



# **Investigating transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention at a South African university**

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## **DECLARATION**

This study selected the structure of an article format. As the researcher, Beandré du Toit, assisted to conceptualise the research approach as well as the design of the study. She completed the literature review, performed data collection, and interpreted the statistical findings of the analysis. Finally, she wrote all the chapters in this mini-dissertation. Prof Leon Jackson was the supervisor who assisted with the conceptualisation and design of the study, aided the statistical analysis and data interpretation. He is the co-author of the article this research produced.

I, Beandré du Toit (53140648), hereby declare that the product “Investigating transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention at a South African university” is my own work. This mini-dissertation was not submitted previously for examination at another university. All academic sources used for this research project are included as in-text references, and each chapter has a its own reference list.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Title: Investigating transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention at a South African university

South African institutions of higher learning face challenges with declined job satisfaction and increased employee turnover rates. These challenges potentially stem from leadership practices that fail to address employee needs. This study aimed to investigate the relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention among support staff at an institution of higher learning in the North-West Province located in South Africa.

This research achieved its objectives through a quantitative, cross-sectional design, with non-probability convenience sampling (n=160). The measuring instruments employed were the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, Affective Commitment Scale, and Intention to Quit Scale. Further, the statistical analysis of data guided the exploratory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and mediation analyses.

The findings revealed positive correlations between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and affective commitment, with a negative correlation to turnover intention. The regression analysis showed that transformational leadership dimensions explained a substantial portion of the variance in job satisfaction. Affective commitment was a significant predictor of reduced turnover intention. Finally, job satisfaction and affective commitment mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. While affective commitment acted as a mediator between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

These findings underscore the importance of developing transformational leadership capabilities among supervisors in institutions of higher learning. This can be used as a strategic approach to improve job satisfaction, commitment, and ultimately reduce costly employee turnover.

**Keywords:** Affective organisational commitment, higher education, job satisfaction, support staff, transformational leadership, turnover intention

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	Affective Commitment Scale
AOC	Affective Organisational Commitment
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EJS	Extrinsic Job Satisfaction
EMS-REC	Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee
FAOG	Fostering Acceptance of Group Goals
HPE	High-Performance Expectations
IC	Individual Consideration
IHL	Institution of Higher Learning
IJS	Intrinsic Job Satisfaction
IS	Intellectual Stimulation
ITQ	Intention to Quit
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
MLQ	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
MSQ	Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire
NWU	North-West University
OCB	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
PAM	Providing an Appropriate Model
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
SET	Social Exchange Theory
TI	Turnover Intention
TL	Transformational Leadership
TLB	Transformational Leadership Behaviour Scale
TLQ	Transformational Leadership Questionnaire
VA	Vision Articulation

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# **CHAPTER 1      NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This study aims to investigate the correlation between transformational leadership and selected employee attitudes of job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment (also referred to as affective commitment), and turnover intention. This study will also investigate the mediating role of job satisfaction and affective commitment between the relationship of transformational leadership and turnover intention. Further, it investigates the mediating role of affective commitment in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. It focusses on the support staff of an Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) in the North-West Province.

This chapter presents a background to the study and the problem statement, followed by the research questions, aim and objectives. After this, the scope of the study and an outline of the research methodology is presented through the research onion of Saunders *et al.* (2023:131). Next, the discussion explains the population, sample, measuring instruments, and statistical analysis methods. Finally, this section addresses the ethical concerns and limitations associated with this study.

## **1.2 Background to the study**

Leadership serves as a crucial foundation for organisational success. The concept of leadership is multifaceted and challenging to define. However, according to Storey *et al.* (2016:1), leadership involves (i) guiding teams, (ii) instigating change through inspiration, and (iii) fostering the growth of team members to reach their full potential. Additionally, Northouse (2021:5) describes leadership as: “the process where an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”. However, leadership remains a complex concept that consists of various dynamic components that are dependent on individual actions and the subjective impact on human behaviour (Alblooshi *et al.*, 2021:341). Ultimately, leadership revolves around the ability to influence, inspire, and motivate a team to achieve shared goals and align with shared values (Kouzes & Posner, 2024:11). This means that managers are appointed to optimise team performance toward the objectives and purpose of the company.

Over time, various leadership theories have been proposed and developed. However, it is essential to understand the link between leadership and job satisfaction to improve employee performance and increase employee retention within organisations (Choi *et al.*, 2025:623; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:653). The literature shows the importance of transformational leadership to achieve organisational success, commitment, and job satisfaction (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1898; Naidoo & Mafora, 2023:154; Othman & Khrais, 2022:304).

It is critical to adopt effective leadership strategies that value the importance of employees in a company. One potential action could be to introduce leadership development programmes tailored to the IHLs in South Africa (Bakker, Hetland, *et al.*, 2023:707; Yusup & Maulani, 2023:798). Additionally, Grocutt *et al.* (2022:404); Oronje *et al.* (2022:1) argue that mentorship initiatives can facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills from experienced to emerging leaders within the organisation. These strategies can help managers develop a better awareness of the crucial role that their leadership plays to (i) influence organisational success, (ii) enhance job satisfaction, (iii) reduce turnover intention, and (iv) drive the overall performance of a team. Therefore, this study will investigate the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions. The study will investigate the mediation effect of affective commitment and job satisfaction between the relationship of transformational leadership and turnover intention. Finally, it will look at the role of affective commitment as a mediator between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

### **1.3 Definition of terms**

#### **Transformational Leadership**

This theory emphasises the influence and inspiration exerted by leaders on their followers, which highlights the psychological impact leaders have on their followers (Antonakis & House, 2014:751). With this approach, the leader encourages the follower to realise how their work is essential and related to the goals and values of the company (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1895). These leaders are charismatic, visionary, and create a sense of purpose among the team to achieve a common goal (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1895).

## **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction, also referred to as employee satisfaction, is explained as an expression of positive employee attitudes toward their employment and daily tasks (Belias *et al.*, 2022:2). This is influenced by multiple factors like teamwork, career advancement opportunities, job complexity, the broader societal implications and the influence of their work (Armstrong, 2006:264; Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:3).

## **Affective Organisational Commitment**

Organisational commitment is the emotional bond that employees may develop toward their organisations (Chigeda *et al.*, 2022:22). It includes the degree to which an employee is inclined to continue their affiliation with the organisation based on their associations with its goals and values (Serhan *et al.*, 2022:143). Affective commitment is the emotional bond and voluntary desire to be involved with the company due to alignment between personal and organisational values (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:38; Meyer & Allen, 1991:67).

## **Turnover Intentions**

Turnover intention refers to the intention of an employee to leave their organisation within a given time frame (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:40; Tett & Meyer, 1993:262). Turnover intentions are built on the three turnover cognitions. This includes (i) an employee starts to think about quitting at a company, (ii) the employee intends to start the search for a job at another company, and (iii) the employee intends to quit the current organisation (Sager *et al.*, 1998:255).

### **1.4 Problem statement**

The sector of higher education in South Africa have observed trends of increased turnover intentions and lower job satisfaction (Selesho & Matjie, 2024:1; Snyman *et al.*, 2023:185). The decreased job satisfaction and high turnover rates indicates a potential underlying issue within these institutions. According to the existing literature, one possible cause of these challenges could be the leadership style employed within the organisation. Therefore, this study has selected an Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) in South Africa, specifically the North-West Province. This organisation has seen an increase in employee turnover over the past three years as per the organisational data.

The persistent issues of high employee turnover suggest that this problem might be rooted in deeper organisational dynamics and, potentially, low job satisfaction and leadership practices. If the leadership style does not sufficiently address the needs and concerns of employees, it may result in an adverse work environment (Brouwers & Paltu, 2020:8). This environment leads to job dissatisfaction, conflicts, and increased turnover (Freire & Azevedo, 2024:640).

The leadership style plays a crucial role and influences job satisfaction and employee retention (Freire & Azevedo, 2024:640). Transformational leadership, for example, has been associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions (Alkarabsheh *et al.*, 2022:1; Choi *et al.*, 2025:610). This leadership style aims to inspire and encourage individuals to achieve optimal employee performance (Melean Romero *et al.*, 2023:546).

This research will determine the relationship between (i) transformational leadership, (ii) job satisfaction, (iii) affective commitment, and (iv) turnover intentions within an IHL in the North-West Province. As suggested by Suroya *et al.* (2023:135-136), this study will also look at job satisfaction and affective commitment as mediators between the relationship of transformational leadership and turnover intention. The relationship between these variables can determine whether leadership practices can mitigate existing institutional challenges.

The existing literature provides valuable insights into the relationship between leadership styles, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and turnover intention. However, there is a gap in research that targets only the support staff of IHLs in South Africa. The current literature recommends performing similar research in different industries and countries (Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:9; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:135). Therefore, this study can potentially contribute valuable insights to the industry, which expands the generalisation of current research to different sectors. It will also expand current research to different staff categories within IHLs, beyond only academic employees.

Additionally, the previous investigations on the relationship of these variables mostly focused on one to three variables at a time rather than considering them collectively (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:37; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:286; Ningsih *et al.*, 2023:96; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:1). Subsequently, Suroya *et al.* (2023:135) confirmed that

organisational commitment does not mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention for employees from Hotels in Indonesia. However, Choi *et al.* (2025:621) found that within the Police Force of the United States, organisational commitment did mediate the relationship.

Due to these contradictions, this study will investigate whether job satisfaction (intrinsically and extrinsically motivated), or specifically affective commitment, can act as a mediator between the relationship of transformational leadership and employee turnover intention. It will also address a gap in South African research on whether affective commitment can mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

It is critical to identify a correlation between transformational leadership and employee attitudes. If a positive relationship is found, it will be essential for the management team to adapt its leadership approach. More effective leadership practices could address concerns like job satisfaction and employee turnover. This can lead to an improved organisational culture, higher employee morale, and better overall performance.

#### **1.4.1 Rationale and significance of the study**

The organisational data shows a challenge with high employee turnover rates in the past three years, potentially associated with low job satisfaction. This research is crucial to identify the root cause behind these negative trends within the selected IHL in the North-West Province. The organisation needs to understand whether the leadership styles adopted by managers contribute to these issues.

The potential significance of this research is to determine whether current leadership approaches correspond to transformational leadership. It will also determine the correlation with job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention among employees. The results of the relationship will guide the recommended leadership styles for managers to mitigate the negative organisational trends. If the organisation improves leadership practices, it can (i) foster a positive work environment, (ii) reduce employee dissatisfaction, (iii) improve team performance, and (iv) decrease employee turnover (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1900; Naidoo & Mafora, 2023:154; Park *et al.*, 2022:920).

The organisation should address this problem since ongoing dissatisfaction and poor performance can impact overall performance, organisational reputation, and increase training and recruiting costs due to replacement of employees (Brouwers & Paltu, 2020:6; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:640). This research will contribute to the organisation's long-term success as it will posit findings on the correlations between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention. It will give some practical insight for managers on how to foster positive employee attitudes.

This research aims to determine whether transformational leadership can mitigate the turnover intention of support staff at an IHL in the North-West Province through job satisfaction and affective commitment. The frameworks to be investigated are outlined below, where job satisfaction (extrinsic and intrinsic) or affective commitment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention.



**Figure 1.1: The conceptual framework based on a mediation model**

(Source: Author)

## 1.5 Research questions

### 1.5.1 Primary research question

The primary research question of this study is: What is the relationship between transformational leadership dimensions, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention in an IHL in the North-West Province?

## **1.5.2 Secondary research questions**

- What is the relationship between transformational leadership style dimensions, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions?
- Are the dimensions of transformational leadership style adopted by the supervisors in the IHL?
- What is the role of transformational leadership style dimensions in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions?
- Does job satisfaction act as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention?
- Does affective commitment act as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intentions?
- Does affective commitment act as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention?

## **1.6 Aim and objectives of the study**

### **1.6.1 Aim of the study**

This study aims to determine the role of transformational leadership on affective commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention at an IHL in the North-West Province. The findings from this research can assist the institution to enhance and promote the adoption of transformational leadership styles. As a result, transformational leadership styles can improve job satisfaction and affective commitment, which may help reduce turnover intention.

### **1.6.2 Primary objective**

The primary objective of the study is to investigate transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention in an IHL located in the North-West Province.

### **1.6.3 Secondary objectives**

- To determine the relationship between transformational leadership style dimensions, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions.
- To determine if the dimensions of transformational leadership style are adopted by the supervisors in the IHL.
- To determine the role of transformational leadership style dimensions in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions.
- To determine if job satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention.
- To determine if affective commitment acts as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention.
- To determine if affective commitment act as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

## **1.7 Scope of the study**

This research delves into the relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention. It will investigate how these elements influence the decision of an employee to stay with their current employer. The study will focus on the targeted population of support staff at the selected IHL in the North-West Province. The variables will be measured through cross-sectional quantitative research to determine meaningful relationships between transformational leadership, affective commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention.

### **1.7.1 Field of study**

*Leadership and employee attitudes:* More specifically, this study will focus on transformational leadership and employee attitudes toward job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention.

*Field:* Industrial-Organisational Psychology. This is the study to understand human behaviour in organisational settings to improve individual and group performance along with organisational effectiveness (Cilliers & Henning, 2021:1-2).

*Subfield:* Organisational behaviour is the study of how people interact within organisations (Wood *et al.*, 2024:4). As explained by Wood *et al.* (2024:4), it aims to understand employee performance and satisfaction through adaptable management practices and scientific analysis of behaviour in an organisation.

### **1.7.2 Sector**

The higher learning sector in South Africa includes 26 public universities, 50 public Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, and other private institutions (Mhlanga *et al.*, 2022:3; Universities South Africa, 2024). Some of these institutions also follow a multi-campus model with more than one campus in a region. This study will be conducted on employees at an IHL in the North-West Province.

### **1.7.3 Geographical demarcation**

The geographical demarcation of the study is identified as the North-West Province in South Africa.

## **1.8 Research methodology**

This study will include two phases to achieve the objectives. Initially, a literature review will look at existing research on the variables of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment and turnover intention. This highlights previous research findings and the relationships that were found. After this, the empirical study will investigate these variables and their associated relationships within a selected IHL in the North-West Province.

### **1.8.1 Literature review**

The literature review will aim to obtain a deep understanding of the constructs of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention. Through the guidance from previous research, the key phrases to conduct research are: “transformational leadership”, “job satisfaction”, “organisational

commitment”, “affective commitment” and “turnover intention”. Relevant academic sources like textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, and dissertations or theses will be selected to inform the literature review. The selected articles are chosen for their relevance to the topic, most recent, peer-reviewed status, and, where possible, their applicability to an African or South African context. Articles will be obtained through Boolean searches of the keywords to find appropriate previous studies. Finally, the platforms used to access sources include Google Scholar, EBSCOhost, Scopus, and Boloka: North-West University (NWU) Institutional Repository.

