the organisation, facilitate job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement. It could thus be possible to identify the factors which would facilitate positive work-related attitudes amongst expatriate managers.

2.4 BEHAVIOURAL MANIFESTATIONS OF JOB ATTITUDES

Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:99) argue that “the importance of job attitudes can be viewed in the context of two decisions people make about their work. The first is the decision to belong, that is, to join and then stay as a member of an organisation. The second is the decision to perform, that is, to work hard in pursuit of high levels of task performance. Importantly, not everyone who belongs to an organisation performs up to expectations”. Employee dissatisfaction can be expressed in a number of ways. For example, rather than resign, employees can complain, be insubordinate, steal the organisation's property, or shirk in the execution of their responsibilities. Withey and Cooper (1989:521-539) identify four responses to the work environment that differ from one another in two dimensions: constructiveness/destructiveness and activity/passivity. These are defined as follows:

- **Exit.** An active but destructive approach, where the employee looks for another job, resigns and leaves the company. This may be an impulsive reaction that may leave a gap in the organisation in terms of valued skills.
- **Voice.** An active and constructive approach initiated by the employee to engage with the organisation to improve the situation. This response can include suggesting improvements and changes, discussing problems with superiors and some form of union activity. Dissatisfaction stemming from perceptions of pay inequities, poor supervisor-subordinate relationships and inadequate working conditions initiates and sustains union activities.

- **Loyalty.** A passive, but constructive, approach. This requires a steady, patient wait for the situation to improve, while remaining positive about the organisation.
- **Neglect.** Is a passive and destructive approach. In this situation, the conditions are left to deteriorate and no action is taken. In fact, the employee will become more negative and act this out through behaviours such as chronic absenteeism and lateness, reduced effort and increased error rate.

Exit and neglect behaviours influence our performance variables – productivity, absenteeism, and turnover. But this model expands employee response to include voice and loyalty – constructive behaviours that allow individuals to tolerate unpleasant situations or to perk up satisfactory working conditions. It helps us to understand situations, such as those sometimes found among unionized workers, where low levels of job satisfaction are coupled with low turnover. Union members often express dissatisfaction through the grievance procedure or through formal contract negotiations. These vice mechanisms allow the union members to continue in their jobs while convincing themselves that they are acting to improve the situation (Guthrie, 2001:180).

Behavioural scientists Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen have developed a comprehensive model of behavioural intentions used widely to explain attitude – behaviour relationships (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977:888-918). Figure 2.5 depict the intention to engage in a given behaviour as the best predictor of that behaviour.

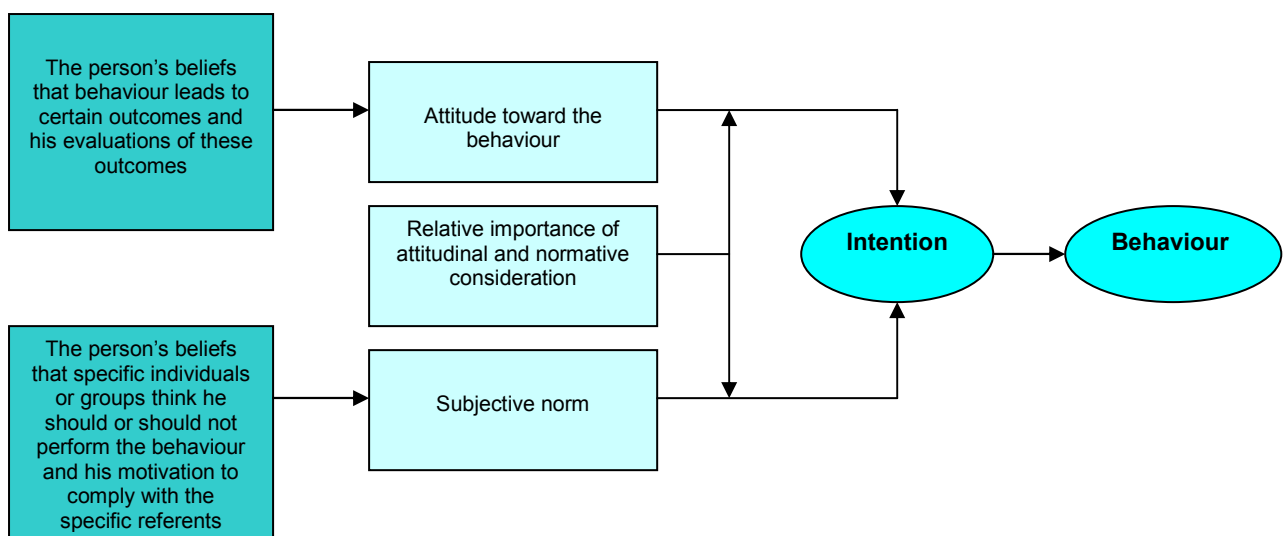


Figure 2.5: A model of behavioural intention (Kreitner and Kinicki, 1998:137)



Steel and Ovalle (1984:673) validate this direct approach, by conducting a meta-analysis of 34 studies of employee turnover involving more than 83 000 employees. The researchers found stated behavioural intentions to be a better predictor of employee turnover than job satisfaction, satisfaction with the work itself or organisational commitment. Although asking about intentions enables one to predict who will quit, it does not help to explain why an individual would want to quit. Thus, to gain a better understanding of why employees exhibit certain behaviours, such as quitting their jobs, one needs to consider their relevant attitudes. As shown in Figure 2.5, behavioural intentions are influenced by one's attitude toward the behaviour and the perceived norms about exhibiting the behaviour. In turn, attitudes and subjective norms are determined by personal beliefs (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998:136-137).

According to Naumann *et al.* (2000:229), most models of turnover include behavioural intentions as an intermediate linkage between worker attitudes and turnover. Supporting this contention, a large body of research has generally found a stronger relationship between attitudes and intentions than between attitudes and turnover (Sager, Varadarajan & Futrell, 1988:21-35). Also, the relationship between the propensity to leave and turnover is consistently strong and positive, although the range of correlation coefficients is quite wide, ranging from $r = .41$ ($p < .05$) (Griffeth & Hom, 1988:103-111) to $r = .71$ ($p < .05$) (Hom & Hulin, 1981:23-29). Steel and Ovalle's (1984:673-686) results of a meta-analysis of published and unpublished studies show a weighted average correlation of .50 between behavioural intention and employer turnover. They conclude that behavioural intentions are "becoming increasingly indispensable to empirical and theoretical work linking turnover behaviour to psychological antecedents". Due to the strength of the relationship between intention and turnover, propensity to leave (or intention to quit) has frequently been used as the dependable variable in turnover studies (Naumann *et al.*, 2000:229).

Lee and Goa (2005:381) confirm that the intention to leave is considered an important work outcome variable. As a behavioural intention variable, the intention to leave, acts intermediary between worker attitudes and actual turnover (Naumann *et al.*, 2000:229). The strong and positive empirical relationship between the intention to leave and actual turnover has led to frequent use of this construct in management

research. For example, many studies in the literature have specifically assessed the link between organisational commitment and intention to leave (Babakus *et al.*, 1996; Jaros *et al.*, 1993). In their meta-analysis, Brown and Peterson (1993:381) suggest that given the preponderance of research evidence, organisational commitment should be recognized as a direct antecedent of the intention to leave.

For the purpose of the study, the dependent variable intention to leave a foreign assignment prematurely or the intention towards undesirable turnover **will be measured through the behavioural intention to quit**. The reasons for this decision are:

- Behavioural intention to leave or stay seems to be the strongest predictors of turnover (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Steel & Ovalle, 1984).
- Intention to quit has frequently been used as the dependent variable in turnover studies (Naumann *et al.*, 2000; Sager *et al.*, 1988).

This area has significant managerial implications because thousands of studies have examined the relationship between job attitudes and organisational variables. Since it is impossible to examine them all, we shall consider a subset of the more important variables from the standpoint of managerial relevance.

2.4.1 Labour turnover

Gomez-Mejia *et al.* (2001:200) define labour turnover/employee separation as “the termination of an employee’s membership in an organisation”. Labour turnover can be classified into four main types: voluntary/involuntary, desirable/undesirable, functional/dysfunctional and controllable/uncontrollable.

According to (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:262), involuntary turnover refers to a situation where an employee’s employment is terminated against his/her will, while voluntary turnover is where an employee willingly terminates his/her employment. Desirable turnover is the termination of the employment contract by mutual agreement, while undesirable turnover is where the employee quits voluntarily, but



against the will of the organisation. Staw (1980:253) indicates that turnover can have several negative/dysfunctional consequences, especially if the turnover rate is high. When people quit their jobs, valuable human resources are lost. Dysfunctional consequences of turnover can include the expenses of recruiting, selecting, training and separating as well as productivity losses caused by any operational disruptions and low morale (Gomez-Mejia *et al.*, 2001:201). Often it is difficult to replace the employees, and the direct and indirect costs to the organisation of replacing workers are high. The remaining employees may be demoralized because of the loss of valued co-workers, and both work and social patterns may be disrupted until replacements are found. Also, the organisation's reputation in the community may suffer. However, some functional benefits may arise from turnover, such as more opportunities for internal promotion, the infusion of expertise from newly hired employees and the replacement of poor performers (Gomez-Mejia *et al.*, 2001:202). Voluntary resignations and dismissals are classified as controllable turnover as the organisation can implement strategies to prevent these. Death, permanent illness and resignation are classified as uncontrollable turnover. The categories of labour turnover for the purpose of this study are voluntary, undesirable, dysfunctional and controllable.

Lee and Liu (2006:756) are of the opinion that domestic definitions of employee separation are too narrow for the international environment therefore they need to be broadened to include several other dimensions of turnover. Expatriate turnover often involves internal transfers across borders. Research has also indicated that many expatriate managers find the repatriation process much more stressful and frustrating than the initial expatriation process and this may cause turnover. Many expatriates develop an intention to quit while on the foreign assignment and view the transfer back as an intermediate step to leaving the organisation.

Figure 2.6 illustrates the relationship between employee attitudes toward the organisation and the organisation's attitudes toward the employee (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:262-263). Desirable turnover is represented by cells b and d. The undesirable turnover of cell c should be minimized. Situations that contribute to cell a, should be encouraged as, in this cell are valued employees who wish to remain with the organisation. The message for managers is to look beyond overall turnover

rates and examine instead the functionality of each departure. Managers need to ask themselves these questions – “Are the right people staying, and are the right people departing?” This is an extremely critical issue. However, the best approach is a preventive one, as Figure 2.6 shows.

Employee's attitude toward organisation	Positive	Employee stays a	Employee's tenure is terminated b
	Negative	c Employee leaves voluntarily	d Employee leaves by mutual agreement
		Positive	Negative
		Organisation's attitude toward employee	

Figure 2.6: Four products of employee-organisation attitudes (Newstrom and Davis, 1997:263)

Newstrom and Davis (1997:261) indicate that higher job satisfaction is associated with lower employee turnover as, the more satisfied employees are, the less likely they are to go through a progressive process in which they consider quitting, search for a new job and evaluate their alternatives, or announce their intention to quit. As shown in Figure 2.7, among employees who have lower satisfaction, labour turnover is usually higher. They may lack self-fulfilment, receive little recognition on the job, experience continual conflicts with a supervisor or peer, or they may have reached a personal plateau in their career. As a result they are more likely to seek greener pastures and leave their employers, while their more satisfied colleagues remain. Yet, again, other factors such as labour-market conditions, expectations about alternative job opportunities, and length of tenure with the organisation are important

constraints on the actual decision to leave one's current job. Satisfaction is also negatively related to absenteeism, but the correlation is weaker than that which we find for labour turnover.

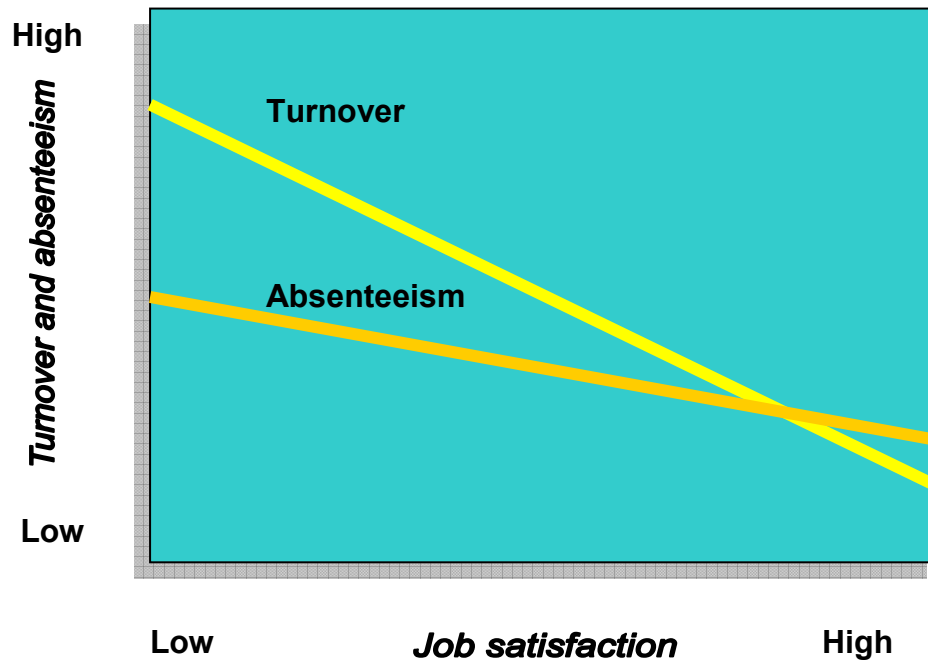


Figure 2.7: Relationship of job satisfaction to turnover and absenteeism (Newstrom and Davis, 1997:262)

A meta-analysis of 49 studies by Tett and Meyer (1993:259-293), demonstrates a moderate negative relationship between turnover and satisfaction. This negative relationship is supported by other researchers (Babakus *et al.*, 1996; Lee & Mowday, 1987; Naumann, 1993b). Given the moderate strength of the relationship reported by researchers, managers should try to reduce turnover by increasing employees' job satisfaction.

For organisational commitment and job involvement, the research evidence demonstrates negative relationships between these attitudes and both absenteeism and turnover (Blau & Boal, 1989:115). In general, it seems that affective commitment is more strongly related to organisational outcomes such as performance and labour turnover, than the other two commitment dimensions. Studies demonstrate that an individual's level of organisational commitment is a better indicator of labour turnover than the far more frequently used job satisfaction predictor, accounting for as much

as 34% of the variance. Organisational commitment is probably a better predictor because it is a more global and enduring response to the organisation as a whole. An employee may be dissatisfied with his or her particular job and consider it a temporary condition, yet not be dissatisfied with the organisation as a whole. But when dissatisfaction spreads to the organisation itself, individuals are more likely to consider resigning. Evidence indicates that an important moderator of the satisfaction-turnover relationship is the employee's level of performance (Spencer & Steers, 1981:511-514)

Labour turnover sometimes arises because unrealistic expectations are created during the recruiting process. In contrast to traditional recruiting, which tries only to "sell" job candidates the organisation, realistic recruitment is the preferred approach. This method gives a realistic job preview, which gives prospective employees as much pertinent information – both good and bad – about the job as possible, with minimal distortion. Not only does this recruiting approach make sense from a staffing perspective, it is also the only ethical thing to do.

2.4.2 Absenteeism and tardiness

Kreitner and Kinicki (1998:208) confirm that managers are constantly on the lookout for ways to reduce absenteeism. One recommendation is to increase job satisfaction. If this is a valid recommendation, there should be a strong negative correlation between satisfaction and absenteeism. In other words, as satisfaction increases, absenteeism should decrease. Figure 2.7 illustrates the relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism. Employees who have low job satisfaction tend to be absent more often, although the relationship is weaker than with labour turnover. Hackett (1989:235-248) has tracked this prediction by synthesizing three separate meta-analyses containing a total of 74 studies. Results reveal a weak negative relationship between satisfaction and absenteeism. It is unlikely, therefore, that managers will realize any significant decrease in absenteeism by increasing job satisfaction. This result is confirmed in a more recent meta-analysis. Harrison, Newman and Roth (2006:305) have also found a moderate satisfaction-absenteeism relationship. Dineen, Noe, Shaw and Wiethoff (2007:623) argue that most of the studies of the satisfaction-absenteeism relationship have been conducted at the

individual level. Their study results indicate that relationships between absenteeism and satisfaction typically found at the individual level are not necessarily homologous at the team level of analysis. Dineen *et al.* (2007:637) report that mean levels of team satisfaction strongly relate to absenteeism. A study by Yucelt (1982:251) found, that although absenteeism is not significantly correlated with overall job satisfaction, there is a significant correlation between absenteeism and satisfaction with the supervisor and co-workers.

Another way in which employees may exhibit their dissatisfaction with job conditions is through tardiness. A tardy employee is one who comes to work, but arrives after the designated starting time. Tardiness is a type of short-period absenteeism ranging from a few minutes to several hours for each event, and it is another way in which employees physically withdraw from active involvement in the organisation. It may impede the timely completion of work and disrupt productive relationships with co-workers. Although there may be legitimate reasons for an occasional tardy arrival (like a sudden traffic jam), a pattern of tardiness is often a symptom of negative attitudes requiring managerial attention (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:264).

2.4.3 Performance

One of the most debated and controversial issues within organisational research centres on the relationship between satisfaction and job performance (Levy-Garboria & Montmarquette, 2004:135). According to Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985:251) and Judge, Thoresen, Bono and Patton (2001:376), three alternative points of view exist: (1) satisfaction causes performance; (2) performance causes satisfaction; and (3) no specific direction or relationship, but rather rewards intervene, that lead to both performance and satisfaction. The relationship between organisational commitment and performance is also debated in literature (Suliman & Isles (a), 2000:407).

➤ Satisfaction causes performance

There used to be a common assumption among researchers that employee satisfaction directly affects performance. This stems back to the paternalistic approach of the 1950s. But most research studies have found no significant



satisfaction-performance relationship (Yukl & Wexley, 1971:30). Herzberg though, argues that satisfaction leads to higher performance. In an attempt to resolve this controversy, Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985:251) conducted a meta-analysis from 74 studies. It was discovered that satisfaction and performance were only slightly related. According to Kreitner and Kinicki (1998:209), researchers claim that this result is misleading and that it understates the true relationship between performance and satisfaction. The rationale behind this claim revolves around the accuracy of measuring an individual's performance. If performance ratings do not reflect the actual interactions and interdependencies at work, weak meta-analysis results are partially due to incomplete measuring of individual-level performance. Examining the relationship between aggregate measures of job satisfaction and organisational performance is one solution to correct this problem. In support of these ideas, a study by Ostroff (1992:963-974) has found a significant, positive correlation between organisational performance and employee satisfaction. Thus, it appears that managers can positively affect performance by increasing employee job satisfaction, although the relationship holds better for professional or higher level employees than for non-professionals or those at lower levels. Blue-collar workers tend to have lower levels of job satisfaction, due to the repetitive and mundane nature of their jobs (Berning & Potgieter, 2000:5).

Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:100) conclude that job satisfaction alone is probably not a consistent predictor of individual work performance. But satisfaction may well be an important component of a larger set of variables that can together predict performance for certain people.

➤ **Performance causes satisfaction**

Some organisational behaviour scholars cling to an old myth – that high satisfaction leads to high employee performance – but this assumption is strongly contested. Satisfied workers may be high, average, or even low producers, but they will tend to continue the level of performance that previously brought them satisfaction (according to the behaviour modification model). The satisfaction-performance relationship is more complex than the simple path of “satisfaction leads to performance.” A more accurate statement of the relationship is that high

performance contributes to high job satisfaction. A basic model of this relationship is shown in figure 2.8. The model, which is based on the work of Edward Lawler and Lyman Porter, maintains that performance accomplishments lead to rewards that in turn lead to satisfaction.



Figure 2.8: The performance-satisfaction-effort loop (Newstrom and Davis, 1997:261)

Rewards in this model are intervening variables. In other words they link performance with later satisfaction. In addition, a moderating variable - perceived equity of rewards - further affects the relationship. The moderator indicates that performance will lead to satisfaction only if rewards are perceived as equitable. If an individual experiences that his/her performance is unfairly rewarded, the performance-causes satisfaction effect will not hold (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997:100-101). The sequence, shown in Figure 2.8, indicates that better performance typically leads to higher economic, sociological and psychological rewards. If these rewards are seen as fair and equitable, then improved satisfaction develops because employees feel that they are receiving rewards in proportion to their performance. On the other hand, if rewards are seen as unfair for the level of performance, dissatisfaction tends to arise. In either case, the level of satisfaction leads to either

greater or lesser commitment, which then affects effort and eventually performance. The results are a continuously operating performance-satisfaction-effort loop. The implication for management is to devote its efforts to enhancing employee performance, as this is likely to produce satisfaction as a by-product. Alternatively, a different scenario emerges if performance is low. Employees might not receive the rewards they were hoping for, and be dissatisfied. In these circumstances, the employee may exhibit one or more negative behaviours, such as labour turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, theft, violence or lack of organisational citizenship.

➤ **Rewards stimulate both performance and satisfaction**

This final argument in the job satisfaction-performance controversy is the most compelling. It suggests that proper, and the key word here is proper, allocation of resources will positively influence both performance and satisfaction. Research indicates that people who receive high rewards report higher job satisfaction. Furthermore, performance-contingent rewards (size and value of the reward is in proportion to the accomplishment) influence people's work performance (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997: 101). The point is to consider job satisfaction and performance as two separate but interrelated work results that are affected by allocation of resources. Whereas job satisfaction alone is not a good predictor of work performance, well-managed rewards are likely to have a positive influence on performance and satisfaction.

2.4.4 Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB)

Of significance in the last two decades has been the emergence of organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) as a behavioural manifestation of job satisfaction, job involvement and organisational commitment. Organ (1997:85) views organisational citizenship behaviour as discretionary actions that promote the success of the organisation. Organisational citizenship is often marked by its spontaneity, its voluntary nature, its constructive impact on results, its unexpected helpfulness to others, and the fact that it is optional. Volunteering for extra assignments or sharing equipment with another worker is also a demonstration of organisational citizenship. Like the thousands of grains of dry yeast that make the other ingredients in bread



dough rise, thousands of tiny bits of extra effort (helping, donating, co-operating) help organisations rise past their competitors. Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) was first coined by Organ and Ryan during the 1970s and re-visited more recently (Organ & Ryan, 1995:775). OCB refers to behaviours of employees as opposed to underlying values or attitudes. OCB is also known as the good soldier syndrome (Turnipseed & Murkinson, 2000:282) because these employees arrive on time, and complete their work. This behaviour improves the quality of performance and involvement in the organisation. This, in turn, releases more creativity and innovation into the organisation (Koys, 2001:101; Lam, 2001:262). OCB is characterized by pro-social behaviour that is not rewarded or penalized by a formal performance management system, although there is a strong relationship between work environment variables, especially good interpersonal and supervisory relationships and OCB. OCB is seen as those actions that are beyond formal prescribed roles and job descriptions i.e. extra roles, rather than normal role behaviour (Lam, 2001:262). Organ and Konovsky (1989:157) claim that the above behaviours associated with OCB are more prevalent among satisfied workers. According to Chiu and Tsai (2006:518), organisational citizenship behaviour is closely related to the concept “contextual performance” and is a type of performance. Contextual performance refers to the behaviour that supports the organisational, social and psychological environment during the operating of core technologies.

OCB is made up of five key categories of behaviour (Allison, Voss & Dryer, 2001: 285):

- **Altruism.** Voluntary actions that help a fellow employee with work-related problems; e.g. help fellow employees use equipment, assist them with incomplete work, help them find information.
- **Civic virtue.** Voluntary participation in and support of organisational functions of both a professional and social nature. In general, this means looking out for the organisation’s best interests; e.g. participating in organisational policy-making, attending optional meetings, attending company-sponsored events (e.g. family day).



- **Conscientiousness.** A pattern of operating well beyond the minimum required tasks; e.g. arrive at work early and leave late, avoid unnecessary breaks, be punctual, make constructive suggestions; and complete tasks before they are due.
- **Courtesy.** A discretionary act of thoughtfulness and considerate behaviour that prevents work-related problems for others; e.g. notify employer if one is going to be late or absent; notify colleagues before you do things that will affect them; and inform colleagues of delays in work progress.
- **Sportsmanship.** A willingness to accept inevitable inconveniences and impositions in the workplace in your stride without complaining; e.g. not complaining about working overtime to complete a project, having a deadline brought forward or working conditions that are uncomfortable but not dangerous.

Organisational citizenship behaviours are those beyond the call of duty. Managers would certainly like employees to exhibit these behaviours. A recent meta-analysis covering 28 separate studies revealed a significant and moderately positive correlation between organisational citizenship behaviours and job satisfaction. Moreover, additional research demonstrated that employees' citizenship behaviours were determined more by leadership and characteristics of the work environment than by an employee's willingness to exhibit citizenship behaviour. This relationship is important to recognize because organisational citizenship behaviours were positively correlated with performance ratings (LePine, Erez & Johnson, 2002:52).

2.4.5 Motivation.

Schermerhorn *et al.* (1997:87) identify motivation as an internal force that accounts for the level, direction and persistence of effort expended at work. If we add the role of motivation to figure 2.8 the relationship between motivation, job performance and satisfaction becomes clear. Figure 2.9, that illustrates this integrated model of motivation to work, is based on Lyman Porter and Edward Lawler's model of motivation. The Porter-Lawler model of motivation effectively summarizes much of what we know about motivating employees at work (Werner, 2007:91-92). In the figure, job performance is determined by individual attributes such as ability and experience, organisational support such as resources and technology and work

effort – the point at which an individual’s level of motivation is evident. While individual motivation directly determines work effort, the key to motivation is the ability to create a work setting that positively responds to individuals’ needs and goals. Whether or not a work setting proves to be motivational for a given individual depends on the availability of rewards and their perceived value. Motivation can also occur when job satisfaction results from either intrinsic or extrinsic rewards that are felt to be equitably allocated. When gross inequity is experienced, satisfaction will be low and motivation will be reduced (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1997:101-102).

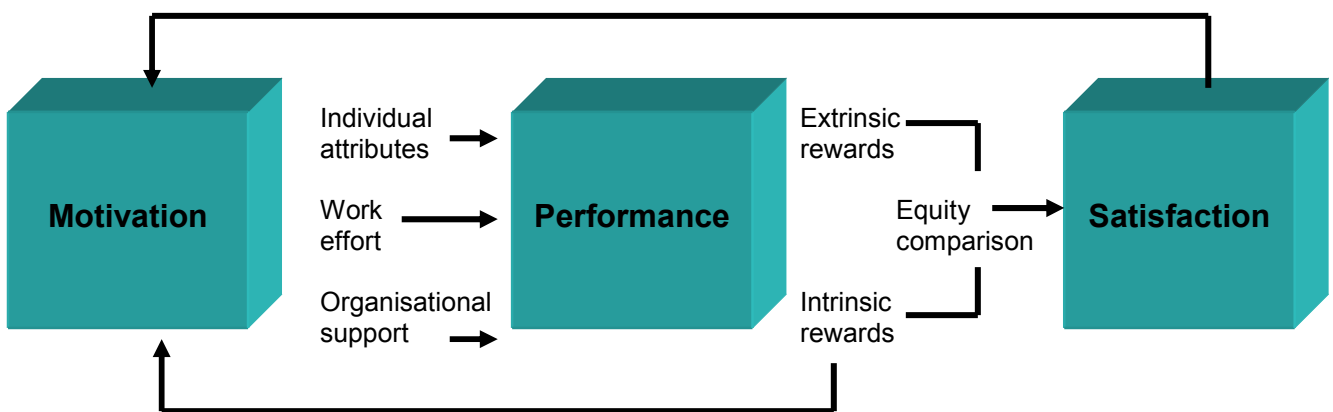


Figure 2.9: An integrated model of individual motivation to work (Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn, 1997:102)

A recent meta-analysis of nine studies revealed a significant positive relationship between motivation and job satisfaction. Because satisfaction with supervision also correlated significantly with motivation, managers’ are advised to consider how their behaviour affects employee satisfaction. Managers can potentially enhance employees’ motivation through various strategies to increase job satisfaction levels (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998:207).

