

Psychological career meta-capacities in relation to the retention of female academics in a teaching and learning environment¹

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ABSTRACT

This article explored the relationship between self-esteem and job-embeddedness (as a set of psychosocial career meta-capacities) and the satisfaction with retention factors of female employees in a teaching and learning environment. The article further reports on the differences that exist between the psychosocial career meta-capacities and satisfaction with retention factors in terms of the demographic variables of age, race and qualification level as well as whether psychosocial career meta-capacities significantly predict satisfaction with retention factors. The study made use of a simple random sampling method to select a sample consisting of permanently employed females within a teaching and learning environment. Data were collected using the Culture-Free Self-esteem Inventory (CFSEI-2AD), Job-Embeddedness Scale (JES) and Retention-Factor Measurement Scale (RFMS). A quantitative research approach was followed. Correlational analysis revealed several links between the variables of self-esteem, job embeddedness and retention factors. Stepwise Regression Analysis results found that only job embeddedness (as a psychosocial career meta-capacity) significantly and positively predicted satisfaction with retention factors. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests provided partial supportive evidence that differences exist in self-esteem, job-embeddedness and retention factors in terms of the demographic variables (age, race and qualification level). Recommendations are provided in terms of retention strategies to be implemented by human resource professionals, specifically for female employees within a teaching and learning environment.

Keywords: teaching and learning, job embeddedness, self-esteem, psychosocial career meta-capacities, retention

INTRODUCTION

Males and females experience socio-psychological realities differently within the work environment. It is thus expected that they differ significantly with regards to their commitment to the organisation and their intention to stay (Kanwar, Singh & Kodwani, 2012). The challenge in employee retention primarily originates from changes in labour force demographics such as the growing role of females and Generation

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Y employees who has different and diverse personal needs and work values (Idris, 2014; Yamamoto, 2011). Generation Y employees are also referred to as millennials and are those employees born between 1980 and 2004. Several previous studies found that female employees have a much lower retention rate compared to their male counterparts (Hom, Roberson & Ellis, 2008; Marmenout & Lirio, 2014). Numerous studies reported on the under-representation of female employees within higher education institutions (Bailyn, 2003; Fotaki, 2013; Van den Brink, Benschop & Jensen, 2010). Coetzee and Schreuder (2009) noted that inconclusive results have been found with regards to female retention, which add to the existing need to understand the reasons behind female retention as it is evident that a higher risk exists that woman leave their occupations (compared to men), especially in a teaching and learning environment.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The general aim of this research was to firstly determine whether a relationship exists between psychological career meta-capacities (self-esteem and job-embeddedness as independent variables) and retention factors (dependent variable), and secondly to determine whether individuals from different age, race as well as qualification levels differ with regard to these variables. Lastly, this research investigated whether psychological career meta-capacities significantly predict retention of female employees. The aim of this study was to recommend female retention strategies to teaching and learning institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academics are crucial to a nation as they are primarily responsible for educating the future leaders of a country (Coetzee & Rothmann, 2004; Dhanapal et al., 2013). Higher education institutions have an essential role in the generation and development of knowledge to assist in growing, refining and developing future talent and socio-economic development with a country, such as South Africa (Shikha, 2012; Van den Berg, Manias & Burger, 2008). For the purpose of this study, higher tertiary education institutions will represent teaching and learning environments and include further education (which is beyond high school qualifications), specifically at college and university levels.

Teaching and learning institutions in South Africa have become susceptible to losing their knowledgeable employees to more attractive offers (from the private sector or from international teaching and learning institutions) (Ngobeni & Bezuidenhout, 2011). Recognizing the factors that keep employees in their present institution is therefore essential. When employees are satisfied with the retention factors offered by an institution, they are likely to remain with their current organisation (Bhattacharyya, 2015; Jakhar, 2015; Michaels, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod, 2001; Takawira, Coetzee & Schreuder, 2014).