### 1.8.2 Empirical Research

The research design and methodology framework as developed by Saunders *et al.* (2023:131) will be employed to explain the methodological decisions of this study. Table 1.1 below outlines the research methodology with its various aspects on philosophies, approaches, strategies, choices, time horizons and procedures (Saunders *et al.*, 2023:131). The various aspects and the applications of this table will be elaborated on in the discussion to follow.

Table 1.1: Research onion application

<b>Aspect of research</b>	<b>Application of study</b>
Philosophy	Positivism
Approach to theory development	Deductive
Methodological choice	Monomethod quantitative
Strategy	Survey
Time horizon	Cross-sectional
Techniques and procedures	Survey design using a structured questionnaire with statistical analysis

(Source: Adapted from Saunders *et al.* (2023:131))

#### 1.8.2.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm (research philosophy) refers to the underlying set of beliefs or assumptions held about the development of knowledge (Saunders *et al.*, 2023:131). This includes (i)

ontological assumptions about the nature of reality (what exists and what can be known about it) and (ii) epistemological stance on the nature of knowledge (how we come to know things and what counts as valid knowledge) (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:32).

The paradigm for this study is positivist, as it assumes that reality can be objectively measured and understood through systematic observations and statistical analysis of quantifiable data (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:32). Based on the explanation of Creswell and Creswell (2023:51), the ontological perspective is objective. This perspective is that social phenomena exist on their own, separate from the people involved (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:29). The epistemological stance is positivism, with a perception that knowledge is objective (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:32). The study will be empirical and employ a scientific methodology to deduce the relationships in human behaviour through an objective framework (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:32). This study will prioritise the identification of patterns, associations, and relationships among (i) transformational leadership, (ii) job satisfaction, (iii) affective commitment and (iv) turnover intention through statistical analysis.

#### **1.8.2.2 Research approach**

This research approach prioritises the connection between research and existing theory and thus uses a deductive research approach (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:32). This means that the current research will test existing leadership and employee behaviour theories through the data collected during the research process.

#### **1.8.2.3 Methodological choice**

The methodological choice will be selected to ensure it aligns with the research approach and paradigm. As explained by Bryman *et al.* (2021:32) interpretivism is associated with qualitative research, while positivism guides quantitative research. Since this study assumes a positivist paradigm and implements a deductive approach, the best-suited methodological choice which will be followed is mono-method quantitative research. This study is also considered quantitative research as it will generate numerical data to allow statistical calculations and determine the correlation between variables (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:48). It involves an online survey design to gather data for statistical analysis and reach a conclusion for the objectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:65-67). Further, quantitative research will allow the use of online questionnaires (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:239;

Taherdoost, 2022:59). This also increases the convenience of the respondent to participate in this research (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:239; Taherdoost, 2022:59). Finally, quantitative research allows similar studies to be replicated in different industries (Taherdoost, 2022:59).

#### **1.8.2.4 Research strategy**

Next is the selection of the research strategy. A social survey allows researchers to determine correlations between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:210). This strategy usually involves a questionnaire that allows researchers to collect quantifiable data from two or more variables (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:237). It is a common strategy associated with quantitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:227). This strategy can include a self-administered, face-to-face, or telephone survey with closed-ended or open-ended questions (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:237).

Therefore, the research strategy for this study will be a survey, as it is typically associated with quantitative analysis of collected data from a questionnaire (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:237). The self-administered questionnaire will contain closed-ended questions, which improves the convenience for respondents to complete the questionnaire without the need for the researcher to be present (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:237). Further, as explained by Bryman *et al.* (2021:239), the use of a self-administered questionnaire is advantageous as it is cost- and time-efficient. Additionally, the online questionnaire tends to deliver reliable responses as respondents can get a holistic overview of the questions and what can be expected (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:241). However, a disadvantage of the self-administered questionnaire is low response rates, but this study aims to mitigate this risk by increasing the population to all support staff of the institution instead of only a selected department (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:242).

#### **1.8.2.5 Time horizon and techniques**

For a survey, the time horizon can either be longitudinal or cross-sectional. Longitudinal surveys extend over a period, and data is collected at multiple time points to track changes and infer causality (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:109). Conversely, a cross-sectional survey is where data is collected at a single point in time to determine correlations between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:246).

Therefore, this study will employ a cross-sectional design due to the following reasons. It will collect data only once and deliver results that can determine the relationship between the variables under investigation (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:107). It will use statistical analysis to generate numerical data to identify the correlation between variables, but will not infer causality (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:107). This research will use data collected from questionnaires to determine the degree of correlation between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention.

#### **1.8.2.6 Population**

The population of this study is the staff of the selected IHL in the North-West Province, but the targeted population will be the support staff of this IHL. This targeted population will include an employee count of 2091, as per the employee data from 2024. The use of inclusion and exclusion criteria, as per Table 1.2 determines which employees qualify to participate in this study. This criterion is to ensure that only current permanent support staff with a reporting supervisor or manager in the organisation complete the questionnaire. The employees also need to have sufficient experience with the company to reflect on their job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention within the next 12 months. Lastly, the questionnaire will only be distributed in English to ensure that there is no discrimination against employees with different home languages.

Table 1.2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Permanent support staff employed at the organisation at the time when the research is conducted.	Temporary support staff are employed at the organisation at the time when research is conducted.
Employees who report to a supervisor/manager.	Employees who do not report to a supervisor/manager.
Employees who are appointed for 3 months or more when the questionnaire is distributed	Employees who are appointed less than 3 months after the questionnaire is distributed.
Employees who read or understand English.	Employees who cannot read or understand English.
Employees with computer and internet access can complete the online questionnaire.	Employees with no computer or internet access cannot complete the online questionnaire.
Support professionals, technical, and administrative staff at the institution.	Academic, trade and service staff at the institution.

(Source: Author)

### 1.8.2.7 Sampling method and sample size

Sampling strategies can be classified as probability or non-probability approaches. Probability sampling means that each respondent in the population has a specific known chance of being selected (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:211). While non-probability sampling means that the respondents in the sample have not been randomly selected, some individuals are more likely to access and participate in the research than others (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:211).

This study will use a non-probability sampling method through the use of a convenience sampling approach (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:222). This convenience sampling method is not considered random since only those willing to participate will complete the questionnaire. This sampling method eases the accessibility for the researcher to obtain an appropriate

number of responses (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:223). It is also chosen due to the time constraints that the researcher will face in the data collection process.

The research notification will be posted on the bulletin board where support staff can access and complete it if they are willing to participate. According to Bryman *et al.* (2021:213), this non-probability sampling method will pose a risk of sampling bias and limited generalisation. However, this research can inform management about whether transformational leadership is implemented at the institution and whether it correlates with job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention.

The sample size will be determined through a priori power analysis with a G\* Power calculation (Faul *et al.*, 2009:1149). The parameters included a medium anticipated effect size ( $f^2 = 0.30$ ), a significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ , and a desired statistical power of 0.95. Based on these parameters, the required and targeted sample size will be a minimum of 134 to detect a medium effect (Faul *et al.*, 2009:1149). Further, similar studies used a sample size of 150-200 (Alwali & Alwali, 2022:157; Smama'h *et al.*, 2023:22; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:130). According to Botma *et al.* (2021:157) a 10% sample size of the population would be sufficient to control possible sample errors. Therefore, this study will aim to obtain a sample size of 200 employees to participate and allow for non-responses or incomplete responses.

#### **1.8.2.8 Measuring instrument**

The questionnaire will have four sections and consist of 56 closed-ended items. A Likert scale will be used with a range from 1 to 5 for section C and D and 1 to 7 for section B to answer items. All the sections of this questionnaire were previously validated with an acceptable internal consistency and reliability. The instrument can be seen in Annexure B, and the below Table 1.3 summarises the instruments that measure the constructs.

Table 1.3: Summary of the measuring instruments

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Number of items</b>
Transformational leadership	(Podsakoff <i>et al.</i> , 1990:121)	Transformation Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ)	23
Job Satisfaction	(Weiss <i>et al.</i> , 1967:6)	Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ)	20
Affective commitment	(Meyer <i>et al.</i> , 1993:544)	Affective Commitment Scale (ACS)	6
Turnover intention	(Colarelli, 1984:636)	Intention to Quit (ITQ) Scale	3

(Source: Author)

*Section A:* Demographic Information. This section will consist of (i) the gender, (ii) the age range, (iii) years of service in the organisation, and (iv) the highest qualification. This information will only be used to give insight into the characteristics of the sample.

*Section B:* Determine the dimensions of transformational leadership practised by the leader as perceived by the employee through the TLQ (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:121). This section will contain 23 items to measure the dimensions of transformational leadership: (i) Articulate a vision, (ii) provide an appropriate model, (iii) foster acceptance of goals, (iv) high-performance expectations, (v) individualised support, and (vi) intellectual stimulation. Employees rate their leaders on items related to the dimensions of transformational leadership style with a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (Very little) to 7 (Very much). This instrument has shown a Cronbach's alpha of >0.7 for the different dimensions, which supports the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument (Grobler & Grobler, 2023:9; Korcu & Kaya, 2023:1130; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:133). Examples of the measured items based on behaviours of the manager include, "Has a clear understanding of where we are going" (vision articulation), "lead by doing rather than simply be telling" (provide and appropriate model), "get the group to work together for the same goal" (foster acceptance of goals), "show that they expect a lot of me" (high-

performance expectations), “act only after considering my feelings” (individualised support), “ask questions that prompt me to think” (intellectual stimulation).

*Section C:* Gauge job satisfaction through the MSQ (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2009; Weiss *et al.*, 1967:6). This section consists of 20 items with a Likert scale of 1 (Very dissatisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied). It measures job satisfaction levels in task-related features (intrinsic satisfaction), non-task-related attributes (extrinsic satisfaction), and overall job satisfaction. This instrument showed a Cronbach alpha of 0.794 to 0.939 in previous studies, which confirms the reliability of the instrument (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:6; Mgaiwa, 2023:12; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:292). Examples items include: “The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities” (internal job satisfaction), “The competence of my supervisor in making decisions” (external job satisfaction), “the working conditions” (general job satisfaction).

*Section D:* Gauge affective commitment with the ACS (Meyer, 1997:118-119; Meyer *et al.*, 1993) and turnover with the ITQ scale (Chompukum & Vanichbuncha, 2025:6; Colarelli, 1984:636). This section will consist of 9 items with a Likert Scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Affective commitment levels will be measured with 6 items adopted from the ACS. This instrument has shown internal consistency and reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 to 0.86 in previous studies (Muleya *et al.*, 2022:5; Siwela & van der Bank, 2021:7). An example item for this measurement is, “I do feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organisation”. Turnover intention levels are determined through 3 items from the ITQ scale that was used in previous studies (Chompukum & Vanichbuncha, 2025:6; Colarelli, 1984:636). This relates to the likelihood that the respondent intends to stay with or quit the company soon. This instrument has shown a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 to 0.87, which supports its reliability (Chompukum & Vanichbuncha, 2025:6; Colarelli, 1984:636; Sabella *et al.*, 2024:4). An example item includes, “I often think about quitting this job”.

#### **1.8.2.9 Data collection**

The availability of digital technologies allows the researcher to collect data via a web-based platform known as Google Forms. This mitigates the need for the researcher to attend the institution in person to distribute questionnaires and allows the researcher to

reach a larger audience more conveniently. The process of distributing the online questionnaire is outlined below.

The researcher will apply for scientific and ethical approval to obtain ethical clearance from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC) for the research. Once ethical clearance is obtained for the study, the researcher will send an application to the gatekeeper committee to gain access to the organisation. After approval from the gatekeeper committee, the communication representative, as assigned and approved by the gatekeeper committee of the organisation, will post notifications on the bulletin board for potential study respondents to access. This will be an individual who is familiar with the process of posting information on the bulletin board and has assisted with the process in previous research conducted at the institution. This notification will include an (i) outline of the study, (ii) a link to the online informed consent, (iii) questionnaire, and (iv) contact details for the research team.

The researcher will adhere to any confidentiality clauses specified by the organisation. Additionally, the contact details of the research team will allow respondents to reach out to the team in case of concerns or questions. It will also maintain the participation of respondents and ensure ethical recruitment and participation in the study.

When respondents open the notification from the bulletin board, they will be provided with a summary of what the study entails and what can be expected in the questionnaire if they choose to participate. The notification will also contain a link to the informed consent. Respondents must agree to the informed consent, which will allow them to continue to the questionnaire. This form will emphasise the (i) voluntary nature of participation, (ii) option to withdraw at any time without any repercussions, and (iii) confidentiality of their information.

The bulletin board notification will contain the link to the informed consent as explained above. Respondents can give their consent by selecting "Yes", which will allow them to continue to the questionnaire. If respondents select No on the informed consent, they will not have access to the questionnaire. The online questionnaire will be created on Google Forms. To ensure confidentiality, no names or personal identification information will be collected from the respondents to aim for anonymous data collection. Biographical details like gender, age, and tenure will only be used to describe the sample group. Additionally,

respondents will be informed that the questionnaire consists of four sections and a total of 56 questions. It will include the estimated time of completion of the questionnaire is 10-15 minutes, and must be completed in one sitting.

#### **1.8.2.10 Statistical analysis**

This study will use Jamovi, an open software statistical program to test for mediation. Further, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) will also be performed. The Cronbach's alpha will determine the internal consistency and reliability of questionnaires (Adriano & Callaghan, 2020:5). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values will assess the suitability of the data for factor analysis (Shrestha, 2021:6). Finally, the Eigenvalues and the variance explained will indicate how much of the total variability in responses is accounted for by each factor and confirm the dimensional structure of the questionnaire (Shrestha, 2021:7).

Descriptive statistics will describe and visualise data to highlight key characteristics of the sample, like frequency (percent and amount observed) and central tendencies (mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation) (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:284). Further, measures of dispersion (variance and standard deviation), and distribution measures (kurtosis and skewness) will also be included (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:418).

Additionally, a bivariate analysis will be included in the descriptive statistics to look at relationships between two variables (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:419). The inferential statistics provide valuable insights into the correlation between variables like transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions. Previous studies have reported factors like the mean, minimum and maximum value and standard deviations of the tested variables (Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:293; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:6)

Additionally, Pearson's correlation will be employed to examine the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) indicates both the direction and strength of the correlation, while significance ( $p$ -value) shows whether these effects are statistically significant (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:257). Pearson correlation ranges are interpreted with values between -1 to 1 (Schober *et al.*, 2018:1763).

As explained by Bryman *et al.* (2021:421), a positive correlation means the tested variables move in the same direction, while a negative correlation means one variable increases as the other decreases (Schober *et al.*, 2018:1763). When the correlation coefficient is closer to 0, it indicates a weak association between the variables (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:421). However, when the coefficient is near -1 or +1, it signifies a strong linear relationship between them (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:421). This analysis was used in similar research (Freire & Azevedo, 2024:649; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:293).