2.4.6 Perceived stress

Kreitner and Kinicki (1998:209) state that stress can have extremely negative effects on organisational behaviour. A meta-analysis of seven studies has revealed that perceived stress has a strong, negative relationship with job satisfaction (Blegen,

1993:36-41). It is hoped that managers will attempt to reduce the negative effects of stress by improving job satisfaction levels.

2.4.7 Violence and theft

One of the direct consequences of employee dissatisfaction is violence, or various forms of verbal or physical aggression at work. Although the source of violence can include customers and strangers, the effect is the same. Millions of workers are currently the victims of workplace violence annually, and many more live under the direct or perceived threat of attack. Ironically, work stress can be a cause of violence or the aftermath of it. Managers have to be increasingly on the lookout for signs that employee dissatisfaction might turn into verbal or physical attacks at work, therefore they have to take appropriate preventive actions (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:265).

Some employees steal goods, while, others use company services without authorization, such as making personal long-distance calls at work (thereby “stealing” both the cost of the call and their productive time). Others forge cheques or commit other types of fraud. All these acts are forms of theft, or the unauthorized removal of company resources. Although there are many causes of employee theft, some employees may steal because they feel exploited, overworked or frustrated by the impersonal treatment that they receive from their organisation. In their own minds, employees may justify unethical behaviour as a way of establishing equity, or even gaining revenge for what they consider to be ill treatment at the hands of a supervisor. In contrast to the situation relating to absenteeism and tardiness, tighter organisational control or incentive systems do not always solve the problem of theft, since these are directed at the symptoms and not at the underlying causes such as severe dissatisfaction (Newstrom & Davis, 1997:264).

Table 2.5 summarizes the relationship between job satisfaction and the discussed variables. The direction of the relationship is either positive (+) or negative (-). The strength of the relationship ranges from weak (insignificant relationship) to strong (significant relationship). Strong relationships imply that managers are able to influence the variable of interest significantly by inspiring job attitudes.

For the purpose of the study it is worthwhile to mention the correlation between job satisfaction, job involvement and organisational commitment. In seeking to identify the different configurations of these job attitudes that are maximally effective in explaining the inter-relationships among them, researchers have focused primarily on linear relationships, even though the emerging view suggests that the relationships may be curvilinear and/or interactional (Bhuian & Menguc, 2002:1).

Table 2.5: Correlates of job satisfaction (Kreitner and Kinicki, 1998:208)

Variables related to satisfaction	Direction of relationship	Strength of relationship
Motivation	Positive	Moderate
Job involvement	Positive	Moderate
Organisational citizenship behaviour	Positive	Moderate
Organisational commitment	Positive	Strong
Absenteeism	Negative	Weak
Tardiness	Negative	Weak
Turnover	Negative	Moderate
Heart disease	Negative	Moderate
Perceived stress	Negative	Strong
Pro-union voting	Negative	Moderate
Job performance	Positive	Weak
Positive attitude	Positive	Moderate
Mental health	Positive	Moderate

A meta-analysis involving 87 different studies demonstrates that job involvement is moderately related to job satisfaction (Brown(b), 1996:235). Managers are thus encouraged to foster satisfying work environments in order to strengthen employees' job involvement. A meta-analysis of 68 studies uncovered a significant and strong correlation between organisational commitment and satisfaction (Tett & Meyer, 1993:259). Mathieu and Zajac (1990:171-194) advise managers to increase job satisfaction to elicit higher levels of commitment. In turn, stronger commitment will lead to higher productivity.

It can thus be concluded that although job attitudes do not necessarily influence quantity and quality of performance, they do influence organisational citizenship behaviour, labour turnover, absenteeism and preferences and opinions about unions. Job attitudes are important variables influencing the behavioural intentions of

individuals in organisations and are of importance to organisations as the behavioural intention to leave or stay seems to be the strongest predictor of actual labour turnover. Because of these influences managers' continue to search for techniques and programmes to improve job attitudes.

2.5 MEASURING ATTITUDES

The preceding review indicates that knowledge of employee attitudes can be helpful to managers when they attempt to predict employee behaviour. Given its importance, organisational behaviour researchers are interested in accurately measuring job attitudes and understanding the consequences for people at work. Kruger *et al.* (2005:160) note that attitudes are measured according to two dimensions: direction (this indicates whether an attitude is positive or negative) and intensity (this indicates the degree of preference or dislike for an object or person). Informally on a daily basis, managers should be able to gauge job satisfaction of others through careful observation or interpretation of what they say and do while going about their jobs. Sometimes, it is also useful to measure more formally the levels of job satisfaction among groups of workers. This is most frequently done through formal interviews or questionnaires. Increasingly, other methods are being used as well, for example focus groups, computer-based attitude surveys and management blogs (Shively, Becker-Doyle, Fabian & Hunt, 2007:79; Wymer & Carsten, 1992:71).

➤ Job satisfaction

Robbins and Judge (2007:85) indicate that approaches to measuring job satisfaction are either an overall single global rating (single-item approach) which is general or a summation score made up of a number of job facets (multiple-item approach) which is specific.

Berning and Potgieter (2000:70) state that the single-item approach attempts to ascertain general overall satisfaction with the "total package" i.e. the job. There are many questionnaires that have attempted to do this, dating back to more than 50 years. Job satisfaction is measured by asking employees one broad, global question,

for example, “Generally, how satisfied are you with your job”. The Brayfield-Rothe (1951) index is a frequently used measurement, aptly titled the “overall job satisfaction” measurement (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:109). Another popular example of this approach is the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire produced by Weiss, Dawis, England and Lofquist in 1967. The 20-item scale, relating to occupational and environmental conditions, purports to measure intrinsic (I) and extrinsic (E) motivation in different areas, but yields an overall satisfaction score. The instrument measures the various components of Herzberg’s theory of job satisfaction, such as working conditions, chances for advancement, freedom to use one’s own judgment, praise for doing a good job, and feelings of accomplishment. These factors are rated on a standardized scale and then added up to create an overall job satisfaction score. When the validity and reliability of the scale was carried out by Gillet and Schwab in 1975, the alpha coefficient was found to be 0.86932 (Cetin, 2006:81).

A study conducted by Nagy (2002:77-86) investigated the use of a single-item approach to measure job satisfaction. The study contained the Job Descriptive Index (JDI), a multi-item approach to measure job satisfaction, as well as a single-item approach which measured each of the five JDI facets. Results indicated that the single-item facet measure correlated significantly with each of the JDI facets (correlations ranged from .60 to .72 with a mean correlation of .66 across all facets). Results also indicated that the single-item approach compared favourably to the JDI and in some cases accounted for incremental variance in self-reported job performance and intention to turnover. The advantages of a single-item approach, include the notion that single-item measures may be easier and take less time to complete, may be less expensive, may have more face validity and may be more flexible than multiple-item scales. These results support the work of Wanous, Reichers and Hudy (1997:250), who have also found that single-item measures of overall job satisfaction correlate favourably with multiple-item measures of overall job satisfaction. Wanous *et al.* (1997:250) conclude that single-item measures may be preferred to multiple-item measures owing to the following conditions:

- Single-item measures take less space than multiple-measures.
- Single-item measures may be more cost effective.



- Single-item measures may contain more face validity, especially when an organisation has poor employee relations (due to negative reactions to perceived repetitious questions from scale measures).
- Single-item measures may be more effective to measure changes in job satisfaction.

Scarpello and Campbell (1983:577) believe that a single-item measuring scale is superior to summing up facet scales, because multiple-item facet scales may omit some components of a job that are important to an employee. Nagy (2002:78) points out though, that most multiple-item scales have been subjected to a tremendous amount of research to justify and validate the items used in the scales.

However, the use of a single global rating does not allow for analysis of the reasons for the stated satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Robbins and Judge (2007:85) mention, “that defining job satisfaction as an individual’s general attitude towards his or her job, is a very broad definition. Yet this is inherent in the concept. Bear in mind, a person’s job entails more than the obvious activities of shuffling papers, waiting on customers or driving a truck. Jobs necessitate interacting with co-workers and employers; following organisation rules and policies; meeting performance standards; accepting working conditions that are often less than ideal; etc. This means that an employee’s assessment of how satisfied or dissatisfied he/she is with his/her job is a complex conglomerate of a number of discrete job elements. The current trend is to treat job satisfaction as a multi-dimensional construct. The reasons for this are largely self-evident: a worker could be highly satisfied with the wages he receives, moderately satisfied with his work-mates but very dissatisfied with his immediate supervisor. Which one, or combination of these, should be used to represent his single attitude to work? Furthermore, it is possible to imagine situations where groups of workers have similar scores on an overall measure, yet they differ widely in terms of their levels of satisfaction with different aspects of their employment. It seems likely, therefore, that studies of separate dimensions of job satisfaction will be more meaningful than research which employs a single global measure”.

Robbins *et al.* (2003:77) state that the multi-dimensional approach is more sophisticated. It identifies key elements in a job and asks for the employee's feelings about each. Typical factors that would be included are the nature of the work, supervision, present pay, promotion opportunities, physical conditions and relations with co-workers. Yeager (1981:205) claims that among the job satisfaction questionnaires that have been used over the years, the most popular one is the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) described by Smith *et al.* (1969). This instrument measures levels of satisfaction on a nominal scale in five aspects of the job:

- The work itself – responsibility, interest and growth.
- Quality of supervision – technical help and social support.
- Relationships with co-workers – social harmony and respect.
- Promotion opportunities – opportunities for further advancement.
- Pay – adequacy of pay and perceived equity vis-à-vis others.

The 72-item questionnaire format is a simple one: for each area a list of adjectives or short phrases is presented, each with a blank space beside it. The subject is instructed to respond in one of three ways to each item: 'yes' if the item describes the particular aspect of his job, 'no', if it does not describe that aspect or a question mark if he cannot decide (Gibson *et al.*, 2006:109).

An impressive body of data has been built up to validate the JDI which is according to Vroom (in Golembiewski & Yeager, 1978:514) without doubt a very carefully constructed measurement of job satisfaction. Specific features which appear to recommend its use are (1) the JDI has been widely in use in business and in government, (2) a strong case has been built for construct validity, both in the original source as well as in numerous other publications; and (3) the JDI dimensional structure seems stable across some occupational groupings and different demographic characteristics (Golembiewski & Yeager, 1978:515).

Although the JDI has been used widely, Smith and her colleagues in the JDI Research Group at Bowling Green State University felt that linguistic and contextual changes in the work arena necessitated revision of the instrument. In the late 1970s, they began a five-year project to revise the JDI. The subsequent revision was the



result of a multi-step process using item response theory as well as traditional psychometric methods. A few items were replaced by others that proved to be more relevant, particularly to non-manufacturing situations. This major effort was completed in 1985. The new instrument, called the Revised JDI, was characterized by the same high levels of internal consistency reliability (average scale alpha of .88) as the original. In a separate, but parallel endeavour, a new, extensively researched scale was formulated to measure satisfaction with the job in general (the JIG). This new scale was designed to provide an overall evaluation of the job, to complement the JDI's specific facet scales. Its average alpha of .91 was consistent with the high alpha levels of the Revised JDI. With the addition of the JIG, it became possible to use the JDI to assess satisfaction with six aspects of employment: supervision, pay, promotion opportunities, the work itself, co-workers and the job in general (Balzer & Smith, 1990). The Revised Job Descriptive Index (including the JIG) assesses an individual's level of job satisfaction on six scales comprising from 9 to 18 short phrases or adjectives. An individual responds to each item by circling "yes" if the item describes his or her job, "no" if the item does not describe his or her job and a question mark if he/she cannot decide. The six scales are scored separately and assess satisfaction with work, supervision, pay, promotion, co-workers and the job in general (Maghrabi & Johnson, 1995:47-48).

Embedded within the theoretical basis of the 'Job Characteristics Model' of Hackman and Oldham, the 'Job Diagnostic Survey' (JDS) was developed as a diagnostic instrument (Hackman & Oldman, 1975:150-170). The 'Job Diagnostic Survey' evolved from the job dimensions identified in the 'Job Characteristics Model' (JCM). According to Kreitner and Kinicki (1998:204), the JDS is widely used as a data collection instrument in the field of organisational development for job characteristics diagnoses. The JDS is used to diagnose existing jobs prior to job redesign, indicating whether job redesign should proceed, and to evaluate the effects of the redesign after the job redesign process.

Three major steps are to be followed when applying Hackman and Oldham's model. Since the model seeks to increase employee motivation and satisfaction, step one is to diagnose the work environment to determine whether a problem exists. This is done through a self-report instrument for managers called the job diagnostic survey



(JDS). Diagnosis begins by determining whether motivation and satisfaction are lower than is desirable. If they are, a manager will assess the motivating potential score (MPS) of the jobs being examined. If the MPS is low, an attempt is made to determine which of the core job characteristics are causing the problem. If the MPS is high, managers need to look for other factors that are eroding motivation and satisfaction. Step two is to determine whether job redesign is appropriate for a given group of employees. Job redesign is most likely to be successful in a participative environment in which employees have the necessary knowledge and skills. Step three is to consider how to redesign the job. The focus of this effort is to increase the scores of those core job characteristics that contribute to dissatisfaction. The JDS has been well researched and most of the evidence supports the theory that there is a multiple set of job characteristics that affect behavioural outcomes such as job satisfaction (Loher *et al.*, 1985:280-289).

➤ **Organisational commitment**

According to Kacmar and Carlson (1999:976), different perspectives regarding the most appropriate definition of organisational commitment have led to some disagreement about how the construct should be measured. Various scales have been designed to measure organisation commitment (e.g. Balfour & Wechsler, 1996; Meyer & Allen, 1984; Mowday *et al.*, 1979; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). The limited research that compared and contrasted the available measurement scales, found a great deal of overlap between the items of the various scales.

According to Lee and Goa (2005:378), many published studies have used the 15-item Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers and Porter in 1979 (Mowday *et al.*, 1979). As an illustration of the importance of the OCQ scale to research on organisational commitment, 103 out of 166 samples reported in Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) meta-analysis used the 15-item OCQ or the 9-item refinement of it. The 15-item OCQ was developed to determine three aspects of attitudinal commitment: (1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organisation's goals and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation' (Mowday *et al.*, 1979:226). Although the OCQ comprises three underlying theoretical

aspects, the authors intended the scale to be unidimensional. A majority of researchers using this scale have reported or used a single-factor solution. The internal consistency reliability of the OCQ scores range from .82 - .93 with a mean score of .87 (Kacmar & Carlson, 1999:980).

Another example is the 9-item organisational commitment survey (OCS) developed by Balfour and Wechsler (1996). The OCS measures the degree to which individuals identify with the organisation for which they work, involving not only the acceptance of and belief in organisational values, but also a willingness to pursue organisational goals and a strong desire for organisational membership (Balfour & Wechsler, 1996:257). Respondents use a five-point Likert-type scale to indicate their responses from 1 = strong disagreement to 5 = strong agreement with each of the items in the scale. The internal consistency reliability for the OCS subscales is: *identification*, .69, *affiliation*, .73 and *exchange*, .74 (Kacmar & Carlson, 1999:980).

A third example is the instrument developed by Meyer and Allen in 1984 and revised in 1991 (Abbott *et al.*, 2005:535). The original instrument contained 8 items focusing on affective commitment and 8 items focusing on continuance commitment. Affective commitment items measure the sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the organisation, identification with the organisation's problems and the feeling that the organisation adds to one's personal meaning. Continuance commitment items measure a perceived lack of alternative job opportunities, the personal sacrifice that would be required to leave the organisation and disruptions that would result from leaving (O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999:203). The revised 24-item scale is a three-component organisational commitment scale that now includes the third dimension of commitment – normative commitment. Respondents indicate their level of agreement with statements about attitudes to their organisation on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. The scale has reliabilities across many studies of .82 for *affective commitment*, .76 for *continuance commitment* and .73 for *normative commitment* (Abbott *et al.*, 2005:535).



➤ **Job involvement**

As job involvement has been less researched than job satisfaction and organisational commitment as an independent variable in turnover studies, the measurement scales available are limited. The job involvement measurement tool most often used is the 9-item questionnaire constructed by Kanungo (1982:341-349).

➤ **Perceived organisational support**

Employees' perception of the amount of support they feel they receive from their organisation can be measured using a 17-item questionnaire developed by Eisenberg *et al.* (1986). Positively worded items in the questionnaire measure the extent to which respondents believe their organisation values their contribution, considers their goals and interests, makes help available to solve problems and cares about their general level of work satisfaction. Negatively worded items examine beliefs that the organisation will disregard employee interests, fail to notice their efforts and contributions and will take advantage of them when the opportunity arises (O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999:203).

Given the importance of job attitudes in understanding organisational behaviour, job attitudes are frequently measured by researchers and organisations. The result of this interest is that many reliable and valid work-related attitude questionnaires exist.

2.6 RESEARCHED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB ATTITUDES AND LABOUR TURNOVER IN AN INTERNATIONAL SETTING

According to Naumann *et al.* (2000:228), although there is a substantial body of research available on domestic labour turnover in management literature, little attention has been devoted to international labour turnover. While turnover process models have been tested in respect of domestic labour turnover (see Cotton & Tuttle, 1986), they have not to any great extent been tested in respect of labour turnover of expatriates (see Lee, 2005; Naumann *et al.*, 2000). Nevertheless, variables derived from models of domestic turnover may be relevant to turnover of expatriates.

As propensity to leave (intention to quit) is a chief determinant of labour turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1991; Steel & Ovalle, 1984), propensity to leave (PTL) is frequently used as a dependent variable in labour turnover studies (Naumann *et al.*, 2000). As a behavioural intention variable, it has been found to intermediate the linkage between worker attitudes and actual labour turnover (Naumann *et al.*, 2000). The strong and positive empirical relationship between the propensity to leave and actual labour turnover has led to frequent use of this construct in management research. Table 2.6 reflects the job attitude variables associated with propensity to leave.

Table 2.6: Researched relationship between job attitudes (job satisfaction, organisational commitment & job involvement) and the propensity to leave

Determinants of propensity to leave (A)	Researchers	Relationship between (A) & (B)
Job satisfaction (B)	Locke (1976) Brown & Peterson (1993) Black, Mendenhall & Oddou(1991) Naumann (1993;2000) Tett & Meyer (1993) Birdseye & Hill (1995) Hom & Griffeth (1995) Vandenberg & Nelson (1999) Lee (2005) Bonache (2005) Harrison, Newman & Roth (2006) Lee & Liu (2006; 2007)	- - - - - - - - - - -
Organisational commitment (B)	Mowday, Porter & Steers (1979; 1982) Meyer and Allen (1984; 1991;1997) Blau and Boal (1989) Tett and Meyer (1993) Jaros, Jermier, Koehler & Sincich(1993) Balfour & Wechsler (1996) Vandenberg & Nelson (1999) Harrison, Newman & Roth (2006) Lee & Liu (2006; 2007) Ahuja,Chudoba & Kacmar (2007)	- - - - - - - - - -
Job involvement (B)	Blau & Boal (1987) Mowday, Porter & Steers (1982) Lee & Mowday (1987)	- - -



While this table is non-conclusive, it reviews the turnover literature investigated for the purpose of this research report. The negative (-) relationships specified between job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement and the propensity to leave are well established (Naumann *et al.*, 2000). The mediating role of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement also appears in turnover models developed by Bluedorn (1982), Lee and Mowday (1987) and Hom and Griffeth (1991). Labour turnover models posit that organisational, job-related and person-related variables are predictors of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement. These are related to propensity to leave / intention to quit, which in turn is a major determinant of turnover. Table 2.7 incorporates some of the variables tested as antecedents of job attitudes.

Table 2.7: Variables tested as antecedents of job attitudes

Determinants of job attitudes (A)	Researchers	Relationship between (A) & (B)
Age (B)	Mathieu & Zajack (1990) Dineen, Noe, Shaw & Withoff (2007)	Moderately + For group behaviour +
Tenure (B)	Mathieu & Zajack (1990) Naumann <i>et al.</i> (2000) Brown & McIntosh (2003)	+ + +
Fluency (B)	Mathieu & Zajack (1990) Naumann <i>et al.</i> (2000)	+ Not significant
Met expectations (B)	Lee & Mowday (1987) Naumann <i>et al.</i> (2000)	+ +
Job characteristics (B): ➤ Role ambiguity/role conflict ➤ Task variety/significance/ identity ➤ Autonomy	Moore(2000) Naumann (1993) Ahuja, Chudoba & Kacmar (2007) Naumann <i>et al.</i> (2000) Idson (1990)	- + + + +
Organisational characteristics (B): ➤ Expatriate training ➤ Fairness of rewards ➤ Work family conflict	Tung (1984) Naumann (1993) Brewster & Pickard (1994) Clark & Oswald (1996) Ahuja, Chudoba & Kacmar (2007) Ahuja, Chudoba & Kacmar (2007)	+ + + - - -

Tett and Meyer (1993) reported a -0.70 correlation between *job satisfaction* and *labour turnover intention* in a meta-analysis of 42 studies. The mean correlation for *organisational commitment* and *labour turnover intention* was -0.55 in 28 studies. Using path analysis Tett and Meyer, in figure 2.10, compared three models for predicting labour turnover intention from job satisfaction and organisational commitment. In all three models, turnover intention predicted actual turnover. In the first model job satisfaction and organisational commitment each independently predicted turnover intention. In the second model, job satisfaction predicted turnover intention, with organisational commitment mediating the relationship. In the third model job satisfaction and organisational commitment were reversed. Tett and Meyer interpreted their results, indicating that model 1 and model 3 fitted well. Trimble (2006:351) found Tett and Meyer's acceptance of only model 1 and 3 interesting, as they could according to him, have accepted all three models as the chi-square values of all three models exceeded the recommended value of .50.

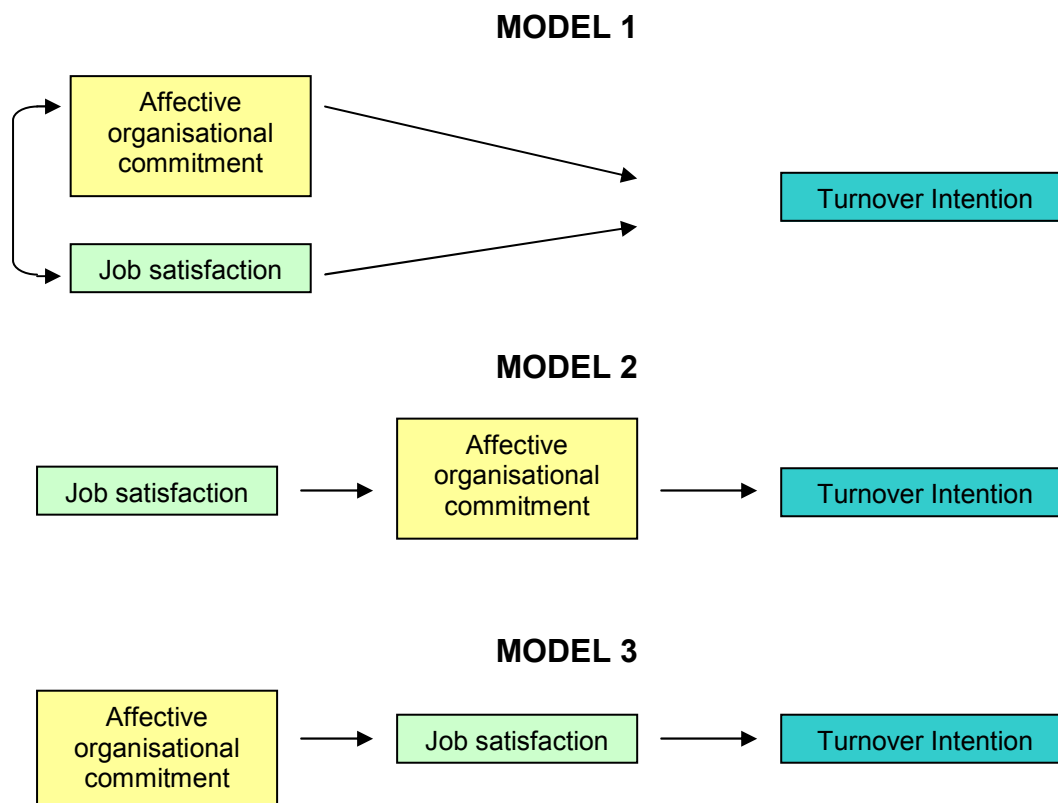


Figure 2.10: Tett and Meyer's theoretical models of the relationship between affective organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention (Tett and Meyer, 1993)

The Tett and Meyer results are confirmed by Babbakus and colleagues. Babbakus *et al.* (1996) found that job satisfaction was related to domestic employees' propensity to leave but was preceded by role conflict and role ambiguity. They also found a significant relationship between organisational commitment and propensity to leave among domestic employees. These findings on the relationship between organisational commitment and propensity to leave are similar to the findings of Ingram and Lee (1990) and McNeilly and Russ (1992).

Several studies empirically tested the effects of organisational commitment on another important work outcome, job effort. Job effort is defined as job-related physical and mental exertion, which can vary from the minimum required to maintain a work role, to working extremely hard. It is considered more reliable than performance as a behavioural outcome variable because it is less influenced by external variables (e.g. economy) than performance. Lee and Goa (2005:393) conducted a study in the Korean retail context and confirmed the following relationships: Organisational commitment is positively related to job effort and negatively related to propensity to leave the organisation (See figure 2.11).