Psychosocial career meta-capacities

Savickas and Porfeli (2012) found that employees who have a variety of psychological career resources are more adaptable to changes in the workplace and are more likely to be committed to their organisation. With the current Covid-19 pandemic it is inevitable that several changes will occur in the workplace. Teaching and learning institutions had to adapt from traditional face-to-face classroom teaching to online teaching. It is thus even more crucial for organisations, specifically teaching and learning institutions to implement retention strategies to enhance the commitment of employees to their organisations. Organisational commitment has a direct influence on employee retention (Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019; Coetzee, Ferreira & Potgieter, 2019). In the current world of work, defined by fast technological and unpredictable changes, retention is influenced by the self-regulation capacities and psychological coping resources of employees (Bezuidenhout, 2010; Ferreira, 2009; Savickas, 2011; Savickas & Porfeli, 2012).

Ferreira (2012) defined career meta-capacities as a set of psychological career resources that individuals hold. In-depth and comprehensive literature reviews found that limited research is available on the

influence of psychological career meta-capacities on the retention of employees. This study focusses on the constructs of self-esteem and job embeddedness (as psychological career meta-capacities) and their possible link with retention.

Self-esteem is defined as a person's general perception of and feelings about their own worth (Battle, 1992). This study made use of the model of Battle (1992) who categorised self-esteem as a multidimensional concept within the work context. His multidimensional dimension of self-esteem includes: general self-esteem (referring to an individuals' overall perceptions and feelings about their own self-worth), social self-esteem (referring to an individuals' feelings about the quality of their relationship with others) and personal self-esteem (referring to an individuals' perception about themselves).

According to Potgieter, Coetzee and Ferreira (2018), job-embeddedness relates to an individuals' non-affective and collective reasons why they would choose to stay within their job or organisation. Mitchell, Holtom and Lee (2001) defined job-embeddedness as a multidimensional construct, and divided it into two divisions, including 'on the job' and 'off the job'. This study made use of the model of Mitchell et al. (2001) to explore, explain and measure the concept of job-embeddedness. Job-embeddedness is associated with how well an employee feels he or she fits into the organisation and thus relates to the psychological attachment an employee has to the job characteristics and working conditions of his or her job or organisation (Potgieter et al., 2018). Mitchell et al. (2001) categorised job-embeddedness into three different scales, which are: fit, links and sacrifice. *Fit* relates to how well an employee believes he or she fits in within their current job, organisation or the community within they work (Holmes, Chapman & Baghurst, 2013). *Links* are the perceived interpersonal connections that employees have (for both on and off the job). This may be connections or links with other people or with groups. If an employee feels connected (and thus have a higher sense of links to other people or groups), he or she is likely to be more committed to the organisation. *Sacrifice* lastly refers to the benefits employees believe they will have to sacrifice if they leave the organisation, job or community (Porter, Woo & Campion, 2016).

Retention factors

Employee retention is the attempt of the organisation to keep their knowledgeable and valuable employees to meet business objectives and contribute to organisational performance, competitive advantage and success (Jakhar, 2015; Netswera, Rankhumise & Mavundla, 2005, Potgieter et al., 2018). Retention factors are those elements that influence an employees' decision to either stay or leave their current organisation (Döckel, 2003). According to Burton et al. (2010), the more satisfied an employee is with the retention factors of the organisation, the more likely he or she is to stay with the organisation. Döckel (2003) also found that organisations are increasingly realising the importance of employee satisfaction with the organisational retention factors. For the purpose of this research, the retention factors identified within a South African work context by Döckel (2003) were used. These factors include compensation (remuneration packages, including benefits, base salaries, increases, etc), job characteristics (constructive features of the job), training and development opportunities (training opportunities such as workshops, seminars, etc), supervisor support (such as the support, recognition and feedback from supervisors/line managers), career opportunities (internal opportunities such as promotion and external opportunities such as moving to another organisation) and work-life balance (the ability to meet both work and family responsibilities).

Literature revealed that there has been a global trend of teaching and learning employees leaving their respective institutions (Theron, Barkhuizen & Du Plessis, 2014). Due to the high direct and indirect costs involved when losing valuable and knowledgeable employees, it is imperative that organisations recognise the factors that impact on the retention of employees. To date, no previous research was found on these constructs, especially within a teaching and learning environment in South Africa. Against this

background, the article extends the research on retention of female employees within a teaching and learning environment by reporting on the relationship found between psychological career meta-capacities and retention factors.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research approach

The research made use of a cross-sectional quantitative approach. Data were collected using a non-probability convenience sampling technique.