Regression analysis is associated with multivariate analysis between three or more variables (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:427). Multiple regression analysis is a statistical approach used to identify the relationship between a dependent variable and numerous independent variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:257). This will assess how well the independent factors predict variations in dependent variables (Mwesigwa *et al.*, 2020:260). The effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables is analysed at a 95% confidence level, with a significance level of  $\alpha = 5\%$  (Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023:185).

Additionally, values like the regression correlation coefficient (R) and standardised coefficient ( $\beta$ ) demonstrate the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023:186). It determines how well the model represents the actual relationship between the variables (Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023:186). Further, statistical significance will be indicated by the p-value  $< 0.05$  (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:421). The practical significance of the results will be interpreted using effect sizes with 0.01 (small), 0.10 (medium), and 0.35 (large) for  $f^2$  values in the regression analysis (Steyn, 2002:12).

Further, mediation analysis will determine the indirect effects of job satisfaction and affective commitment (Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:294). This will involve bootstrapping confidence intervals (CI) to test the significance of indirect effects. Further, an acceptable indirect effect will be indicated by the absence of zero in the CI.

The results of these statistical methods achieve the objectives as it will identify the relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment and turnover intention.

### **1.8.2.11 Reliability and validity**

In quantitative research, the reliability of a measuring instrument refers to the ability to produce similar results consistently when applied in the same conditions (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:250). This includes stability and internal consistency of a specific measure. This research will assess internal consistency or reliability, which determines whether the items within a scale maintain consistent scores for the construct and dimension it measures (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:53). This can be assessed through Cronbach's alpha, and an acceptable level of internal reliability is indicated with a score of >0.7 (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:251). This study will use measuring instruments that were previously validated and resulted in acceptable internal reliability scores. However, this study will still determine the internal reliability of the instruments within this context.

Finally, validity determines whether the measuring instrument accurately captures the concept it is intended to assess (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:55). For this research, the construct validity will be determined. This refers to the degree to which a measure captures the underlying theoretical concept it measures (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:250). It should show that the instrument accurately measures the intended concept, known as convergent validity, and does not capture unrelated or irrelevant aspects, which is referred to as discriminant validity (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:56).

For the EFA, the following criteria will be used: KMO values above 0.6 will be considered acceptable for this study (Shrestha, 2021:6), while Eigenvalues greater than 1 will be acceptable (Shrestha, 2021:7). The percentage of variance indicates how well the factors account for the overall variability in the data, where higher percentages reflect a better model fit (Shrestha, 2021:7).

## **1.9 Ethical consideration**

This research was deemed relevant and appropriate by two experienced researchers from the NWU Business School, who evaluated the topic and confirmed its suitability. The research proposal subsequently received ethical approval from EMS-REC with the clearance certificate included in Annexure C. After this, the formal approval from institutional gatekeepers (provided In Annexure D) was obtained before data collection.

### **1.9.1 Privacy Protection**

The importance of confidentiality and privacy is to ensure there is no harm to the dignity of respondents (Kang & Hwang, 2023:4). To ensure the privacy of respondents, no personally identifiable information will be collected for this study. As the notification will be posted on the bulletin board, no access to any personal information will be required. In compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 (POPIA) of 2013 the researcher will be responsible to adhere to all legal requirements for processing personal information. This includes aspects like (i) lawfulness, (ii) consent, (iii) data quality, (iv) transparency, (v) security, (vi) retention policies, and (vii) future access to respondents' personal information (Kandeh *et al.*, 2018:3).

The informed consent form will contain a section that addresses POPIA to protect private information from respondents. All data will be collected and reported as statistical findings to analyse the relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention. Finally, the results will be accessible online to the research team, with only the creator of the research instrument (the researcher) being able to grant access to the results form. The data protection strategy also includes physical safeguarding of documents in locked storage.

### **1.9.2 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is about the agreements and protocols for handling data, ensuring that information is kept secure and not disclosed (Botma *et al.*, 2021:22). The questionnaires will be completed anonymous, and the results will be presented collectively to protect respondent confidentiality (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:174). This contributes to respondents answering questions honestly without fear of repercussions (Kang & Hwang, 2023:4). Lastly, Kang and Hwang (2023:2) argue that confidentiality can reduce researcher bias toward respondents. Data will be collected through online questionnaires using the Google Forms platform to ensure confidentiality. Additionally, no personally identifiable information will be collected. This ensures anonymity and eliminates the risk of data breaches. Individual data will remain confidential and will only be accessible to the research team from the NWU.

### **1.9.3 Conflict of interest**

The researcher is not employed in the organisation where the research will be conducted. Additionally, the NWU communication representative will share the notification on a bulletin board that contains the link to the questionnaire. Therefore, the researcher will not know who receives or completes the questionnaire. This reduces potential conflicts of interest and safeguards the voluntary nature of participation.

### **1.9.4 Do no harm**

The researcher will prioritise beneficence by adhering to the principle of do no harm to respondents (Botma *et al.*, 2021:4). Additionally, the researcher will also actively minimise potential risks, with the ultimate goal of promoting good research (Botma *et al.*, 2021:4). This will include minimising any physical and emotional harm to respondents of the research.

### **1.9.5 Justice**

This concept focuses on the value that all respondents should be treated fairly (Botma *et al.*, 2021:4). This includes that all will have the same time and a voluntary nature to access and participate in the study through the link posted on the bulletin board.

### **1.9.6 Preventing deception**

This ensures that the research is presented truthfully with clear and honest objectives of what it aims to achieve (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:171). This also includes the concepts of reciprocity and trust that emphasise honesty and integrity during research (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:173). The researcher will honestly report the aim and use of data for the study. This ensures that respondents have a true understanding of the various aspects of this research.

## **1.10 Contribution of the study**

The study aims to contribute to understanding the relationship between the variables of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment and turnover intention within the IHL through the following aspects:

- The findings of this study add to the existing knowledge on leadership and management in the South African IHL. It will identify the direction and significance of the relationships between the specified variables in the context of this research. Further, it can determine the mediating nature of job satisfaction or affective commitment in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention.
- It also supports the practical development of leadership behaviours. Determining the relationships between the above variables can reveal whether transformational leadership is positively correlated to job satisfaction and affective commitment and negatively correlated to turnover intention. These insights can guide the design of leadership development programmes which aim to reduce employee turnover and enhance job satisfaction.

### **1.11 Limitations**

*Limited understanding of causes:* The output of the research will give numerical results that will allow the researcher to determine correlations and relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:382). However, quantitative research will not provide an in-depth explanation of respondents' feelings (Taherdoost, 2022:59).

*Response bias:* In quantitative research, this refers to errors that occur when respondents do not respond truthfully, accurately, or consistently to survey questions (Grimmond *et al.*, 2025:1).

*Response error:* If the questionnaire is poorly designed, ambiguous, and not validated, it may lead to misinterpretation or inaccurate responses (Botma *et al.*, 2021:156).

*Sampling bias:* Certain individuals in the population have a higher chance of being selected due to the use of non-random convenience sampling, which may lead to sampling bias (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:211). This means that the sample may represent the entire population, and therefore, there will be limited generalisation of the findings (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:223; Golzar *et al.*, 2022:74).

*Non-Response:* There is a risk of non-responses in quantitative research (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:229). Potential low response rates or incomplete surveys could lead to a sampling error and skew the results (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:229).

*Scope of Study:* The research is confined to a specific organisation and geographical location. Findings may not necessarily apply to other institutions.

## **1.12 Outline of the mini-dissertation**

*Chapter 1: Nature and scope of the study.* This chapter introduces the research to provide a clear understanding of the underlying problem. It will outline the following aspects: the nature of the research, its significance, and scope. The introduction serves as the research proposal (without the literature review). It discusses the research approach, rationale, and anticipated contributions to the field or the existing literature.

*Chapter 2: Research article.* This chapter is presented in the style of a research article and starts with the introduction and problem statement. This is followed by a literature review that offers a comprehensive summary of previous research on the topic. It includes a review of relevant academic books, articles, and other sources. This section will list, describe, and critically evaluate prior studies to provide a theoretical framework for the investigation of the research scope. The review shows that the author has thoroughly researched and incorporated relevant previous work.

The chapter then outlines the research questions and objectives. Next, the research method section clarifies the data collection and analysis methods. The methodology chapter also explains the procedures followed and supports validity and ethical considerations.

Finally, the results section will report on the statistical analyses results as well as the various relationships between the variables (transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention). It is followed by the discussion, theoretical contributions, managerial implications, limitations and recommendations for future research.

*Chapter 3: Conclusions and recommendations.* This section will include a discussion, conclusion, limitations, recommendations, and a summary. The final chapter provides a

concise and engaging summary of the research findings. It will address the main research question, review the research process, and outline the contributions made to the field. It will also look at the limitations of the current research. Additionally, it will provide recommendations on what future research can be done to contribute to and expand on the current research.

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## CHAPTER 2 RESEARCH ARTICLE

### Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention among support staff at an Institution of higher learning in the North-West Province located in South Africa. A quantitative cross-sectional survey design, along with non-probability convenience sampling (n = 160) was employed to obtain data for statistical analyses. The TLQ, MSQ, ACS and ITQ Scale was used as the measuring instruments. The results showed that transformational leadership was positively correlated with job satisfaction and affective commitment, while all these showed a negative correlation with turnover intention. The regression analysis revealed that the dimensions of transformational leadership predicted job satisfaction, while affective commitment was a significant predictor of turnover intention. Further, the mediation analysis confirmed that job satisfaction and affective commitment showed strong indirect effects on the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. Finally, affective commitment also mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. The practical recommendations summarise how managers can use transformational leadership behaviours to achieve positive employee attitudes. The article ends with the limitations and suggestions for future research.

**Keywords:** Affective organisational commitment, higher education, job satisfaction, support staff, transformational leadership, turnover intention

### 2.1 Introduction

In recent years, organisations have emphasised the importance of increased job satisfaction to address turnover intentions of employees (Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:2; Tshwane *et al.*, 2023:2). This is especially seen with an increase in millennials and Generation Z that enter the workforce and prioritise their need for job satisfaction (Marozva *et al.*, 2024:1; Zahra *et al.*, 2025:6). This is no different for the Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) in South Africa, specifically in the North-West Province. Challenges of low job satisfaction and increased turnover intention have prompted researchers to investigate underlying organisational factors, including leadership practices, that might

contribute to these adverse trends (Brouwers & Paltu, 2020:1; McCallaghan *et al.*, 2019:195; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:1; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:124).

Leadership is crucial for the success of an organisation as managers and team leaders are appointed to optimise team performance toward the objectives and purpose of the company (Kouzes & Posner, 2024:11). According to Storey *et al.* (2016:1), leadership involves (i) guiding teams, (ii) instigating change through inspiration, and (iii) fostering the growth of team members to reach their full potential. Additionally, Northouse (2021:5) describes leadership as: “the process where an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”. Leadership is essentially about the ability to guide and inspire teams to achieve shared goals and embody common values (Kouzes & Posner, 2024:11).

Over time, various leadership theories have been proposed and developed. However, understanding the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction could contribute to improved employee performance, commitment and retention within organisations (Choi *et al.*, 2025:623; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:653). The literature shows the importance of transformational leadership to achieve organisational success, commitment and job satisfaction (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1898; Naidoo & Mafora, 2023:154).

Therefore, this study investigates the correlation between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment (also referred to as affective commitment), and turnover intention. Further, this study identifies whether job satisfaction and affective commitment mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. The structure of the upcoming section of this paper is as follows: Define the research problem and discuss the literature review of the constructs investigated in this study. Thereafter, the reader will be introduced to the research questions and objectives. Further, this paper continues to explain the research method, along with the results and findings of the research. Finally, the paper will clarify theoretical contributions, recommendations, limitations, and potential future research.

## **2.2 Problem statement**

A South African IHL faces challenges increased employee turnover over the past three years as per the employee data of the organisation. This indicates a potential underlying

issue within the institution. According to the existing literature, one possible cause of these challenges could be the leadership style employed within the organisation (Choi *et al.*, 2025:610; Khumalo & Jackson, 2024:72). Leadership plays a critical role to shape employee attitudes (Freire & Azevedo, 2024:640; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:2). Ineffective leadership leads to adverse work environments of dissatisfaction, conflict and high employee turnover (Brouwers & Paltu, 2020:8; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:640).

Conversely, the positive behaviours of transformational leadership correlate with higher levels of job satisfaction, performance and lower levels of turnover intentions (Alkarabsheh *et al.*, 2022:1; Khumalo & Jackson, 2024:176). This can be attributed to the main focus of this leadership style, which is to inspire and motivate employees to achieve higher performance and individual support that helps employees to reach their full potential (Khumalo & Jackson, 2024:176; Melean Romero *et al.*, 2023:546).

This study aims to investigate the relationships between (i) transformational leadership, (ii) job satisfaction, (iii) affective commitment, and (iv) turnover intentions within an IHL in South Africa, specifically the North-West Province. As suggested by Suroya *et al.* (2023:135-136), this study will look at job satisfaction and affective commitment as mediators between the relationship of transformational leadership and turnover intention. The relationship between these variables can determine whether transformational leadership practices can mitigate the current challenges of employee turnover.

The existing literature provides valuable insights on the link between leadership styles, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and turnover intention (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:639; Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:1; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:296). However, there is a gap in research that targets IHLs in South Africa, more specifically support staff. The current literature recommends performing similar research in different industries (Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:9; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:135). Further research into understanding the relationship between turnover intention and transformational leadership can potentially contribute valuable insights to the industry. The integrated investigation of these four variables together remains underexplored, especially on support staff in IHLs in South Africa. This research also addresses a gap of limited recent research within South Africa to determine whether

affective commitment can mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

This additional research can contribute to expand the generalisation of current research to different sectors. It also expands the current research to different employee categories other than academic staff. It gives some additional insights into a South African context on the complex interrelationships between the targeted employee attitudes. Further, there were contradictory findings on the mediating effect of organisational commitment between transformational leadership and turnover intention in previous research (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:135). Due to these contradictions and suggestions from previous research, this study investigated whether affective commitment or job satisfaction (intrinsic and extrinsic) can act as separate mediators between the relationship of transformational leadership and employee turnover intention.



**Figure 2.1: The conceptual framework based on a mediation model**

(Source: Author)

This study addresses the gap in the literature and contribute to the theoretical findings and practical insights for leadership development within the sector. This could address issues related to job satisfaction, commitment and employee turnover. In turn, it can result in a supportive organisational culture, higher employee morale, and better performance (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1900; Naidoo & Mafora, 2023:154; Park *et al.*, 2022:920).

### 2.3 Literature review

This section conceptualises the core constructs of this research: Transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention, as well as their

interrelationships based upon existing research. This aims to introduce the essence of leadership and employee attitudes to provide an understanding of the constructs investigated in this study.

