

**Assessing the effects of employee turnover at a selected  
agribusiness organisations' performance in South Africa**

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**Mini-dissertation accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree Master of Business Administration at the North-West University**

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## **ABSTRACT**

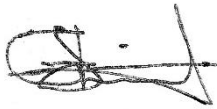
The agricultural sector is an important contributor to South Africa's GDP and employs nearly a million people. However, employee turnover is an ongoing issue of concern for agribusinesses across the country and this impacts organisational performance. There exists a plethora of empirical research that has established a strong relationship between employee turnover and organisational performance in the South African agricultural sector. However, the challenges related to employee turnover in the agribusiness sector are not limited to measurable indicators alone but must establish an in-depth contextual understanding as to why the challenges associated with employee turnover are persistent in the agribusiness sector. Therefore, this study seeks to assess qualitatively the influence of employee turnover on organisational performance in a selected South African agribusiness. The research paradigm chosen for this study is interpretivism, prioritizing the understanding of people's real-world experiences and subjective viewpoints. The research approach is qualitative, delving into subjective meanings, feelings and perceptions regarding employee turnover's influence on performance. The research design employs a descriptive case study method, focusing on SENWES, a prominent South African agribusiness to explore the employee turnover-performance relationship. 14 senior managers at SENWES form the total population. Purposive sampling selects participants based on qualifications, roles, experience, tenure and involvement in organizational goals. Data collection tools encompass an interview guide, SENWES guidelines and policy documents. Thematic analysis, supported by ATLAS.ti software is used to identify recurring patterns and themes. Four themes

emerged from the study; namely, the major causes of employee turnover, The second theme was employee intention to quit, the third theme was employee intention to quit and its implication for performance, and lastly the fourth theme was strategies to reduce turnover rates. This study illuminated staff turnover factors and their effects on a selected South African agribusiness. In some companies, salary discontent may not be the main cause of turnover. It is important to remember that employee turnover is affected by more than just pay. Dissatisfaction with the working environment can seriously impact morale, job contentment and turnover. Creating an inclusive and collaborative workplace where employees may participate in decision-making can reduce employee turnover.

**Keywords:** employee turnover, agribusiness, intention to quit, organisational performance retention strategies

## DECLARATION

I, Gerhard Linde certify that this research project, titled “Assessing the effects of employee turnover at a selected agribusiness organisations’ performance in South Africa” is my own work and is being presented in partial fulfilment of the Master of Business Administration degree requirements at the North-West University. It has never been submitted for a degree or examination at any other university. Additionally, I certify that I have obtained all the necessary authorisations and consent to conduct this study.



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Gerhard Linde

20 November 2023

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of “employee turnover” on a selected agribusiness organisation; namely, SENWES performance in South Africa. Employee turnover refers to the frequency with which employees leave a company and their replacement by new employees (Kanyangale & Breen, 2022). Sihlobo and Qobo (2021) have explained that employee turnover in agribusiness organisations is context-dependent. Therefore, in this study employee turnover refers to the number of workers who voluntarily or involuntarily leave a company within a given period. The definition of employee turnover in this study is expanded to incorporate both voluntary and involuntary separations within a set-out period (Khokhar *et al.*, 2022).

According to Thindisa and Urban (2022), there are studies that have focussed on measuring the performance of business organisations across different sectors, but limited studies do exist that have focussed on explaining the effect of employee turnover on organisational performance. In this study, therefore, performance is seen as the accomplishment of an organisation's goals and objectives, which involve constructs such as financial performance, operational effectiveness and customer satisfaction. However, Sihlobo and Qobo (2021) opined that performance in agribusiness can be judged on the productivity of an individual employee within the organisation and their contribution towards the organisation's goals and objectives. As such, performance in this study is viewed as a single-dimensional construct that explains the overall contribution of an employee towards the organisational goals.