Research participants

A non-probability convenience sample ($N = 244$) of part-time and full-time employed female employees within a teaching and learning institution participated in this study. They were predominantly white (75%) employees in their early career stages (43%; 26 – 40 years). Almost half of these participants (47%) completed their PhD studies.

Measuring instruments

Permission from the developers of the questionnaire were obtained prior to conducting this study.

Culture-free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI-2AD)

The self-esteem of participants was measured using the Culture-free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI2-AD) developed by Battle (1992). This instrument was specifically designed to assess the self-esteem construct of adults within a valid and reliable manner. The CFSEI-2AD is a self-rated instrument, containing 44 items and three subscales. The subscales include general self-esteem (example item: 'I am happy most of the time'), social self-esteem (example item: 'I like everyone I know') and personal self-esteem (example item: 'I am usually tense or anxious'). The instrument was scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale where 1 equals strongly disagree, and 6 equals strongly agree. Several previous studies confirmed the validity and reliability of the CFSEI2-AD (Battle, 1992; Coetzee, 2005; Potgieter, 2012). The reported reliability indices for the CFSEI2-AD ranged from .79 to .92. The overall reliability coefficient obtained from the CFSEI 2-AD in this study was .82. For the subscales of self-esteem in this study, the internal consistency reliability coefficients ranged between .64 (social self-esteem) and .87 (general self-esteem).

Job embeddedness scale (JES)

To measure the job embeddedness of the participants, the Job Embeddedness Scale (JES) developed by Mitchell et al. (2001) was used. This scale was chosen as it was proven to be valid and reliable for use within a South African context. The JES is a self-rated, multi-factorial measuring instrument and contains 17 items and 3 subscales: fit (7 items, for example 'I fit with the company's culture'), links (6 items, for example 'My co-workers are similar to me') and sacrifice (10 items, for example 'I would sacrifice a lot if I left this job'). This instrument was scored on a six-point Likert-type scale, where 1 equals strongly disagree, and 6 equals strongly agree. Several previous confirmed the validity and reliability of the JES. In terms of reliability (internal consistency) in this study, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient obtained for job embeddedness ranged from .83 (Links) to .92 (overall job embeddedness).

Retention Factor Measurement Scale (RFMS)

The level of satisfaction respondents has with retention factors was measured using the Retention Factor Measurement Scale (RFMS) developed by Döckel (2003). The RFMS (Döckel, 2003) is a multi-dimensional, self-rated measurement which consist of 42 items and 6 subscales. The subscales include compensation (example item: 'The number of benefits I receive'), job characteristics (example item: 'The job is quite simple and repetitive'), training and development opportunities (example item: 'I can apply the training I receive

in this organisation'), supervisor support (example item: 'I feel undervalued by my supervisor'), career opportunities (example item: 'My chances of being promoted are good'), and work-life balance (example item: 'I often feel that there is too much work to do'). The instrument is scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale where 1 equals strongly disagree and 6 equals strongly agree. Several previous studies confirmed the validity and reliability of the RFMS (Dockel et al., 2006; Van Dyk, Coetzee & Tebele, 2013). The internal consistency reliability coefficients of scores from the subscales (compensation, job characteristics, training and development opportunities, supervisor support, career opportunities and work life balance) ranged between .53 (supervisor support) and .97 (compensation).

Research procedure

An online survey was conducted amongst permanently employed female staff at a teaching and learning institution in South Africa. The researcher invited participants to partake in the study on a voluntary basis. The online survey included a participation information sheet, and it was assumed that the participants consented to partake in the study if they chose to continue with the survey after reading the information sheet. The privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of all the participants were ensured and honoured during the whole research process. Ethical clearance and permission to conduct the research were obtained from the management of the university.

Statistical analysis

In order to achieve the objectives of this research study, descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations and Cronbach alpha coefficients), correlation analysis, stepwise regression analysis and Kruskal Wallis tests were conducted. The significance value for the interpretation of the results were set at $p \leq 0.05$ (95% confidence level) to make provision for the elimination of the probability of Type 1 error. Furthermore, the threshold value for multicollinearity concerns were set at r greater than .90 (Hair et al., 2010). The guidelines of Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) were followed to indicate multicollinearity in the multiple regression analysis. Tolerance values were therefore set at $\leq .10$.