### **2.3.1 Theoretical perspective**

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) is a framework to analyse social and psychological relationships at work, with a focus on the social dynamics of work and employment relationships (Cross & Dundon, 2019:264). This theory focuses on costs and benefits and believes that an individual who gains benefits from someone else feels a sense of obligation to return benefits through supportive actions and loyalty (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005:874; Donkor *et al.*, 2022:3). Thus, the theory examines employee behaviour and allows organisations to implement specific human resource management practices to foster successful social exchange relationships (Xuecheng & Iqbal, 2022:2). It is therefore believed that the positive experience of transformational leadership will translate into increased job satisfaction and affective commitment and reduced turnover intentions of employees in a North-West Province IHL.

Additionally, the Herzberg two-factor theory believes that job satisfaction is independent from dissatisfaction since they are impacted by different factors. This theory builds on two concepts known as hygiene and motivational factors (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:37). Hygiene (extrinsic) factors lead to job dissatisfaction and include aspects like company policies, work conditions, salary and job security (Herzberg, 1987:9; Perez, 2024:15). While motivational factors correspond with satisfaction and include aspects like achievement, recognition, responsibility and growth (Herzberg, 1987:9; Perez, 2024:15). In practice, this theory can give way to organisations to enhance both hygiene and motivation factors to foster employee satisfaction and commitment within the organisation.

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model explains that all jobs involve demands that result in stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007:312). As explained by Bakker and Demerouti (2007:312), these demands then require resources that help employees to achieve goals, reduce stress, and promote growth. In this study, transformational leadership is seen as a resource that improves employee attitudes, like job satisfaction and commitment. This will, in turn, reduce turnover intention.

## 2.3.2 Transformational leadership

### Definition

Transformational leadership is the influence and inspiration exerted by leaders on their followers, which highlights the psychological impact leaders have on followers (Antonakis & House, 2014:751). With this approach, the leader stimulates the follower to realise how their work is essential and related to the values of the company (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1895). Additionally, the leader develops the skills and knowledge of followers to contribute to their growth (Zhu *et al.*, 2012:191).

### Dimensions

The general and most well-known four behaviours of transformational leadership are identified as idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, individualised consideration, and inspirational motivation (Bass & Avolio, 1990:22; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:4).

Idealised influence highlights the role model aspect of a leader and the importance of ethical principles and moral conduct (Bass & Riggio, 2005:6). Furthermore, the leader fosters a collective vision among the team to work towards shared objectives (Bass & Avolio, 1994:115). Intellectual stimulation is when innovative thinking is encouraged by the leader, which motivates teams to implement creative and innovative problem-solving measures (Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:4). Individualised consideration is when the leader implements a coaching approach by addressing specific needs, skills, and input that each follower needs to reach their full potential (Bass & Avolio, 1990:22). Finally, inspirational motivation refers to when the leader expresses enthusiasm, positivity, and excitement to inspire the team to achieve the organisational goals (Bass & Avolio, 1990:22; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:4). Ultimately, as explained by Ntseke *et al.* (2022:4), this type of leader focuses on the improvement of (i) team morale, (ii) employee motivation, (iii) organisational commitment, and (iv) alignment between the team and organisational values or goals.

Alternatively, the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) focuses on the five fundamental leadership practices known as (i) model the way, (ii) inspire a shared vision, (iii) challenge the process, (iv) enable others to act, and (v) encourage the heart (Feher & Kollár, 2024:271; Posner, 2016:1-2). However, Podsakoff *et al.* (1990:107) suggested that transformational leadership consists of six behaviours, namely (i) vision articulation, (ii)

provide an appropriate model, (iii) foster the acceptance of group goals, (iv) high-performance expectations, (v) individualised support, and (vi) intellectual stimulation.

While four of the behaviours of Podsakoff *et al.* (1990:107) correlate with those proposed by Bass and Avolio (1990:22), there are two additional behaviours of vision articulation and high performance expectations. Vision articulation is when the leaders identify new opportunities and goals, then inspire their team to pursue them (Khumalo & Jackson, 2024:177; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:112). Additionally, the leader displays and sets high-performance expectations to demand excellence and high-quality work from their team (Grobler & Grobler, 2023:2; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:112).

Provide an appropriate model aligns with the leader who acts as a role model, while fostering the acceptance of group goals, aims to encourage teamwork towards the common goal (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:112). Individualised support is when the leader shows concern towards the feelings and needs of the follower, and intellectual stimulation encourages followers to complete their tasks innovatively (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:112). Based on the above behaviours, transformational leaders focus to inspire and influence followers' attitudes to perform beyond their basic professional requirements expected by the organisation (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:108).

Further, the Transformational Leadership Behaviour Scale (TLB) also referred to as a Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ) in this study measures six identified dimensions, namely (i) vision articulation, (ii) providing an appropriate model, (iii) fostering the acceptance of group goals, (iv) high-performance expectations, (v) individualised support and (vi) intellectual stimulation (Grobler & Grobler, 2023:2; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:133). Alternatively, previous studies used the MLQ to measure the four components of transformational leadership (Donkor *et al.*, 2022:7; Melean Romero *et al.*, 2023:544). This study, following similar previous research in a South African context, will employ the validated TLQ (Grobler & Grobler, 2023:2; Kgekoane, 2022:24; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:133). This questionnaire will measure the six dimensions mentioned for the TLQ as highlighted above (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:133). This part of the questionnaire will allow employees to reflect on their supervisor's leadership style (Baran *et al.*, 2022:11).

## **Correlations**

Similar research has shown that transformational leadership is favoured due to its significant and positive impact on employee engagement and performance (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1900; Naidoo & Mafora, 2023:154; Park *et al.*, 2022:920), job satisfaction (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Ningsih *et al.*, 2023:88; Oyewobi, 2024:737), affective commitment (Jiatong *et al.*, 2022:1; Park *et al.*, 2022:92), organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (Hermanto *et al.*, 2024:1; Nurjanah *et al.*, 2020:3; Qalati *et al.*, 2022:7), reduced employee burnout (Chen *et al.*, 2022:1; Zhang *et al.*, 2024:716) and innovative problem-solving (Abdul-Azeez *et al.*, 2024:1901; Zhang *et al.*, 2024:725). Additionally, transformational leadership shows a negative correlation with turnover intention (Alkarabsheh *et al.*, 2022:1; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:649; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:9).

Transformational leadership shows positive correlations to numerous positive aspects of employees; however, this type of leadership takes a large toll on the leader (Lin *et al.*, 2019:1556). Some of the disadvantages of transformational leadership include that followers can become too reliant on the leader's guidance to aid in decision-making (Bwalya, 2023:182). Moreover, Bwalya (2023:182) argued that this leadership style can cause the leader to experience burnout due to the significant time and energy it demands from them. This is especially the case for employees with low competence and low work ethic, such as laziness or unreliable behaviour (Lin *et al.*, 2019:1556). Some employees can resist change, which means that they can resist accepting the leader's vision for change (Bwalya, 2023:182).

### **2.3.3 Job satisfaction**

#### **Definition**

Job satisfaction can be explained as the attitude of an employee towards their job, which is shaped by various factors within their work environment (Belias *et al.*, 2022:2).

#### **Dimensions**

Intrinsic job satisfaction refers to how employees experience task-related factors of their job (Hoff *et al.*, 2020:13; Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:3). These factors include recognition, achievement, the task itself, advancement at work, and responsibilities (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:3; Wernimont, 1966:43). Intrinsic rewards can improve

turnover intentions and productivity (Ali & Anwar, 2021:21; Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:3). In addition, Ali and Anwar (2021:21) stressed that these factors can cultivate a positive atmosphere that increases satisfaction, motivation, and commitment. This can improve overall organisational performance (Ali & Anwar, 2021:21).

Alternatively, extrinsic job satisfaction reflects employees' feelings towards tangible aspects of their job. These factors include salary, company policies, technical competencies, relationship with colleagues, and working environment (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:9; Wernimont, 1966:43). Most employees seek compensation and career progress, and a perceived imbalance between contributions and rewards received may lead to employees leaving the organisation (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:3).

Previous studies used the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) to measure job satisfaction through the five dimensions of (i) employment, (ii) compensation, (iii) promotion, (iv) supervision, and (v) coworkers (Castanheira, 2023:3718; Wahyuhadi *et al.*, 2023:703). Alternatively, the Spector Job Satisfaction Survey was also previously used to measure the nine different aspects of job satisfaction known as (i) salary, (ii) promotion opportunities, (iii) extra benefits, (iv) rewards, (v) supervisor, (vi) colleagues, (vii) nature of work, (viii) communication, (ix) existing procedures (Belias *et al.*, 2022:6; Spector, 1985:693; van den Berg *et al.*, 2024:38). This highlights the various aspects of a job that contribute to overall job satisfaction. It is also important that managers are aware of these aspects to know how to manage and improve the job satisfaction of their team members.

Further, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was developed to specify and measure the different intrinsic and extrinsic factors of job satisfaction (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:5). The MSQ long form consists of 100 items and measures 20 different scales of job satisfaction, while the MSQ short form uses 20 items to measure the three scales of intrinsic, extrinsic, and general job satisfaction (Perez, 2024:4). This study, similar to other studies, will employ the shortened MSQ with 20 questions to gauge job satisfaction levels (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2009:2; Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:5; Perez, 2024:4; Weiss *et al.*, 1967:3,13).

## **Correlations**

Job satisfaction shows a positive correlation with employee engagement (Sahni, 2021:9; Shabane, 2022:18), performance (Indrayani *et al.*, 2023:22; Suleman *et al.*, 2022:13), organisational commitment (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:293) more specifically, affective commitment (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:45; Dube & Ndofirepi, 2024:43), and OCB (Hennicks *et al.*, 2022:6; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022:43) and innovative work behaviour (Demircioglu, 2023:130; Shafaei & Nejati, 2023:278). Additionally, job satisfaction has a significant negative correlation with turnover intention (Ertürk, 2022:198; Tshwane *et al.*, 2023:1) and employee burnout (Genedy *et al.*, 2024:19; Heidari *et al.*, 2022:5).

### **2.3.4 Organisational commitment**

#### **Definition**

Organisational commitment can be viewed as an emotional bond that employees may develop toward the organisation (Chigeda *et al.*, 2022:22). It also reflects the extent to which an employee aligns with organisational goals and values, which influences the desire to stay at an organisation (Serhan *et al.*, 2022:143).

#### **Dimensions**

The three dimensions of organisational commitment include affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Based on the explanation of Meyer and Allen (1991:61) affective commitment refers to an emotional bond characterised by a voluntary desire to be involved with the company due to alignment between personal and organisational values (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:38; Meyer & Allen, 1991:67). While continuance commitment is linked to the potential reward or cost an employee might experience when leaving an organisation (Chigeda *et al.*, 2022:23; Meyer & Allen, 1984:373). Finally, normative commitment is when the employee has a feeling of obligation to remain with an organisation (Chigeda *et al.*, 2022:22; Meyer & Allen, 1991:67).

Further, this study will focus on the relationship of affective commitment to other variables as it correlates with the voluntary desire to stay with the company. As proposed by Meyer *et al.* (1993:544), affective commitment can be measured through the use of a 6-item scale known as the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS). This instrument gauges affective

commitment by focusing on an individual's emotional attachment, sense of belonging, and personal connection with their organisation (Meyer, 1997:118-119; Meyer *et al.*, 1993:544).

## **Correlations**

Organisational commitment shows a positive relationship with employee engagement (Al Otaibi *et al.*, 2023:2536; Orgambidez & Benitez, 2021:791), employee performance (Donkor *et al.*, 2022:9; Wang *et al.*, 2022:1), job satisfaction (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:45; Dube & Ndofirepi, 2024:43), OCB (Arifin & Narmaditya, 2024:1; Hermanto *et al.*, 2024:16), and innovative work behaviour (Demircioglu, 2023:130; Khaola & Rambe, 2021:391). Further, it shows a negative correlation to employee burnout (Laily *et al.*, 2022:214; Wang *et al.*, 2022:6) and turnover intention (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:43; Masindi *et al.*, 2024:78).

### **2.3.5 Turnover intention**

#### **Definition**

Turnover intention refers to an employee's inclination or plan to leave their current organisation within a specific timeframe (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:40; Tett & Meyer, 1993:262). Turnover intentions are built on the three turnover cognitions. This includes an employee (i) starts to think about quitting, (ii) intends to search for another job, and (iii) then intends to quit and leave (Sager *et al.*, 1998:255).

#### **Dimensions**

Voluntary turnover happens when employees willingly decide to leave their jobs for new opportunities or personal reasons (Yasin *et al.*, 2023:593). Additionally, Yasin *et al.* (2023:593) explained involuntary turnover as employees who are compelled to leave by the organisation, often due to factors like downsizing or termination. Voluntary turnover can arise from a combination of (i) poor organisational practices, (ii) adverse job conditions, (iii) individual and social dynamics, and (iv) systemic financial limitations (Basti *et al.*, 2022:378). Further, this study will use the intention to quit (ITQ) scale as it was used previously in various areas like business graduates and management companies (Chompukum & Vanichbuncha, 2025:6; Colarelli, 1984:636; Sabella *et al.*, 2024:4). This measures the three turnover cognitions mentioned above. Assessing these intentions in

the present can help understand and potentially prevent actual turnover by addressing the underlying causes (Lazzari *et al.*, 2022:280-281).

## **Correlations**

Turnover intention is related to the organisational commitment of an employee (Wu & Liu, 2022:6). It shows a negative correlation with employee engagement (Gutierrez *et al.*, 2025:1085; Van Heerden *et al.*, 2022:9), performance (Otache & Inekwe, 2022:762; Pienaar *et al.*, 2025:9), organisational commitment (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Wu & Liu, 2022:6), job satisfaction (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:9; Masindi *et al.*, 2024:78; Samad *et al.*, 2022:68), and OCB (Hsu & Yang, 2022:1; Kyungmi & Hye Suk, 2024:11). Further, turnover intention showed a positive correlation with employee burnout (Chun *et al.*, 2022:7; Yi *et al.*, 2024:5). Additionally, the importance of turnover intention mainly lies in its predictive relationship to actual turnover (Lazzari *et al.*, 2022:279).

### **2.3.6 Transformational leadership, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and turnover intention**

Previous studies suggested that the leadership style of managers can influence an employee's likelihood of leaving the organisation (Alkarabsheh *et al.*, 2022:1; Jiatong *et al.*, 2022:1). Similarly, studies also investigated the impact of leadership style on job satisfaction (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Ningsih *et al.*, 2023:96; Oyewobi, 2024:737). Another study also found that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between leadership style and (i) organisational commitment (Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:296) and (ii) turnover intention (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621). However, there were inconsistent results on the mediating effect of organisational commitment on the relationship between mediating effect of organisational commitment between transformational leadership and turnover intention in previous research (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:135).