Although performance in business organisations has been measured using a variety of strategies such as financial ratios, balanced scorecards, measurements for employee productivity and customer satisfaction surveys, most of these studies focussed on a deductive approach which led to the generalization of the findings (Mamba *et al.*, 2021). This assertion is exemplified by Thindisa and Urban (2022) who used financial performance metrics like return on investment and gross profit margin to assess how well agricultural organisations were performing overall. Mamba *et al.* (2021) on the other hand have used employee productivity to evaluate individual performance in agribusiness organisations using variables such as revenue per person and production per hour. However, none of these studies have used an inductive approach in which the employee's feelings and experiences form part of their performance management.

In quantitative studies, statistical analysis methods like categorization, reduction and or relationship methods have been widely used to demonstrate the link between performance measurements and employee turnover. Most of these studies only established the relationship patterns and Sihlobo and Qobo (2021), in a study of agricultural organisations in South Africa found a significant inverse relationship between turnover rates and financial performance measurements. Similarly, Grosse *et al.* (2022) investigated the association between employee turnover and productivity indicators and found that higher turnover rates were associated with poorer output per employee. However, none of these studies has ever factored in employee feelings and personal experiences and their effects on employee turnover in specific organisations.

In this study, we sought to assess how employee turnover may derail an agribusiness organisation from reaching its goals from a contextual perspective using a case study design. The researchers approached the senior managers of a chosen agribusiness organisation involved in the determination of the skills needed to achieve the organisational goal. In this study, performance was established in terms of the short-term and long-term goals of the selected agribusiness organisation and examined employee turnover within a specific timeframe, establishing why employees do leave or stay in the organisation, and whether employee turnover has delayed the organisation reaching its short-term or long-term goals in the context of the South African agribusiness sector.

The agriculture sector is an important contributor to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs more than 868,000 people (Statistics South Africa, 2023). Employee turnover is an ongoing issue for agribusiness organisations across South Africa and this influences organisational performance. Employee turnover has been identified as a major challenge in the South African agriculture sector and this affects the sector's ability to reach its goals and objectives (Munyaka, Roodt & Koen, 2020). Brown (2020) and Munyaka *et al.* (2020) agree that employee turnover is increasing in the South African agriculture sector and there exists a plethora of empirical research that has established a strong relationship between employee turnover and organisational performance within the South African agriculture sector. However, the challenges related to employee turnover in the agribusiness sector are not limited to measurable indicators alone but must establish an in-depth contextual understanding as to why the challenges associated with employee turnover are

persistent in the agribusiness sector of South Africa. Therefore, this study aimed to assess qualitatively the effect of employee turnover on organisational performance in a selected South African agribusiness organisation.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The effect of employee turnover on organisational performance in the agriculture sector is gaining traction. Mamba *et al.* (2021) and Munyaka *et al.* (2020) in a previous study have observed that high employee turnover is linked to lower production, higher costs and lower morale among workers. Similarly, Vein, Nkosi and Visser (2021) in another study have established a link between employee turnover, decreasing productivity, higher expenses and decreased competitiveness in the South African sugar cane production businesses.

Employee turnover can be categorized in two ways; namely, voluntary and involuntary turnover. Employees can opt to leave a company either voluntarily or involuntarily and this happens when an employee is either dismissed (involuntary) or leaves the organisation for personal reasons (voluntary) as stated by Thindisa and Urban (2022). Kacmar *et al.* (2006) in an earlier study explained that employee turnover is a major problem that hurts organisational performance. Furthermore, the effect of employee turnover is exacerbated in the South African agriculture sector by the unique nature of the sector given that it is still labour-intensive and characterized by seasonal labour demand with restricted access to resources and training (Munyaka, Roodt & Koen, 2020). The effects of personnel turnover on organisational performance can be greatly amplified by these challenges.