Several research studies indicated that demographical variables significantly influence retention. The demographical variables of age, race and qualification level were therefore included as control variables.

RESULTS

Descriptive and correlations

As shown in Table 1, the reliability coefficients reported acceptable internal consistency reliability of the three overall scales. The overall reliability coefficients of all scales scored high, with RFMS ($\alpha = .91$), JES ($\alpha = .92$) and CFSEI-2AD ($\alpha = .82$). These coefficients showed strong overall internal consistency for the three subscales.

Table 1
Internal consistency Reliability: CFSEI-2AD, JES, and RFMS

Subscale	Mean	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Self-Esteem (CFSEI-2AD)	4.35	-.86	1.23	.82	40
Job Embeddedness (JES)	4.35	-.66	-.10	.92	23
Retention factors (RFMS)	3.92	-.26	.23	.91	34

In terms of the objective of determining the relationship between the variables of self-esteem, job embeddedness and satisfaction with retention factors, the CFSEI-2AD, JES and RFMS variables (as shown in Table 2) show that the links were all significant and positive, ranging between $.16 \leq r \leq .93$ (small to large practical effect, $.05 \leq p \leq .001$). It was, however, interesting to note that no significant association were found between work/life balance and any of the self-esteem or job-embeddedness variables. It was expected that multicollinearity would not be a problem, as the Pearson product-moment coefficients revealed a small to large practical effect (the highest value being .93), and this is just above the level of concern for multicollinearity ($r \geq .90$) to be present (Hair et al., 2010).

The results of the bivariate correlation analyses revealed supportive evidence that a significant relationship exist between self-esteem (CFSEI-2AD), job embeddedness (JES) and retention factors (RFMS) as manifested in the sample of female respondents within a teaching and learning environment.

Table 2
Correlations: CFSEI-2AD, JES, and RFMS

Variables	General SE	Social SE	Personal SE	Overall CFSEI-2AD	Fit	Links	Sacrifice	Overall JES	Compensation	T&D opp	Sup. supp	Career opp.	Work/Life	Overall RFMS
General SE	1.000													
Social SE	.58***	1.000												
Personal SE	.74**	.48**	1.000											
Overall CFSEI-2AD	-	-	-	1.000										
Fit	.45**	.38**	.38**	-	1.000									
Links	.27**	.21**	.24**	-	.64*	1.000								
Sacrifice	.22**	.19**	.18*	-	.60*	.93**	1.000							
Overall JES	-	-	-	.32**	-	-	-	1.000						
Compensation	.16*	.16*	.18*	-	.39*	.80**	.76*	-	1.000					
T&D opportunities	.17*	.18*	.28**	-	.44*	.50**	.52*	-	.44**	1.000				
Supervisor support	.17*	.13	.22**	-	.33*	.40**	.41*	-	.36**	.35**	1.000			
Career opportunities	.17*	.15*	.31**	-	.43*	.62**	.59*	-	.52**	.45**	.30**	1.000		
Work-life balance	.11	.04	.05	-	-.01	-.06	-.06	-	-.11	-.10	-.11	-.14	1.000	
Overall RFMS	-	-	-	.24**	-	-	-	.76**	-	-	-	-	-	1.000

Notes: N = 195 *** $p \leq .001$; ** $p \leq .01$; * $p \leq .05$. $r \leq .30$ (small practical effect size), $r \geq .30 \leq .49$ (medium practical effect size), $r \geq .50$ (large practical effect size)

Stepwise regression analysis

Stepwise regression analysis was performed using the demographic variables (age, race and qualification level), and the overall self-esteem construct and the overall job-embeddedness construct as the independent variables, and the continuous retention-factors construct as the dependent variable.

According to the results obtained, the regression model was significant ($F = 58.23$; $p = .000$; $R^2 = .56$; $\Delta R^2 = .55$; $\Delta F = 55.92$). The adjusted R^2 value of .55 indicated that the model predicted approximately 55% (medium practical effect) of the variance in the dependent variable (retention factors). Table 3 shows that JES significantly ($\beta = .76$; $p \leq .000$), explains the variance of retention factors. The collinearity statistics revealed that the tolerance values of all constructs were all almost 1 and the variance inflation factor (VIF) was less than 2.5 (suggesting slight or no multicollinearity concerns).