Further, transformational leadership showed a positive correlation with job satisfaction (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Ningsih *et al.*, 2023:96) and organisational commitment (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:134), and specifically affective commitment (Donkor *et al.*, 2022; Jiatong *et al.*, 2022:8; Park *et al.*, 2022:92). Additionally, Alkarabsheh *et al.* (2022:1); Samad *et al.* (2022:68) discovered a negative correlation between turnover intention and transformational leadership style.

Furthermore, job satisfaction showed a positive correlation with organisational commitment (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:45; Dube & Ndofirepi, 2024:43), affective commitment (Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:8; Othman & Khrais, 2022:169) yet a negative correlation with turnover intention (Ertürk, 2022:198; Tshwane *et al.*, 2023:1). Similarly, affective commitment also showed a negative correlation to turnover intention (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:46; Masindi *et al.*, 2024:78). This means that increased job satisfaction and affective commitment result in lower turnover intentions.

The previous research provided some valuable information on the relationships between the different variables. However, this study focused specifically on affective commitment instead of all the dimensions of organisational commitment. It looked at the correlations between transformational leadership and employee attitudes, as well as the relationships between employee attitudes themselves. Finally, this study investigated whether affective commitment plays a mediating role to enhance other attitudes.

## **2.4 Research questions**

### **2.4.1 Primary research question**

The primary research question of this study is: What is the relationship between transformational leadership dimensions, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention in an IHL in the North-West Province?

### **2.4.2 Secondary research questions**

- What is the relationship between transformational leadership style dimensions, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions?
- Are the dimensions of transformational leadership style adopted by the supervisors in the IHL?
- What is the role of transformational leadership style dimensions in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions?
- Does job satisfaction act as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention?

- Does affective commitment act as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention?
- Does affective commitment act as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention?

## **2.5 Research objectives**

### **2.5.1 Primary objective**

The primary objective of the study is to investigate transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention in an IHL located in the North-West Province.

### **2.5.2 Secondary objectives**

- To determine the relationship between transformational leadership style dimensions, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions.
- To determine if the dimensions of transformational leadership style are adopted by the supervisors in the IHL.
- To determine the role of transformational leadership style dimensions in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions.
- To determine if job satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention.
- To determine if affective commitment acts as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention.
- To determine if affective commitment act as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

## 2.6 Research methodology

### 2.6.1 Research approach, sample and procedure

This study used the research onion of Saunders *et al.* (2023:131) to simplify the methodological framework adopted. This section outlines the various layers of the research onion as they were applied in this study. It also details the specific choices made at each layer to justify the decision.

This study was positioned within the positivist research paradigm, which assumed that reality is objective and measurable (Saunders *et al.*, 2023:134). It adopted an objective ontological stance with an epistemological stance of positivism to uncover the truth about the interrelationships between the constructs through empirical data and statistical techniques (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:29;32). As this study aimed to test existing theoretical frameworks associated with the constructs, a deductive, mono-method quantitative design was employed (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:29;32). Further, the data collection strategy was aligned with an online survey and a cross-sectional approach with a non-probability convenience sample at a single point in time (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:29;32). The sample included support, technical, and administrative staff of the IHL in the North-West Province.

Before any research was conducted, the study obtained ethical clearance from the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC). Further, access to the targeted population required approval from the institution's gatekeeper committee.

After permission was given by the gatekeeper committee, the communication representative was identified and posted the notification of the study on the bulletin board. This notification included the link to access the informed consent and the online questionnaire. From this link, respondents were provided with informed consent. Once "yes" was selected, the respondent could proceed with the questions from the measuring instruments. The consent form outlines the purpose of the study and emphasised its voluntary and confidential nature. The confidentiality of respondents was preserved throughout the data collection, analysis, and dissemination process, as no personal identifiers were collected.

The inclusion criteria for the target population were all permanent support, technical, and administrative staff who were employed for at least three months. The respondents were required to report to a supervisor and be proficient in English. The exclusion criteria were any academic, trade, and temporary staff.

Approximately 2000 potential respondents were invited to participate in the study through the bulletin board notification, and only 162 responses were received. After incomplete responses were removed, the final dataset for analysis contained 160 complete responses. The response rate for this study was 7.7%. Further, demographic information (age, gender, highest academic qualification, and years of experience) was collected for sample characteristics purposes. This demographic information is presented in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Demographic characteristics of sample

<b>Category</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Gender	Female	115	71.90%
	Male	45	28.10%
Age of respondent	18-25 years	2	1.30%
	26-30 years	25	15.60%
	31-35 years	15	9.40%
	36-40 years	23	14.40%
	41-45 years	27	16.90%
	46-50 years	15	9.40%
	51-55 years	24	15.00%
	56-65 years	28	17.50%
	>66	1	0.60%
Years of service in this organisation	Less than 1 year	12	7.50%
	11-15 years	30	18.80%
	16-20 years	22	13.80%
	2-5 years	40	25.00%
	21-25 years	10	6.30%
	26-30 years	10	6.30%
	6-10 years	31	19.40%
	Longer than 31 years	5	3.10%
Highest qualification	B degree	26	16.25%
	Certificate	21	13.13%
	Diploma	17	10.63%
	Honours	32	20.00%
	Masters	29	18.13%
	Matric	12	7.50%
	PhD	5	3.13%
	Post-Grad Diploma	18	11.25%

(Source: Author)

The results in Table 2.1 showed that most respondents were females (71.90%), with the highest age group represented being 56-65 years (17.5%), followed closely by age group

41-45 years (16.90%). Further, 25% of the sample have 2-5 years in the organisation, and 52.5% hold a post-graduate degree.

## **2.6.2 Measuring instruments**

The questionnaire included four sections and consisted of 56 closed-ended items. Items were answered using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 for sections C and D and 1 to 7 for section B as per the already validated instruments. This study adopted pre-validated instruments developed by previous researchers to measure each construct. The prior validation ensured the reliability and validity of the instruments used in the study. The questionnaire included the following four sections:

### **Section A: Demographic information**

This section consisted of (i) the gender, (ii) the age range, (iii) years of service in the organisation, and (iv) the highest qualification. This information gave insight into the characteristics of the sample.

### **Section B: Transformational leadership**

This measured the dimensions of transformational leadership practised by the supervisor using the TLQ (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:121). This section contained 23 items that measured the dimensions of transformational leadership (articulate a vision, provide an appropriate model, foster acceptance of goals, high-performance expectations, individualised support, and intellectual stimulation). Employees rated their leaders on items related to the dimensions of transformational leadership style with a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (Very little) to 7 (Very much).

An example item that measured the different dimensions included the following based on characteristics displayed by the manager or supervisor: Articulate a vision (“Has a clear understanding of where we are going”); provide an appropriate model (Provides a good model for me to follow); foster acceptance of goals (“Fosters collaboration among work groups”); high-performance expectations (“Insists on only the best performance”); individualised support (“Shows respect for my personal feelings”); and intellectual stimulation (“Asks questions that prompt me to think”).

This instrument had previously shown an overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.79 - 0.87 and satisfactory confirmatory factor analysis results for the different dimensions, which support the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument (Grobler & Grobler, 2023:9; Kgekoane, 2022:38; McCallaghan 2020:73; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:133).

### **Section C: Job satisfaction**

This section gauged job satisfaction through the adopted MSQ (Buitendach & Rothmann, 2009; Weiss *et al.*, 1967:6). It consisted of 20 items with a Likert scale of 1 (Very dissatisfied) to 5 (Very Satisfied). It measured job satisfaction levels in task-related features (intrinsic satisfaction), non-task-related attributes (extrinsic satisfaction), and overall job satisfaction. This instrument showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.794 to 0.939 in previous studies, which confirmed the reliability of the instrument (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:6; Mgaiwa, 2023:12; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:292). Examples of items include: "The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities" (internal job satisfaction), "The competence of my supervisor in making decisions" (external job satisfaction), "the working conditions" (general job satisfaction).

### **Section D: Affective commitment and turnover intention**

This section gauged affective commitment with the ACS (Meyer, 1997:118-119; Meyer *et al.*, 1993) and turnover intention with the ITQ scale (Chompukum & Vanichbuncha, 2025:6; Colarelli, 1984:636). This section consisted of 9 items with a Likert Scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Affective commitment levels were measured with 6 items adopted from the ACS. This instrument had shown internal consistency and reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85 to 0.86 in previous studies (Muleya *et al.*, 2022:5; Siwela & van der Bank, 2021:7). An example item for this ACS, "I do feel 'emotionally attached' to this organisation".

Turnover intention levels were determined through 3 items from the ITQ scale that were used in previous studies (Chompukum & Vanichbuncha, 2025:6; Colarelli, 1984:636). This was related to the likelihood that the respondent intended to stay with or quit the company soon. This instrument had shown a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 to 0.87, which supported its reliability (Chompukum & Vanichbuncha, 2025:6; Colarelli, 1984:636; Sabella *et al.*, 2024:4). An example item includes, "I often think about quitting this job".

## 2.7 Statistical analysis

The objectives of this research determined the statistical techniques for data analysis. The data was exported into an Excel file from the Google Forms platform, and then Jamovi, a statistical analysis tool, was used for statistical analysis. The data analysis commenced with descriptive statistics through frequencies characterised in the demographic profile outlined earlier in Table 2.1.

First, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to assess the dimensional structure of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate internal consistency and reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:250). A Cronbach's alpha score above 0.7 was considered acceptable (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:251). Next, for the EFA, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure assessed the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Values above 0.6 were considered acceptable for this study (Shrestha, 2021:6). While eigenvalues and variance explained confirmed how much of the total variability was accounted for by each factor (Shrestha, 2021:6-7). Eigenvalues greater than 1 were deemed acceptable, and higher variance percentages reflected a better model fit (Shrestha, 2021:6-7).

Next, descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis) were used to summarise the sample and key study variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:284). This was followed by inferential statistics to determine relationships between independent and dependent variables. It included a Pearson correlation to investigate the strength and direction of relationships between variables (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:424). The statistical significance level was set at 95% ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Further, a multiple regression analysis was applied to test predictive relationships between independent and dependent variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:257). The model's correlation coefficient (R) and standardised coefficient ( $\beta$ ) indicated the strength and direction of effects, while t and p-values determined their statistical significance (Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023:186). Finally, the mediation analysis determined the indirect effects of job satisfaction and affective commitment, where significance was confirmed if the bootstrap confidence interval (CI) excluded zero (Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:294).

## **2.8 Results**

The results of this research are presented in five sections below. It starts with the EFA results, followed by the descriptive statistics of the measuring instrument and the correlations between study variables. It continues with regression analysis and end with the mediation analysis.

### **2.8.1 Exploratory factor analysis**

The results were obtained through an EFA in a simple principal component analysis of the individual scales. The results confirmed that all scales were unidimensional constructs. Vision Articulation (VA); (eigenvalue = 3.92; variance explained = 78.32%; KMO = 0.88), Role Modelling (PAM); (2.86; 95.33%; 0.77), Goal Acceptance (FAOG); (3.53; 88.40%; 0.88), Performance Expectations (HPE); (2.48; 82.79%; 0.70), Individual Consideration (IC); (3.28; 81.97%; 0.75), Intellectual Stimulation (IS); (3.65; 91.16%; 0.88) and Transformational Leadership (TL) (15.93; 69.26%; 0.95). The analysis also validated the outcome measures: Intrinsic Job Satisfaction (IJS); (5.98; 49.82%; 0.88), Extrinsic Job Satisfaction (EJS); (3.54; 58.98%; 0.83), Affective Commitment (AOC); (4.22; 70.32%; 0.88), and Turnover Intention (TI); (2.31; 76.80%; 0.73) as respective unidimensional constructs.

### **2.8.2 Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis**

This section shows the results for the descriptive statistics along with the correlations of various constructs of this research. Table 2.2 presents the internal consistency through the Cronbach's alpha, skewness and kurtosis. While the results of the Pearson correlation are shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.2: Descriptive statistics (n=160) and Cronbach's alpha coefficients

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. TL	0.98	4.97	1.35	-0.72	-0.47
2. VA	0.95	4.94	1.44	-0.74	-0.20
3. PAM	0.98	5.03	1.81	-0.69	-0.64
4. FOAG	0.97	5.00	1.53	-0.68	-0.37
5. HPE	0.90	5.35	1.23	-1.05	1.33
6. IC	0.93	4.75	1.55	-0.56	-0.33
7. IS	0.97	4.87	1.59	-0.71	-0.29
8. IJS	0.91	3.91	0.68	-0.60	0.23
9. EJS	0.86	3.40	0.92	-0.44	-0.46
10. AOC	0.91	3.56	0.94	-0.47	-0.32
11. TI	0.85	2.47	1.27	0.48	-0.94

(Source: Author)

The interpretation of results in Table 2.2 showed that Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all scales exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Drost, 2011:114). The mean scores were above the midpoints for the transformational leadership dimensions and outcome variables of intrinsic, extrinsic job satisfaction, and affective commitment. This suggested a notable prevalence of these dimensions in the experiences of the respondents, while turnover intention appropriately fell below its midpoint. Further, Table 2.2 showed that the data was distributed normally as skewness and kurtosis values fell within  $\pm 2.00$  and  $\pm 7.00$ , respectively (Finch & West, 1997:454).

For the correlation analysis, the results are presented in Table 2.3. Transformational leadership demonstrated a significant positive relationship with extrinsic job satisfaction ( $r = 0.77$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), intrinsic job satisfaction ( $r = 0.63$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), and affective commitment ( $r = 0.67$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Additionally, transformational leadership showed a significant negative relationship with turnover intention ( $r = -0.56$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This means that higher levels of transformational leadership were associated with lower intentions to quit among the employees.

Table 2.3: Pearson correlation results of TL, JS, AOC, and TI

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. TL	—										
2. VA	0.93***	—									
3. PAM	0.94***	0.88***	—								
4. FAOG	0.93***	0.83***	0.85***	—							
5. HPE	0.64***	0.57***	0.47***	0.57***	—						
6. IC	0.86***	0.72***	0.82***	0.77***	0.37***	—					
7. IS	0.94***	0.85***	0.85***	0.86***	0.59***	0.77***	—				
8. IJS	0.63***	0.58***	0.57***	0.60***	0.45***	0.53***	0.60***	—			
9. EJS	0.77***	0.71***	0.75***	0.71***	0.42***	0.69***	0.75***	0.64***	—		
10. AOC	0.67***	0.61***	0.60***	0.62***	0.44***	0.59***	0.66***	0.68***	0.65***	—	
11. TI	-0.56***	-0.55***	-0.55***	-0.51***	-0.30***	-0.46***	-0.53***	-0.55***	-0.53***	-0.63***	—

Note. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$   
 The practical significance of the results was interpreted based on their effect size 0.10 (small), 0.30 (medium) and 0.50 (large) (Steyn, 2002:12).