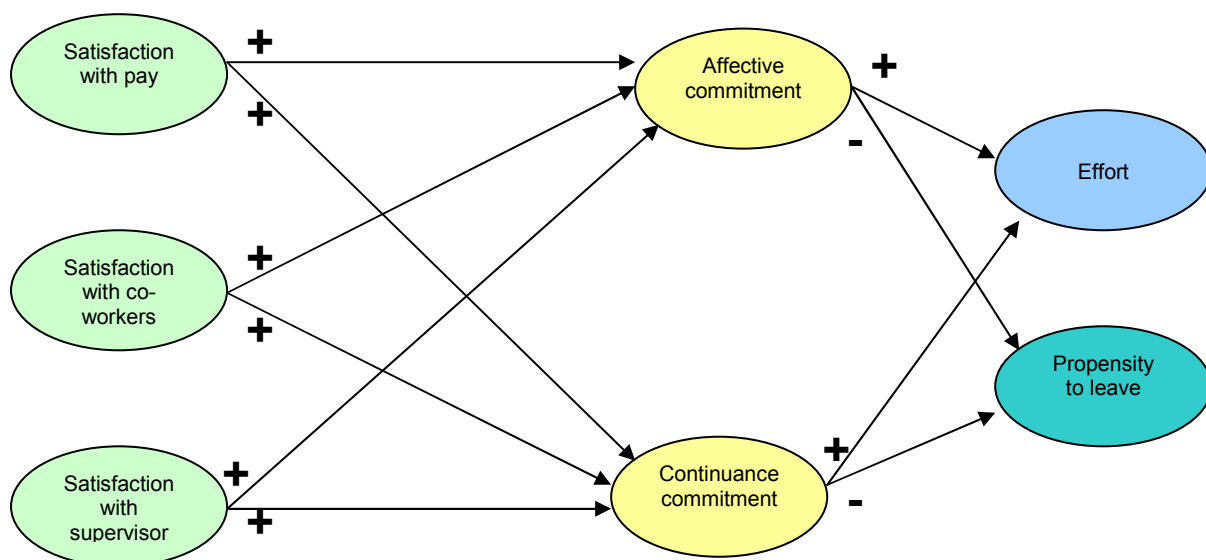


Figure 2.11: Test results of the antecedents and consequences of affective and continuance commitment (Lee and Goa, 2005:393)

Ahuja, Chudoba and Kacmar (2007:2), building on Moore's (2000) work on turnover intention, developed and tested a model that is context-specific to the Information Technology consultant. Hom and Griffeth (1995:37) suggest that context matters because their turnover meta-analysis concluded that most correlations changed across settings. For this reason Ahuja and colleagues adapted Moore's model to be context-sensitive to the information technology setting. This was done by substituting work/family conflict for Moore's role stressors (role ambiguity and role conflict) and by adding organisational commitment, both of which are critical to the information technology setting (Ahuja *et al.*, 2007:3). Figure 2.12 summarizes the result of the study.

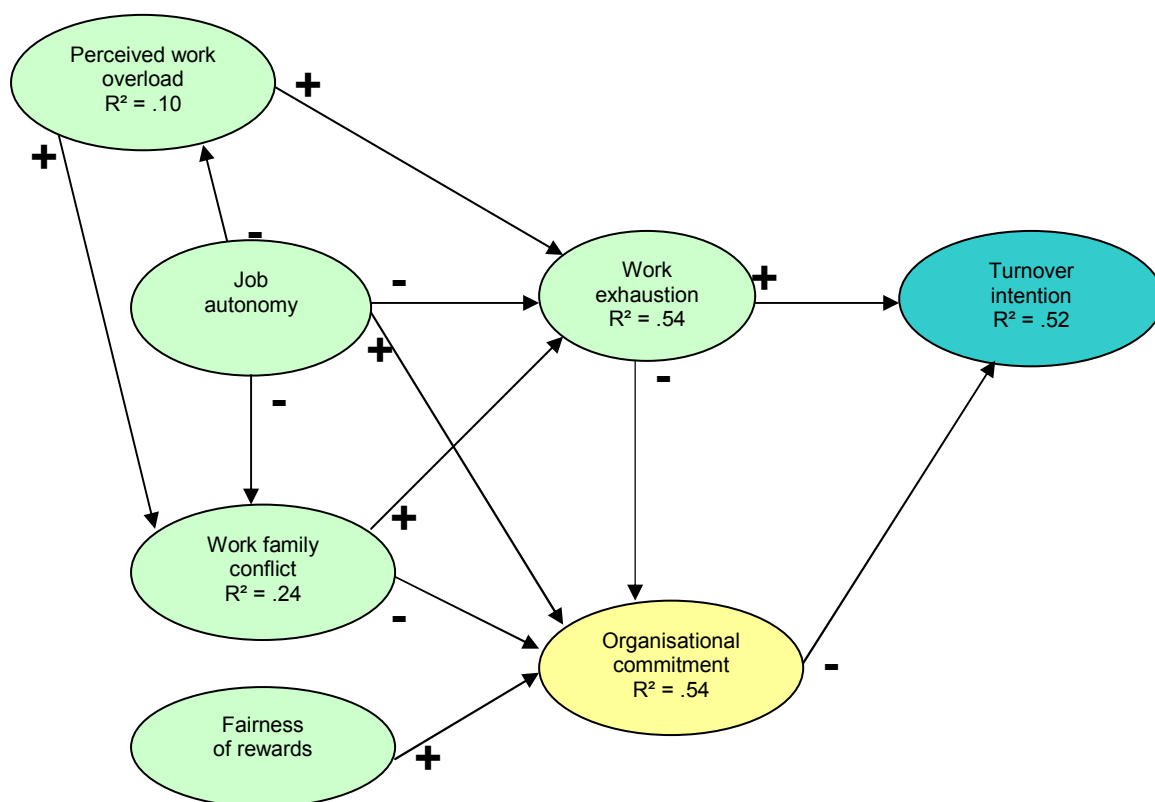


Figure 2.12: Theoretical turnover model adapted from the work of J.E. Moore. (in Ahuja, Chudoba and Kacmar, 2007:4)

The model accounts for slightly over half of the variance in turnover intention, implying that work exhaustion and organisational commitment are key turnover factors. This is confirmed by a recent study conducted by Lee and Liu (2007:122-134). Lee and Liu aimed to address the challenge of repatriate turnover by focusing on how effective repatriation adjustment, job satisfaction and organisational

commitment are at predicting the Taiwanese repatriates' intention to leave their organisation. Lee and Liu concluded that the combination of the three variables could predict approximately 58% of the variance of intent to leave and that the variables were negatively related to the intention to leave.

From the above it can be concluded that the negative relationship specified between job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement and the intention to leave are well established in various previous research studies.

2.7 SUMMARY

From the literature study the following conclusions can be made:

- Employee attitudes are important to organisations as they predict behaviour.
- Specific aspects related to one's job and the organisation, facilitate job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement.
- Job attitudes influence organisational citizenship behaviour, labour turnover, absenteeism and preferences and opinions about unions. Job attitudes are important variables influencing the behavioural intention to stay or leave an organisation.
- Given the importance of job attitudes in understanding organisational behaviour, job attitudes are frequently measured through existing work-related attitude questionnaires.
- The negative relationship specified between job satisfaction; organisational commitment, job involvement and the intention to leave are well established in various previous research studies.

From all the proposed and tested research cited in this literature review, it can with great confidence be concluded that the aspects of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement are determinants of the propensity to leave an organisation. Job attitudes can thus have important implications for multinational corporations, as job attitudes influence the job behaviour of individuals and groups and how individuals and groups behave towards others. It is therefore important to know what job attitudes are, how they originate and how they are changed and

measured. Neglecting the role of job attitudes in the labour turnover process of expatriate managers appears to be a major shortcoming of international turnover research, therefore, the literature is in support of the need for this study.

Chapter 3 will aim to clarify the rationale of the research design and methods, engaged in to achieve the study objectives set out in chapter 1. The research design provides the overall structure for the procedures the researcher followed, the data the researcher collected and the data analysis the researcher conducted. This design is the researcher's blueprint for the research study.



CHAPTER 3

RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Putting together a piece of good research can not be done by slavishly following a set of rules about what is right and what is wrong. The researcher who is faced with a variety of options and alternatives has to make strategic decisions about what to select. Each choice brings with it a set of advantages and disadvantages. The key is to decide on a design that is appropriate for the specific research problem and the aim of the research study.

Chapter 3 presents the plan or blueprint of how the researcher intended to conduct the study to ensure that the most valid findings were reached. The most appropriate operations/procedures to be performed in order to test the hypothesis are specified and the reasons for these choices debated. The discussion includes: the type of research design, the measuring instrument, the sampling procedure, data management and data analysis. To conclude the chapter, the validity of the chosen research design and methods is debated. Throughout the planning phase of the research design and methods, the researcher identified possible biases, while simultaneously addressing the strategies implemented to overcome these possible obstacles.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study relied on:

- **Measurement** through a structured questionnaire.
- **Descriptive statistics** to describe the data by investigating the distribution of scores on each variable and by determining whether the scores on the different variables were related to each other.
- **Inferential statistics** to draw conclusions about the sample data and generalize it to the population.

- **Additional data gathering** to provide the scope for deducing common themes in the experiences of expatriate managers. Some of the experiences of the expatriate managers could only be analyzed through meaningful recordings. Words and sentences were used to qualify and record information.

It was proposed that the study be conducted within the *quantitative paradigm*, although a certain part of the study used qualitative techniques (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:47; Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:38).

The reasons for this decision were:

- The best way to measure the job attitudes of expatriate managers is to assess the various factors constituting job attitudes.
- The differences in the scores obtained can be interpreted and given meaning to in terms of the direction and intensity of the job attitudes of expatriate managers.
- The scores can be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.
- A better attempt can be made to interpret the results and generalize the interpretation to the South African population of individuals involved in expatriation to foreign countries.

3.3 TYPE OF RESEARCH DESIGN

Babbie (2004:243) suggests that surveys are appropriate for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes. He comments that surveys are chiefly used in studies that have individual people as the unit of analysis and are excellent vehicles for measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population. As the purpose of the research study is explanatory and descriptive, the unit of analysis is the individual and the point of focus is the orientation (job attitude) of the individual, *survey design was regarded as the most appropriate research design* to conduct the research. The time dimension is cross-sectional, as the job attitudes of expatriate managers are studied by taking a cross-section of the phenomenon at a given time and analyzing that cross-section carefully (Babbie 2004:89,95,101-102; Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:66).

According to Buckingham and Saunders (2004:12), the survey method can be defined as a technique for gathering statistical information about the attributes, attitudes or actions of a population by administering standardized questions to some or all of its members. The survey method applied in this study was based on the following guidelines:

- A sample of people was selected from a group, and their answers were taken to be representative of everybody in the group.
- Survey questions were standardized, so that everybody was asked about the same thing in the same way.
- The survey gathered information on people's personal attributes, on their attitudes and values as well as on their activities and behaviour.
- The focus was not in what any one individual had to say, but was aimed rather at generalizing about the group or whole population.
- Once the phenomena had been quantified, analysis through statistical procedures guided the findings.

(Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:13)

Surveys generally fall into one of two categories - descriptive or relational. Descriptive surveys are designed to provide a snapshot of the current state of affairs and to discover facts about a population. The aim is to describe a social phenomenon, and to measure its incidence in a population. Relational surveys are designed to examine relationships empirically between two or more constructs either in an exploratory or in a confirmatory manner to try to find evidence about some of the likely causes of people's behaviour or attitudes. The aim is to explain why people think or act as they do by identifying likely causal influences on their attitudes and behaviour. *The current study is a relational survey* that sought to explore the relationship between the propensity to leave a foreign assignment and job attitudes. (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:13; Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:167-170)

All social research is fallible, and surveys are no exception. This, however, does not make worthwhile survey research invalid. Buckingham and Saunders (2004:15) point out that the technical problems to watch out for during survey research concern

mainly the quality of the information that is gathered in a survey. This research study is no exception therefore special attention was paid to the following questions during the design phase:

- Did the sampling technique supply a group of respondents whose answers represent the whole population from whom it was drawn?
- Did the questions evoke the kind of information wanted?
- Did the measuring instrument unwittingly introduce a bias into the information gathered?

(Babbie, 2004:274; Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:15)

When these questions are raised, Buckingham and Saunders (2004:15) are of the opinion that researchers are concerned about the possibility that the facts they gather in their surveys may be distorted, consequently the empirical tests that they apply to their theories may in some way be inadequate. While such concerns must be taken seriously, there are procedures researchers can follow to minimize these technical difficulties. The researcher followed certain procedures to overcome the above problems thereby improving the chances of producing reasonably reliable, valid and useful data.

Babbie (2004:275) notes that another limitation in survey design could be that the researcher will not develop a sensitivity for the respondents' total life situation therefore he/she may not be aware of important new variables operating in the phenomenon being studied. To overcome these problems of "surface level analysis" and "inflexibility", open-ended questions were included in the pre-structured questionnaire to allow respondents to identify variables not foreseen by the researcher.

It is clear that survey research in the form of self-administered questionnaires was the obvious choice for the study and the best practical method to conduct the research. The reasons for the decision were:

- The population from which original data had to be collected was too geographically dispersed to be observed directly.



- It was possible to discover facts about people's actions, attitudes and attributes by asking the respondents questions and recording their answers systematically.
 - The facts gathered could be used to test the stated theories.
 - Survey responses represented 'observations' which could validly be measured and analysed using statistical procedures.
 - The questionnaire – the instrument for collecting facts in social surveys – was not inherently biased.
 - The standardised questionnaire offered the possibility of making refined descriptive assertions about expatriates' job attitudes.
 - A constructed standardized questionnaire provided data in the same form from all respondents, making comparisons possible.
 - Surveys were financially affordable.
 - Many questions could be asked on a given topic, giving the researcher considerable flexibility in the analysis.
- (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:262-264; Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:35; Denscombe, 2000:27; Mouton, 2003:152-153)

3.4 MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Denscombe (2000:7) states that the survey approach is a research strategy, not a research method. Researchers who adopt the survey strategy are able to use a whole range of methods within the strategy: questionnaires, interviews, documents and observations. For the purpose of the research study, *self-administered e-mailed questionnaires were chosen as the data-gathering method.*

Structured self-administered questionnaires were sent via e-mail to a sample of respondents. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part consisted of questions with predetermined responses using interval scales. This enabled the researcher to extract numerical data. The second part was semi-structured, with open-ended questions to allow the respondent his/her own response to the questions. This enabled the researcher to extract textual data.

The following reasons supported the suitability of a questionnaire as the basic design method for the stated research problem:

- The information required was straightforward and uncontroversial.
- The cost was lower when compared with other methods.
- The self-administered e-mailed questionnaire had three sample-related advantages over other kinds of surveys: It allowed for wider geographic coverage, a larger sample and wider coverage within the sample population.
- A self-administered questionnaire was used as the population was adequately literate and geographically dispersed.
- The self-administered e-mailed questionnaire was much easier to administer than other kinds of surveys.
- Unlike almost all other methods of data collection, it could be assumed that when the questionnaire was sent through the e-mail, all members of the sample received it almost simultaneously.
- The possibility of anonymity and privacy could increase the number of responses.
- Many surveyors believe that people are more likely to give complete and truthful information on sensitive topics in a self-administered questionnaire than in an interview as questionnaires preclude the effect of personal contact with the researcher.
- The questionnaire enables the gathering of standardized data, generalizable to the population.
- It was possible to generate a huge amount of information on a wide range of topics. The self-administered e-mailed questionnaire could provide personal information on people such as their age, tenure and educational qualification. It could reveal people's attitudes and document people's activities.

(Bourque & Fielder, 2003:9-14; Denscombe, 2000:27,107)

Given its importance, job attitudes are frequently measured by researchers and organisations. Many work-related attitude questionnaires exist. Naumann *et al.* (2000:228) indicate that to examine the intention to leave of expatriates, it is useful to include a set of organisational, job-related and person-related determinants. A set of person-related determinants should include variables specifically related to the expatriate scenario (e.g. fluency in host-country language, international experience,

and expatriate training) and organisational and job-related variables should draw on studies from the organisational literatures that identify the antecedents of job attitudes. For the purpose of this research study only person-related and job-related variables were included in the measurement instrument as the organisational variables fall outside the scope of the research study. The measurement instrument used for the study was developed by integrating questions used in already existing job-attitude surveys. According to Bourque and Fielder (2003:36), there are multiple advantages to this method of adopting standard question batteries, particularly for surveyors who are preparing mail questionnaires: (1) Such question batteries are almost always made up exclusively of closed-ended questions (respondents are generally reluctant to answer open-ended questions in self-administered questionnaires), and possible answer categories have already been worked out and tested in prior studies. (2) Instructions to respondents have been developed and tested. (3) Surveyors who use questions in a standard battery exactly as they were used in other studies can then compare the data they collect with the data collected in those prior studies or with a standard population. Buckingham and Saunders (2004:77) add to this discussion, by stating that using other people's questionnaires (modified if necessary, and properly acknowledged in your write-up) has two huge advantages: (1) Validity. The questions are likely to 'work'. If they have been tried out and found useful in other studies, then they will probably provide you with reasonably valid measurements. (2) Reliability. By ensuring some uniformity of measurements between your study and earlier work, you will be able to compare your results directly with those reported by others.

As this study engaged relational research, it was important to include questions to measure all the variables identified. Each of the variables needed to be measured by at least one set of questions in the questionnaire, as the aim of the study was to trace the expected causal relationship between the independent variables: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement, and the dependent variable: propensity to return from a foreign assignment prematurely or the intention to leave the multinational corporation. The mediating role of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job involvement was borrowed from the labour turnover model developed by Bluedorn (1982). This model posits that organisational, job-related and person-related variables are predictors of job satisfaction,

organisational commitment and job involvement, while these variables are related to propensity to leave. Propensity to leave is a chief determinant of labour turnover (Naumann *et al.*, 2000:228).

It was important to consider the reliability and validity of the already existing scales that were used in the study and to keep the total questionnaire to a manageable length. The self administered e-mailed questionnaire can be viewed in Appendix A. The following surveys were combined into one questionnaire:

- *Job characteristics of skill variety, task identity, task significance and autonomy were measured using the 21-item Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975).*
- *Job characteristics of role conflict and role ambiguity were measured using 20 selected items from scales developed by Rizo, House and Lirtzman (1970).*
- *Five dimensions of job satisfaction: satisfaction with supervision, co-workers, compensation package, promotion opportunities, and the job itself were measured using the 72-item Job Descriptive Index (JDI) developed by Smith, Kendall and Hulin in 1969 and revised in 1985. (Smith, Balzer, Brannick, Chia, Eggleston, Gibson, Johnson, Josephson, Paul, Reilly, & Whalen, 1987:31-33)*
- *Organisational commitment was measured using the 15-item Organisational Commitment Scale (OCS) developed by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979).*
- *Job involvement was measured using the 6-item scale developed by Kanungo (1982).*
- *Met expectations of the work environment and the physical environment were measured using the 8-item scale modified by Lee and Mowday's (1987).*
- *Intention to leave was measured using the two items developed by Hom, Griffeth and Sellaro (1984).*

The questions, measuring the intention to leave, were: "Do you sometimes think of quitting your job?" and "How often do you think of quitting your job?" The questions were worded in this manner since turnover can occur while the expatriate is on an overseas assignment or soon after returning. As the operational definition of expatriate failure for the purpose of this study included premature return, a third question was included: "Did you often (if already back in South Africa) or do you

think often (if still on a foreign assignment) of returning sooner to South Africa than your contract states?”

A section measuring the person-related determinants (biographical characteristics) of the sample was also included in the questionnaire. Variables specifically related to the expatriate scenario namely age, marital status, tenure, international experience, country in which stationed, cultural heritage, fluency in the language of host country and work exhaustion were included to determine whether these person-related variables contribute the intention to leave a foreign assignment.

Table 3.1: Summary of the measurement instrument

Variable	Subscales	Original document	No. of items
Job characteristics*	Skill variety	Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) by Hackman and Oldman (1980)	3
	Task identity		3
	Task significance		5
	Autonomy		3
	Feedback		7
	Role conflict	Selected items from scales by Rizo, House and Lirtzman (1970)	12
	Role ambiguity		8
Job satisfaction	Job itself	Job Descriptive Index (JDI) by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969) and revised in (1985)	18
	Supervision		18
	Co-workers		18
	Promotion opportunities		9
	Compensation package		9
Organisational commitment	-	Organisational Commitment Scale (OCS) by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982)	15
Job involvement	-	Scales from Kanungo (1982)	6
Met expectations*	-	Modified from Lee and Mowday's (1987) scales	8
Intention to leave	Intention to quit	From Hom, Griffeth, and Sellaro (1984)	2
	Intention to return prematurely	Developed by researcher	1

* “Job characteristics” and “met expectations” were included in the measurement instrument as these variables are recognized antecedents of job attitudes in labour turnover models.

The above measurement instruments with the exception of the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) are derived from a study that was done by Naumann *et al.* (2000). The

reliability and validity of the instruments have been established by Naumann *et al.* (2000). The reliability and validity of the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) has also been confirmed. Jung, Dalessio and Johnson (1986:613) indicate that the JDI dimensions (supervision, co-workers, pay, promotion, and work) are very stable across a wide variety of situations and groups of respondents. They comment as follows: “Practitioners and researchers who use the JDI can be confident that its dimensionality is not sample-specific. As with any psychometric measure, users of the JDI are encouraged to check the dimensionality of the instrument if possible. However, given the strong evidence for the stability of the five-factor solution, users of the JDI need not be concerned that the traditional five-factor structure is inappropriate”.

One of the most serious and documented disadvantages of using mail questionnaires is the low response rate. When a single mailing that incorporates no incentives is made to a sample of the general community, the surveyor can expect no better than a 20% response rate. A high rate of non-response is a problem because you need the people you interview to be representative of the wider population from which they have been sampled. People who are difficult to contact, who refuse to participate or who do not understand your questions are likely to be distinct sections of the population, and by failing to recruit them, the final achieved sample becomes bias (Bourque & Fielder, 2003:16; Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:70). The researcher tried to boost the response rates to the e-mail questionnaires by:

- Using a covering letter to make the survey look relevant and interesting to the expatriates and using an official letterhead to show that the correspondence was not junk mail. See Appendix A.
- Keeping the questionnaire as short as possible and presenting a clear, attractive layout.
- Forewarning people through organisational correspondence.
- Following up non-respondents through the lead contact person (a human resource officer that acted as co-ordinator between the researcher and the multinational corporation), reminding participants by e-mail and emphasizing how important the answers were to the researcher.

- Reassuring people that their answers would be treated as strictly confidential and that it would be impossible for anybody reading the final report to identify any respondent.

According to Buckingham and Saunders (2004:71), low response rates are not the only problem with e-mail questionnaires. Some of the other problems are:

- You cannot explore people's answers – what they write is all you get, and if somebody's answer is unclear, then you have to make peace with it.
- Most people do not like writing, so the use of 'open-ended questions' is very restricted.
- You cannot control the conditions under which the questionnaire is completed. Respondents may be influenced by other people when they are filling it in, and you can never know whether or not they took it seriously.
- Researchers can use questionnaires to purposes to which they are not suited. They 'stretch' the tool beyond its capacities, by asking questions to which people struggle to give meaningful answers. They get data, but their results are generally worthless.
- Sometimes there is little or no rationale for the questions that get asked, so researchers have little idea what to do with the answers they get. It is not uncommon for questionnaire surveys to generate much more data than they can ever use.
- Sometimes the questions are badly framed. Researchers then end up with large numbers of people failing to answer a question, or replying with a 'Don't know.' Or they discover too late that respondents have misinterpreted a question, or that they have all given the same answer to an item intended to tease out variations.

Some of the problems above were obviated through a pre-test. The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire on acquaintances who currently work on foreign assignments (n = 3), acquaintances who had returned from foreign working assignments (n = 3) and colleagues in the academic environment of organisational behaviour (n = 4). These individuals were not included in the final sample. The pre-test provided valuable information, and convinced the researcher to change certain aspects of the questionnaire and the administrative procedures. The alterations

related mainly to linguistic changes of some phrases, ensuring reader-friendliness of some instructions and ensuring no red-tape in the administrative procedures. Since the questionnaire was compiled from pre-existing scales that were standardised, the researcher decided not to adjust the length of the questionnaire, or the original author's items and response scales. By the time the researcher went into the field, she was confident that there were no ambiguities in the questionnaire, and that the data would be collected in the format required.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:130) argue that unless the researcher is certain that the measurement instrument actually measures what it is supposed to be measuring, the results will be difficult to interpret. Using the guidelines of Leedy and Ormrod (2005:92-93) and Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006:147-151), the validity of the measurement instrument was determined and the conclusion was reached by the researcher that the measurement instrument was valid. See Table 3.2.

Table 3:2: Validity of the measurement instrument

Validity	Description	Action by the researcher	Result
Content validity	The extent to which an instrument is a representative sample of the content area (domain) being measured, i.e. determining if the whole content of the definition is represented in the instrument.	The researcher drafted a table of specifications during the literature review, listing the topics and behaviours associated with job attitudes. The measuring instrument was developed to reflect all the topics listed in the table of specifications.	High-content validity
Criterion validity	The extent to which the results of the measuring instrument correlate with other related measures that are regarded as valid.	Criterion validity of the measuring instruments used in the study was previously determined by other researchers in related studies.	High-criterion validity
Construct validity	The extent to which an instrument measures a characteristic that cannot be directly observed but must instead be inferred from patterns in people's behaviour.	Construct validity of the measuring instruments used in the study was previously determined through factor analysis by other researchers in related studies.	High-construct validity



Face validity	The extent to which, on the surface, an instrument looks as if it is measuring a particular characteristic. Face validity is important to ensure the co-operation of the people who are participating in the research study.	The researcher pre-tested the questionnaire on acquaintances who currently works on foreign assignments, acquaintances who had returned from foreign working assignments and colleagues in the academic environment of organisational behaviour.	High-face validity
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3.5 SAMPLE DESIGN AND SAMPLING METHOD

The set of people who are the focus of the research and about whom the researcher wants to determine certain characteristics is called the population (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:84). For this research study the population was *all employees who worked or who are currently working for a South African Multinational Corporation outside South Africa's border*. The employees were not citizens of the country in which the firm is located (host-country), but citizens of South Africa, the country in which the organisation is headquartered (parent country). McBurney (2001:248) refers to the population as the sampling frame. As complete coverage of the population was not possible, a subset of the population (sample) was studied. The researcher studied the sample in an effort to understand the population from which it was drawn. The sample was described not primarily as an end in itself, but rather as a means to explain certain facets of the population (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005:194). Sampling refers to the process of selecting a representative subset of observations from a population to determine the characteristics (i.e. the population parameters) of the random variable under study (Wegner, 2000:170). Buckingham and Saunders (2004:99) mention that a sample may consist of a tiny fraction of the whole target population, but provided it is selected carefully and methodically, it can provide remarkably accurate estimates of the parameters of the whole population. Sampling theory distinguishes between probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling occurs when the probability of including each element of the population can be determined. Non- probability

sampling occurs when the probability of including each element of the population in the sample is unknown (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:199,206).

Although probability sampling is the preferred sampling design, non-probability sampling was used during this study. *The method of non-probability sampling applied during the study was a combination of convenience sampling and purposive sampling.* Goodwin (1995:109) points out that convenience sampling is the most frequent type of non-probability sampling. In a convenience sample the researcher requests volunteers to participate in the study from a group of available people who meet the specific requirements of the study. In the study, the procedure entailed taking all cases on hand that suited the purpose of the researcher, until the sample reached its desired size. Subjects were chosen on the basis of what the researcher considered to be typical units. The purpose was to draw a sample that had the same proportions of characteristics as the population (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:86-92; Denscombe, 2000:16). The proportions of the population that were considered by the researcher to be typical were:

- The participant must hold South African citizenship.
- The participant must be employed or have been employed by a South African multinational corporation.
- The participant must be posted or have been posted on an international assignment outside the borders of South Africa.
- The position held during the international assignment must be on a managerial level.