Table 3

Results of the Stepwise Regression Analysis: Demographic Variables and CFSEI-2AD and JES Variables as Independent Variables and RFMS as Dependent Variable

Model variables	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B.	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.55	.35		4.34	.000***		
Age	.13	.11	.06	1.22	.22	.95	1.04
Education	.08	0.08	0.5	1.04	.30	.94	1.06
CFSEI-2AD	-.05	.08	-.03	-.61	.55	.88	1.13
JES	.59	.04	.76	14.45	.000***	.87	1.1.12

Notes: N = 195; *** $p \leq .001$; ** $p \leq .01$; * $p \leq .05$.

The results revealed that only job embeddedness significantly and positively predict satisfaction with retention factors. According to the results, demographic variables and self-esteem did not significantly predict satisfaction with retention factors. However, the demographic variables, self-esteem and job embeddedness jointly explain the variation in retention factors as the regression model was significant ($p < .000$).

Tests for significant mean differences

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test scores for age (Table 4) indicated that there was statistically significant difference between the different age groups and general self-esteem ($p \leq .05$), personal self-esteem ($p \leq .01$), and overall self-esteem ($p \leq .01$). A significant difference was only found between age groups and fit ($p \leq .01$) (job embeddedness scale) as well as age groups and training and development opportunities ($p \leq .01$) (retention factor scale). It thus seems significant differences were found between most of the self-esteem variables and only some of the job-embeddedness and retention factor variables.

Table 4
Kruskal-Wallis Test Scores for Age (N = 195)

Variable	Age	N	Mean Rank (SD)	Chi-Square	df	p
General SE	25 and younger	8	111.50	8.30	3	.04*
	26-40 Years	92	85.70			
	41-55 Years	69	109.01			
	56 and older	26	109.13			
Social SE	25 and younger	8	89.69	5.38	3	.15
	26-40 Years	92	89.09			
	41-55 Years	69	105.40			
	56 and older	26	112.46			
Personal SE	25 and younger	8	101.81	11.53	3	.01**
	26-40 Years	91	85.14			
	41-55 Years	69	102.78			
	56 and older	26	125.42			
Lie Items	25 and younger	8	98.25	4.85	3	.18
	26-40 Years	91	105.07			
	41-55 Years	69	94.62			
	56 and older	26	78.42			
Overall CFSEI-2AD	25 and younger	8	106.13	10.23	3	.02**
	26-40 Years	91	84.48			
	41-55 Years	69	108.89			
	56 and older	26	114.44			
Fit	25 and younger	8	107.94	10.34	3	.02**
	26-40 Years	91	83.40			
	41-55 Years	69	108.23			
	56 and older	26	112.02			
Links	25 and younger	8	109.63	2.17	3	.54
	26-40 Years	91	91.67			
	41-55 Years	69	103.34			
	56 and older	26	94.86			
Sacrifice	25 and younger	8	114.63	1.77	3	.62
	26-40 Years	91	91.63			
	41-55 Years	69	99.67			
	56 and older	26	95.48			

Variable	Age	N	Mean Rank (SD)	Chi-Square	df	p
Overall JES	25 and younger	8	109.63	3.34	3	.34
	26-40 Years	91	89.36			
	41-55 Years	69	103.86			
	56 and older	26	101.82			
Compensation	25 and younger	8	116.13	1.95	3	.58
	26-40 Years	91	92.58			
	41-55 Years	69	95.16			
	56 and older	26	104.04			
T&D opportunities	25 and younger	8	108.44	10.10	3	.02**
	26-40 Years	91	80.53			
	41-55 Years	69	95.61			
	56 and older	26	115.74			
Supervisor support	25 and younger	8	117.75	5.29	3	.15
	26-40 Years	91	83.17			
	41-55 Years	69	95.41			
	56 and older	26	100.94			
Career opportunities	25 and younger	8	112.13	2.96	3	.40
	26-40 Years	91	85.98			
	41-55 Years	69	92.53			
	56 and older	26	100.78			
Work-life balance	25 and younger	8	56.75	4.24	3	.24
	26-40 Years	91	91.53			
	41-55 Years	69	96.13			
	56 and older	26	87.04			
Total RFMS	25 and younger	8	116.19	4.36	3	.23
	26-40 Years	91	88.54			
	41-55 Years	69	98.26			
	56 and older	26	109.80			

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test scores for race (Table 5) indicate that there was no statistically significant difference between the different race groups (Black, Coloured, Indian and White) and self-esteem or retention factors. The only significant differences were found in job-embeddedness. A significant difference was found between race and Links ($p \leq .01$) and Sacrifice ($p \leq .05$).