(Source: Author)

From the dimensions of transformational leadership, intellectual stimulation demonstrated the strongest relationship with extrinsic job satisfaction ( $r = 0.75$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and affective commitment ( $r = 0.66$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Further, goal acceptance showed the strongest correlation with intrinsic job satisfaction ( $r = 0.60$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). While vision articulation and role modelling displayed the strongest negative relationship with turnover intention ( $r = -0.55$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Performance expectations showed the weakest correlations with the dependent variables, though still significant. The correlations for performance expectations ranged from  $r = 0.42$  to  $r = 0.45$  ( $p < 0.001$ ) for intrinsic, extrinsic job satisfaction and affective commitment, and  $r = -0.30$  ( $p < 0.001$ ) for turnover intention. This suggested that setting high expectations contributed to positive employee attitudes, the other dimensions had stronger influences.

The outcome variables also demonstrated significant intercorrelations. Affective commitment exhibited a strong positive relationship with both intrinsic ( $r = 0.68$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and extrinsic job satisfaction ( $r = 0.65$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction were also strongly correlated ( $r = 0.64$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicated the interrelated nature of these positive employee attitudes.

Finally, turnover intention showed significant negative correlations with all positive outcome variables. The strongest negative correlation was observed with affective commitment ( $r = -0.63$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), followed by intrinsic ( $r = -0.55$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and extrinsic job satisfaction ( $r = -0.53$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). These findings suggested that affective commitment may be particularly important in reducing turnover intentions.

### **2.8.3 Regression analysis**

Next, this research sought to determine the predictive influence of transformational leadership dimensions on intrinsic job satisfaction, extrinsic job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention. This was done through a regression analysis, and the results are shown below.

Table 2.4: Regression analysis with dependent variables IJS, EJS, AOC and TI (n=160)

Predictor	IJS		EJS		AOC		TI	
	Stand $\beta$	t	Stand $\beta$	t	Stand $\beta$	t	Stand $\beta$	t
1. VA	0.11	0.76	0.05	0.45	0.07	0.54	-0.19	-1.33
2. POAM	0.00	0.01	0.24	1.78	-0.11	-0.78	-0.23	-1.43
3. FAOG	0.22	1.52	0.07	0.61	-0.01	-0.06	0.05	0.39
4. HPE	0.13	1.63	-0.02	-0.32	0.03	0.44	0.10	1.20
5. IC	0.12	1.00	0.14	1.50	0.13	1.33	0.10	0.90
6. INS	0.15	0.99	0.35*	2.94	0.23	1.76	0.04	0.29
7. IJS	-	-	-	-	0.39**	5.30	-0.17	-1.88
8. EJS	-	-	-	-	0.16	1.81	-0.04	-0.40
9. AOC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.39**	-4.29
F	17.4		41.1		26		14.7	
p	< 0.001		< 0.001		< 0.001		< 0.001	
R	0.64		0.79		0.76		0.69	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.41		0.62		0.58		0.47	
f <sup>2</sup>	0.68		1.61		1.38		0.88	
Effect size	Large		Large		Large		Large	

The parameters for  $f^2$  are set for practical significance with effect sizes: 0.01  $\geq$  small, 0.10  $\geq$  medium, 0.35  $\geq$  large (Steyn, 2002:12).

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.001$  / \* Significant at  $p < 0.01$

$\beta$  = standardised estimates

(Source: Author)

From the results in Table 2.4 transformational leadership characteristics collectively explained 41% of the variance in intrinsic job satisfaction with a large practical effect ( $f^2 = 0.68$ ). Although none of the leadership dimensions reached statistical significance, *goal acceptance* ( $\beta = 0.22$ ) demonstrated the highest positive associations with intrinsic job satisfaction. For extrinsic job satisfaction, transformational leadership dimensions accounted for 62% of the variance, also a large effect ( $f^2 = 1.61$ ). Further, intellectual stimulation ( $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) was a statistically significant contributor. This suggested that leaders who stimulated innovative thinking contributed to higher extrinsic satisfaction.

For affective commitment, the model explained 58% of the variance ( $f^2 = 1.38$ ), and signified a large practical effect. Intrinsic job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.39$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) was a significant predictor. This indicated that employees who experienced higher levels of

intrinsic satisfaction tended to feel more emotionally connected and committed to their organisation. Finally, the model for turnover intention accounted for 47% of the variance ( $f^2 = 0.88$ ), which also reflected a large practical significance. Affective commitment ( $\beta = -0.39$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) was the only significant predictor. It revealed that employees with a stronger emotional attachment to the organisation had a lower intention to quit.

In summary, the results suggested that transformational leadership characteristics play a key role in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions. All models showed large practical effects and meaningful predictive value to support this statement.

#### 2.8.4 Mediation analysis

This study also determined the indirect effect of affective commitment in the relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and turnover intention, as seen in Table 2.5. This addressed the objectives of whether job satisfaction and affective commitment mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. It also looked at the mediating effect of affective commitment between job satisfaction and turnover intention. The bootstrap CI tested the indirect effect, where a significant indirect effect was indicated by the absence of zero.

Table 2.5: Indirect effects of predictors on dependent variables

Indirect path	Estimate	SE	p	Bootstrapping 95% CI	
				Lower	Upper
TL → AOC → IJS	0.16***	0.03	< 0.001	0.10	0.23
TL → AOC → EJS	0.11*	0.04	0.013	0.03	0.20
TL → AOC → TI	-0.29***	0.08	< 0.001	-0.46	-0.16
TL → IJS → TI	-0.20**	0.07	0.003	-0.33	-0.08
TL → EJS → TI	-0.18	0.10	0.065	-0.40	-0.01
IJS → AOC → TI	-0.60***	0.12	< 0.001	-0.83	-0.37
EJS → AOC → TI	-0.44***	0.09	< 0.001	-0.60	-0.26

\*\*\* significant for  $p < 0.001$  / \*\* significant for  $p < 0.01$  / \* significant for  $p < 0.05$

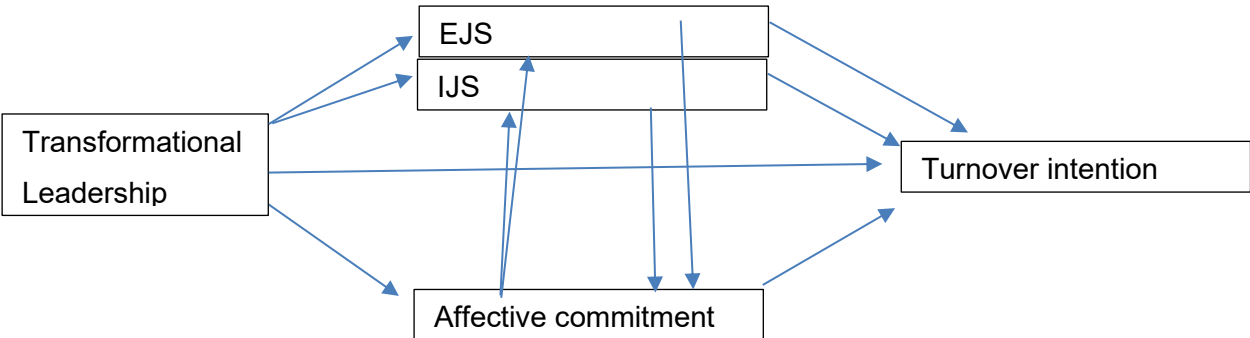
(Source: Author)

The results in Table 2.5 showed that most indirect paths were significant. Transformational leadership positively influenced intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction

via affective commitment (95% CI [0.10, 0.23], [0.03, 0.20]) and indirectly reduced turnover intention via affective commitment (95% CI [-0.46, -0.16]). Further, transformational leadership also indirectly reduced turnover intention through intrinsic and marginally extrinsic job satisfaction (95% CI [-0.33, -0.08]; [-0.40, -0.01]). These findings confirmed that job satisfaction and affective commitment were mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. To add to existing literature this research also looked at the indirect effect of only employee attitudes, without the influence of transformational leadership. This showed that intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction had a significant indirect effect on turnover intention through affective commitment (95% CI [-0.83, -0.37], [-0.60, -0.26]).

**2.9 Discussion**

The primary objective of this research was to investigate transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention in an IHL located in the North-West Province. The data was collected from 160 respondents and statistical analyses revealed the direct relationships between the constructs as well as the mediating role of job satisfaction and affective commitment in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. It also showed the indirect effect of affective commitment between (i) job satisfaction and turnover intention and (ii) transformational leadership and job satisfaction. The relationships are indicated in Figure 2.2.



**Figure 2.2: The conceptual framework tested in the mediation model**

(Source: Author)

For the first secondary objective the findings supported previous studies with a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership, job satisfaction (intrinsic and extrinsic) (Ningsih *et al.*, 2023:88; Oyewobi, 2024:737; Samad *et al.*, 2022:68) and

affective commitment (Choi *et al.*, 2025:618; Donkor *et al.*, 2022; Jiatong *et al.*, 2022:8; Park *et al.*, 2022:92). Further, job satisfaction also showed a positive correlation with affective commitment, as expected based on similar research (Gessese & Premanandam, 2023:8; Othman & Khrais, 2022:169; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:134). This research further supported previous studies and showed that transformational leadership (Alkarabsheh *et al.*, 2022:1; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:9; Samad *et al.*, 2022:68), affective commitment (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:46; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:650; Masindi *et al.*, 2024:78) and job satisfaction (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:9; Masindi *et al.*, 2024:78; Tshwane *et al.*, 2023:1) have a significant negative correlation to turnover intention. It shows that transformational leadership correlate with an increase in positive employee attitudes like satisfaction and commitment, and a decrease in turnover intention.

To address the second secondary objective the results with means above the midpoint showed that most employees perceive their leaders to adopt a transformational leadership style. The results also showed that the highest scoring dimension of transformational leadership was fostering high performance expectations, which suggests that leaders set challenging goals and motivate employees to excel. This was followed by the second-highest score of role modelling, which means leaders demonstrate the behaviours and values they expect to see from the employees. While still above average, individual consideration had the lowest score among the dimensions of transformational leadership. This suggests that leaders provide less personalised attention and support to individual employees compared to other leadership behaviours.

The third secondary objective was to determine the role of transformational leadership style dimensions in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions. The regression analysis showed that transformational leadership dimension played an important role to shape key employee attitudes. Transformational leadership dimensions contributed to higher levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and affective commitment. Further, intrinsic job satisfaction was seen as a significant predictor of affective commitment. In turn, affective commitment was a significant predictor of turnover intention, which highlights its central role to retain employees (Wu & Liu, 2022:6). The combined predictors accounted for a good proportion of variance in all outcome variables. This suggests that transformational leadership and related employee attitudes play an

important role in shaping work-related outcomes (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:295). This emphasises its practical importance for organisational management and human resource strategies (Freire & Azevedo, 2024:653).

The fourth secondary objective was to determine if job satisfaction acted as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. The results indicated that job satisfaction showed an indirect effect in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention, in line with previous findings (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621-622; Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:12). This highlights that job satisfaction assists to translate transformational leadership behaviours into lower employee turnover intention.

The fifth secondary objective was to determine if affective commitment acted as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention. The mediation analysis showed a significant indirect effect of affective commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. This is contradictory to previous research, which showed no mediation of organisational commitment (Suroya *et al.*, 2023:134) or specifically affective commitment in this relationship (Donkor *et al.*, 2022:12). This contradiction may be attributed to the unique organisational culture within South African IHLs, where emotional attachment to institutional values plays a particularly significant role in employee retention.

Finally, for the sixth secondary objective looking at only employee attitudes, it showed that intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction were found to have a significant indirect effect on turnover intention via affective commitment. This is in line with the limited previous research that tested this model in other countries (Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:12; Kartika & Purba, 2018:100). This finding shows the interconnected nature of employee attitudes as satisfaction and commitment do not operate in isolation but reinforce one another. This highlights that job satisfaction and emotional attachment together create a more stable and loyal workforce. Affective commitment also showed a strong indirect effect in the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. This contributed to the current research, as most previous studies determined the indirect

effect of job satisfaction between leadership and affective commitment (Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:286; Oyewobi, 2024:737; ÖZgÜL *et al.*, 2022:10).

Overall, the discussion shows that transformational leadership is essential to enhance job satisfaction and affective commitment of employees. This, in turn, reduces their intention to leave the organisation. Practically, this suggests that leaders in this IHL should prioritise and role model supportive, motivating, and high-expectation environments to strengthen employee commitment and retention.

## **2.10 Theoretical contributions**

The theoretical contribution of this study added to the current research on the variables of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment and turnover intention, especially in IHLs. It also confirmed the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments, TLQ, MSQ, ACS and ITQ scales, in a South African context. The confirmation of the ability to use these scales in different settings can improve the potential generalisability across contexts.

Further, this research builds on the foundation of researchers like Nanjundeswaraswamy (2023:286); Oyewobi (2024:737); Suroya *et al.* (2023:135-136) as it investigates the variables in a South African context. Additionally, as a future recommendation by Suroya *et al.* (2023:135-136) this research determined both job satisfaction and affective commitment as mediators in the relationship between leadership and turnover intention. Most of the previous similar research in an IHL focused on academic staff only, or both academic and non-academic staff (Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:1; Kgekoane, 2022:65). Therefore, this research expands the focus specifically on non-academic staff and their perceptions.

## **2.11 Managerial implications**

It is essential for this IHL to address the root causes of turnover intentions and low job satisfaction. One of the potential causes of turnover intention is the leadership style that managers implement (Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:9). The findings of this research guide practical insights for managers.

Firstly, the results showed that transformational leadership has a significant positive correlation to job satisfaction and affective commitment, along with a negative correlation with turnover intention. This means organisations can prioritise leadership development programmes like coaching sessions or workshops. As per the JD-R model, this will provide leaders with the resources to address the demands of people management (Bakker, Demerouti, *et al.*, 2023:38).

Next, the results showed that individualised consideration had the lowest mean score of the dimensions of transformational leadership. Managers must improve this, as it focuses on the individual needs of team members and allows them to grow to their full potential (Bass & Avolio, 1990:22). Some practical steps include monthly one-on-one meetings, mentoring initiatives and personal development plans to understand the goals, needs and challenges of employees (Flinchum *et al.*, 2023:495).

The results highlighted the crucial role of emotional attachment to improve employee retention. Therefore, it is important to foster affective commitment, potentially through team cohesion that can include potential team-building activities and linking daily tasks to the overall success and values of the organisation (Dunger, 2023:54).

Finally, managers can do annual assessments as part of performance management on their leadership practices and employee attitudes to monitor the progress and areas of concern among employees (Ehmann *et al.*, 2024:1; Malik *et al.*, 2024:602). These practices will allow the IHL to enhance their current leadership behaviours to align more with transformational leadership. This can lead to improved job satisfaction, affective commitment, which can reduce turnover intention among employees.

## **2.12 Limitations**

Like many empirical investigations, this study is not without limitations. Firstly, the cross-sectional research design limits the ability to infer causal relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:107). Secondly, as all data were gathered using self-administered questionnaires, the study may be affected by common method bias (Kock *et al.*, 2021:1). Additionally, there was also potential response bias if respondents did not respond truthfully, accurately, or consistently to survey questions.