It can thus be seen that although the researcher relied on available subjects (convenience sampling), a very specific type of person was recruited for the study. This implied that the sampling approach was also purposive in nature (Goodwin, 1995:109; Rossouw, 2003:113). Babbie (2004:183) defines purposive or judgemental sampling as a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher selects the sample on the basis of own judgement about which ones will be the most useful or representative. This judgement is based on the knowledge of the sample, its elements and the purpose of the study. Rossouw (2003:113) states that purposive sampling is appropriate when the researcher wants to select unique cases which can

provide special information. Terre Blance *et al.* (2006:50) indicate that selecting cases for theoretical reasons (purposive sampling) supplies the researcher with good examples of the phenomenon. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:206) argue that although purposive sampling may be appropriate for certain research problems, the researcher should provide a rationale for selecting the particular sample of participants.

The reasons for the sampling decision were:

- The aim of the study was not to describe the specific features of a defined population accurately by investigating just a segment of it, but to study the relationship between variables.
- It was not possible to compile a list of the population (sampling frame). Such a list is not freely available in South Africa, but in the possession of big research houses or consultants. They did not want to supply the researcher with such a list for financial reasons. The researcher had to approach the South African multinational corporations directly to conduct the study. Most of the South African multinational corporations did not want to supply the researcher with a list of their expatriates and did not want the researcher to make direct contact with their expatriates. Access to data was limited because of competitive or proprietary considerations. However, the multinational corporations agreed to a lead contact person who could act as co-ordinator, mostly from the human resource management division.
- The above point explains why the researcher did not know who and how many people make up the population.
- The researcher had no option but to take what was available, as there were not many cases to which the researcher had access. It proved difficult to contact the sample through conventional probability sampling methods.
- This method did allow the researcher to identify in advance the characteristics that were needed.
- The method ensured that all the scenarios in expatriate failure were included.
- Cases that could clarify and deepen understanding could be selected. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:92) argue that purposive sampling has value especially if an expert who knows the population under study is involved. The lead contact

persons in the study helped the researcher to select subjects as they know the expatriates in their multinational corporation.

- The researcher is of the opinion that through this technique, the sample was more representative as all cases being brought to the researcher's attention were used.
- Compared with probability samples, non-probability samples are quick and cheap (feasible).
- An added advantage of the convenience sample was that the researcher did not need a sampling frame. Buckingham and Saunders (2004) state that if there is no list of names and addresses of the individuals who make up a given population, there may be no way of constructing a reliable sampling frame from which to draw a probability sample. In such a situation, convenience sampling could be used instead.

As no sampling frame could be compiled for the study the researcher relied on clear population parameters. The purpose of the parameters was to ensure relevance i.e. to ensure that the sample contains subjects that are directly related to the research topic. The sample, based on availability (convenience sampling), was drawn from South African-based multinational corporations. The following categories of employees (population parameters) were included in the sample (purposive sampling):

- Expatriate managers who repatriated from foreign assignments prematurely.
- Expatriate managers who repatriated from foreign assignments on schedule.
- Expatriate managers who were on foreign assignments and who had resigned during the assignment or shortly thereafter.
- Expatriate managers who are currently on foreign assignments.

Even though the entire population was not tested in this study, the researcher wanted to generalize the results from the sample to the larger population. It was thus important that the sample reflected the population as a whole.



3.6 DATA MANAGEMENT

In the research study numerical and textual data (raw data) were electronically obtained through self-administered e-mailed questionnaires. Before analysing the data the researcher had to put mechanisms in place to manage the data. The purpose of data management was to transform the raw data into an electronic format suitable for the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). According to Neuman (2006:344), raw data is unordered, contains errors and missing values and must be transformed into an ordered error-free data set before it can be analysed. Preparing the data involves three tasks: coding the data, entering the data and cleaning the data set (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2006:189). The data management process (researcher's plans to deal with raw data) can be summarized as follows:

- **Developed a data code sheet to encode the raw data.** As the statistical package SPSS requires numerical values to calculate the statistics; a code sheet was developed to transform the information provided in the questionnaire into meaningful numerical format before entering it into the computer. The code sheet helped the researcher to understand the meaning of the values. The code sheet served two essential functions: (1) It was the primary guide in encoding the information received from the questionnaires; and (2) it assisted the researcher during data analysis to locate variables and to interpret codes.
- **Prepared an Excel spreadsheet to capture the data.** A spreadsheet was prepared to enter the data. Each row represented one subject and each column represented the scores of the specific variables. As the questionnaire was adequately pre-coded and a code sheet developed prior to data gathering, it was possible to enter the data directly into the spreadsheet when a questionnaire was received.
- **Designed an operational plan to clean the data.** Errors invariably occur when encoding and entering the data, therefore it was necessary to clean the data before using it for statistical analysis. The data were entered twice by the research assistant, and then the two spreadsheets were compared to eliminate encoding and entering errors.

- **Processing the data.** Data will be entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows. According to Buckingham and Saunders (2004:155) SPSS is a powerful data analysis and statistics program specially tailored to the requirements of social science researchers and widely used by researchers in universities, government and other sectors. Although SPSS is not the only software package available for the analysis of quantitative data, it was the one the researcher had most convenient access to.

(Babbie, 2004:412-418; Neuman, 2006:344)

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Once data collection and data preparation (data coding, entering and cleaning) had been completed, the researcher began with the process of data analysis. As mentioned, the pre-structured questionnaire consisted of two sections: closed questions (numerical data) and open-ended questions (textual data). The two sets of data required different methods of analysis.

3.7.1 Numerical data analysis

It is important for the researcher to already be at the design stage clear which particular kinds of quantitative data will be collected and what statistical procedures will be used. Unless the researcher thinks ahead on this point there is a real danger that the data collected will turn out to be inappropriate for the kind of analysis the researcher eventually wants to undertake.

From a quantitative perspective, Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:38) state that numbers form a coding system by which different cases and different variables may be compared. Systematic changes in scores are interpreted, or given meaning, in terms of the actual world they represent. As numbers are exact, they can be analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the analysis of all the numerical data in the study. The statistical methods of data analysis used in the study are depicted in Table 3.3.



Table 3.3: Statistical data analysis (Babbie, 2004:400-419; Field, 2006:218; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:257-274; Terre Blance *et al.*, 2006:154)

Type of analysis	Information required	Statistical procedure	Statistical purpose
<i>Descriptive analysis</i>			
Analysis of a single variable for purposes of description	Distributions	Frequency distributions and percentages	A description of the number of times the various attributes of a variable are observed in a sample
	Points of central tendency	Means	An arithmetical average of all the values in the data set
	Amount of variability	Standard deviation	A measure of dispersion around the mean
Analysis of two variables for the purpose of determining empirical relationships	Measure of association (correlation)	Spearman's rank order correlation (Non-parametric statistics)	Making predictions from the correlations - to examine the relationship between the predictors and the attitudes.
Analysis of the simultaneous relationships among several variables	Regression	Logistic regression	To predict which of two categories a person is likely to belong to, given certain other information (to look at which variables predict whether a person will quit or not).
<i>Inferential analysis</i>			
To estimate population parameters from the sample and to test statistically based hypotheses	Test of statistical significance	T-Test (Parametric statistics)	To determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between two means.
		ANOVA (Parametric statistics)	To look for differences among three or more means by comparing the variances both within and across groups
	As part of logistic regression	Chi-square goodness-of-fit test (Nonparametric statistics)	To determine how closely observed frequencies or probabilities match expected frequencies or probabilities
<i>Reliability analysis</i>			
To measure the dependability of the measuring instrument	To determine internal consistency	Cronbach alpha coefficient	To determine the degree to which each item in the scale correlates with each other item.



3.7.2 Textual data analysis

There are some kinds of information, however, that cannot be adequately recorded using quantitative data. In this case language provides a far more meaningful way to record human experiences. From a qualitative perspective, data was analysed by identifying general themes through analytical induction. The purpose was to focus on the central themes. Final analysis was done by comparing material in the extracted themes to look for variations and nuances in meanings and to discover connections between themes. During this process the approach of Marshall and Rossman in De Vos (1998:342) was used. Marshall and Rossman identify five stages in qualitative data analysis:

- Organising the data.
- Generating categories, themes and patterns.
- Testing the emerging hypotheses against the data.
- Searching for alternative explanations of the data.
- Recording the findings.

(De Vos, 1998:342-343)

The goal was to integrate the themes and concepts into a theory that offers an interpretation of the research arena.

Once the data had been analysed, a framework of organisational best practice enhancing expatriate job and organisational adjustment was designed. The framework was tested through content analysis using a small sample of 10 to verify the content validity of the best practice framework. Lawshe's content validity technique was utilised for this purpose (Lawshe, 1975). The sample was drawn through purposive sampling and was based on availability.

3.8. VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The central aim of the research design was to establish a relationship between the job attitudes of expatriate managers and the expatriate managers' propensity to return prematurely or resign during or shortly after the foreign assignment with a high

degree of certainty. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:80) point out that the potential of a design to achieve this aim is referred to as the validity of the design. Validity is measured in terms of two separate, but related, dimensions: internal and external validity.

3.8.1 Internal validity

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:80) report that internal validity is concerned with the question: “Do the observed changes in the dependent variable actually relate to the changes in the independent variable?” Internal validity examines the extent to which the research design has excluded all other possible hypotheses which could explain the variation of the dependent variable (intention to quit). In order to achieve high internal validity, a research design should control as many extraneous variables as possible. Two possible complications were considered by the researcher in order to achieve high internal validity:

- **Reactive effects to participating in the study.** Prior to the data gathering participating subjects were not informed of what the researcher planned to find in the data.
- **Measurement unreliability.** The researcher used a well-researched, reliable and valid measurement instrument.
(Terre Blance *et al.*, 2006:175-177)

3.8.2 External validity

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:80) report that external validity is concerned with the question: “Do the results obtained from the sample apply to all the subjects in the population being studied?” External validity examines the extent to which the results of the study can be generalized. Three factors were considered by the researcher in order to achieve high external validity:

- **The representatives of the sample.** The researcher paid specific attention to selecting a representative sample during the sampling procedure.

- **Ensuring that the study simulates reality as closely as possible.** During the construction of the measurement instrument care was taken to ensure that the items in the questionnaire were related to the actual working environment.
- **Replication in a different context.** When the researcher compared the study results with similar studies in different contexts, similar conclusions were reached.

(Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:99-100)

3.9. SUMMARY

Quantitative research was chosen as the most appropriate approach to the study, although a certain part of the study had qualitative characteristics. Survey design through self-administered e-mailed questionnaires was used to gather data from the sample that was drawn through convenience purposive sampling. Data was analysed quantitatively through descriptive and inferential statistics, and qualitatively through analytical induction. As the validity of the research design was of utmost importance for the success of the research study, it was necessary to know the rules and procedures when developing a successful research design. It took time and patience to develop a good design, but the effort gave the researcher confidence to succeed with the next stage of the research.

It is important not to confuse overall research planning with research methodology. In chapter 3 the research plan is presented to the readers and in chapter 4 the actual execution of the research will be discussed. Architectural planning and research planning have much in common. Each requires a conceptualization of the overall organisation of a project and a detailed specification of the steps to be carried out. Only then can work on the project actually begin. For successful completion, a building project requires plans that are clearly conceived and accurately drawn, similarly, a research project should also be entirely visualized and precisely detailed.



CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology contains the procedures and methods used in the research study to collect and analyze (obtain and process) data. The methodology dictates the particular tools the researcher has to select to carry out the research. Every worker needs tools. As the carpenter needs a hammer and saw, the researcher needs an array of tools with which the data can be collected and made meaningful. Chapter 3 indicated how the researcher, through research methodology and research tools extracted meaning from the collected data. Data and methodology are inextricably interdependent. For this reason, the methodology to be used for a particular research problem must always take into account the nature of the data that will be collected for the resolution of the problem. A review of the literature revealed methodologies that have been employed by other researchers to study similar problems. As these methods have been tested and adjusted for studying a specific problem, they are more reliable. The researcher has relied on similar previous studies in the selection of appropriate methodologies.

Chapter 4 addresses the procedures used in this study. The procedures of sampling, data management, data analysis and data interpretation are discussed. The reliability of the measurement instrument as well as the profile of the participants is also discussed.

4.2 PROCEDURE FOR SAMPLING

The procedure the researcher followed to draw the sample is depicted in Figure 4.1. The numbers in brackets represent the number of multinational corporations (MNCs).

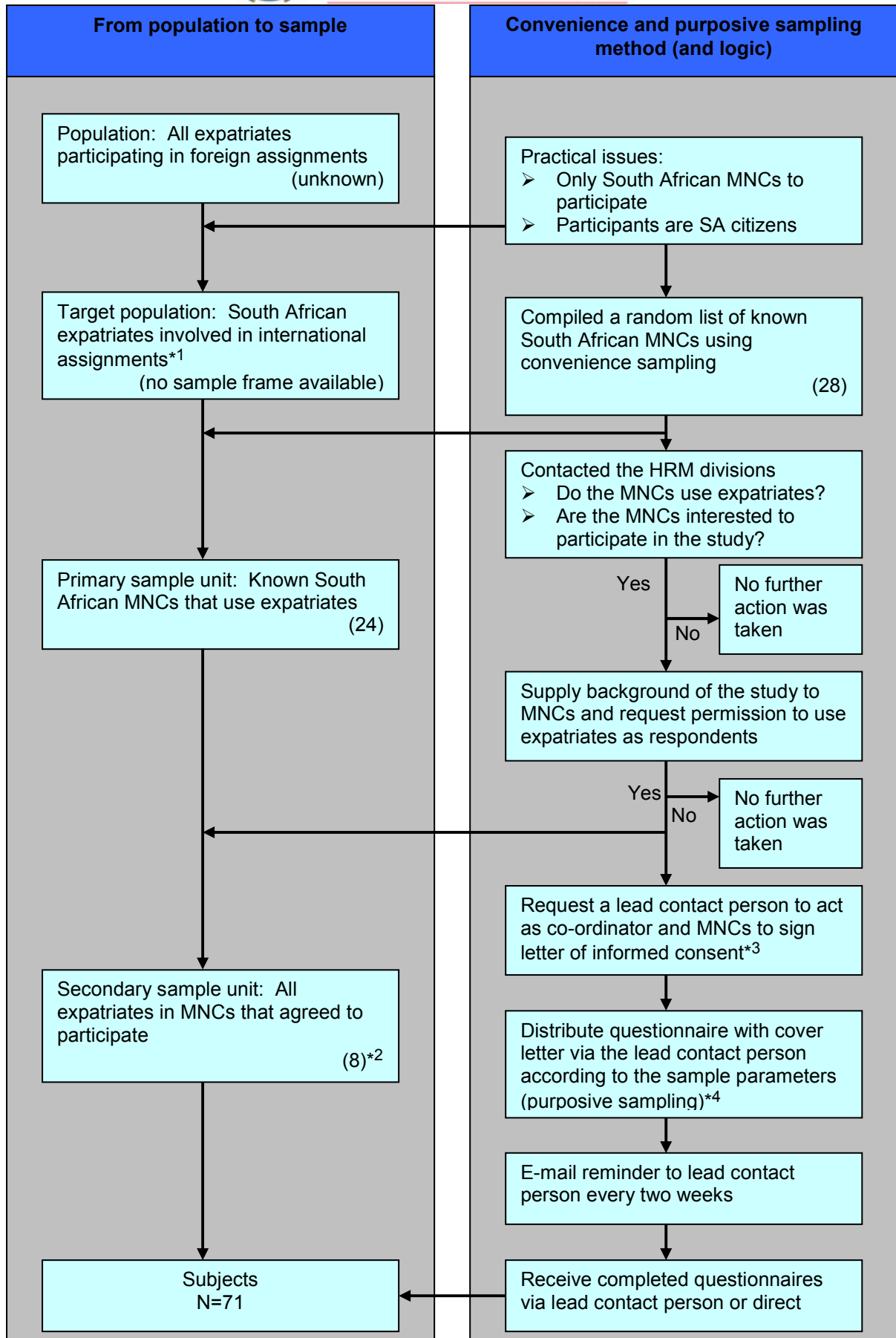


Figure 4.1: From population to sample through convenience / purposive sampling methods



- *1 – The definition did not exclude expatriates who had finished their foreign assignments or who had already returned to South Africa.
- *2 – This became the sample frame for the participating organisations, but as the organisations did not want to reveal the mailing list of their expatriates, no sample frame for the possible participants existed.
- *3 – A letter of informed consent was given to every participating organisation. The letter included: a description of the research, ethical considerations, process of participation and the potential benefit of the study for the multinational corporation.
- *4 - An undisclosed number of questionnaires were sent out making follow-up and determining response rate impossible for the researcher.

Denscombe (2000:17) defines a sample frame as “an objective list of the population from which the researcher can make his or her selection.” A sample frame must thus contain an up-to-date list of all those that comprise the target population. The researcher did not have access to a sample frame for the following reasons:

- Research houses in South Africa specializing in expatriate research may not make their records available for financial reasons.
- South African consultants specializing in expatriate management, treat membership records as confidential information.
- Multinational corporations did not want to supply the names and e-mail contacts of their expatriates because they feared these would land in the hands of competitors.

Not having a sample frame was one of the major reasons for choosing a convenience/ purposive sampling design. However, a disadvantage of not having a sample frame was that the researcher was unable to determine the response rate. 28 South African Multinational Corporations (MNCs) were randomly telephoned to request their expatriates to participate as respondents in the study. Of the 28, 4 did not make use of expatriates and 7 were not interested. A letter seeking permission and explaining the research purpose and process was sent to the remaining 17. Only 8 of the 17 institutions gave permission. This amounted to 27.8% of the 24 institutions.

Reasons given by some of the multinational corporations for not participating:

- They were members of a research house, or made use of contracted service from a consultant therefore participating would breach the agreement.
- They did surveys themselves and did not want to burden the expatriates with “another” survey.
- They were afraid that the list of their expatriates’ contact details would end up in the wrong hands and other multinational corporations would poach their expatriates.
- The person the researcher contacted was most probably a gatekeeper, protecting the time and other valued attributes of their expatriates.

As the researcher relied on purposive sampling, the sample parameters were very important. The lead contact person in every MNC was requested to send questionnaires to all the South African expatriates that he/she had on record and comply with the sample parameters set out in chapter 3.

4.3 PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY

4.3.1 The sample size of the study

As the survey was conducted using a lead contact person and the number of questionnaires sent out was not disclosed, the researcher was unable to measure the response rate properly. Denscombe (2000:19) defines the response rate as “the proportion of the total questionnaires distributed which are successfully completed and returned as requested”. The researcher received 75 questionnaires of which 4 were not usable. This implied that for this study $n = 71$. From the 8 participating organisations only two were willing to reveal how many questionnaires had been distributed by them, and as the lead contact persons in both the organisations collected the questionnaires, the researcher was able to calculate the response rate from only these two multinational corporations. Organisation 1 sent out 15 questionnaires and 6 were returned. Response rate 40%. Organisation 2 sent out 8 questionnaires and 3 were returned. Response rate 37.5%. The assumed response rate of the study seems higher than other international studies. In the study by

Naumann *et al.* (2000) a total of 800 questionnaires were mailed and 209 usable questionnaires were returned, that made the overall response rate 26 %. Naumann *et al.* (2000:230) concluded that the response in their study was higher than that in most international surveys (Dawson & Dickinson, 1988; Jobber & Saunders, 1988).

Although the response rate seemed higher than in other international studies it was still lower than the norm set by Babbie and Mouton (2001:261). They argue that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting. On the other hand, Welman and Kruger (2001:147) point out that mail surveys have the lowest response rate of all survey methods. Reasons that could have contributed to the low response rate were:

- The length of the questionnaire is commonly believed to reduce response rate (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:167). Frohlich (2002:530-562) suggests that a questionnaire of 40-50 items spread over four-five pages would elicit high response rates. He argues that if a survey is under four or five pages, resistance to participate would be lower and the response rate higher. The questionnaire used in the study was 11 pages long and contained 175 items. The negative influence of the length of the questionnaire was confirmed by comments received from some of the participants. The researcher, however, could not alter the existing instruments without influencing the validity; therefore the length of the questionnaire could not be reduced.
- The contact leads at the respective multinational corporations could have failed to deliver the questionnaires to the prospective respondents or they did not carry out the required follow-ups.

The most serious limitation of the study seems to be the size of the sample. According to Denscombe (2000:21-24), in order to generalize from the findings of a survey, the sample must not only be carefully selected to be representative of the population, it also needs to include an adequate number. Denscombe (2000:24) argues though, that whatever the theoretical issues, the fact of the matter is that surveys and sampling are frequently used for small-scale research involving between 30 and 250 cases.

Nevertheless, the following points need to be stressed in relation to smaller samples:

- Extra attention needs to be paid to the issue of how representative the sample is and special caution is needed about the extent to which generalizations can be made on the basis of the research findings. Provided the limitations are acknowledged and taken into account, the limited size of the sample need not invalidate the findings.
- The smaller the sample, the simpler the analysis should be, in the sense that the data should be subjected to fewer subdivisions. Keeping the analysis down to four factors, for instance, greatly increases the prospect of having a reasonable number of cases in each category.
- Samples should not involve fewer than 30 people or events.
(Denscombe, 2000:24)

The smaller sample size seems aligned to other international studies on expatriate management. In a recent study conducted by Lee and Liu (2007:127), they had 118 subjects from 86 randomly selected multinational corporations. Lee and Liu e-mailed the survey to the human resource management departments of the selected participating organisations, who then distributed it to the organisations' repatriates. The actual number of distributed surveys could not be computed. The smaller sample size in international expatriate studies seems to correlate with the South African situation as a South African study conducted by Vogel (2006:123) had only 65 responses to his web-based survey. The small sample and assumed low response rate contributed to the following sample biases:

- The high non-response rate is associated with a real risk that the data will be biased. If the data is biased, there is a risk that the low responses might reflect the perspective of certain expatriates only and not all South African expatriates.
- Many statistical tests require an appropriate number of cases.

The words of Hoinville (in Denscombe, 2000:23) motivated the researcher to stick to good judgement during the sampling procedure: ***“In practice, the complexity of the competing factors of resources and accuracy means that the decision on a sample size tends to be based on experience and good judgement rather than on a strict mathematical formula.”***



4.3.2 The demographic profile of the participants

The demographical and work-related characteristics of the sample are discussed in order to get a profile of the survey group. Data analysis was done through frequency distributions. Babbie (2004:401) indicates that a frequency distribution is a description of the number of times the various attributes of a variable are observed in a sample. Consequently frequencies describe the characteristics of the sample. Information that will be given on all relevant questions posed in Section F of the questionnaire will be displayed in both tabular and graphical format. The purpose of the graphical format is to provide a visual illustration of the sample.

Age: The age distribution of the participants appears in Table 4.1 where the participants are classified into six age groups. The largest single group (38,03%) of participants was between the ages of 30 and 39 years. The smallest group (2,82%) of the participants was younger than 20 or older than 60 years. The predominant age group in their thirties was in line with recent trends. Scullion (1994:88-89) mentions that there is a tendency of multinational corporations to give younger managers international experience earlier in their careers than previously.

Table 4.1: Age distribution of the participants

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percentage
0-20	2	2.82	2	2.82
21-29	15	21.13	17	23.94
30-39	27	38.03	44	61.97
40-49	15	21.13	59	83.1
50-59	10	14.08	69	97.18
60-69	2	2.82	71	100

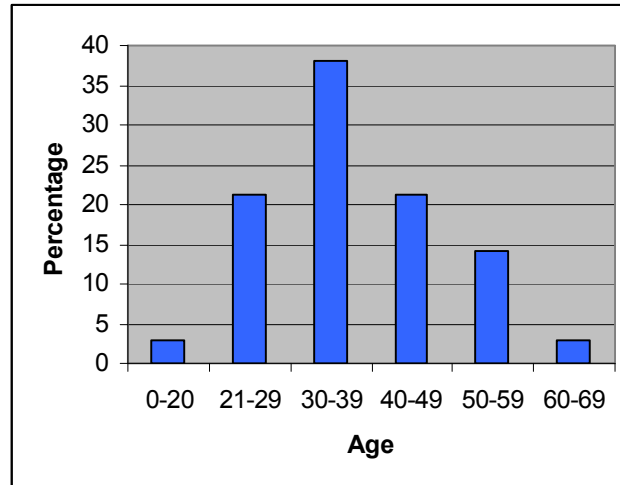


Figure 4.2: Age distribution of the participants

Gender: The gender distribution of the participants appears in Table 4.2. The majority of the respondents are male (n = 42) representing 59,15% of the sample. Females (n=29) represent 40,85% of the sample. Scullion and Brewster (2001:353) state that although the number of female expatriates is lower in relation to the overall size of the qualified labour pool, there appears to be a steady increase in the use of women in international assignments. The male/female distribution in the study is in line with international trends.

Table 4.2: Gender distribution of the participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percentage
Male	42	59.15	42	59.15
Female	29	40.85	71	100

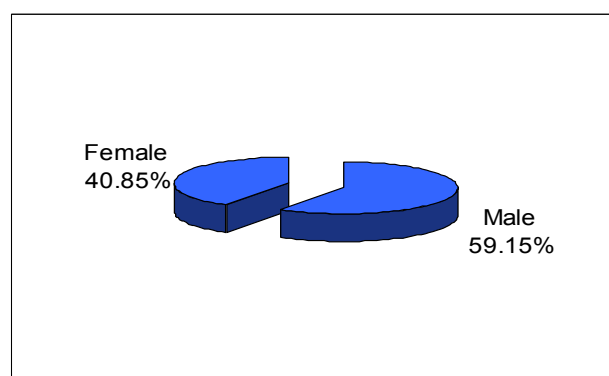


Figure 4.3: Gender distribution of the participants

Marital status: The data in Table 4.3 shows that of the 71 respondents, 45 are married (63,38%) and 24 are not married (33,8%). The higher percentage of married expatriates in the study supports Hawley’s (2005:1) view that one of the greatest challenges facing multinational corporations is the fact that they are not dealing with individual employees, but with a whole family and their needs as a family in the relocation process.