Table 5
Kruskal-Wallis Test Scores for Race (N = 195)

Variable	Race	N	Mean Rank (SD)	Chi-Square	df	p
General SE	African	24	87.46	2.98	3	.40
	Coloured	2	131.75			
	Indian	3	61.50			
	White	166	99.78			
Social SE	African	24	69.42	7.10	3	.10
	Coloured	2	103.00			
	Indian	3	107.67			
	White	166	101.90			
Personal SE	African	24	121.15	5.88	3	.12
	Coloured	2	118.50			
	Indian	3	68.50			
	White	166	94.33			
Lie Items	African	24	105.29	1.30	3	.73
	Coloured	2	75.25			
	Indian	3	118.83			
	White	166	96.25			
Overall CFSEI-2AD	African	24	95.94	1.07	3	.79
	Coloured	2	114.25			
	Indian	3	68.00			
	White	166	98.64			
Fit	African	24	82.75	4.72	3	.19
	Coloured	2	83.00			
	Indian	3	46.17			
	White	166	100.19			
Links	African	24	72.96	9.44	3	.02**
	Coloured	2	28.25			
	Indian	3	70.00			
	White	166	101.85			
Sacrifice	African	24	73.09	7.86	3	.05*
	Coloured	2	41.00			
	Indian	3	62.83			
	White	166	100.35			

Variable	Race	N	Mean Rank (SD)	Chi-Square	df	p
Overall JES	African	24	75.46	7.33	3	.06
	Coloured	2	55.00			
	Indian	3	56.17			
	White	166	101.41			
Compensation	African	24	69.02	7.10	3	.07
	Coloured	2	83.00			
	Indian	3	68.33			
	White	166	100.28			
T&D opportunities	African	24	107.79	3.51	3	.32
	Coloured	2	129.25			
	Indian	3	69.75			
	White	166	89.71			
Supervisor support	African	24	96.29	2.15	3	.54
	Coloured	2	45.50			
	Indian	3	115.75			
	White	166	91.14			
Career opportunities	African	24	113.64	6.71	3	.08
	Coloured	2	30.25			
	Indian	3	88.50			
	White	166	89.36			
Work-life balance	African	24	80.40	2.11	3	.55
	Coloured	2	55.25			
	Indian	3	104.00			
	White	166	92.72			
Total RFMS	African	24	82.20	3.29	3	.35
	Coloured	2	65.75			
	Indian	3	65.67			
	White	166	98.77			

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test scores for qualification level (Table 6) indicate that there was no statistically significant difference between qualification level and self-esteem. Statistically significant differences were found between qualification level and Links ($p \leq .05$), Sacrifice ($p \leq .05$) and overall job-embeddedness ($p \leq .01$). A statistically significant difference was also found between qualification level and work/life balance ($p \leq .01$).

Table 6
Kruskal-Wallis Test Scores for Qualification Level (N = 195)

Variable	Qualification	N	Mean Rank (SD)	Chi-Square	df	p
General SE	Honours	17	91.76	2.03	3	.57
	Masters	74	100.55			
	PhD	100	95.79			
	Under Grad	4	132.75			
Social SE	Honours	17	93.15	1.80	3	.61
	Masters	74	95.70			
	PhD	100	99.14			
	Under Grad	4	132.63			
Personal SE	Honours	17	84.38	1.57	3	.67
	Masters	74	100.73			
	PhD	100	96.65			
	Under Grad	4	114.63			
Lie Items	Honours	17	104.59	2.44	3	.49
	Masters	74	93.09			
	PhD	100	100.90			
	Under Grad	4	64.88			
Overall CFSEI-2AD	Honours	17	88.06	1.59	3	.66
	Masters	74	98.65			
	PhD	100	98.05			
	Under Grad	4	127.00			
Fit	Honours	17	102.71	5.67	3	.14
	Masters	74	87.44			
	PhD	100	101.39			
	Under Grad	4	142.00			
Links	Honours	17	113.32	7.97	3	.05*
	Masters	74	83.93			
	PhD	100	102.67			
	Under Grad	4	130.50			
Sacrifice	Honours	17	109.31	8.07	3	.05*
	Masters	74	83.64			
	PhD	100	101.44			
	Under Grad	4	139.63			