Furthermore, the use of a non-probability convenience sampling approach introduces sampling bias. This decreases the generalisability of the results (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:223). Further, this research had a low response rate of 7.7%; however, the 160 responses still exceeded the required minimum. Finally, the questionnaire was only distributed in English, which may have led to misinterpretation.

### **2.13 Recommendations for future research**

Future research should use longitudinal designs to determine causal relationships and increase generalisability through larger samples and different industries. Studies could explore other variables like employee performance or OCB or investigate all dimensions of organisational commitment. Given the contradictory findings on affective commitment as a mediator, further research should test this in various populations. The use of probability sampling and non-academic staff from multiple IHLs can improve participation rates to reduce bias. Lastly, qualitative studies are recommended to gain deeper insights into employee perceptions and contextual factors.

### **2.14 Conclusion**

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention among support staff at an IHL in the North-West Province. It collected 160 responses cross-sectional, quantitative and online survey approach. It found significant positive correlations between transformational leadership, job satisfaction and affective commitment. It also found that these three variables had significant negative correlations with turnover intention. The research also found that job satisfaction and affective commitment served as mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. It also showed that for employee attitudes, affective commitment mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. These findings show the importance of transformational leadership behaviours as a strategic approach to improve job satisfaction, affective commitment, and reduce turnover intention.

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## CHAPTER 3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes the literature review and empirical analysis in line with the stated objectives of the study. Furthermore, it will conclude the theoretical insights and contributions of this research. It will outline the limitations, practical recommendations for IHL and finally give recommendations for future research.

### 3.1 Discussion

This research aimed to investigate the relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention among support staff at an IHL in the North-West Province. The responses of 160 online questionnaires were analysed to determine the direct correlations between the research variables. This research further investigated the mediating roles of affective commitment in the relationship between (i) transformational leadership and turnover intention and (ii) job satisfaction and turnover intention. It also looked at the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. It supported the current research that highlighted the important relationships between these variables (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:639; Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:1; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:296).

For the first secondary objective this research looked to determine the relationship between transformational leadership style dimensions, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions. The results demonstrated significant positive correlations between transformational leadership dimensions, intrinsic, extrinsic job satisfaction, and affective commitment. Additionally, all three of these variables showed a significant negative relationship with turnover intention. These findings are consistent with previous research that found positive relationships between transformational leadership, job satisfaction (Choi *et al.*, 2025:618; Ningsih *et al.*, 2023:88; Oyewobi, 2024:737), affective commitment (Choi *et al.*, 2025:618; Jiatong *et al.*, 2022; Park *et al.*, 2022:92) and a negative relationship with turnover intention (Choi *et al.*, 2025:618; Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:9; Samad *et al.*, 2022:68).

There was a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and extrinsic job satisfaction. This suggests that leaders can through the behaviours of

transformational leadership enhance employee satisfaction with external aspects of their job like improving working conditions, giving recognition and promotions where due and aligning benefits with performance rewards like pay raises or bonuses (Maloba & Pillay-Naidoo, 2022:9). While, the positive correlation for intrinsic job satisfaction means that transformational leaders can make the tasks employees do more meaningful and challenging based on their skillset (Ali & Anwar, 2021:21). Managers can also increase autonomy and decision-making opportunities to help employees grow professionally (Ali & Anwar, 2021:21). The positive correlation with affective commitment indicates that transformational leadership fosters an emotional attachment to the organisation, likely because leaders create a sense of purpose and alignment between individual and organisational values (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:38; Wang, 2022:13). The negative correlation with turnover intention demonstrates that transformational leadership effectively reduces employees' desire to leave the organisation (Akinyemi *et al.*, 2022:40). This is critical for institutional stability and reducing costly employee turnover.

The second secondary objective of this research looked at the adoption of the transformational leadership dimensions by the leaders as perceived by employees. The results revealed that transformational leadership was prevalent among leaders at the institution. The prevalence of the various dimensions was ranked based on their means, with the highest score associated with high-performance expectations. This was followed closely by provide an appropriate model, and the lowest score was for individual consideration.

This emphasis on high expectations is significant because it demonstrates that leaders in the institution prioritise excellence and quality work, which can motivate employees to strive for higher performance standards and improve organisational success (Grobler & Grobler, 2023:2; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:112). The perception that managers provide an appropriate model shows that they mimic the behaviour and high expectations that are required from employees (Khumalo & Jackson, 2024:177; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:112). However, the relatively lower score for individual consideration shows the need to pay personal attention to employees based on individual challenges and developmental areas (Bass & Avolio, 1990:22; Khumalo & Jackson, 2024:177).

Subsequently, the third secondary objective was to determine the role of transformational leadership style dimensions in job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions. The regression analysis showed that the combined predictors showed large effects, and the models gave meaningful explanations of the various outcomes. The combined predictors accounted for a good proportion of variance in all outcome variables. The dimensions of transformational leadership explained 38% of the variance in intrinsic job satisfaction and 62% of the variance in extrinsic job satisfaction. Additionally, when intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction were introduced into the model, they explained 57% of the variance in affective commitment. Finally, the model of dimensions of transformational leadership, job satisfaction affective commitment (a significant predictor) explained 46% of the variance in turnover intention.

This suggests that transformational leadership and related employee attitudes play an important role in shaping work-related outcomes (Choi *et al.*, 2025:620; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:295). Ultimately, the findings demonstrate interrelationships between leadership behaviours, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, and affective commitment and their contributions to understanding employees' intention to leave the organisation.

The analysis showed the importance of affective commitment acting as a predictor to turnover intention, similar to previous research (Freire & Azevedo, 2024:650; Wu & Liu, 2022:6). This shows the need for managers to focus on how to improve affective commitment among employees. From the analysis, intrinsic job satisfaction acted as a significant predictor of affective commitment. This relationship is likely observed because employees who find fulfilment from their work (intrinsic satisfaction) naturally develop a stronger emotional attachment to their organisation (affective commitment) (Ali & Anwar, 2021:21; Meyer & Allen, 1991:61). In essence, this means that managers can improve intrinsic job satisfaction and, in return, employees develop an emotional attachment to an organisation. This will likely reduce the desire to consider alternative employment. Ultimately, it shows how affective commitment acts as a retention strategy.

Additionally, the fourth secondary objective looked at job satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. Since intrinsic and extrinsic showed acceptable indirect effects, it means that job satisfaction acted as a

mediator in the above relationship. This supports the results from previous research, which found similar mediating relationships (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621-622; Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:12). This means that job satisfaction is the mechanism through which managers can reduce turnover intention. Overall, this suggests that employees are more likely to remain with an organisation when transformational leaders create a meaningful and supportive work environment. This improves job satisfaction and strengthens emotional attachment to the organisation.

Next, the fifth secondary objective was to determine if affective commitment acted as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention. The results confirmed a significant indirect effect of affective commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. This finding contradicts some previous research that found no mediation effect of affective or organisational commitment in this relationship (Donkor *et al.*, 2022:12; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:134). The contradiction with previous studies suggests that the mediating role of affective commitment may be context dependent. Organisations in the higher education sector often foster an emotional connection between employees and the institution's values, which may influence how affective commitment functions within this context.

Lastly, the sixth secondary objective determined if affective commitment acted as a mediator in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. The analysis showed that job satisfaction had a significant indirect effect on turnover intention via affective commitment. Additionally, transformational leadership showed a significant indirect effect on job satisfaction via affective commitment. This contributes to current research and shows the reciprocal nature of these variables (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621-622; Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:12; Kartika & Purba, 2018:100). The findings suggest that transformational leadership increases affective commitment, which in turn enhances job satisfaction, which then reduces turnover intention. This shows the importance of affective commitment as a mechanism through which leadership practices can generate positive outcomes for employees and organisations.

In summary, these findings show how these variables work together in complex harmony. It confirms that managers should focus on transformational leadership behaviours to improve positive employee attitudes and reduce negative outcomes like turnover

intentions. Since turnover intention is closely linked to actual turnover, this can also reduce turnover (Lazzari *et al.*, 2022:280-281). Furthermore, both job satisfaction and affective commitment served as mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. Affective commitment also mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. This highlights the interplay between these variables to shape employee attitudes and intentions.

### **3.2 Theoretical implications**

This research was guided by the theoretical frameworks of SET, which was the primary theoretical lens through which the relationships were examined. It posits that social exchanges are determined by cost and benefit, and those individuals who receive benefits reciprocate supportive actions and loyalty (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005:874; Donkor *et al.*, 2022:3). The findings of this research confirmed the SET perspective as employees who perceived their supervisors to practice the transformational leadership also tend to show higher levels of job satisfaction and affective commitment. This is in line with Ntseke *et al.* (2022:4) who explained that this leadership style contributes to the improvement of (i) team morale, (ii) employee motivation, (iii) organisational commitment, and (iv) alignment between the team and organisational values or goals. The significant negative correlation between transformational leadership and turnover intention validates the relationship of loyalty and employees being less likely to leave due to the positive benefits of this leadership style (Choi *et al.*, 2025:622; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005:874; Donkor *et al.*, 2022:3).

For Herzberg's two-factor theory, this study provided valuable insights to distinguish between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and the relationship it has with leadership (Herzberg, 1987:9; Perez, 2024:15). This study found that transformational leadership was positively correlated with both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. It also showed that the behaviour of intellectual stimulation was a significant predictor of extrinsic job satisfaction. Additionally, the JD-R model supported that transformational leadership is a valuable resource that helps employees cope with job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007:312). This is supported by the significant effect that the six dimensions explained in the outputs of job satisfaction (intrinsic and extrinsic), affective commitment and turnover intention.

Theoretically, this study extends existing models as it validates their applicability across diverse institutional and cultural contexts. This insight refines current theoretical understanding as it integrates the aspects of SET, Herzberg's theory, and the JD-R model into a unified framework of leadership and employee attitudes. Consequently, the study advances theoretical knowledge through the mediating roles of job satisfaction and affective commitment as key psychological mechanisms that link transformational leadership to reduced turnover intention.

This study also contributes to the transformational leadership theory, as it validated the six-dimensional model proposed by Podsakoff *et al.* (1990:107). The dimensions showed significant intercorrelations to collectively explain transformational leadership (Grobler & Grobler, 2023:2; Khumalo & Jackson, 2024:177; Podsakoff *et al.*, 1990:112). It also confirmed the validity and reliability of the measuring instruments, TLQ, MSQ, ACS and ITQ scales, in a South African IHL context.

Further, this research builds on the foundation of researchers like Nanjundeswaraswamy (2023:286); Oyewobi (2024:737); Suroya *et al.* (2023:135-136) as it investigates the variables in a South African context. Additionally, this research determined both job satisfaction and affective commitment as mediators in the relationship between leadership and turnover intention. Most of the previous similar research in an IHL focused on academic staff only, or both academic and non-academic staff (Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:1; Kgekoane, 2022:65). Therefore, this research expands the focus specifically on non-academic staff and their perceptions. Ultimately, it supported the positive correlations between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and affective commitment and their negative correlation to turnover intention (Choi *et al.*, 2025:621; Freire & Azevedo, 2024:639; Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023:1; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023:296; Suroya *et al.*, 2023). The findings collectively supported the proposed theoretical framework

### **3.3 Managerial implications**

It is essential for this IHL to address the root causes of turnover intentions and low job satisfaction. One of the potential root causes of turnover intention is the leadership style that managers implement (Ntseke *et al.*, 2022:9). This study specifically focused on the relationships between the positive leadership style of transformational leadership and

how it correlates with employee attitudes of job satisfaction, affective commitment and turnover intention. The findings of this research guide several practical insights for managers and leaders at IHLs.

Firstly, the results showed that transformational leadership has a positive correlation with job satisfaction and affective commitment, along with a negative correlation with turnover intention. This means that to reduce turnover intentions, the IHL must prioritise leadership development programmes like coaching sessions or workshops. As per the JD-R model, this will provide leaders with the interpersonal skill resources to address the demands of people management (Bakker, Demerouti, *et al.*, 2023:38).

Next, the results showed that individualised consideration had the lowest mean score of the dimensions of transformational leadership. It is essential that managers focus on and improve this area, as this dimension is focused on understanding the individual needs of the team members (Bass & Avolio, 1990:22). Individual consideration makes employees feel valued and allows a manager to understand the specific type of support or development each employee needs to reach their full potential.

Some practical steps include regular monthly one-on-one meetings, mentoring initiatives, and personal development plans for employees to understand their goals, needs and challenges. As argued by Flinchum *et al.* (2023:495) regular one-on-one meetings are important because they demonstrate a manager's personal investment in employees, strengthen emotional bonds, and enhance engagement. It is also essential to have discussions that focus on career development and individual growth, instead of only when there are performance issues (Flinchum *et al.*, 2023:495).

The results highlighted the crucial role of an emotional attachment to an organisation to improve employee retention. This was a strong correlation and predictor value of affective commitment to turnover intention. Therefore, it is important to foster affective commitment, potentially through team cohesion (Dunger, 2023:54). Further, Dunger (2023:54) suggested that team-building activities or team events can improve commitment as they promote a sense of belonging. Additionally, celebrating small wins and recognition can ensure employees understand how their tasks contribute to the success of the larger organisation. It is also essential that the IHL make use of their experts in the field of organisational behaviour who can provide and guide managers on

the development of transformational behaviours and use these to improve affective commitment.

Finally, the managers can do annual assessments on their leadership practices and employee attitudes to monitor the progress and areas of concern among employees (Malik *et al.*, 2024:602). The insights gained from these assessments can be integrated into managerial performance reviews (Ehmann *et al.*, 2024:1). This will ensure that leadership effectiveness and employee well-being are evaluated alongside operational outcomes. This approach can inform managers on areas of improvement and allow them to proactively implement strategies that address these concerns (Ehmann *et al.*, 2024:5). This can in turn, create a work environment where employees feel heard, valued, and supported, which reduces turnover intentions.

These practices will allow the IHL to enhance their current leadership practices to align more with transformational leadership. This leads to improved job satisfaction and affective commitment to reduce costly turnover among employees

### **3.4 Limitations**

Like many empirical investigations, this study is not without limitations. Firstly, the cross-sectional research design limits the ability to infer causal relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2023:107), and the quantitative research approach will give correlations and not in-depth insights into participants' experiences (Taherdoost, 2022:59). All data were gathered through self-administered questionnaires therefore, the study may be affected by common method bias and response bias (Grimmond *et al.*, 2025:1; Kock *et al.*, 2021:1).

Furthermore, the use of a non-probability convenience sampling approach introduces sampling bias, as not all members of the target population had an equal likelihood of selection. This decreases the generalisability of the results as it may not represent the perceptions of the broader population (Bryman *et al.*, 2021:223). Additionally, this research had a low response rate of 7.7%, however, the 160 responses still exceeded the minimum requirement. Finally, the questionnaire was distributed in English which may cause misinterpretation if the respondent's is not fluent in English. This was mitigated by introducing the inclusion criteria that the respondent must understand English.