Table 4.3: Marital status of the participants

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percentage
Never married	24	33.8	24	33.8
Married	45	63.38	69	97.18
Widowed	1	1.41	70	98.59
Divorced	1	1.41	71	100

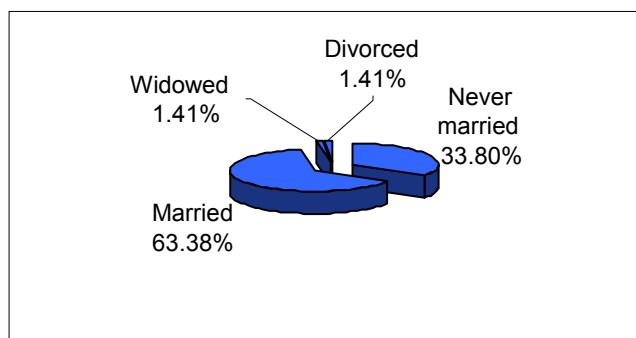


Figure 4.4: Marital status of the participants

Tenure: Table 4.4 indicates that 64,79% of the participants have less than 5 years’ experience with the current multinational organisation, with the largest single group (36,62%) in the 3 to 5 year category. The high percentage of low tenure (only 12,68% of participants have more than 11 years with the multinational corporation) raised the question of what prevented the more experienced individuals from being on international assignments. This high level of low tenure also challenges Hill’s (2003:612-613) argument that one of the main reasons for using expatriates is the transmission of corporate culture (values). The question can thus be raised why the employees with longer service are not available to transfer the organisational values. An explanation can be that the notion of employees staying with a single

organisation for most of their career life has become obsolete. A new trend is occupational commitment. A person is loyal to a profession rather than to a specific organisation (Corcoran, 2003:13). Collings *et al.* (2007:204) support this view by mentioning the changing attitudes towards careers. The nature of careers is changing and increasing emphasis is placed on career mobility and a decreasing commitment to specific organisations.

Table 4.4: Organisational tenure of the participants

Number of years	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percentage
0-2	20	28.17	20	28.17
3-5	26	36.62	46	64.79
6-8	8	11.27	54	76.06
9-11	8	11.27	62	87.32
12-14	1	1.41	63	88.73
15-17	4	5.63	67	94.37
18-20	2	2.82	69	97.18
21-23	0	0	0	0
24-26	0	0	0	0
27-29	1	1.41	70	98.59
30-32	0	0	0	0
33-35	1	1.41	71	100

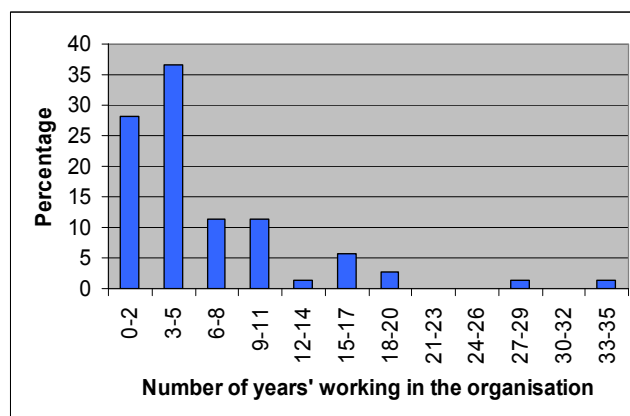


Figure 4.5: Organisational tenure of the participants

Experience in working on foreign assignments: Table 4.5 indicates that 69,01% of the participants in the study have less than 5 years' experience on international assignments. Figure 4.6 indicates that the majority of the sample has participated in 1 or 2 international assignments. A reason for posting less experienced expatriates

on foreign assignments could be the development and transfer of organisational capabilities, enhancing organisational learning and management development (Hill, 2003:612-613). Scullion (1994:88-89) supports this view by stating that some companies adopted a strategy of broadening the opportunities for international development throughout the organisation instead of a selected few.

Table 4.5: Participants’ years of experience on foreign assignments

Years’ experience	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percentage
0-2	20	28.17	20	28.17
3-5	29	40.85	49	69.01
6-8	8	11.27	57	80.28
9-11	8	11.27	65	91.55
12-14	0	0	0	0
15-17	6	8.45	71	100

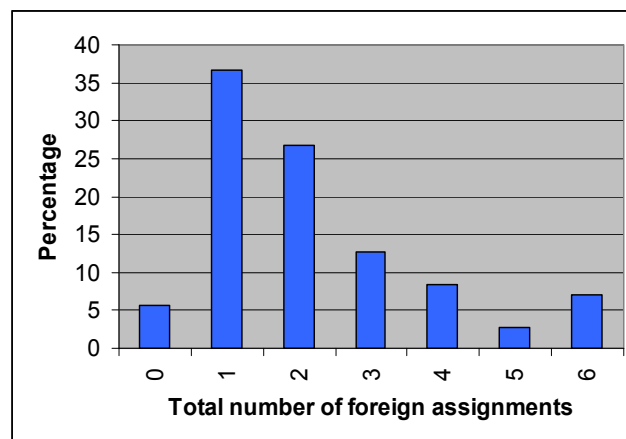


Figure 4.6: Participants’ number of foreign assignments

Education: Table 4.6 indicates that the largest single group of participants (26,76%) have a Bachelor’s degree or equivalent with 23,94% of the participants holding a Master’s degree or equivalent. The high level of education supports Hill’s (2003:612-613) argument that two of the main reasons for using expatriates are the transfer of knowledge and skills, and potential management development.

Table 4.6: Participants' highest academic achievement

Highest academic achievement	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percentage
Grade 12 or equivalent	6	8.45	6	8.45
Post-school certificate/diploma	14	19.72	20	28.17
National diploma/National higher diploma	6	8.45	26	36.62
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	19	26.76	45	63.38
Honours degree or equivalent	6	8.45	51	71.83
Master's degree or equivalent	17	23.94	68	95.77
Doctoral degree	3	4.23	71	100

Location of the international assignment: The participants were asked to identify the country in which they were currently stationed, or if they had already returned, in which country they were stationed during expatriation. The responses were then classified according to continents. From figure 4.7 it can be seen that the majority of participants were stationed in Africa (69,01%) followed by Europe (25,35%). This is similar to the results from the study conducted by Vogel (2006:143). In his study 61,53% of the participants were stationed in Africa and 20% in Europe. It can thus be concluded that the majority of South African expatriates are first stationed in Africa and then in Europe. As cross-cultural adjustment is a major indicator for expatriate success, this demographic information is worth taking note of.

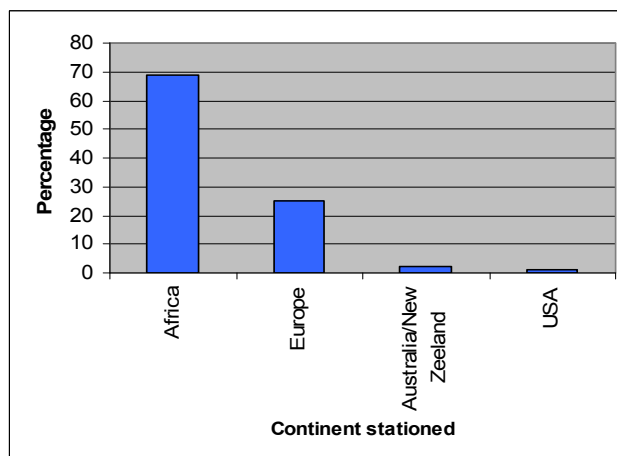


Figure 4.7: Host continent of the participants

Fluency in the host country language: Figure 4.8 highlights that 42,25% participants in the study indicated that they were not fluent in the language predominantly spoken in the host country of the foreign assignment. Usunier (1998:92) postulates that language barriers and communication problems play an important role in the difficulties related to personal adjustment. The open-ended questions confirmed language as a barrier to adjustment. It is interesting to see that despite this being common knowledge in the international management arena, it is still not properly addressed by multinational corporations in their selection and training programmes.

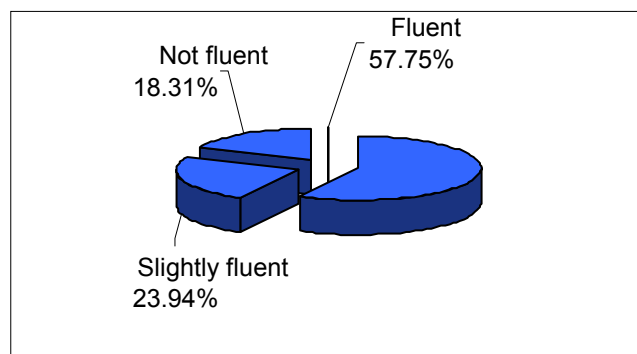


Figure 4.8: Participants' fluency in the host country's language

Work pressure: Participants were asked to indicate the hours they worked on average per week, if they worked overtime regularly and how many days' vacation leave they took on average per annum. The purpose for the inclusion was to get an indication of the expatriate's level of work exhaustion. Ahuja *et al.* (2007:4) recently confirmed a strong positive relationship between work exhaustion and turnover intention. In this study, Table 4.7, 57,75% of the participants indicated that they experience work pressure because of perceived work overload.

Table 4.7 Participants' experience of work pressure

Work pressure	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative frequency	Cumulative percentage
Yes	41	57.75	41	57.75
No	30	42.25	71	100

4.4 PROCEDURE FOR DATA MANAGEMENT

4.4.1 Administration of the data collection

A self-administered questionnaire, combining six separate existing instruments was developed and pre-tested. The questionnaire was in electronic format and was sent and returned via e-mail as an attachment in Microsoft Word, as was discussed in chapter 3. A section on biographical characteristics was added at the end of the questionnaire to gather relevant background, personal and organisational information. In order to not confuse the respondents, the different instruments were separated into the sections depicted in Table 4.8:

Table 4.8: Sections of the measurement instrument

Section	Instrument
A	Job characteristics (41 items) covering the instrument of Hackman and Oldman (JDS) and the selected scales of Rizo, House and Lirtzman.
B	Job satisfaction (72 items) covering the instrument of Smith, Kendall and Hulin (JDI).
C	Organisational commitment (15 items) covering the instrument of Mowday, Porter and Steers (OCS).
D	Job involvement (6 items) covering the scales from Kanungo.
E	Expectations (8 items) covering the scales of Lee and Mowday.
F	Biographical characteristics (18 items), 3 items identifying the participants' intention to quit and 2 open questions asking participants about their adjustment to foreign assignments.

In line with the advice of Leedy and Ormrod (2005:191) clear instructions were given at the beginning of each section as well as clear explanations on the interpretation of the measurement scales. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter explaining the purpose of the study to the prospective participant, the importance of completing the questionnaire, the confidentiality agreement and general instructions on how to complete the questionnaire.

Once permission had been obtained from the multinational corporation and the letter of consent signed, the questionnaire was sent via e-mail to a lead contact person at each multinational corporation. The lead contact person was, in all 8 multinational corporations, a part of the human resource management division and to some extent involved with expatriates. The lead contact person's responsibility was to distribute

and collect the questionnaires. The lead contact person was requested to send the questionnaires according to the sampling parameters and contact all available expatriates that adhered to the parameters set. Completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher either directly or via the lead contact person, depending on the arrangements the lead contact person had made with the expatriates in his/her organisation. Every two weeks, an e-mail reminder was sent to the lead contact person who then had to remind the respondents to complete and return the questionnaires. The researcher also had telephonic conversations with the lead contact persons to urge them to send out the questionnaires and remind the expatriates to return them.

During the process of data gathering the researcher adhered to the following ethical principles:

- Freedom from coercion – no individual or organisation was pressurised to participate in the research study.
- Informed consent – the researcher gave each organisation a full description of the procedure of the study and its risks and benefits before it was asked to participate.
- Confidentiality – the data from the study is published in a way that protects the anonymity of the participating organisations and their employees. The data is stored without identification.

4.4.2 Administration of the returned questionnaires

Having procedures for the administration of the returned questionnaires was as important as collecting the data. Administration of the returned questionnaires included data coding and editing, data entry, data cleaning and data-processing. Activities performed by the researcher during this phase of the study concentrated mainly on the following:

- **Data coding and editing.** Prior to data entry, it was necessary to check the completed questionnaires, code all items in the questionnaire, deal with missing data, and eliminate incorrect responses. The researcher checked each returned

questionnaire, on reception, for problems and missing data. Finchilescu (2005:209-210) recommends dealing with missing data by either removing the respondent from the data file or replacing the missing number with the average of the respondent's other scores if not more than 25% is missing. Roth and Switzer (1995) recommend, among other techniques, *listwise deletion* and *regression imputation*. *Listwise deletion* eliminates all the data for an individual when there is any missing data and regression imputation uses related variables to estimate or impute missing values. If an answer had been omitted, but the researcher felt the respondent's intended response was obvious, she made the necessary correction (*regression imputation*). In cases where the missing data could not be accounted for, the questionnaire was eliminated (*listwise deletion*). 75 questionnaires were returned, of which 4 were eliminated. Hence, the researcher was left with 71 usable questionnaires.

A reference number was allocated to every returned questionnaire (1-75) and a number (code) was allocated to each variable according to the already developed code book (discussed in chapter 3). A sample log was maintained on: the reference number assigned to the respondent; the date the completed questionnaire was received; corrections made to the questionnaire (if any); reasons for elimination; and any comments the researcher wanted to remember regarding the respondent (some respondents attached interesting messages and remarks to their questionnaires). Coding of the textual data will be dealt with in section 4.7, the procedure for qualitative data analysis, as the coding of the textual data forms part of the qualitative analysis.

- **Data entry.** A data file (Microsoft Excel spreadsheet) was prepared and a research assistant appointed. The assistant entered the data directly from the questionnaire with the assistance of the codebook.
- **Data cleaning.** As accuracy was extremely important during the coding and entering of the data, and the sample size allowed it, the research assistant entered all the data twice and then compared the two spreadsheets to eliminate any mistakes.

- **Data processing.** The statistical analysis of the data was done for practical reasons at the Department of Statistics at the University of Limpopo, South Africa. The Excel spreadsheet was e-mailed to the statistician who processed the data using the statistical program SPSS. The researcher and the statistician were in agreement on the statistical analysis methods highlighted in chapter 3.

4.5 RELIABILITY OF THE MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Cooper and Schindler (2003:231) state that a good measurement tool should be an accurate indicator of what the researcher is interested in measuring, and in addition, easy and efficient to use. Three major criteria exist to determine the above: the scientific requirements of validity and reliability, and the operational requirement of practicality. As the validity and practicality of the research measurement tool have already been confirmed in chapter 3, the focus will now be on a discussion of the reliability of the measurement instrument. As obtaining additional reliability estimates by administering the survey a second time or by using alternative forms of the instrument was not feasible, the researcher relied on Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient to ensure the internal consistency of the questionnaire. Cronbach alpha (α) coefficients are computed to assess the internal consistency reliability of the measuring instrument and items that are used in the study. This index is indicative of the extent to which all the items in the measuring instrument measure the same characteristic, and that the set of variables is consistent within what it is intended to measure. If multiple measures are taken, the values of the reliable measures will all be consistent (Field, 2005:666-669). Reliability differs from validity in that it relates not to what should be measured, but instead to how it is measured.

Cronbach's alpha as a measure of reliability ranges from 0 to 1 with a value of above .50 regarded as acceptable (Cooper & Schindler, 2003:216-217). There is, however, considerable debate in the literature as to what constitutes "acceptable" or "sufficient" alpha. Terre Blanche *et al.* (2006:154) state that as a rule of thumb, questionnaire-type scales with an alpha greater than .75 are considered reliable (internally consistent). Other authors are of the opinion that reliability coefficients in the range of .50 to .60 are deemed sufficient (Field, 2005:668). Cortina (in Field,



2005:668) explains these discrepancies by indicating that the value of α depends on the number of items in the instrument and that more items require a higher α . The internal consistency reliability coefficients of the study reported in Table 4.9 show that all nine sub-dimensions of the measurement instrument meet the above criteria with alphas ranging from the lowest .776 (the job itself) to the highest .895 (organisational commitment). The coefficient alphas indicate that the reliability of the measurement instrument is good.

Table 4.9: Cronbach's alpha for the sub-scales of the measurement instrument

Instrument sub-dimension	Cronbach's alpha (α)	No of items
Job characteristics	.840	41
The job itself	.776	18
Supervisor	.843	18
Co-workers	.862	18
Promotion opportunities	.864	9
Compensation package	.820	9
Organisational commitment	.895	15
Job involvement	.826	6
Expectations	.810	8

The above alphas seem aligned with the results from other researchers. In a study by Whisenant, Pedersen and Smucker (2004:368-382) the Job Description Index (JDI) was used in conjunction with a referent-comparison scale in order to measure job satisfaction. Initial validation of the JDI instrument included factor and cluster analysis, which supported the five factors (the job itself, supervisor, co-workers, pay and promotional opportunities) and allowed the developers of the survey to conclude that the scale had a high level of discriminate and convergent validity. Whisenant *et al.* (2004:372) state that reliability assessments using Cronbach alpha coefficients have typically exceeded .80 on all the JDI scales in other studies. In the study of Whisenant and colleagues the Cronbach's reliability coefficients were .88 for the facet of pay satisfaction, .78 for promotion satisfaction, .90 for supervision satisfaction, .77 for co-worker satisfaction, and .91 for the job-itself satisfaction. These correlations indicate how well the items within each part (facet) of the instrument yield similar results from each respondent (Whisenant *et al.*, 2004:372).

4.6 PROCEDURE FOR QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS (NUMERICAL DATA)

The purpose of the study was to test empirically whether job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement affect the expatriates' intent to leave the organisation and to identify the specific factors of job attitudes that are perceived by expatriates as critical to their adjustment in a foreign assignment. The study examined the relationships of a set of independent variables: job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement with the dependent variable, South African expatriates' intent to leave the organisation (intention to quit).

In order to achieve the above purpose the researcher relied on the following descriptive and inferential statistical procedures:

- Descriptive statistics (Means, Standard deviations, Frequencies, Percentages, Tables and Graphs) – to describe the characteristics of a data set and to compare results.
- Parametric statistics (T-tests and ANOVA) – to test for statistically significant differences between the two groups (those with an intention to quit and those who have no intention to quit).
- Non-parametric statistics (Spearman's rho) – to determine the correlation between job attitudes and the intention to quit.
- Logistic regressions – to identify the predictor variables that are responsible for the most significant variances in the intention to quit.
- Non-parametric chi-square test as part of Logistic regression – to determine the probability that the difference between those with an intention to quit and those who have no intention to quit has resulted from sampling error alone.

4.6.1 Means and standard deviations

Means and standard deviations are techniques used to describe characteristics of a dataset and to compare results (Wegner, 2000:53, 83). The mean is the best-known measure of central tendency that reveals what sets of measures are like on average. The standard deviation is a measure of dispersion and indicates the distances that

describe the distribution of the individual scores from the mean. The higher the standard deviation, the greater the distances, on average, above or below the mean (Babbie, 2004:402-405). The mean and standard deviation were used to describe the two groups (intention to quit versus no intention to quit) and to compare the differences. Significant differences between the two groups were given meaning to and the mean was used descriptively as a prediction of the intention to quit.

**Table 4.10: Measures of descriptive statistics
(Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:260,263)**

The statistic	Symbol used	How it is determined	Data for which it is appropriate
Arithmetic mean	\bar{X}	$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{n}$	Data on interval and ratio scales; and that falls in a normal distribution.
Standard deviation	SD	$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2}{(N - 1)}}$	Data on interval and ratio scales; and that falls in a normal distribution.

4.6.2 T-test

The T-test for independent groups is an appropriate inferential test to test a hypothesis in which the mean scores on some variable will be significantly different for two independent groups. The T-test is used to compare the two (estimated) population means and compare distributions that are normally distributed. T-tests can be used when the sample size is small, the population standard deviation is unknown, the researcher can assume that the two groups are drawn from a normal distribution and the data is on an interval scale (Terre Blance *et al*, 2006:226; Zikmund, 2003:524-525). The T-test was used in the study to determine whether a statistical difference existed between the participants that had an intention to quit and those who did not have an intention to quit, for males and females (gender) and for married and unmarried people (marital status). The results were used to indicate which variables were significantly different between the two groups and also to infer predictions about the intentions of expatriates to quit based on population parameters.



Table 4.11: Measure of statistically significant differences between groups (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:260,272)

The statistic	Symbol used	How it is determined	Data for which it is appropriate
2-sample t-test	T	$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{S_{x_1-x_2}}$	Data on interval and ratio scales. Two means Two groups

4.6.3 ANOVA (Analysis of variance)

To avoid the problem of multiple t-tests in a single-factor design, the researcher used a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for significant differences in age groups and educational levels. One-way analysis means one independent variable (Factorial ANOVA will be applied in cases of more than one independent variable). In essence, one-way ANOVA, tests for the presence of some “overall” significance that could exist somewhere among the various levels of the independent variable. The ANOVA is used to look for statistically significant differences among three or more means by comparing the variances (X^2) both within and across groups. The ANOVA yields an F score and like the score from a t-test, the F score examines the extent to which the obtained mean differences could be due to chance or some other factor, presumably the independent variable (Goodwin, 1995:209, Terre Blance *et al.*, 2006:227-229).

Table 4.12: Measure of statistically significant differences between three or more means (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:266)

The statistic	Symbol used	How it is determined	Data for which it is appropriate
One-way ANOVA	F	$C = \frac{k!}{2(k-2)!}$	Nominal data More than two means One IV. One DV

4.6.4 Spearman's rank-order correlations coefficient

The measures of central tendency (mean) and variability (standard deviation) related to only a single variable. However, the researcher also wanted to know how many

more variables were interrelated. The statistical process, by which the nature of relationships among different variables is discovered, is called correlation. The resulting statistic, called a correlation coefficient is a number between - 1 and + 1. A correlation coefficient for two variables simultaneously tells two different things: (1) The direction of the relationship is indicated by the sign of the correlation coefficient – a positive number indicates a positive correlation; and (2) The strength of the relationship is indicated by the size of the correlation coefficient. The closer the value of a correlation coefficient (ρ) to -1.00 or +1.00, the more accurate is the prediction that one variable is related to another variable (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:265). Spearman’s rank order correlation (Spearman’s rho) was used in this study to determine the extent to which job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement are related to the intention to quit. The correlation coefficients were based on the assumption that in the case where the job attitudes and the intention to quit fluctuate simultaneously, a correlation or relationship exists between them.

Table 4.13: Measure of correlations (Croucher, 2003:251)

The statistic	Symbol used	How it is determined	Data for which it is appropriate
Spearman’s rank order correlation (Spearman’s rho)	R_s	$r_s = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n^3 - n}$	Both variables involve rank-ordered data and so are ordinal in nature

4.6.5 Logistic regression

Regression analysis is a form of multivariate analysis where more than two variables are analysed simultaneously. The general formula, called the regression equation, for describing the association between two variables is $Y = f(X)$. This formula reads “Y is a function of X”, meaning that values of Y can be explained in terms of variations in the values of X. Stated differently, X causes Y, so the value of X determines the value of Y. There are several forms of regression analysis available, but for the purpose of this study logistic regression will be used (Babbie, 2004:447-448; Field, 2005:218). Logistic regression was used to predict the intent to quit (outcome variable) from the different independent variables (predictor variables) and explained the impact of the predictors on the intent to quit.

Table 4.14: Measure of regression analysis (Field, 2005:220)

The statistic	Symbol used	How it is determined	Data for which it is appropriate
Forward stepwise logistic regression	$P(Y)$	$P(Y) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + \dots + b_nX_n + \epsilon_i)}}$	The outcome variable is dichotomous

4.6.6 Chi-square (X^2) goodness-of-fit test as part of Logistic regression

As the researcher wanted to see whether there was a relationship between two categorical variables (the participants who indicated an intention to quit and specific aspects of job attitudes) the Chi-square (X^2) goodness-of-fit test was used. The test is based on the observation of how closely observed frequencies or probabilities match expected frequencies or probabilities. In other words, it was possible to test for statistically significant differences between the observed distribution of data among categories and the expected distribution based on the hypotheses. The result was used to identify the likelihood of an expatriate quitting if certain job attitudes were not present in the job (Babbie, 2004:464; Field, 2005:682-684).

Table 4.15: Measure of statistical significance (Cooper and Schindler, 2003:536)

The statistic	Symbol used	How it is determined	Data for which it is appropriate
Chi-square (X^2) goodness-of-fit test	X^2	$x^2 = \sum \frac{(O_{erved}_{ij} - Model_{ij})^2}{Model_{ij}}$	For nominal, ordinal, interval or ratio data

4.7 PROCEDURE FOR QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS (TEXTUAL DATA)

Exploratory questions were included to allow the identification of variables not foreseen by the researcher. This enabled the researcher to develop an impression of the respondents' total life situation and to become aware of important new variables operating in the phenomenon under study. This was achieved by including the open-ended questions in the pre-structured questionnaire.

The following two open-ended questions were included:

- Which aspects made or are making your adjustment to the foreign assignment easier?
- Which aspects made or are making your adjustment to the foreign assignment difficult?

From a qualitative perspective, the answers to the two questions above (raw data) were analysed through analytical induction. Manning in De Vos (1998:338) defines analytical induction as seeking “to develop universal statements containing the essential features of a phenomenon, or those things that are always found to cause or lie behind the existence of a social occurrence”. During this process the approach of Marshall and Rossman in De Vos (1998:342-343) was used. Marshall and Rossman identify five stages in qualitative data analysis:

➤ **Organising the data**

The researcher read the answers many times to become familiar with the data and listed all the answers for every participant on separate note cards. The note cards were numbered from 1-75, similar to tally, with the reference number that was allocated to every returned questionnaire.

➤ **Generating categories, themes and patterns**

Participants answering the open-ended questions were not forced at the time of data collection to adjust their answers to categories. The researcher did the coding as part of qualitative data analysis. The questions were not pre-coded because the researcher had little idea about the range of different reasons that participants might come up with. Participants were therefore left free to say whatever they wanted. The researcher had to decide what the relevant points were in what was being said. The researcher started by reading through all the recorded responses to a question and extracting from them the basic points that the participants made. As she sifted through participants' answers, she began to compile a list of codes that reflected the main themes in the responses. Code sheets were compiled for aspects making adjustment easier (Table 4.16) and aspects making adjustment difficult (Table 4.17).



Table 4.16: Code sheet for aspects that made adjustment easier

Code	Categories/ Themes
Commitment to the vision of the organisation	E1
Friendly supportive co-workers (work environment)	E2
Good relationship with management	E3
Teamwork	E4
Job satisfaction and challenges within the job	E5
Remuneration/ benefits	E6
Work environment (Ethics, work schedule)	E7
Being well prepared / Pre-departure training	E8
Expatriate support from home country	E9
Friendly supportive locals (social environment)	E10
Fluency in the host-country language	E11
Family accompanied expatriate on the assignment	E12
The opportunity to see new places and travel	E13
Country parameters (Safe environment, stable economic climate, stable political environment, high-quality education)	E14

Table 4.17: Code sheet for aspects that made adjustment difficult

Code	Categories/ Themes
Local language barriers	D1
Missing family and friends	D2
Racism and discrimination (social and work)	D3
Unsettled family life (opportunities for spouses and schooling for children)	D4
Foreign culture (social environment)	D5
Weather	D6
Missing everyday commodities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Food ➤ Technology and infrastructure ➤ Medical services ➤ Living conditions ➤ Others 	D7
Financial constraints	D8
Cultural differences in the working environment	D9
No expatriate support received from the organisation	D10
Unmet expectations	D11

It is thought valuable to take note of the comment of Buckingham and Saunders (2004:139): “Phenomenologists remind us however, that different people may devise different sets of categories from reading the same responses.

Once the set of codes had been devised the participants’ answers were coded into the above categories. Allocating answers to the coding categories enabled the researcher to calculate frequency counts, which could be interpreted and given meaning to in the context.