Variable	Qualification	N	Mean Rank (SD)	Chi-Square	df	p
Overall JES	Honours	17	111.71	9.10	3	.03**
	Masters	74	84.01			
	PhD	100	102.27			
	Under Grad	4	145.75			
Compensation	Honours	17	108.00	2.85	3	.42
	Masters	74	89.97			
	PhD	100	97.40			
	Under Grad	4	125.63			
T&D opportunities	Honours	17	88.00	1.50	3	.68
	Masters	74	87.79			
	PhD	100	94.94			
	Under Grad	4	117.17			
Supervisor support	Honours	17	110.59	2.64	3	.45
	Masters	74	87.16			
	PhD	100	91.22			
	Under Grad	4	98.33			
Career opportunities	Honours	17	117.56	4.32	3	.23
	Masters	74	88.92			
	PhD	100	89.13			
	Under Grad	4	86.17			
Work-life balance	Honours	17	47.50	12.57	3	.01*
	Masters	74	92.63			
	PhD	100	97.13			
	Under Grad	4	94.00			
Total RFMS	Honours	17	103.03	2.35	3	.50
	Masters	74	89.91			
	PhD	100	98.34			
	Under Grad	4	123.88			

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

For the purpose of this discussion, the teaching and learning institution will refer to the organisation for which the participants work. Individuals with high self-esteem (general, social and personal) may feel more embedded in their jobs and within the organisation (Potgieter & Ferreira, 2018). High self-esteem individuals are more likely to control their emotions and are more likely to connect with others in the

organisation and therefore experience a stronger connection with the organisation. Individuals that feel more embedded in their organisation may therefore prefer to remain with the organisation. The empirical results confirm that individuals who experience a good fit, or feelings of compatibility with the organisation are more likely to stay with the organisation (Potgieter & Ferreira, 2018). Similarly, individuals with positive highly developed self-esteem may experience stronger links as well as a higher sense of sacrifice (although not as high as fit) leading to these individuals being more embedded in their organisations. This leads to employees choosing to remain with the organisation and therefore higher retention of valued employees for the organisation.

Individuals that possess high (general, social and personal) self-esteem are likely to experience high levels of satisfaction with the retention factors of the organisations (Potgieter & Snyman, 2018). The findings of this study suggest that individuals prefer competitive compensation structures within organisations. Moreover, individuals value an organisation that provides training and development opportunities. Therefore, competitive compensation structures and training and development opportunities may result in an increase of individual self-esteem. Similarly, organisations that provide career opportunities to employees may contribute to higher self-esteem in individuals (general, social and personal). In particular, the results of the study indicate that, providing career opportunities may result in an increase in personal self-esteem or self-worth. A possible reason for this increase in personal self-esteem may be that career opportunities can be regarded a personal goal. Therefore, where organisations provide career opportunities for their employees, it seems logical that this may lead to an increase in individual self-worth. In this manner, organisations that provide career opportunities for their valued employees have a positive influence on retention. According to the results, work-life balance had no impact or showed no significant difference in terms of level of self-esteem. Therefore, a flexible work-life balance appears not to affect individuals' level of self-esteem. This finding contradicts the majority of studies that do find that providing adequate work-life balance for employees leads to an increase in self-esteem.

Individuals that are embedded in the organisation are more likely to have a higher intention to stay with their organisation. In this manner, it can be assumed that individuals that experience high embeddedness contribute to improved retention for organisations. In particular, this study found that participants who are provided with career opportunities (a retention factor) may experience higher levels of embeddedness in their current organisations. This relationship (job-embeddedness and career opportunities) might be understood in terms of the importance of career opportunities for an individual (career opportunities are linked to personal self-esteem, which can be understood as a personal level of self-worth as indicated in the results). Therefore, in an instance that an organisation does provide career opportunities, it results in increased job-embeddedness. This increased job-embeddedness may lead to better organisational retention. Moreover, the results indicate that work-life balance showed no significant difference in terms of level of job-embeddedness. In this manner, whether an organisation provides work-life balance is unrelated to individuals' level of job-embeddedness. This is in contradiction to a variety of recent studies that have found a significant relationship between job-embeddedness and work-life balance (Afsar & Rehman, 2017; Cowart et al., 2014).