### **3.5 Recommendations for future research**

This research cannot conclude causal relationships, thus, it is recommended that future research employ longitudinal designs to examine causal relationships between these variables. This research provided some valuable input for the selected IHL; however, future studies can conduct similar research in different industries and larger samples to increase generalisability. Additionally, other studies can also change some of the variables investigated, for example, variables of transformational leadership, employee engagement and employee performance or OCB (Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022:43; Suleman *et al.*, 2022:13).

This research specifically focused on affective commitment and future studies can look at organisational commitment as a whole or the individual correlations to normative and continuance commitment (Freire & Azevedo, 2024:649). Additionally, this research found a contradiction to previous research with affective commitment as a mediator between transformational leadership and turnover intention (Donkor *et al.*, 2022:12; Suroya *et al.*, 2023:134). This future research can potentially investigate this mediation analysis in different target populations to improve valuable correlations.

Further, future studies can use probability sampling to reduce sampling bias and expand the population to include non-academic staff across all South African universities. It is essential to achieve higher participation rates to minimise non-response bias. The use of shortened and translated versions of the measurement instruments could help mitigate common method bias.

Finally, future qualitative studies can provide some deeper insight into why employees experience specific perceptions. This can allow researchers to explore nuanced factors that may influence how employees interpret the tested variables. Ultimately, this provides richer contextual insights that quantitative data alone may not reveal.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention among support staff at an IHL in the North-West Province. It collected 160 responses through an online survey approach and found significant positive correlations between transformational leadership,

job satisfaction and affective commitment. It also found that transformational leadership, job satisfaction and affective commitment had significant negative correlations with turnover intention. It further found that job satisfaction and affective commitment served as mediators in the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. It also found that for employee attitudes, affective commitment mediated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. These findings show the importance of transformational leadership capabilities as a strategic approach to improve job satisfaction, affective commitment, and reduce turnover intention. It also showed the importance of affective commitment within this organisation to improve the other employee attitudes.

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## **ANNEXURE A: INFORMED CONSENT**

DEAR PARTICIPANT

### **INFORMED CONSENT TO COMPLETE SURVEY**

You are invited to take part in a research study that forms part of a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher or person explaining the research to you any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to say no to participating, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the NWU Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC) and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the North-West University and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study.

**Title of the project:** Investigating the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and turnover intention in a South African institution of higher learning.

**Institution:** NWU Business School

**Ethics Reference Number:** NWU-00647-25-A4

#### **Names and contact details of project staff**

	<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Researcher</b>
<b>Title, name &amp; surname</b>	Prof Leon Jackson	Beandré du Toit
<b>Full Names</b>	Leon	Beandré
<b>Function in Project</b>	Principle Investigator	Researcher
<b>Telephone</b>	082 840 1135	072 969 1696

## **What is this research study all about?**

The primary objective of the study is to investigate transformational leadership, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention in an institution of higher learning located in the North West.

Secondary objectives:

- To determine if the dimensions of transformational leadership style is adopted by the supervisors in the institution of higher learning.
- To determine the role of transformational leadership style, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment, and turnover intentions.
- To determine if job satisfaction acts as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention.
- To determine if affective organisational commitment acts as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and turnover intention.

## **What is the purpose of the study?**

This research will investigate the relationships between transformation leadership and employee job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment, and turnover intention. It aims to inform management practices by investigating the correlation of transformational leadership with these employee outcomes. This will ultimately provide insights into strategies to improve employee retention and improve the institution's long-term success

## **What will be expected of you?**

- Complete the survey that consists of 56 close-ended questions, which should take approximately 10-15 minutes of your time.
- Questions will relate to the leadership behaviour of your supervisor/manager, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and turnover intention.
- You can complete this survey at any time and location convenient to you where you have access to a computer and internet.
- Respond to the questions in an open and honest manner.

Please note that your responses are anonymous and no personally identifiable data will be collected.

## **Potential Risks:**

The risks associated with this study are minimal. They may include:

- Participants may encounter technical difficulties, such as internet disconnection or device malfunctions, that could interrupt the completion of the survey.
- Allocating 15 minutes in one sitting might be a minor inconvenience, particularly if the participant has a busy schedule.

## **Potential Benefits:**

While there may not be direct benefits to you, participating in this study will contribute to valuable research that could help the organisation understand the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention.

## **Ethical considerations**

- *Intended Use of Data:* All the data collected for this research will be analysed for academic purposes and the statistical analysed results will be published in the public domain.
- *Confidentiality:* All responses will be kept confidential and no personal identifiable information will be collected.
- *Biographic information:* Limited demographic information will be collected to allow for the profiling of the sample. However, this information will not be used for further statistical considerations.
- *POPIA:* Further, in compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 (POPIA) of 2013, the researcher will adhere to all legal requirements when processing survey responses and information.
- *Access and Storage:* The results will be accessible online to the research team with only the creator of the research instrument (the researcher) being able to grant access to the results form. The results of the questionnaire will be downloaded to Excel, and the file will also be password protected. Finally, the data will only be stored or used for 5 years from the time of collection.

## DECLARATION

### Declaration by participant

By selecting the option below, I agree to take part in the research study titled: Investigating the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and turnover intention in a South African institution of higher learning.

1. I confirm that I have read the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have these answered satisfactorily.
2. I confirm that I voluntarily participate in this study and understand that I can withdraw from the study at any point.
3. I understand that as I have completed the study anonymously it will not be possible to remove any information I have provided, as you will not be able to identify me in any way.
4. I understand that individuals from the University may look at anonymous research data collected during the study, to ensure that the study is conducted appropriately.
5. I agree that my anonymous information can be shared with individuals from the project team detailed above.
6. I understand that all the data collected for this research will be analysed for academic purposes and the statistical analysed results will be published in the public domain.
7. I understand that the research team will remain compliant with the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 (POPIA) of 2013, and adhere to all legal requirements for processing information during this research.

If you agree to participate in this study, please give voluntary informed consent by clicking “Yes”. This will take you directly to the online questionnaire.

I agree to take part in this study

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
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## ANNEXURE B: MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Section A:

*Instructions:* Select the alternative that best describe you

<b>1. Gender</b>	Male			
	Female			
<b>2. Age</b>	18 -25	26 - 30	31 – 35	36 – 40
	41 – 45	46 – 50	51 – 55	56 – 65
<b>3. Years of service in this organisation</b>	Less than 1 year	2 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 15 years
	16 – 20 years	21 – 25 years	26 – 30 years	Longer than 31 years
<b>4. Highest qualification</b>	Matric	Certificate	Diploma	B degree
	Post Grad Diploma	Honours	Masters	PhD

Section B:

*Instructions:* Read through the following statements and indicate the extent to which it characterises your situation 1 (Very Little) - 4 (Moderate Amount) - 7 (Very Much)

	To what extent does each of the following statements characterise your manager/supervisor's leadership orientation. My manager ...	Very little			Moderate			Very much
B1	have a clear understanding of where we are going	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B2	paint an interesting picture of the future of our group/section	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B3	always seek new opportunities for the group/organisation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B4	inspire others with his/her plans for the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B5	is able to get me to be committed to his/her dreams	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B6	lead by "doing" rather than simply be "telling"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B7	provide a good model for me to follow	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B8	lead by example	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B9	foster collaboration among group members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B10	encourage employees to be "team players"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B11	get the group to work together for the same goal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B12	develop a team attitude and spirit among employees	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B13	show that they expect a lot of me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B14	insist on only the best performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B15	will not settle for second best	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B16	act only after considering my feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B17	show respect for my personal feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B18	is thoughtful of my personal needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B19	treat me only after considering my feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B20	challenge me to think about old problems in new ways	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B21	ask questions that prompt me to think	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B22	stimulate me to rethink the way I do things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B23	have ideas that challenge me to reexamine some of my basic assumptions about work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**SECTION C:**

*Instruction:* For each statement below, indicate how satisfied you are with each aspect of your job by selecting a number between 1 (Very Dissatisfied) and 5 (Very Satisfied).

	<b>Statement</b>	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
C1	Being able to keep busy all the time.	1	2	3	4	5
C2	The chance to work alone on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
C3	The chance to do different things from time to time.	1	2	3	4	5
C4	The chance to be "somebody" in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
C5	The way my boss handles his/her workers.	1	2	3	4	5
C6	The competence of my supervisor in making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
C7	Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience.	1	2	3	4	5
C8	The way my job provides for steady employment.	1	2	3	4	5
C9	The chance to do things for other people.	1	2	3	4	5
C10	The chances to tell people what to do.	1	2	3	4	5
C11	The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
C12	The way company policies are put into practice.	1	2	3	4	5
C13	My pay and the amount of work I do.	1	2	3	4	5
C14	The chances for advancement on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
C15	The freedom to use my own judgement.	1	2	3	4	5
C16	The chance to try my own methods of doing the job.	1	2	3	4	5
C17	The working conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
C18	The way my co-workers get along with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
C19	The praise I get for doing a job.	1	2	3	4	5
C20	The feeling of accomplishment I get from my job.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION D:**

*Instruction:* For each statement below, indicate your agreement with the statement with 1 (Strongly Disagree) and 5 (Strongly agree).

	<b>Statements</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
D1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
D2	I really feel as if this organisation's problems are my own	1	2	3	4	5
D3	I do feel like I am 'part of the family' at my organisation	1	2	3	4	5
D4	I do feel 'emotionally attached' to this organisation	1	2	3	4	5

D5	This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me	1	2	3	4	5
D6	I do feel a 'strong' sense of belonging to my organisation	1	2	3	4	5
D7	I often think about quitting this job	1	2	3	4	5
D8	If I have my own way, I will NOT be working for my present company 1 year from now	1	2	3	4	5
D9	I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months	1	2	3	4	5

## ANNEXURE C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



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**Senate Committee for Research Ethics**

Tel: 018 299-484

Feziwe.Mseleni@nwu.ac.za

17 April 2025

### ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **North-West University Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)** on 17 April 2025, the Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-REC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

<b>Study title:</b>	Investigating the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and turnover intention in a South African institution of higher learning.																																													
<b>Study leader/Supervisor (Principal investigator/Researcher):</b>	Prof. L.T.B. Jackson	<b>University no.:</b>	11209658																																											
<b>Student:</b>	B. du Toit	<b>University no.:</b>	53140648																																											
<b>Ethics number:</b>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>6</td><td>4</td><td>7</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Institution</td> <td colspan="5">Study number</td> <td colspan="3">Year</td> <td colspan="2">Status</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="15">Status: S = Submission; R = Re-submission; P = Provisional authorisation; A = Authorisation</td> </tr> </table>			N	W	U	-	0	0	6	4	7	-	2	5	-	A	4	Institution			Study number					Year			Status		Status: S = Submission; R = Re-submission; P = Provisional authorisation; A = Authorisation														
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Institution			Study number					Year			Status																																			
Status: S = Submission; R = Re-submission; P = Provisional authorisation; A = Authorisation																																														
<b>Application type:</b>	Single study - Postgraduate research	<b>Risk level:</b>	Low/minimal risk																																											
<b>Commencement date:</b>	17 April 2025																																													
<b>Expiry date:</b>	17 April 2026																																													
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.																																														

#### Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

Requires RDGC clearance.

## ANNEXURE D: PERMISSION OF GATEKEEPER



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Research Support Department  
Tel: 061910344  
Email: [Feziwe.Mseleni@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Feziwe.Mseleni@nwu.ac.za)

**Economic and Management Sciences  
Research Ethics Committee (EMS-  
REC) on behalf of Research Data  
Gatekeeper Committee (RDGC)**

### NWU RDGC PERMISSION GRANTED LETTER

Based on the documentation provided by the researcher specified below, on 16 July 2025 Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC), on behalf of the North-West University (NWU) Research Data Gatekeeper Committee (NWU-RDGC) hereby **grants permission** for the specific project (as indicated below) to be conducted at the NWU:

Project title:	Investigating the relationship between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective organi				
<b>Project leader</b>					
Title:	Ms	Initials:	B	Surname:	du Toit
<b>Project team</b>					
Title:	Prof	Initials:	LTB	Surname:	Jackson
Title:		Initials:		Surname:	
<b>Ethics clearance information</b>					
Ethics reference no.:	NWU-00647-25-A4	Institution:	North-West University		
NWU EMS-REC reference no.:	NWU-00647-25-A4				
Approval date:	4/17/25	Expiry date:	4/17/26		
<b>Specific conditions of approval:</b>					
None.					

**General Conditions of Approval:**

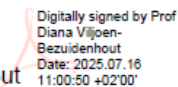
- The NWU-RDGC and EMS-REC will not take the responsibility to recruit research participants or to gather data on behalf of the researcher. This committee can therefore not guarantee the participation of our relevant stakeholders.
- Any changes to the research protocol within the permission period (for a maximum of 1 year) must be communicated to the EMS-REC and NWU-RDGC. Failure to do so will lead to withdrawal of the permission.
- The EMS-REC and NWU-RDGC should be provided with a report or document in which the results of said project are disseminated.

Please note that under no circumstances will any personal information of possible research participants be provided to the researcher by the EMS-REC and NWU-RDGC. The NWU complies with the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA) as well as the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013 (POPI). For an application to access such information please contact Ms Annamarië De Kock (018 285 2771) for the relevant enquiry form or more information on how the NWU complies with PAIA and POPI.

The EMS-REC and NWU-RDGC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the EMS-REC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Prof Diana  
Viljoen-  
Bezuidenhout



Digitally signed by Prof  
Diana Viljoen-  
Bezuidenhout  
Date: 2025.07.16  
11:00:50 +02'00'

**Prof Diana Viljoen-Bezuidenhout**

**Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)**

## ANNEXURE E: TURNITIN REPORT

Investigating <sup>2</sup> transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention, at a South African university

B du Toit

 <sup>1</sup> [orcid.org/0000-0002-8171-8713](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8171-8713)

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## ANNEXURE F: EDITOR CERTIFICATE



### CERTIFICATE: LANGUAGE EDITING

Herein, confirmation that the following document was edited:

---

**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)**

**Title**

Investigating transformational leadership, job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intention at a South African university

**B du Toit**

**Student number: 53140648**

**orcid.org/0000-0002-8171-8713**

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The following was edited according to requirements, subject to Harvard Guidelines  
(for article writing):

*Clarity and coherence, grammar, punctuation, consistency of style, citations and references, formatting and layout, word choice and clarity, consistency of terminology, and readability*

(Academic integrity of the document was upheld and final changes and suggestions must be made by the student.  
Editing check sheet annexed as page 2 of this certificate)

*W Smith*

**Registered Psychometrist**

HPCSA: PMT0097012

Editors' Guild Reg #: SM1027

*R du Plessis*

**Ethical Editing Advisor**

Editors' Guild Reg #: DUP022

*Registered with the Professional Editors Guild*

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