➤ **Testing the emerging hypotheses against the data**

Once the categories and patterns became apparent in the data, the researcher tested it against the hypotheses and the literature. The purpose was to evaluate the data for informational accuracy, credibility usefulness and centrality.

➤ **Searching for alternative explanations of the data**

As categories and patterns between the categories emerged in the data, the researcher engaged in challenging the patterns that became apparent. The researcher looked for other plausible explanations for the data and the links between them. The purpose was to ensure that the explanation given would be the most probable explanation of all possible explanations.

➤ **Recording the finding**

As the qualitative data was central to the analytic process, the results were discussed with the results of the quantitative analysis in chapter 5. The goal was to integrate the themes and concepts into a theory that would offer an interpretation of the research arena.

(Babbie, 2004:314-324; De Vos, 1998:342-343; Hardy & Bryman, 2000:548-553; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:142)

4.8 PROCEDURE FOR DATA INTERPRETATION

Data interpretation aims at extracting meaning from the analysed data. After data analysis the researcher had to organize and manipulate the quantitative and qualitative data to get it to reveal aspects of interest about the job attitudes and

intention to quit of expatriates. Neuman (2006:343) states that the major concern of data interpretation is to answer the question of statistical significance, in other words, how safe generalizations are from a part to a whole. Babbie (2004:459) defines statistical significance as the likelihood that relationships observed in the sample can be attributed to sampling error alone. The reliability of the generalization, i.e. the probability of error, will depend on the extent to which the sample mirrors the population. A relationship is significant at the .05 level of the likelihood. Interpreting the data means the following:

- Relating the findings to the original research problem and the specific research questions and hypotheses.
- Relating the findings to pre-existing literature, concepts, theories and research studies.
- Determining whether the findings have practical as well as statistical significance.
- Identifying limitations of the study.

Once the data had been analysed a framework of organisational best practice enhancing expatriate job and organisational adjustment was deduced. The framework was tested by content analysis through a small sample of 10 to verify the content validity of the best-practice framework, utilising Lawshe's content validity technique (Lawshe, 1975). The sample was drawn using convenient sampling and was based on availability.

4.9 SUMMARY

Chapter 4 addressed the procedures used in this study. As the researcher relied on convenience and purposive sampling, the sample parameters were very important. The lead contact person in every MNC was requested to send questionnaires to all the South African expatriates that he/she had on record and comply with the sample parameters. The questionnaire was in electronic format and was sent and returned via e-mail. Administration of the returned questionnaires included data coding and editing, data entry, data cleaning and data-processing. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher relied on descriptive and inferential statistical procedures to analyse the quantitative data and analytical induction to analyse the

qualitative data. Once the data had been analysed a framework of organisational best practice enhancing expatriate job and organisational adjustment was deduced. The framework was tested by content analysis to verify the content validity of the best-practice framework.

The words of Leedy and Ormrod (2005:179): “To behold is to look beyond the fact; to observe is to go beyond observation. Look at the world of people and you will be overwhelmed by what you see. But select from the mass of humanity a well-chosen few, and observe them with insight and they will tell you more than all the multitudes together”, summarize what chapter 4 aimed at achieving.

Chapter 5 presents the results and findings that originated from the data gathering and data analysis process.



CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the research project was to investigate empirically variables influencing expatriates' work-related attitudes and to examine the relationships between work-related attitudes and expatriates' tendency to return early or resign during or shortly after the foreign assignment. The findings provided a better understanding of the role of job and organisational variables in the expatriate adjustment process. The study added value as the findings were used to identify organisational best practice to solve the problem of expatriate failure. **The main purpose of the study** was to present identified practices through an organisational best-practice framework enhancing expatriate job/organisational adjustment. To achieve the research aim and purpose, the following research questions, as stated in chapter 1, formed the basis of data gathering, data analysis and data interpretation:

- Is the group of respondents who have the intention to separate from the foreign assignment in the sample, either through quitting (turnover intention) or by returning before completing the foreign assignment (propensity to return prematurely) significant?
- Are there statistically significant differences between the group of participants who have an intention to quit and the group of participants who do not have an intention to quit; and among the following demographic groups based on: age, gender, marital status and educational level?
- Is there a relationship between the various job attitudes measured in the study and the intention to quit, and what is the direction and the strength of the relationship?
- Are there specific aspects of work-related attitudes that will predict the intention to quit?
- Are there specific work-related aspects that are perceived by the participants as critical to their adjustment while on a foreign assignment?



- Do the findings provide sufficient information to identify factors, under the control of the multinational corporation, that will facilitate positive work-related attitudes amongst expatriates and can this be summarized in a framework of organisational best practice, enhancing expatriate managers' job and organisational adjustment?

Chapter 5 **presents the findings** of the data analysis in a usable format and chapter 6 **discusses the findings** (data interpretation). The findings are presented in tabular form. See Table 5.1 for an explanation of the abbreviations used in the tables.

Table 5.1: Abbreviations of the variables included in the analysis

VARIABLE	ABBREVIATIONS
JOB CHARACTERISTICS (JC)	
Skill variety	Skill V
Task identity	Task I
Task significance	Task S
Autonomy	Auto
Feedback	Feed
Role conflict	Role C
Role ambiguity	Role A
JOB SATISFACTION (JS)	
The job itself	Job
Supervisor	Sup
Co-workers	Co
Promotion opportunities	Prom
Compensation package	Com
OTHER WORK-RELATED ATTITUDES	
Organisational commitment	OC
Job involvement	JI
Expectations	E
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	
Age	Age
Gender	Gen
Marital status	Mar stat
Educational level	Educ
Organisational tenure	Tenure
International experience (years)	Exp(Y)
International experience (number of assignments)	Exp(Num)
Work pressure	WP
INTENTION TO SEPARATE	
Intention to quit	Quit
Propensity to return prematurely	Return

5.2 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

5.2.1 The “intention to separate” in the sample

Is the group of respondents who have the intention to separate from the foreign assignment in the sample, either through quitting (turnover intention) or by returning before completing the foreign assignment (propensity to return prematurely) significant?

Empirical evidence strongly supports the position that intent to stay or leave is consistently related to voluntary turnover. Researchers have found that the turnover intention (to leave/to quit) and propensity to return prematurely are the strongest predictors of actual turnover. International labour turnover is defined as separation from the organisation (quit) and internal transfers back to the home country (return prematurely). Both forms of turnover are costly and detrimental to the multinational corporation (Lee & Liu, 2007:124). The researcher posed three questions to the participants in the measurement instrument related to the intention to separate: (1) Do you think of quitting your job? (2) How often do you think of quitting your job? (3) Did you often (if already back in South Africa) or do you often (if still on a foreign assignment) think of returning earlier to South Africa than your contract states? In the study the participants who indicated an intention to quit measured 46,48% (33 out of 71 participants), see Figure 5.1 and the propensity to return prematurely measured 26,76% (19 of 71 participants), see Figure 5.2.

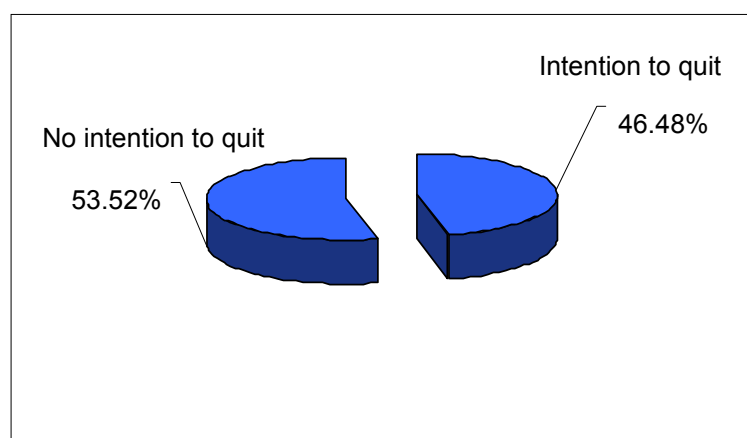


Figure 5.1: Participants' intention to quit

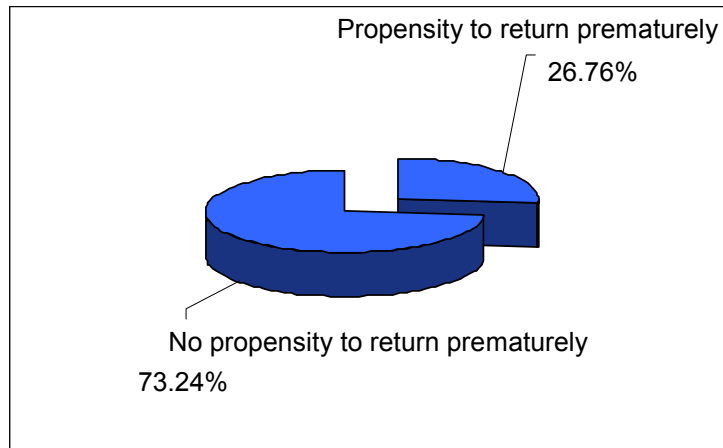


Figure 5.2: Participants’ propensity to return prematurely

The above percentages become more awkward for the multinational corporations if they are cross-tabulated with the frequencies of how often the participants’ think of quitting the foreign assignment. See Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Intention to separate in the sample

Sample N = 71			Intention to return					
			No (N=52)			Yes(N=19)		
			Intention to quit		Total	Intention to quit		Total
			No (N=32)	Yes (N=20)		No (N=6)	Yes (N=13)	
Frequency:	Never	Count	30	5	35	6	3	9
		Row%	68.2%	11.4%	79.5%	13.6%	6.8%	20.5%
		Col%	93.8%	25.0%	67.3%	100.0%	23.1%	47.4%
	Occasionally	Count	1	11	12		8	8
		Row%	5.0%	55.0%	60.0%		40.0%	40.0%
		Col%	3.1%	55.0%	23.1%		61.5%	42.1%
	Always	Count	1	4	5		2	2
		Row%	14.3%	57.1%	71.4%		28.6%	28.6%
		Col%	3.1%	20.0%	9.6%		15.4%	10.5%

Of the participants who want to return early from the foreign assignment, 68,42% (13 out of 19 participants) want not only to return, but in fact to quit the job. In other words, labour turnover can be predicted when the expatriate returns to South Africa. From the participants who do not necessarily want to return early, 38,46% (20 out of 52 participants) want in fact to quit their job. This can be an indication that labour



turnover will take place while the expatriate is still on the foreign assignment. 75,76% of the participants who want to quit, think about quitting often (25 out of 33 participants). In Table 5.2 thinking about quitting often; is represented by the frequencies occasionally and always.

5.2.2 Differences between groups of participants

Are there statistically significant differences between the group of participants who have an intention to quit and the group of participants who do not have an intention to quit; and between the following demographic groups based on: age, gender, marital status and educational level?

The researcher considered group differences in mean work-related attitudes by applying independent sample T-tests on dichotomous variables and analyses of variance techniques on variables having more than two categories. The T-test was applied to the variables marital status, gender and the intention to quit, while the ANOVA was applied to the variables of age and educational level. Once the ANOVAs were calculated a multiple comparison test – Bonferroni - was conducted to identify which category of the different age groups and educational levels had the significant mean difference. Table 5.3 - 5.8 highlights only the statistically significant findings.

Table 5.3: T-test of mean scores between the work-related attitudes and marital status of South African expatriates

N=69	Never Married		Married		Significance (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P-value
Work-related dimensions					
Feedback	3.74	0.587	3.39	0.583	.022
Co-workers	14.08	3.37	12.00	4.70	.038
Expectations	29.04	5.68	26.20	4.58	.027
Promotional opportunity	5.33	2.91	3.82	3.08	.050
Organisational commitment	87.29	10.64	80.78	18.20	.065

The mean scores on the work-related attitudes and marital status of South African expatriates were very similar except for feedback, co-workers, expectations and



promotional opportunities. All the means of the never married group were significantly higher than their married counterparts ($p < .05$). Although not significant ($p = .065$), organisational commitment is worth mentioning.

Table 5.4: T-test of mean scores between the work-related attitudes and gender of South African expatriates

N=71 Work-related dimensions	Male		Female		Significance (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P-value
Skill variety	3.86	.642	3.52	.670	.035
Job involvement	25.26	8.74	19.76	7.30	.005
Expectations	26.36	4.66	28.97	5.85	.041
The job itself	11.48	3.58	13.00	2.98	.055

The mean scores on the work-related attitudes and gender of South African expatriates were very similar except for skill variety, job involvement and expectations. The means for skill variety and job involvement were significantly higher ($p < .05$) for males than for females. The mean for expectations was significantly higher for females than for males. Although not significant ($p = .055$), it is worth mentioning that the mean for the job itself was higher for females than for males.

Table 5.5: T-test of mean scores between the work-related attitudes and intention to quit of South African expatriates

N=71 Work-related dimensions	Intention to quit (Yes)		Intention to quit (No)		Significance (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P-value
Feedback	3.34	.591	3.67	.593	.025
Role conflict	4.43	.680	4.93	.665	.003
The job itself	10.76	3.99	13.26	2.27	.002
Co-workers	11.27	4.95	14.08	3.22	.006

The mean scores on the work-related attitudes and intention to quit of South African expatriates were very similar except for feedback, role conflict, the job itself and co-workers. The means of the group with no intention to quit were significantly higher ($p < .05$) than the means of the group that have an intention to quit. Although not

significant ($p = .063$), it is worth mentioning that the mean for role ambiguity is also higher for the group with no intention to quit than the group with an intention to quit.

Table 5.6: ANOVA to compare the mean scores between the work-related attitudes and the educational level of South African expatriates

Work-related dimensions	Sec/Diploma N=20		NHDip/ Bdegree N=25		Post-graduate N=26		Significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P-value
Supervisor	13.75	2.77	14.36	3.53	10.85	4.85	.005
Compensation package	4.70	2.79	6.20	2.42	4.31	2.81	.036
Organisational Commitment	90.65	10.73	86.16	10.25	74.23	19.87	.001

The mean scores on the work-related attitudes and the different educational levels did not differ significantly, except for the supervisor, compensation package and organisational commitment. For all three of the independent variables the mean score for the lower educational levels were significantly higher than the mean score of the educational level post-graduate ($p < .05$).

Table 5.7: ANOVA to compare the mean scores between the work-related attitudes and the different age groups of South African expatriates

Work-related dimension	0-29 N=17		30-39 N=27		40-49 N=15		50-69 N=12		Significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	P-value
Promotion opportunities	5.47	2.70	5.11	3.03	3.60	3.42	2.17	1.80	.009

The mean scores on the work-related attitudes and the different age groups did not differ significantly, except for promotional opportunities. The mean score for participants younger than 40 years was significantly higher than the mean score for the age group older than 50 years.

In comparing the means and standard deviations of the demographic variables from the group who indicated an intention to quit with the group who did not indicate an intention to quit, the only significant statistic is the mean difference on experience

gained on international assignments (See Table 5.8). The mean for international experience: intention to quit = .91. The mean for international experience: No intention to quit = 1.82. Interesting to note was that there was no difference between the means for work pressure of the two groups.

Table 5.8: Comparing mean scores between international experience and intention to quit of South African expatriates

N=71	Intention to quit (Yes) N=33		Intention to quit (No) N=38	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Demographic variable				
International experience	.91	1.011	1.82	1.625

5.2.3 The correlation between work-related attitudes and the intention to quit

Is there a relationship between the various job attitudes measured in the study and the intention to quit, and what are the direction and the strength of the relationship?

Spearman's correlation coefficient (r_s) was used to determine the relationship between variables; job characteristics, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement, met expectations and the intention to quit.

According to Hardy and Bryman (2004:53), Spearman's rho measures the degree of monotonic relationships between two ordinal variables. As the number of categories increases, Spearman's rho becomes a more useful measure, since it relies on a comparison of the rank ordering of respondents within the two distributions. Rank orderings that are quite similar produce high positive values; rank orderings that are opposite produce high negative values, and rank orderings that are unrelated produce values close to zero.

Spearman's correlation coefficient (r_s) that is a non-parametric statistic, was used because the variables were on an ordinal level, therefore, the researcher could take advantage of the fact that the cases were rank ordered. A second reason could be that the data violated parametric assumptions such as non-normally distributed data



(Buckingham & Saunders, 2004:216). Spearman’s test works by first ranking the data and then applying Pearson’s equation to those ranks (Croucher, 2003:251); Field, 2005:129). The results are presented in Table 5.9 and Table 5.10.

In the social sciences, there are several standard levels of statistical significance. Primarily, the most important criterion is that the significance value should be lower than .05. However, if the exact significance value is much lower, then researchers can be much more confident about the strength of the experimental effect. In these circumstances researchers like to cause a stir about the fact that their result is not only significant at .05, but it is significant at a much lower level as well (Field, 2005:140). The levels of significance that the researcher used were .05 and .01.

Table 5.9: Spearman’s correlation coefficient (N = 71)

			Skill V	Task I	Task S	Auto	Feed	Role C	Role A	Quit
Spearman’s rho	Skill V	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000							
	Task I	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.201 .092	1.000						
	Task S	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.272* .022	.340** .004	1.000					
	Auto	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.305** .010	.454** .000	.400** .001	1.000				
	Feed	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.123 .307	.366** .002	.462** .000	.065 .592	1.000			
	Role C	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	-.181 .131	.046 .701	.182 .129	.010 .936	.370** .001	1.000		
	Role A	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.010 .935	.127 .291	.338** .004	.178 .138	.390** .001	.537** .000	1.000	
	Quit	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	-.127 .290	.257* .030	-.016 .893	-.052 .669	-.168 .162	-.369** .002	-.219 .067	1.000

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

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

The results of the correlation analysis presented in Table 5.9 show that the following correlations were significant (highlighted in blue):

- skill variety and task significance $r_S = .272$, $p < .05$
- skill variety and autonomy $r_S = .305$, $p < .01$
- task identity and task significance $r_S = .340$, $p < .01$
- task identity and autonomy $r_S = .454$, $p < .01$
- task identity and feedback $r_S = .336$, $p < .01$
- task significance and autonomy $r_S = .400$, $p < .01$
- task significance and feedback $r_S = .462$, $p < .01$
- task significance and absence of role ambiguity $r_S = .338$, $p < .01$
- feedback and absence of role conflict $r_S = .370$, $p < .01$
- feedback and absence of role ambiguity $r_S = .390$, $p = .01$
- absence of role ambiguity and absence of role conflict $r_S = .537$, $p < .01$

Of particular importance to the purpose of the study is the negative correlation between the intention to quit and the absence of role conflict $r_S = -.369$, $p < .01$. Questions related to role conflict in the questionnaire were either reverse scored or posed in a positive manner. The negative relationship was predictable and it implies that the clearer an individual is about the role he or she needs to fulfil, the less role conflict the individual will experience, consequently the less the intention to quit. The positive correlation between the intention to quit and task identity $r_S = .257$, $p < .05$ is a surprise to the researcher and not explicable.

Although the above indicates the existence of a relationship, and the direction of the relationship between the variables, the strength of all the relationships is not strong. The strongest relationship is between the absence of role conflict and the absence of role ambiguity, whereas the absence of role conflict explains 28,8% of the variance of the absence of role ambiguity. The correlation coefficient between task identity and autonomy, and task significance and feedback, may be regarded as moderate.



Table 5.10: Spearman's correlation coefficient (N = 71)

			Quit	Job	Sup	Co	Prom	Com	OC	JI	E
Spearman's rho	Quit	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000								
	Job	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	-.391** .001	1.000							
	Sup	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	-.118 .329	.459** .000	1.000						
	Co	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	-.349** .003	.382** .001	.493** .000	1.000					
	Prom	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.057 .635	.319** .007	.382** .001	.341** .004	1.000				
	Com	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	-.224 .060	.203 .089	.574** .000	.432** .000	.475** .000	1.000			
	OC	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	-.232 .051	.506** .000	.387** .001	.292* .013	.446** .000	.257* .031	1.000		
	JI	Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	.062 .605	-.008 .948	.098 .415	.087 .473	.074 .538	.050 .678	-.054 .652	1.000	
	E		-.087 .470	.330** .005	.273* .021	.442** .000	.613** .000	.412** .000	.638** .000	.079 .515	1.000

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

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

The results of the correlation analysis presented in Table 5.10 show that the following correlations were significant:

- the job itself and supervisor $r_s = .459$, $p < .01$
- the job itself and co-worker $r_s = .382$, $p < .01$
- the work itself and promotional opportunities $r_s = .319$, $p < .01$
- the job itself and organisational commitment $r_s = .506$, $p < .01$
- the job itself and expectations $r_s = .330$, $p < .01$
- supervisor and co-worker $r_s = .493$, $p < .01$
- supervisor and promotional opportunities $r_s = .382$, $p < .01$
- supervisor and compensation package $r_s = .574$, $p < .01$
- supervisor and organisational commitment $r_s = .387$, $p < .01$
- supervisor and expectations $r_s = .273$, $p < .05$



- co-workers and promotional opportunities $r_S = .341, p < .01$
- co-workers and compensation package $r_S = .432, p < .01$
- co-workers and organisational commitment $r_S = .292, p < .05$
- co-workers and expectations $r_S = .442, p < .01$
- promotional opportunities and compensation package $r_S = .475, p < .01$
- promotional opportunities and organisational commitment $r_S = .446, p < .01$
- promotional opportunities and expectations $r_S = .613, p < .01$
- compensation package and commitment $r_S = .257, p < .05$
- compensation package and expectations $r_S = .412, p < .01$
- organisational commitment and expectations $r_S = .638, p < .01$

Of particular importance to the purpose of the study are the negative correlations between the intention to quit and the job itself $r_S = -.391, p < .01$ and between the intention to quit and co-workers $r_S = -.349, p < .01$.

Although the above statistics indicate the existence of a relationship, and the direction of the relationship between the variables, the strength of all the relationships is not strong. The strongest relationships are between organisational commitment and expectations, where expectations makes up 40,70% of the variance in organisational commitment, and between promotional opportunities and expectations. Promotional opportunities explains 37,76% of the variance in expectations. The correlation coefficient between task identity and autonomy as well as task significance and feedback can be seen as indicating a moderate degree of correlation.

It seems thus that an expatriate's intention to quit is definitely related to role conflict, the job itself and co-workers. Other correlations to take note off are the positive correlations between organisational commitment and the job itself, supervision, promotional opportunities and met expectations. No correlation between the intention to quit and job involvement was established.

5.2.4 Predicting the intention to quit

Are there specific aspects of work-related attitudes that can predict the intention to quit?

Logistic regression was used to predict the intent to leave from the independent variables and to explain the impact of these predictor variables on intention to leave. Logistic regression is a form of multiple regression but with an outcome variable that is a categorical dichotomy, and predictor variables that are continuous or categorical. In other words it is possible to predict to which of two categories (intention to quit or no intention to quit) a person is likely to belong given certain other information (Field, 2005:218). Logistic regression analysis was performed using stepwise entry for the independent variables.

Table 5.11: Omnibus test of model coefficients

		Chi-square	Df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	10.451	1	.001
	Block	10.451	1	.001
	Model	10.451	1	.001
Step 2	Step	4.861	1	.027
	Block	15.312	2	.000
	Model	15.312	2	.000
Step 3	Step	8.056	1	.005
	Block	23.368	3	.000
	Model	23.368	3	.000

The overall fit of the model is significant at step 1 with the predictor variable “the job itself”, $X^2 = 10.451$, $p < .001$, and the overall fit of the model is significant after both the first new variable (role conflict), $X^2 = 15.312$, $p < .001$ and second new variable (promotional opportunity), $X^2 = 23.368$, $p < .001$ have been entered. The significance of .000 (highlighted in blue) indicates that the H_0 can be rejected. The H_0 states that all correlation coefficients in the model are zero, in other words that no correlation exists between the dependent variable and the predictor variables.



Table 5.12: Model summary

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
1	87.624a	.137	.183
2	82.762b	.194	.259
3	74.706b	.280	.375

Overall the model accounts for 28% - 37,5% of the variances in the intention to quit (depending on which measure R² you use).

Table 5.13: Variables in the equation

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
Step 1^a								
Jobscore	-.259	.092	8.013	1	.005	.772	.645	.923
Constant	3.019	1.166	6.704	1	.010	20.480		
Step 2^b								
RoleCon	-.075	.035	4.515	1	.034	.928	.866	.994
Jobscore	-.217	.096	5.106	1	.024	.805	.667	.972
Constant	6.708	2.208	9.227	1	.002	818.812		
Step 3^c								
RoleCon	-.107	.040	7.117	1	.008	.898	.830	.972
Jobscore	-.312	.110	8.084	1	.004	.73	.591	.908
Promscore	.282	.106	7.057	1	.008	1.326	1.077	1.632
Constant	8.459	2.535	11.137	1	.001	4716.772		

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Jobscore.

a. Variable(s) entered on step 2: RoleCon.

b. Variable(s) entered on step 3: Promscore

The correlation coefficients for the predictor variables (role conflict -.107, the job itself -.312 and promotional opportunity .282) are all significant ($p < .05$).

Table 5.14: Step summary^{a,b}

Step	Improvement			Model			Correct Class %	Variable
	Chi-square	Df	Sig.	Chi-square	df	Sig.		
1	10.451	1	.001	10.451	1	.001	64.8%	IN: Jobscore
2	4.861	1	.027	15.312	2	.000	71.8%	IN: RoleCon
3	8.065	1	.005	23.368	3	.000	74.6%	IN: Promscore

a. No more variables can be deleted from or added to the current model

b. End block: 1

The conclusion can be drawn that the overall accuracy of the model is 74,6% (highlighted in blue). The accuracy can be deduced from a classification table on which the model predicts an expatriate's intention to quit and then compares this with the observed intention to quit. 74,6% of the models predictions are correct. This implies that the model will predict an expatriate's intention to quit 74,6% accurately. The Hosmer and Lemeshow's *Goodness-of-fit* test has been applied to assess how well the chosen model fits the data.

Table 5.15: Hosmer and Lemeshow test

Step	Chi-square	Df	Sig.
3	6.778	8	.561

The test statistic is 6.778 and the significance value .561. The statistic tests the hypothesis that the observed data is significantly different from the predicted values in the model. In effect, the researcher wants a non-significant value for the test as it will indicate that the model does not differ significantly from the observed data. As the value .561 is not significant, it is an indication that the model predicts the real-life data very well and therefore the model appears fit.

The findings of the logistic regression enable the researcher to conclude with a high level of certainty that the presence of role conflict, a job that lacks challenge and the absence of promotional opportunities will predict an expatriates' intention to return prematurely or intention to resign from the multinational corporation.

5.2.5 Aspects perceived by South African expatriates as critical to their adjustment

Are there specific work-related aspects that are perceived by the participants as critical to their adjustment while on a foreign assignment?

The participants' responses to the two open-ended questions were allocated to the relevant code category and frequency counts were calculated. Frequencies supply a valuable picture of how the data is distributed across the aspects the expatriates perceive as critical.

As 9 participants did not complete the open-ended questions, they were excluded from this part of the data analysis (N = 62). Table 5.16 and Table 5.17 present the findings.