Individual demographic variables (age and qualification level) and self-esteem (general, personal and peer) do not appear to affect company retention factors. However, the results indicate that age, qualification level, self-esteem and job-embeddedness jointly do explain the variation in retention factors. This result suggests that organisations should focus on employee demographics, in particular in terms of their self-esteem and job-embeddedness conjointly as a means of retaining talented employees. Moreover, the empirical study revealed that high job-embeddedness may lead to individual satisfaction with retention factors.

The results indicate that individuals of different age groups differ in terms of their level of general, personal and overall self-esteem. This is in line with recent research that found that people of different age groups experience different levels of self-esteem. Self-esteem increases from adolescence to middle adulthood, peaks at around age 50-60 years, then declines into old age (Orth & Robins, 2014). Moreover, the results suggest that organisations should note that individuals of different age groups differ in terms of their level of the 'fit' they experience with their organisation. As such, individuals of different ages differ in terms of their level of compatibility experienced with their current organisation.

Moreover, the results suggest that different age groups are not affected by retention factors. The results suggest that individuals of different race groups (Black, Coloured, Indian and White) experience no differences in self-esteem (personal, peer and general). Similarly, different race groups do not appear to be affected by retention factors. However, individuals of different races (Black, Coloured, Indian and White) seem to differ in terms of their perception of how embedded they are in their current organisation. In particular, the results indicate different race groups' experiences of the number or quality of links or connections they have in their current organisations. Moreover, race groups also differ in terms of their experience of what they perceive they will have to sacrifice, once choosing to leave the current organisation. In this manner, individual perceptions of stronger links and what will be sacrificed if an individual decided to leave the organisation, allow for these individuals to be more embedded within their current organisation, and therefore support employee retention.

It appears that individuals that have different qualification levels (Honours, Masters, PhD and Undergrad) do not differ in terms of their level of self-esteem. The level of self-esteem (high or low) is not affected by an individual's qualification level and vice versa. However, this research suggests that individuals' level of job-embeddedness is affected by their qualification level. Therefore, an individual's qualification level affects their degree of embeddedness within his or her current organisation. In particular, the higher the individual's qualification level, the more connections (links) the individual has with his or her current organisation. Moreover, higher qualified individuals may also experience a higher sense of sacrifice, in terms of what they would consider they would have to give up if they left the current organisation. Thus, an increased level of embeddedness experienced by higher qualified individuals may lead to improved organisational retention. Moreover, the results indicate that individuals with higher qualification levels may value work flexibility more than those with lower qualification levels.

CONCLUSIONS

The research has contributed to an empirically tested psychological career profile that may be used to inform retention practices within a teaching and learning environment, specifically for female employees. Significant relationships were found between the variables, self-esteem and job-embeddedness, in particular, the sub-variable fit. Moreover, a positive relationship exists between self-esteem and retention factors, especially, compensation, training and development and supervisor support. The empirical research also indicated a positive relationship between job-embeddedness and retention factors. In particular, fit showed significant positive relationships with all the retention factor variables except for work-life balance. Moreover, it was found that high-job-embeddedness was linked with compensation, training and development, and career opportunities, in particular in terms of links and sacrifice. Human resource practitioners within teaching and learning institutions should thus take note of these findings when designing and implementing retention strategies for female academics.

The consequences of possible future research could include raising mindfulness of the fact that employees in the workplace have different levels of self-esteem, they also experience different levels of job-embeddedness, and these constructs influence employee retention. Moreover, employees differ in terms of their age, race and qualification levels and these variables influence an employee's level of self-esteem

and embeddedness. Organisations need to be aware that every individual needs to be treated in a way that is suitable to him or her as a means to promote self-esteem and employee job-embeddedness, which will culminate in employee satisfaction with retention factors, resulting in retention of valuable employees. This study also highlights the possibility of the importance of compensation, career development and career opportunities and retention practices.

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