

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION,
SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS
AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF IN SELECTED HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS.**

Ms Musawenkosi B. Sibanda
Department of Organisational Psychology:
University of Cape Town
E-mail: SibandaM@uct.ac.za

Mrs Martha Harunavamwe
Economic and Management Sciences
University of Free State, Faculty
E-mail: harunavamweM@ufs.ac.za

Mr Trust Kabungaidze
Rhodes University,
E-mail: t.kabungaidze@ru.ac.za

Higher education institutions are experiencing huge turnover challenges globally with Australia predicting about 20 000 academic staff shortage in the next decade if the retention crisis is not resolved (Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge, 2012). Consistent with that, South Africa is also experiencing high turnover rates among academics in institutions of higher learning. Owing to this turnover crisis, experts in the area indicated that, establishing job satisfaction factors considered important by academic staff and determining their relationship with turnover intentions is one great step towards strategising ways to curb actual turnover. Contrary to that, most of the research results in the area suggest a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions, however, without further inquiry the same cannot be generalised to academic staff in higher learning institutions. Job satisfaction together with some demographic variables such as age, length of service, and education level have been associated with turnover intentions but the results have been inconclusive. The current study sought to establish conclusive results on the relationship between job satisfaction, selected demographic variables and turnover intentions among academic staff in higher education institutions. The assessed demographic variables were age, gender, tenure and position, these four variables were chosen because in a recent study by Agyeman and Ponniah (2014) they were discovered to have stable relationship with retention and turnover intentions in India hence they have an influence on employee retention strategies. Using a quantitative research approach this study purposively sampled 74 academics (65% females) in selected universities in Eastern Cape South Africa. Through an online survey, data was collected using a Minnesota satisfaction scale and turnover intention scale which had an acceptable overall reliability score measured by Cronbach Alpha, ($\alpha = 0.85$). To assess differences in turnover intentions with regards to gender T-tests were applied. To assess differences in turnover intentions with regards to age, position and tenure, one way ANOVA was utilised. To ascertain the relationship between job satisfaction, demographic variables and turnover, Pearson correlations were used and results indicate a significant negative relationship between turnover intention and job satisfaction ($r = -0.45$; $p = 0.000$), negative relationship between tenure and turnover intentions ($r = -.246$; $p = .035$) and a negative relationship between position and turnover intentions ($r = -.119$, $p = .034$). Gender and turnover intentions are not significantly related. In light of the above job satisfaction, position and tenure have negative relationship with turnover intentions. Generally the academics were found to inhibit high turnover intentions. The study recommend that higher education institutions should give competitive rewards to good performers based on student results or number of research outputs regardless of age, position or tenure to motivate and boost the self-esteem of academics and lower turnover intentions.