Table 5.16: Frequency count for the aspects that make adjustment easier as perceived by expatriates

Categories/ Themes	Frequency count (N = 62)
Commitment towards the vision of the organisation	34
Friendly supportive co-workers (work environment)	39
Good relationship with management	14
Teamwork	18
Job satisfaction and challenges within the job	15
Remuneration/ benefits	18
Work environment (Ethics, work schedule)	10
Well prepared/ Pre-departure training	12
Expatriate support from home country	18
Friendly supportive locals (social environment)	42
Fluency in the host-country language	22
Family accompanied expatriate on the assignment	16
The opportunity to see new places and travel	8
Country parameters (Safe environment, stable economic climate, stable political environment, high quality education)	26



Table 5.17: Frequency count for the aspects that make adjustment more difficult as perceived by expatriates

Categories/ Themes	Frequency count (N = 62)
Local language barriers	28
Missing family and friends	38
Racism and discrimination (social and work)	16
Unsettled family life (employment opportunities for spouses and schooling for children)	24
Foreign culture (social environment)	16
Weather	8
Missing everyday commodities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Food ➤ Technology and Infrastructure ➤ Medical services ➤ Living conditions ➤ Others 	31
Financial strains	10
Cultural differences in the working environment	32
No expatriate support received from the organisation	16
Unmet expectations	32

5.2.6 Framework of organisational best practice

Do the findings provide sufficient information to identify factors under the control of the multinational corporation that will facilitate positive work-related attitudes amongst expatriates and can these be summarized in a framework of organisational best practice – enhancing expatriate job and organisational adjustment?

As a negative relationship between the work-related attitudes and the intention to quit was established through Spearman’s correlation coefficient; and as specific factors of work-related attitudes were identified as critical to adjustment through the T-test, ANOVA, Logistic regression and the responses to the open-ended questions, it is possible to summarize the results in a framework of organisational best practice.



5.3 SUMMARY

The study explored South African expatriate managers' intention to quit the multinational corporation or the foreign assignment and the factors theoretically and empirically related to it. In the study, the intention to quit was the dependent construct in the model and the researcher examined evidence for how this was influenced by job characteristics, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement, expectations and other characteristics viewed by expatriates as critical to their adjustment. The analyses were done through descriptive analysis, T-test, ANOVA, Spearman's correlation coefficient, Logistic regression and content analysis. With these statistics the researcher summarized large bodies of data regarding the work-related attitudes of the participants, made comparisons between different groups, investigated the correlation between variables, made predictions about the intention to quit, identified critical aspects for adjustment of expatriates and determined whether the findings had any statistical significance. Statistics proved to be a very powerful tool in the researcher's search for answers to the stated research questions. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses that have been presented in chapter 5 will be interpreted and discussed in chapter 6.



CHAPTER 6

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher has to be careful not to make snap judgments about the data he/she has collected, as the most thorough research effort can go astray when conclusions are drawn from the data. The interpretation of the data is the essence of the research. Chapter 6 presents an interpretation and discussion of the findings recorded in chapter 5. The focus of the discussion will be on:

- Relating the findings to the original research problem and the specific research questions and hypotheses.
- Relating the findings to pre-existing literature and research studies.
- Determining whether the findings have practical significance, i.e. whether the findings are usable.

6.2 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

6.2.1 The “intention to separate” in the sample

Is the group of respondents who have the intention to separate from the foreign assignment in the sample, either through quitting (turnover intention) or by returning before completing the foreign assignment (propensity to return prematurely) significant?

The findings indicate that 46,48% of the participants report an intention to quit and that 26,76% of the participants report an intention to return prematurely. From the 26,76% participants who indicated an intention to return prematurely, 68,42% indicated an intention to quit. If the participants' intentions translate into actual labour turnover and premature return, and research confirms that most probably it will (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982; Steel & Ovalle, 1984), it will create problems and expenses for the multinational organisations. Separation from

the organisation through labour turnover while on, or shortly after, being on a foreign assignment and separation from the foreign assignment through the premature return of an expatriate from the host country to the home country is operationally termed, for the purpose of the study, expatriate failure. The high cost and high rates of expatriate failure were set out in chapter 1. The high percentages for intention to separate in the study confirm the rationale for and importance of the research study as set out in chapter 1.

The percentages for intention to quit and propensity to return early in the study are aligned with the expatriate failure rates published in international and South African literature. Hawley (2005:1) states that between 25 and 40 percent of South African expatriate managers end their assignments early and Hill (2003:612) suggests that between 16 and 40 percent of American employees sent abroad to developed countries return from their assignments early while almost 70 percent of American employees sent to developing countries return home early. Naumann *et al.* (2000:227) indicate that 25 percent of returned expatriates leave the parent company within one year of repatriation. Harzing (1995:458), after intensive debate on the empirical foundation of the high levels of expatriate failure rates, concludes that the problem is not so serious, but it is worthy of further attention.

The findings of this study do indicate unacceptably high levels of separation intention in South Africa, therefore, a red light is flashing for South African multinationals to investigate the phenomenon properly and take proactive action. It is important to note that the intention to quit does differ between the expatriates stationed in Africa (51%) and the expatriates stationed in Europe, United States and Australia (36%). There seems to be truth in the claim that the failure rates are higher for expatriates stationed in developing countries in comparison with those in developed countries. Taking into account that most South African multinational organisations spread their wings into Africa, South African multinationals are faced with an even greater challenge of managing the processes of expatriation and repatriation successfully.

6.2.2 Differences between groups of participants

Are there statistically significant differences between the group of participants who have an intention to quit and the group of participants who do not have an intention to quit; and among the following demographic groups based on: age, gender, marital status and educational level?

The question seeks to establish the difference between the mean scores of the different work-related attitudes (independent variables) of the various selected groups. The mean scores of the work-related attitudes and the different groups do not differ significantly except for the following:

- **Intention to quit:** The means of the participants who have no intention to quit are significantly higher for the predictor variables; feedback, absence of role conflict, the job itself and co-workers. In comparing the means and standard deviations of the demographic variables from the group who indicated an intention to quit, with the group who did not indicate an intention to quit, the only significant statistic is the mean difference on experience in international assignments. The participants who do not indicate an intention to quit have a higher mean score than the participants who have an intention to quit. In other words, on average the non-quitters have more international experience than the quitters. Interesting to note is that there is no difference in the means for work pressure for the two groups.
- **Gender:** The means of the male group are significantly higher for the predictor variables; skill variety and job involvement. The mean of the female group is significantly higher for the predictor variable expectations.
- **Marital status:** The means of the never married group are significantly higher for the predictor variables; feedback, co-workers, expectations and promotional opportunity.
- **Age:** The means of the younger age groups are significantly higher for the predictor variable; promotional opportunity.
- **Educational level:** The means of the lower qualified groups are significantly higher for the predictor variables; supervision, compensation package and organisational commitment.



It can thus be concluded that the intention to quit is influenced by the quantity and quality of feedback an expatriate receives on how well he or she is doing, how clear the expatriate is on his/her role in the foreign assignment and the absence of role conflict. The extent to which the job provides the expatriate with stimulating tasks, opportunity for learning and personal growth and the chance to be held responsible and accountable for results (the job itself) and the extent to which co-workers are supportive are also significant. It also seems as if international experience contributes to expatriates' intention to stay. The implication is that, if all other needs are met and experienced expatriates are on international assignments, the more likely the chances are of retaining these expatriates on a foreign assignment. When selecting expatriates, multinational corporations should consider hiring people with expatriate experience. Perhaps this experience can be related to realistic expectations.

Further implications for multinational corporations are that male expatriates need skill variety and job involvement, while female expatriates want their expectations to be met. Unmarried expatriates place greater emphasis on receiving feedback, co-workers, expectations and promotional opportunities, than their married counterparts. Younger expatriates value promotional opportunities, while less qualified expatriates, who rely more on fair supervision and compensation packages, tend to value organisational commitment more than more qualified expatriates.

Although job involvement, as one of the independent variables in the study, does not find much statistical support as a predictor of the intention to quit, the male participants rate it as an important variable. Blau (1985b:19) describes job involvement as the extent to which a person identifies psychologically with his or her job and considers his or her performance level as a reflection of self-worth. A person with a high level of job involvement will have a strong sense of "belonging" in the specific job, and will want to perform well. It seems that male expatriates rate their jobs as important to their self-image, as they identify with them and view them as a central life interest.

6.2.3 The correlation between work-related attitudes and the intention to quit.

Is there a relationship between the various job attitudes measured in the study and the intention to quit, and what is the direction and the strength of the relationship?

The pattern of correlations, although not totally significant, is what can be expected when referring to the literature. The intention to quit is negatively correlated with most of the aspects related to job satisfaction (job characteristics, absence of role conflict and role ambiguity, the job itself, supervision, co-workers and compensation package) and organisational commitment. This implies that if the above work-related aspects are present in the work environment the likelihood of quitting will decrease. Job involvement though, in contradiction to other similar research studies, does not show a negative correlation with the intention to quit. The strongest negative correlations with the intention to quit are a challenging job (-.391), the absence of role conflict (-.369) and supportive co-workers (-.349). All three correlations are significant at $p < .01$. The effect of these correlations will be considered to be medium according to the cut-off points of Cohen (1988). According to Cohen (1988), the following cut-off points in terms of the correlation coefficient are recognized as practically significant (independent of the direction of the relationship): $r = .10$ small effect, $r = .30$ medium effect and $r = .50$ large effect.

Additionally, job satisfaction and organisational commitment are significantly related to several predictor variables. The highest correlations for the various aspects of job satisfaction are with met expectations (ranging from .273 to .638), and the highest correlations for organisational commitment are with met expectations (.638), a challenging job (.506), supervision (.387), and promotional opportunities (.446).

In a study conducted by Naumann *et al.* (2000), he and his colleagues find that the propensity to leave a foreign assignment is negatively correlated with job satisfaction (-.41), organisational commitment (-.43), and job involvement (-.31). Additionally, each of the three attitudes is significantly related to several predictor variables. The highest correlations for job satisfaction are with role ambiguity (-.45), task significance (.39), met expectations (.36), task identity (.35), autonomy (.33), role conflict (-.31) and participation (.30). The highest correlations for organisational

commitment are with role ambiguity (-.51), participation (.41), role conflict (-.38), met expectations (.33) and the value of expatriate training (.31). The highest correlations for job involvement are with participation (.28), met expectations (.22) and skill variety (.21).

It can be concluded that multinational corporations can foster positive work-related attitudes in expatriates through providing challenging jobs, managing role conflict, ensuring supportive co-workers, clarifying and meeting expectations, following sound supervisory practices and providing promotional opportunities.

6.2.4 Predicting the intention to quit

Are there specific aspects of work-related attitudes that will predict the intention to quit?

Although the independent variables are correlated, judgments about the relative importance of these predictors are difficult. However, the results of the logistic regression show that a challenging job, the absence of role conflict and promotional opportunities have the strongest influence on the intention to quit. This alone accounts for 37,5 percent of the variance of the intention to leave with statistical significance ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). As the overall accuracy of the model is 74,6%, it can be concluded that a challenging job, the absence of role conflict and promotional opportunities are strong predictors of an expatriate's intention to quit.

These findings correspond well with the researched literature. Literature indicates that **the job itself** - the extent to which the job provides the individual with stimulating tasks, opportunities for learning and personal growth, and the opportunity to be responsible and accountable for results and **promotional opportunities** - the opportunities for promotion and advancement in the organisation, not necessarily associated with hierarchical progress in the organisation, but including opportunities for lateral movement and growth; have been associated with job attitudes (Schleicher, Watt & Greguras, 2004:165).

6.2.5 Aspects perceived by South African expatriates as critical to their adjustment.

Are there specific work-related aspects that are perceived by the participants as critical to their adjustment while on a foreign assignment?

The responses to the open-ended questions on what makes adjustment easier, and what makes adjustment difficult, reveal the following:

- **Adjustment is easier** when there are commitment to the vision of the organisation (shared vision), supportive co-workers, good supervision, teamwork, a challenging job, reasonable compensation package, a favourable work environment, pre-departure training, fluency in language of host country, family and organisational support, supportive social environment and well-disposed host country parameters.
- **Adjustment is difficult** when there are local language barriers, the absence of familiar social relationships, xenophobia (dislike of foreigners), unsettled family life, cultural differences both in the work environment and the social environment, unmet expectations, a lack of support received from the organisation, inclement weather conditions and absence of everyday commodities such as types of food and medical services.

The findings of the qualitative data analysis correspond with the findings of the quantitative data analysis. This confirms the aspects that are perceived by the participants as critical to their adjustment while on a foreign assignment and allows the researcher to confidently make conclusions regarding the critical aspects influencing job attitudes.

As the purpose of the study is to identify the work-related aspects that facilitate expatriate adjustment, the above aspects are classified into work-related, person-related and other-related variables. See Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Aspects related to expatriate adjustment

Work-related adjustment variables	Person-related adjustment variables	Other-related adjustment variables
Shared vision	Fluency in host country	Host country parameters
Congenial co-workers	language	Friendly supportive host
Supervision	Family support and presence	country nationals
Teamwork	Social relationships	Opportunity to see new places
Challenging job	Settled family life	Weather
Compensation package	Cross-cultural adaptation	Medical services
Work environment	Acceptance in host country	Living conditions
Sufficient pre-departure training	Types of food	Technology and infrastructure
Organisational support practices	Home-sickness	
Diversity management	Met Expectations	
Absence of xenophobia		
Met Expectations		

It is interesting to note that when the question is posed about what makes adjustment easier, the majority of responses are job-related, but when the question is posed about what makes adjustment difficult, the majority of responses are person-related. It seems that the variables that facilitate adjustment are not the same variables that hamper adjustment. What makes a person adjust is not the same as what makes a person fail to adjust. This principle relates to the controversial two-factor theory of Frederick Herzberg. Herzberg's theory is based on two basic needs: (1) the need for psychological growth or motivating factors; and (2) the need to avoid pain or hygiene factors (Samad, 2006:113). According to Herzberg job satisfaction depends upon a certain set of conditions, whereas job dissatisfaction is the result of an entirely different set of conditions. Thus, although it is possible to think of satisfaction and dissatisfaction as two extremes on a single continuum, they are determined by different factors. Hence, it may be more helpful to consider these as two separate factors. Although Herzberg's theory has been severely criticized, the principle makes sense in terms of expatriate adjustment because two sets of variables are apparent. In other words, the set of variables that facilitates adjustment seems to be work-related whereas the set of variables that prevents adjustment seems to be person-related. The implication of the principle implies that, to prevent expatriate separation, managers should make drastic changes by adding person-related factors and work-related factors to the expatriation and repatriation process.

Another significant point that stands out is the high emphasis the participants place on commitment to the organisation's vision, or sharing the same vision. This brings the point of affective commitment to mind. Meyer and Allen (1991:67) argue that an individual will develop an emotional attachment to an organisation when he/she identifies with the goals of the organisation and is therefore willing to assist the organisation in achieving these goals. Furthermore identification with an organisation occurs when the employee's personal values are congruent with the organisation's values enabling the employee to internalize the values and goals of the organisation. With this, there are a psychological identification with- and a pride of association with the organisation. Employees build affective and normative commitment by connecting their own values to the perceived values of their current organisation.

Another finding worth mentioning is the role of organisational support practices for the expatriate and his/her family. Perceived organisational support (POS) is the degree to which employees believe the organisation provides them with needed support, values their contribution and cares about their well-being. Provision of support is clearly an important aspect for expatriates as this aspect is consistently mentioned. This finding supports the research of Lazarova and Caligiuri (2001:389), who found that supportive organisational practices offered by multinational corporations improve expatriates and repatriates general perceptions about their organisations, which ultimately influence their desire to remain with the organisation. An example can be support in terms of medical services. A practically significant group of participants (all stationed in Africa), mention the lack of reliable medical services as a major factor impacting on their adjustment

Florkowski and Fogel (1999:783) found that perceptions of local ethnocentrism had a negative effect on work adjustment and commitment to the host unit. This study also found that expatriate managers were likely to react negatively to perception of host ethnocentrism.

Although "cultural differences" is cited as a predictor variable impacting on adjustment in the study and various cases in the literature have been made on the impact of cultural differences, it is interesting to see that studies conducted by Lee and Liu (2006; 2007) in the Asian context reveal similar results to this study done in

an African context. The question can be debated whether such major cultural differences exist when it comes to an expatriate's job and organisational needs on a foreign assignment.

The last factor that features consistently as a predictor variable is the role of expectations. Accurate expectations dealt with in realistic job previews seem to be critical to the adjustment of expatriates on foreign assignments.

6.2.6 Framework of organisational best practices

Do the findings provide sufficient information to identify factors, under the control of the multinational corporation, that will facilitate positive work-related attitudes amongst expatriates and can these be summarized in a framework of organisational best practice – enhancing expatriate job and organisational adjustment?

As a negative relationship between work-related attitudes and the intention to quit has been established; and as specific aspects of work-related attitudes have been identified as critical to adjustment, it is possible to summarize the results in a framework of organisational best practice.

The aim of the framework depicted in Figure 6.1 is to encourage expatriate job and organisational adjustment. This is what the researcher wants to achieve, her contribution to the field of organisational behaviour. With this proposed framework the objective set for the research study is achieved: to propose a framework of organisational best practice that will encourage positive job attitudes of expatriate managers on international assignments.

Organisational practices that focus on fostering positive work attitudes should improve the probability of adjustment during foreign assignments, thereby reducing the risk of expatriate failure. The framework should be a guideline and be employed as a control mechanism for South African companies during the adjustment phase of expatriate managers on foreign assignments.

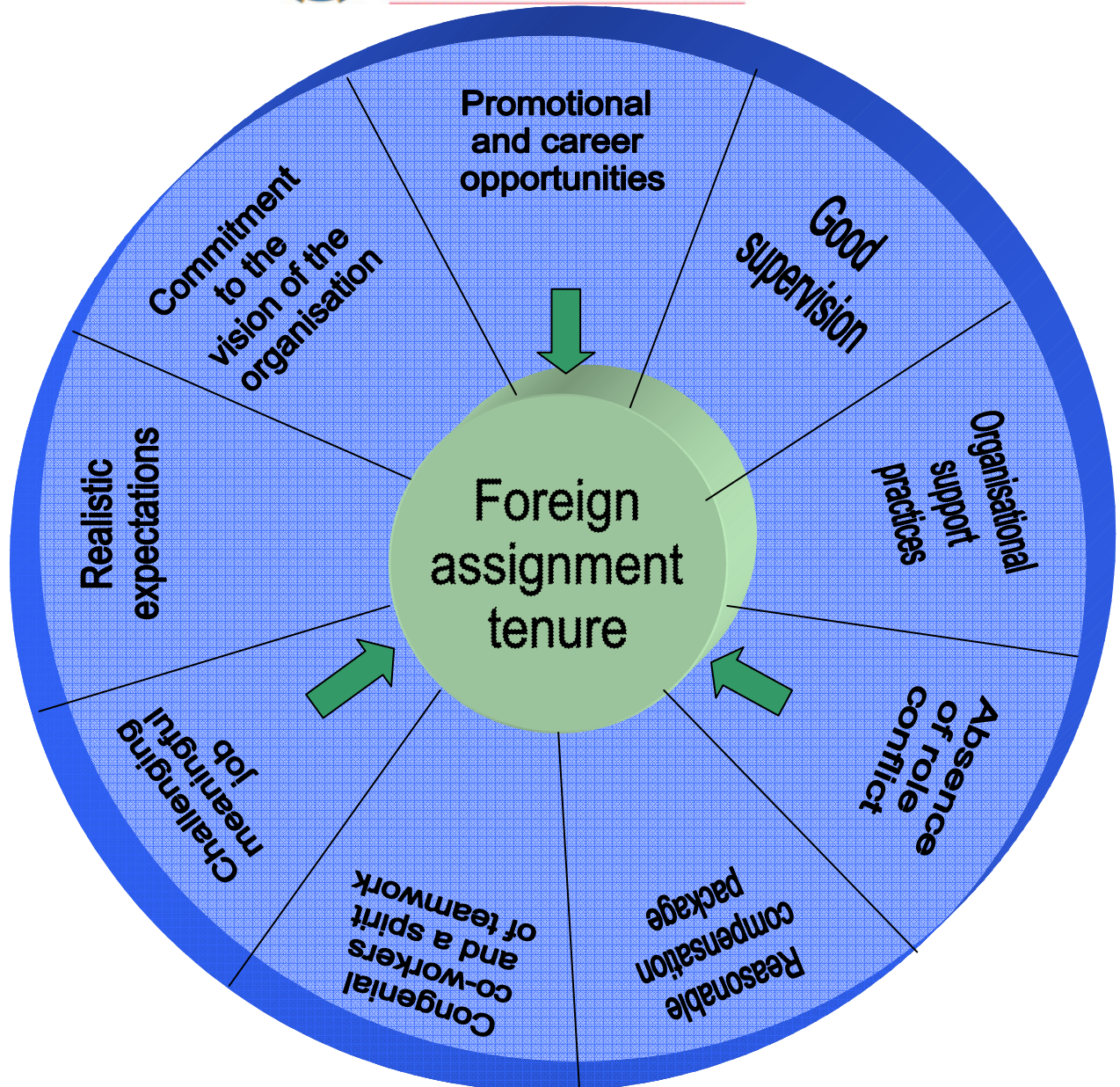


Figure 6.1: Framework of organisational best practice – enhancing expatriate job and organisational adjustment

The nine major components of the framework can be explained as follows:

- 1) **Commitment to the vision of the organisation.** Identification with the vision of the multinational corporation. This will happen when the expatriate's own values are congruent with the multinational corporation's values and the expatriate is able to internalize the values and goals of the multinational corporation.



- 2) **Promotional and career opportunities.** The opportunities for promotion and advancement in the multinational corporation, not necessarily associated with hierarchical progress in the multinational corporation, but including opportunities for lateral movement and growth.
- 3) **Good supervision.** Management's ability to demonstrate interest in and concern for employees. It implies that expatriates' relationships with supervisors need to be open and supportive, and absent from xenophobia.
- 4) **Organisational support practices.** The degree to which expatriates believe the multinational corporation provides them with needed support (practically and emotionally) and cares about their well-being.
- 5) **Absence of role conflict.** Expatriates' need to receive relevant messages regarding appropriate behaviour in the foreign assignment context. In other words the role requirements on the foreign assignment should not violate the expatriate's basic values and the expatriate must not be faced with conflicting expectations or demands.
- 6) **Reasonable compensation package.** Expatriates' need to receive compensation packages that they perceive to be in line with their expectations and to enable them to maintain the same or better standard of living than in the home country. When compensation is seen by expatriates as fair, based on job demand, individual skill level and community pay standard, satisfaction is likely result.
- 7) **Congenial co-workers and a spirit of teamwork.** Expatriates expect to get more from work than merely money or other tangible assets. For most expatriates, work fulfils the need for social interaction. Not surprisingly, therefore, technically, emotionally and socially supportive co-workers are consistently indicated as a critical aspect of expatriate adjustment. The need to be part of a group seems to be associated with expatriates' strong emphasis on teamwork.
- 8) **A challenging and meaningful job.** The extent to which the job provides the individual with stimulating tasks, opportunities for learning and personal growth, the opportunity to be responsible and accountable for results and regular feedback on performance. The individual must experience work as worthwhile and important.

- 9) **Realistic expectations.** Accurate expectations through realistic job previews seem critical to the adjustment of expatriates on foreign assignments.

These work-related aspects that contribute to job satisfaction and organisational commitment will in turn foster foreign assignment tenure. Due to the interdependent nature of work-related aspects, if one of the organisational practices is ignored, the likelihood of expatriate separation increases.

The presence of the nine organisational practices contribute to **foreign assignment tenure** – completion of a foreign assignment on schedule and no labour turnover during or shortly after being on a foreign assignment. This implies that the expatriate will serve the full intended purpose of the foreign assignment. As seen in Figure 6.1, the object of this approach is to promote foreign assignment tenure by enhancing expatriate job and organisational adjustment through the provision of organisational best practice.

6.3 SUMMARY

The high percentages for intention to separate in the study confirm the importance of the research study. A negative relationship between work-related attitudes and the intention to quit has been established and specific aspects of work-related attitudes have been identified as critical to adjustment. The results are summarized in a framework of organisational best practice. The aim of the framework is to enhance expatriate job and organisational adjustment. The **framework of organisational best practice** is what the researcher wanted to achieve. This is the contribution of the research to the field of organisational behaviour. Chapter 6 has provided an interpretation of the data and chapter 7 will conclude the research study.



CHAPTER 7

FINAL SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of chapter 7 is to bring closure to the interpretation of the findings and to look back at what has been accomplished. In chapter 7 the researcher summarizes the findings and states whether the research hypotheses have been supported or not, identifies possible practical implications of the results to multinational corporations, discusses the contribution of the study to the field of international management, lists the limitations of the current study, makes recommendations for future studies worthy of investigation and brings the research report to a final conclusion.

7.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Cotton and Tuttle (1986); Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982); and Steel and Ovalle (1984) have found that labour turnover intention and propensity to return prematurely, are the strongest predictors of actual labour turnover and actual premature return. In this study the participants who indicate an intention to quit is a high 46,48%. Participants indicating the propensity to return early is also high at 26,76%. Assuming, based on the mentioned research, that these intended behaviour will most probably become actual behaviour, the rationale for and importance of the research study is confirmed: expatriate failure is worthy of study because it is imperative for multinational corporations to have a framework of organisational practices that will facilitate expatriate job and organisational adjustment.

The means of the participants in the sample who have no intention to quit are significantly higher for the predictor variables: receiving feedback, absence of role conflict, a challenging meaningful job and congenial co-workers. These factors thus play a determining role in an expatriate's decision to quit or not. In comparing the means and standard deviations of the demographic variables from the group who indicate an intention to quit with the group who do not indicate an intention to quit,



the only significant statistic is the mean difference on experience in international assignments. This implies that more experienced expatriates are more likely to stay on a foreign assignment. The lack of statistical support for the other demographic variables implies that demographic factors are not strong predictors of the intention to separate from an organisation or a foreign assignment. Literature provides contradictory views on this point as some studies support the role of the demographic variables while others report no significant influence. The conclusion reached by the researcher is that different demographic groups have different needs, and although these difference do not significantly impact on the intention to separate, multinational corporations should be aware that a one-fits-all approach will not foster positive work-related attitudes amongst expatriates. The implications for multinational corporations are that male expatriates need skill variety and job involvement. Female expatriates want their expectations to be met. Unmarried expatriates place higher emphasis on feedback, supportive co-workers, met expectations and promotional opportunities than their married counterparts. Younger expatriates value promotional opportunities. Less qualified expatriates rely more on fair supervision and compensation packages and tend to value organisational commitment more highly than more qualified expatriates.

A moderately negative relationship exists between the intention to quit and most of the aspects related to job satisfaction (job characteristics, absence of role conflict and role ambiguity, the job itself, supervision, co-workers and compensation package) and organisational commitment. Job involvement does not show a negative correlation with the intention to quit. The intention to quit correlates negatively with a challenging and meaningful job, the absence of role conflict and congenial co-workers. Job satisfaction and organisational commitment are significantly related to the following predictor variables: job satisfaction with met expectations and organisational commitment with met expectations, a challenging and meaningful job, supervision and promotional opportunities. The researcher concludes that multinational corporations can encourage positive work-related attitudes in expatriates by providing a challenging and meaningful job, managing role conflict, ensuring supportive co-workers, clarifying and meeting expectations, following sound supervisory practices and providing promotional and career opportunities.



The results of the logistic regression have shown that a challenging job, the absence of role conflict and promotional opportunities have the strongest influence on the intention to quit. This alone accounts for 37,5 % of the variance of the intention to quit.

The open-ended questions bring the following to light. Adjustment is facilitated through: commitment to the vision of the organisation (shared vision), supportive co-workers, good supervision, teamwork, a challenging job, reasonable compensation package, a favourable work environment, pre-departure training, fluency in the language of host country, family and organisational support, a supportive social environment and well-disposed host country parameters. Adjustment is hampered by: local language barriers, the absence of familiar social relationships, xenophobia, unsettled family life, cultural differences both in the work environment and the social environment, unmet expectations, a lack of support received from the organisation, inclement weather conditions and missing everyday commodities such as types of food and medical services.

The findings of the study generally support the hypotheses put forward concerning the negative relationship between job satisfaction (H1) and organisational commitment (H2) and propensity to return early from an international assignment or labour turnover during or shortly after the international assignment. This implies that the higher the level of job satisfaction and organisational commitment among expatriates, the lower the intention to separate, as expatriates will be better adjusted to the job and work environment of the foreign assignment.

The findings do not support the hypothesis regarding a negative relationship between job involvement and propensity to return early from an international assignment or labour turnover during or shortly after the international assignment (H3). The researcher is, however, of the opinion that the role of job involvement must not be ignored as the male participants rate it as an important variable. It seems that for a male expatriate manager his job is important to his self-image as he identifies with it and regards it as a pivotal interest.

The findings of the study are similar to a study recently conducted by Lee and Liu (2007) in Taiwan. They performed a multiple regression analysis on the data they gathered, using simultaneous entry for the independent variables. The results, based on the full regression model, indicate that two predictors, adjustment and organisational commitment, are significantly related to intention to leave the multinational corporation. They report that approximately 58% of the variance of intention to leave can be explained by the combination of the three predictors, adjustment, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Lee & Lui, 2007:122).

7.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDING FOR MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Empirical evidence supports the view that expatriate failure rates can be unacceptably high if the intention to quit and the intention to return prematurely turn into actual turnover and actual premature return. Keeping in mind that research has confirmed intention to separate as the strongest predictor of actual separation; it is worthwhile for multinational corporations to take a preventative approach. As the findings provide evidence that various aspects related to work-related attitudes influence the expatriate's intention to quit, the preventative strategies can be derived from these predictor variables. There are several actions multinational organisations can take to reduce the intention to separate among expatriates.

- **Realistic job previews.** As met expectations appear to be significantly related to job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job involvement, managers should provide realistic job previews to prospective expatriate managers. Management should be careful not to oversell or create unrealistic expectations concerning the foreign assignment. During the job preview the expected roles of the expatriate manager should also be clarified.
- **Job design.** Multinational corporations should ensure that the jobs of expatriate managers are designed in a manner that will influence work attitudes positively. Jobs should include skill variety, task identity, task significance, feedback and autonomy. Managers should also try to alleviate role conflict and role ambiguity by clearly defining the job they want the expatriate managers to perform.



- **Organisational support practices.** Perceived organisational support (POS) is the degree to which expatriates believe the multinational corporation provides them with support needed, values their contribution and cares about their well-being. Multinational corporations should be aware of, and supply on a practical level, what expatriate managers and their families require during expatriation and repatriation. An example would be medical services from the multinational corporation for expatriates stationed in certain African countries.

- **Teamwork.** It seems that, due to the context of international assignments, co-workers play a more critical role in the adjustment to the job than in a domestic assignment. Management therefore needs to pay special attention to the composition of the work group in the multinational corporation. Typical teamwork strategies used in the domestic arena should be investigated and tested for use in the international arena.

- **Sharing the vision through participative strategic planning.** Commitment to the vision of the multinational corporation is consistently cited during data gathering as a critical adjustment variable. It seems as if adjustment in a host country accelerates if the expatriate manager commits to the vision of the multinational corporation for the specific country. An expatriate manager must believe in the reason for the multinational corporation being in a certain country and the role he/she has to play in realising the vision of the multinational corporation.

The above aspects are classified in the **framework of organisational best practice** presented in chapter 6.

7.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE CURRENT STUDY

While there is still much to be learned about expatriate and repatriate adjustment and its antecedents and outcomes, the study has made several contributions.

Significant contribution is made to the body of knowledge in the study fields of Organisational Behaviour and International Human Resources Management.

The study adds value by contributing to the issue of how little, in relative terms, is known about many of the mentioned concepts in the “international” as opposed to the “domestic” context. Although there is a substantial body of research available on domestic labour turnover in management literature, little attention has been devoted to international labour turnover. The study provides insight on the little debated phenomenon international labour turnover.

The study confirms and expands on previous international research on the role of work-related attitudes in the intention to quit the multinational corporation or to return prematurely from the foreign assignment. The findings of the study confirm the role of work-related attitudes in the holistic expatriate adjustment model. In terms of the South African research arena, the study is one of the first to identify work-related attitudes as an antecedent to South African expatriate managers’ labour turnover intention, as most of the current South African research has focused on the role of the spouse and family and pre-departure training in the adjustment process. Furthermore, the conceptual framework of the study can guide future South African research into expatriate managers’ separation intention and adjustment processes.

The findings also provide empirical evidence that expatriate failure rates could reach unacceptable levels, and that job satisfaction and organisational commitment are negatively related to intent to leave the organisation. Through statistical procedures specific aspects of work-related attitudes are identified as critical to the adjustment process. The findings are summarized in a framework of organisational best practice. The aim of the framework is to enhance expatriate job and organisational adjustment. The framework of organisational best practice is what the researcher set out to achieve.

Finally, the results and recommendations of the study may help multinational corporations in South Africa to facilitate the expatriation and repatriation processes of their expatriate managers, saving substantial sums of money and keeping

valuable human capital within the multinational corporation. This is the practical value of the research to the multinational corporation society.

7.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following limitations have become evident during the research study:

- As the size of the sample narrowed the researcher's field in terms of options for statistical procedures and the sample consisted of South African expatriates only, the generalizability of the findings are limited.
- The length of the questionnaire was considered by some participants to be too long. This could have contributed to a lower response rate and brought the question to mind if it would not have been more appropriate to view job satisfaction as a univariate construct instead of a multivariate construct. Viewing job satisfaction as a univariate construct would have reduced the number of questions in the self-administered questionnaire.
- Analysis was only conducted on an individual level. Organisational behaviour as a field of study involves three levels of analysis (individual, group and organisational level). The question comes to mind if work-related attitudes on the group and organisational level of organisational behaviour, could influence the labour turnover intentions and adjustment of expatriate managers.
- Work-related attitudes were viewed as linear for the purpose of the study. In reality the relationships between the various work attitudes are much more complex and inter-related.

7.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study does not provide the definitive answer to the adjustment problems of expatriate managers on foreign assignments. The field of study needs to be explored further if South African multinational corporations want to manage their human talent

optimally and staff their foreign subsidiaries with satisfied, committed and long-serving expatriates and repatriates. Suggestions for future research include:

- Future research, involving expatriate turnover should utilize a longitudinal research design rather than a cross-sectional design, so that the relationship between propensity to leave and actual labour turnover can be explored; and causal relationships in the turnover model can be examined.
- Future research should look holistically at expatriation and repatriation. The study, although acknowledging repatriates, focused mainly on expatriates. It has become evident that expatriation and repatriation are not two separate processes, but rather that expatriation is the initiation, while repatriation is the culmination of the same process. In reality, most activities that ensure high retention after repatriation occur during the expatriate assignment. Poor repatriation may result in a loss of valuable expatriate managers, a reluctance of future expatriate managers to accept overseas positions and an under-utilization of expatriate managers. Repatriation should not be the end of an international assignment for the expatriate manager, but rather the beginning of a new assignment.
- As the study confirms that most South African expatriate managers seem to be stationed in Africa, South African research focusing on the organisational support side of foreign assignments needs to move beyond the traditional topics to include variables specifically related to the African continent such as medical services, living conditions and technology. Additionally, variables such as acculturation and socialization to the host country should be explored.
- The under-researched role of teamwork and commitment to the vision of the multinational corporation in the adjustment process needs further investigation.



7.7 FINAL CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to investigate empirically variables influencing expatriates' work-related attitudes and to examine the relationships between work-related attitudes and expatriates' tendency to return early or resign during or shortly after the foreign assignment. The rationale for the study is that various previous research findings have suggested that job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement (together labelled job or work-related attitudes) are key variables in the turnover process. Virtually all turnover models include job attitudes as predictors of propensity to leave (Naumann *et al.*, 2000:228). The results of the study indicate that various aspects of organisational commitment and job satisfaction are inversely and significantly related to turnover intentions. Job involvement does not seem to be significantly related to turnover intention. This implies that the higher the level of organisational commitment and job satisfaction among expatriates, the lower the level of turnover intention.

The data analysis reveals that a challenging meaningful job, promotional and career opportunities, congenial co-workers, met expectations, commitment to the vision of the organisation, the absence of role conflict, good supervision, organisational support practices and reasonable compensation packages are significant predictors of turnover intentions. These aspects of the main variables (job satisfaction and organisational commitment) emerge as significant determinants of expatriate's job- and work adjustment on a foreign assignment. The results are in the hypothesized direction and in line with previous findings as various researchers confirm that job satisfaction and organisational commitment are consistent predictors of turnover intentions. Therefore, the present study validates the results obtained by these researchers and generalizes them to South African expatriate managers. Although some aspects of the independent variables in the study do not contribute or predict to turnover intentions, the identified predictors of turnover intentions in this study and the variables that have significant correlation with turnover intentions need to be recognized as a potential source of expatriates' intention to leave the multinational corporation.



The findings provide a better understanding of the role of job and organisational variables in the expatriate adjustment process. The study adds further value as the findings have been used to identify organisational best practice to solve the problem of expatriate failure. These practices have been placed in an organisational best-practice framework to facilitate expatriate job/organisational adjustment. The study suggests that the management of multinational corporations should consider these aspects of organisational commitment and job satisfaction to manage the adjustment of expatriate managers on foreign assignments effectively. The results of the study may also offer some insights into the multinational corporations of South Africa when they attempt to overcome turnover intentions among expatriate managers.

In conclusion, the study makes a useful contribution to theories about the relationship between organisational commitment and job satisfaction variables and labour turnover intentions as well as valuable suggestions on how multinational corporations can facilitate the adjustment of expatriate managers on a job and work level. Adjustment will reduce the probability of expatriate failure, saving multinational corporations substantial amounts of money and retain valuable knowledge by ensuring tenure in their staff compliment.



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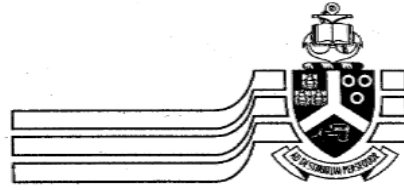
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APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT



University of Pretoria

Department of Human Resources Management
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences
Pretoria 0002

1 June 2006

Dear Participant

Ilze Swarts is a registered Ph.D Organisational Behaviour student at the University of Pretoria in the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences. She is currently busy with her final preparations towards this degree.

You have been selected, due to your involvement in foreign assignments, to participate in this study. Your participation in this survey will be appreciated, as every response adds value to the study. The aim of the survey is TO investigate the role of job attitudes (job satisfaction, job involvement and organisational commitment) in the adjustment process of employees on an international assignment in a foreign country. The findings will be summarized in a framework of organisational best practice enhancing expatriate adjustment. This could be of value to you and future employees engaged in international assignments.

This survey is divided into sections dealing with different aspects of job attitudes. Every section is preceded by instructions. Please follow the instructions as closely as possible. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions as they are intended to determine perceptions. Please answer all questions. If any question/item is left blank, it will unfortunately render your questionnaire unusable. Completing the questionnaire should not take longer than **20 minutes**.

Your answers will be treated as strictly confidential. You need not reveal your identity. The information obtained will be used solely for research purposes, and is subject to the ethical rules of research at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

Please return the completed questionnaire **by 5 July 2006**. To return the questionnaire, please follow the instructions of your organisation's contact person for the study. If you have any queries you are welcome to contact Ilze Swarts at **082 463 9483** or on e-mail ilzes@mweb.co.za

Thank you for your participation.

Ilze Swarts

APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
1	Respondent number	V1	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> 1 - 3

Section A: Job characteristics

Listed below is a series of statements that represent possible perceptions individuals have about their jobs outside the borders of their home country. With respect to your own perceptions about your latest/current job outside the borders of your home country, please indicate the extent to which each of the twenty-one (21) statements below represents your experience of this job, by crossing the number that corresponds with your response:

- 1 = to a much lesser extent than expected
- 2 = to an extent less than expected
- 3 = to an expected extent
- 4 = to a more than expected extent
- 5 = to a great extent

Example:

If you think that the following statement is definitely to a great extent true about your job, cross no '5'

	<i>To a much lesser extent</i>		<i>To a great extent</i>		
	1	2	3	4	5
a. To what extent does your job require you to work closely with other people (either "clients" or people in related jobs in your own organisation)?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

For each statement, please cross the number that corresponds to your response

Job – current or latest job outside the borders of your home country	To a much lesser extent than expected	To an extent less than expected	To an expected extent	To a more than expected extent	To a great extent	For office use only		
						A1		
1. To what extent does your job require you to work closely with other people (either "clients" or people in related jobs in your own organisation)?	1	2	3	4	5	A1		4
2. How much autonomy is there in your job? That is, to what extent does your job allow you to decide on your own how to go about doing the work?	1	2	3	4	5	A2		5
3. To what extent does your job involve doing a "whole" and identifiable piece of work? That is, is the job a complete piece of work that has an obvious beginning and end? Or is it only a small part of the overall piece of work, which is completed by other people or by automatic machines?	1	2	3	4	5	A3		6



APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

4. How much variety is there in your job? That is, to what extent does the job require you to do many different things at work, using a variety of your skills and talents?	1	2	3	4	5	A4	7
5. In general, how significant or important is your job. That is, are the results of your work likely to significantly affect the lives or well-being of other people?	1	2	3	4	5	A5	8
6. To what extent do managers or co-workers let you know how well you are doing your job?	1	2	3	4	5	A6	9
7. To what extent does doing the job itself provide you with information about your work performance? That is, does the actual work itself provide clues about how well you are doing – aside from any “feedback” co-workers or supervisors may provide?	1	2	3	4	5	A7	10
8. The job requires me to use a number of complex or high-level skills.	1	2	3	4	5	A8	11
9. The job requires a lot of cooperative work with other people.	1	2	3	4	5	A9	12
10. The job is arranged so that I am responsible for an entire piece of work from beginning to end	1	2	3	4	5	A10	13
11. Just doing the work required by the job provides many chances for me to figure out how well I am doing.	1	2	3	4	5	A11	14
12. The job is quite simple and repetitive.	1	2	3	4	5	A12	15
13. The job can be done adequately by a person working alone – without talking or checking with other people.	1	2	3	4	5	A13	16
14. Co-workers on this job give me “feedback” about how well I am doing my work.	1	2	3	4	5	A14	17
15. This job is one where a lot of other people can be affected by how well the work gets done.	1	2	3	4	5	A15	18
16. The job gives me opportunities to use my personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work.	1	2	3	4	5	A16	19
17. Supervisors often let me know how well they think I am performing on the job.	1	2	3	4	5	A17	20
18. The job provides me with the opportunity to complete the pieces of work I have begun.	1	2	3	4	5	A18	21
19. The job itself provides clues about whether or not I am performing well.	1	2	3	4	5	A19	22
20. The job gives me considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do the work.	1	2	3	4	5	A20	23
21. The job itself is significant or important in the broader scheme of things.	1	2	3	4	5	A21	24

APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

Section A continues

Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the twenty (20) statements below by crossing the number that corresponds with your response:

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 2 = moderately disagree
- 3 = slightly disagree
- 4 = undecided
- 5 = slightly agree
- 6 = moderately agree
- 7 = strongly agree

Example:

If you moderately agree with the following statement, cross no "6"

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>				<i>Strongly Agree</i>		
a. I have to do things that I think should be done differently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

For each statement, please cross the number that corresponds to your response

Job – current or latest job outside the borders of your home country	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree	For office use only	
								A	B
22. I have to do things that I think should be done differently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A22	25
23. I work on necessary things most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A23	26
24. I perform work that agrees with my values.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A24	27
25. I have enough time to complete my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A25	28
26. I receive assignments that are within my training and capability.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A26	29
27. I have just the right amount of work to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A27	30
28. I am able to act the same way on my job, regardless of the group I am with.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A28	31
29. I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A29	32
30. I work under incompatible policies and guidelines.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A30	33
31. I have to bend a rule or policy in order to carry out an assignment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A31	34
32. I receive incompatible requests from two or more people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A32	35
33. I do things that are accepted by one person and at the same time rejected by another person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A33	36
34. I feel certain about the criteria that will be used to evaluate me for a raise or promotion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A34	37
35. I am told how well I am doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A35	38
36. I feel certain about how much authority I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A36	39
37. I know what my responsibilities are.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A37	40



APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

38. I don't have to "feel my way" in performing my duties.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A38		41
39. I know exactly what is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A39		42
40. Explanation of what has to be done is clear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A40		43
41. I work under clear directives or orders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A41		44

Section B: Job satisfaction

Listed below are seventy-two (72) short phrases or adjectives, representing possible feelings individuals might have about their job content and job context. With respect to your own feelings about your job and other job-related issues, please indicate your response by crossing **1** if the item describes your situation, **2** if you are unsure and **3** if the item does not describe your situation.

- 1 = Yes
2 = I am not sure (?)
3 = No

Example:

If you think that the following word describes your job, cross no '1'

	YES	?	NO
a. Fascinating	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

For each statement, please cross the number that corresponds to your response

DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS DESCRIBE YOUR JOB? <i>Job – current or latest job outside the borders of your home country.</i>				For office use only		
	YES ? NO					
1. Fascinating	1	2	3	BA1		45
2. Routine	1	2	3	BA2		46
3. Satisfying	1	2	3	BA3		47
4. Boring	1	2	3	BA4		48
5. Good	1	2	3	BA5		49
6. Creative	1	2	3	BA6		50
7. Respected	1	2	3	BA7		51
8. Hot	1	2	3	BA8		52
9. Pleasant	1	2	3	BA9		53
10. Useful	1	2	3	BA10		54
11. Tiresome	1	2	3	BA11		55
12. Healthy	1	2	3	BA12		56
13. Challenging	1	2	3	BA13		57
14. On your feet	1	2	3	BA14		58
15. Frustrating	1	2	3	BA15		59
16. Simple	1	2	3	BA16		60
17. Endless	1	2	3	BA17		61
18. Gives sense of accomplishment	1	2	3	BA18		62



APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

DO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS / WORDS DESCRIBE YOUR SUPERVISOR?				For office use only		
<i>Supervisor – current or latest supervisor outside the borders of your home country</i>						
1. Asks for my advice	1	2	3	BB1		63
2. Is hard to please	1	2	3	BB2		64
3. Impolite	1	2	3	BB3		65
4. Praises good work	1	2	3	BB4		66
5. Tactful	1	2	3	BB5		67
6. Influential	1	2	3	BB6		68
7. Up-to-date	1	2	3	BB7		69
8. Does not supervise enough	1	2	3	BB8		70
9. Quick-tempered	1	2	3	BB9		71
10. Tells me where I stand	1	2	3	BB10		72
11. Annoying	1	2	3	BB11		73
12. Stubborn	1	2	3	BB12		74
13. Knows his/her job well	1	2	3	BB13		75
14. Bad	1	2	3	BB14		76
15. Intelligent	1	2	3	BB15		78
16. Leaves me on my own	1	2	3	BB16		79
17. Lazy	1	2	3	BB17		80
18. Available when needed	1	2	3	BB18		81

DO THE FOLLOWING WORDS / STATEMENTS DESCRIBE YOUR CO-WORKERS?				For office use only		
<i>Co-workers – current or recent co-workers outside the borders of your home country</i>						
1. Stimulating	1	2	3	BC1		82
2. Boring	1	2	3	BC2		83
3. Slow	1	2	3	BC3		84
4. Ambitious	1	2	3	BC4		85
5. Stupid	1	2	3	BC5		86
6. Responsible	1	2	3	BC6		87
7. Fast	1	2	3	BC7		88
8. Intelligent	1	2	3	BC8		89
9. Easy to make enemies	1	2	3	BC9		90
10. Talk too much	1	2	3	BC10		91
11. Smart	1	2	3	BC11		92
12. Lazy	1	2	3	BC12		93
13. Unpleasant	1	2	3	BC13		94
14. Allow no privacy	1	2	3	BC14		95
15. Active	1	2	3	BC15		96
16. Narrow interests	1	2	3	BC16		97
17. Loyal	1	2	3	BC17		98
18. Hard to satisfy	1	2	3	BC18		99



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DOES THE FOLLING STATEMENT DESCRIBE YOUR POSSIBILITIES FOR PROMOTION?				For office use only		
<i>Promotion opportunities in your current or latest job outside the borders of Your home country</i>						
1. Good chance for advancement	1	2	3	BD1		100
2. Opportunities somewhat limited	1	2	3	BD2		101
3. Promotion on ability	1	2	3	BD3		102
4. Dead-end job	1	2	3	BD4		103
5. Good chance for promotion	1	2	3	BD5		104
6. Unfair promotion policy	1	2	3	BD6		105
7. Infrequent promotions	1	2	3	BD7		106
8. Regular promotions	1	2	3	BD8		107
9. Fairly good chance for promotion	1	2	3	BD9		108

DOES THE FOLLING STATEMENT DESCRIBE YOUR COMPENSATION PACKAGE?				For office use only		
<i>Compensation package – current or latest package for a job outside the borders of your home country</i>						
1. Income inadequate for normal expenses	1	2	3	BE1		109
2. Satisfactory retirement plan	1	2	3	BE2		110
3. Barely live on income	1	2	3	BE3		111
4. Poor package	1	2	3	BE4		112
5. Income provides luxuries	1	2	3	BE5		113
6. Insecure	1	2	3	BE6		114
7. Less than I deserve	1	2	3	BE7		115
8. Highly paid	1	2	3	BE8		116
9. Underpaid	1	2	3	BE9		117

Section C: Organisational commitment

Listed below is a series of statements that represent possible feelings individuals may have about the organisation for which they currently work or worked before on an international assignment. With respect to your own feelings about the particular organisation for which you are now working or worked before, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the fifteen (15) statements below by crossing the number that corresponds with your response:

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 2 = moderately disagree
- 3 = slightly disagree
- 4 = undecided
- 5 = slightly agree
- 6 = moderately agree
- 7 = strongly agree



APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

For each statement, please cross the number that corresponds to your response

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree	For office use only		
1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this organisation be successful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C1		118
2. I talk of this organisation to friends and family as a great organisation to work for.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C2		119
3. I feel very little loyalty towards this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C3		120
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C4		121
5. I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C5		122
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C6		123
7. I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work was similar.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C7		124
8. This organisation really inspires the very best in me where job performance is concerned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C8		125
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C9		126
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for above others I was considering at the time I joined this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C10		127
11. There is not much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C11		128
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C12		129
13. I really care about the fate of this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C13		130
14. For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C14		131
15. Deciding to work for this organisation was a definite mistake on my part.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	C15		132

Section D: Job Involvement

Listed below is a series of statements that represent possible feelings individuals might have about their involvement in their work. With respect to your own feelings about how involved you should be in your work, please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each of the six (6) statements below by crossing the number that corresponds with your response:

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 2 = moderately disagree
- 3 = slightly disagree
- 4 = undecided

APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

- 5 = slightly agree
6 = moderately agree
7 = strongly agree

For each statement, please cross the number that corresponds to your response

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree	For Office use Only		
1. The most important things that happen in life involve work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	D1		133
2. Work is something people should be involved in most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	D2		134
3. Work should only be a small part of one's life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	D3		135
4. Work should be considered central to life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	D4		136
5. In my view, an individual's personal life goals should be work-oriented.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	D5		137
6. Life is worth living only when people get absorbed in work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	D6		138

Section E: Expectations

Listed below is a series of statements that request you to indicate to what extent your expectations with your current situation have been met. With respect to your own feelings about how your expectations have been met, please indicate the degree by crossing the number that corresponds with your response:

- 1 = less than expected
2 = somewhat less than expected
3 = as expected
4 = somewhat more than expected
5 = much more than expected

	Less than expected	Somewhat less than expected	As expected	Somewhat more than expected	Much more than expected	For Office use Only		
1. My immediate supervision has been	1	2	3	4	5	E1		139
2. The kind of work that I do has been	1	2	3	4	5	E2		140
3. The amount of work that I do has been	1	2	3	4	5	E3		141
4. My co-workers have been	1	2	3	4	5	E4		142
5. The physical conditions have been	1	2	3	4	5	E5		143
6. The financial aspects (pay, benefits) have been	1	2	3	4	5	E6		144
7. Matters affecting my career future have been	1	2	3	4	5	E7		145
8. All in all my expectations have been met	1	2	3	4	5	E8		146



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10. Your current job level

Non management		1
First level supervisor		2
Middle management		3
Top management		4
Professional		5

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11. Your highest educational attainment (mark highest level of attainment only)

Secondary school	1	Std 10 or equivalent	2
Post-school certificate/diploma	3	National diploma/ National Higher diploma	4
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	5	Honours degree or equivalent	6
Master's degree or equivalent	7	Doctoral degree or equivalent	8

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12. Your mother tongue is:

Afrikaans	01	South Sotho	07
English	02	Northern Sotho	08
Xhosa	03	Tsonga	09
Venda	04	Tswana	10
Zulu	05	Swazi	11
Ndebele	06	Other (specify)	12

F 12		163-164
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13. How would you classify the dominant nature of your social heritage or culture:

Sotho (Northern, Western, Southern)	01	Arabic	09
Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, Ndebele)	02	Mediterranean	10
Other African	03	Western European	11
Afrikaner	04	Other Asian	12
English	05	North American	13
Jewish	06	Latin American	14
Indian	07	Eastern European	15
Malayan	08	Other (please specify)	16

F13		165-166
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14. What language is predominantly spoken in the country of your foreign assignment?

F1		167
F15		168-169

15. Can you speak the above language?



APPENDIX A: MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENT

16. How many hours do you, on average, work per week?

F16			170-171
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17. Do you regularly work over weekends or during holidays?

Yes 1 No 2

F17			172-173
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18. The number of day's vacation leave that you took last year

F18			174
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19. Do you sometimes think of quitting your job?

Yes 1 No 2

F19			175-176
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20. How often do you think of quitting your job?

F20			177
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21. Did you often (if already back in your home country) or do you think often (if still on a foreign assignment) of returning earlier to your home country than your contract requires?

Yes 1 No 2

F21			178-179
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22. Which aspects made or are making your adjustment to the foreign assignment easier?

F22			180
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23. Which aspects made or are making your adjustment to the foreign assignment difficult?

F23			181
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