Grosse *et al.* (2022) found that employee turnover can have negative consequences on the agriculture industry, while Brown (2020) established that insufficiently trained labour in an organisation can result in high employee turnover rates, which can harm the robustness and effectiveness of production. Furthermore, employing, training and recruiting new personnel to drive productivity in any organisation also increases expenditure and if the rate at which employees leave the organisation increases, so does the cost of employee turnover argues Price (2011). While increasing the levels of employee turnover may lead to an organisation losing institutional knowledge, expertise is also lost thereby restricting the capacity of the organisation to reach its goals and objectives (Thindisa & Urban, 2022). However, most studies on the effects of employee turnover on organisations' performance in the agribusiness sector in South Africa have been quantitative in design and deductive in nature thereby limited in terms of context and individual employees' experience as to why they leave or stay in an organisation. Therefore, the present study assesses the effects of employee turnover on a selected agribusiness organisation's performance in South Africa using a qualitative research design and approach.

Further research on employee turnover in the agriculture sector within context is also required, according to recent studies by Brown (2020); Grosse *et al.* (2022); Mamba *et al.* (2021); Munyaka *et al.* (2020); and Nkosi and Visser (2021). Nkosi and Visser (2021) investigated the causes and consequences of employee turnover in the South African sugar cane sector using a quantitative approach. Their analysis came to the conclusion that the major variables influencing turnover were irrigation crises related to operations and maintenance, which resulted in a concentration of land and the

increase of medium-sized producers. Due to this change, the advantages of corporate agriculture are now unevenly distributed, which often disadvantages the majority of African landowners and may hinder the growth of medium-scale farming. In a similar vein, Brown (2020) stressed the need for further investigation into employee turnover in the African agriculture industry. In order to fully comprehend the underlying reasons and viable retention tactics, he suggested using a case study approach.

According to Shako and Gichinga's (2017) research, there is a negative correlation between high employee turnover and productivity and morale in Kenyan commercial banks, which is similar to the agricultural sector given their similar context. This suggests that turnover in the agricultural sector may also have similar negative effects. Moreover, to understand the unique challenges from a contextual viewpoint, it is important to use a case to explain how staff turnover affects individual agribusiness organisations' performance in South Africa as these organisations struggle to meet their goals. As such the findings from an in-depth study of this nature may enable the development of tailored management strategies to mitigate the possible negative effects of employee turnover and improve organisational performance in the short and long term.

Also, studies that specifically investigate the link between employee turnover and organisational performance in the South African agribusiness sector are few and far between. To close this knowledge gap and provide a thorough understanding of how turnover affects the performance of an agribusiness organisation, it was important to design a qualitative study such as the one underway. The intention is to close the

existing gap in knowledge that aims at guiding strategic decision-making on employee retention strategies and perhaps enhance the performance of agribusiness organisations in South Africa.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The agribusiness sector in South Africa is experiencing increased employee turnover and this has negative effects on organisational performance major causes include dissatisfaction with pay, limited career advancement opportunities, and workplace challenges. The issue extends to employees quitting due to workplace issues, a desire for a motivating work environment, and the impact on well-being and motivation (Brown, 2020; Munyaka *et al.*, 2020). This study uses a case study approach because most studies on employee turnover have focussed on quantitatively measuring the impact of the neglect of employees' experiences and feelings in a contextual setup. In the quantitative studies that have been accomplished, a deeper understanding of employee turnover experiences, reasons as well as perceptions and their effect on performance in the agricultural industry has not been fully assessed. Though existing studies on employee turnover have mostly focussed on establishing the relationship between employee turnover and organisational performance using quantitative measurements, this study seeks to contribute to the existing literature by providing an in-depth understanding of employee turnover and organisational goals using a qualitative approach is important in academic literature. Munyaka *et al.* (2020) opined that most studies on employee turnover in the agribusiness sector of South Africa have mostly focussed on causes such as working conditions, pay and employee engagement but little is known about

how employee turnover affects organisational goals which in turn affects the performance of individuals, groups and the organisation. By assessing the effect of employee turnover on organisational performance as perceived by senior managers within the South African agricultural sector, this study may contribute to existing knowledge on employee turnover and organisational performance. The study may further unearth in-depth information as to why employee turnover is high in the South African agribusiness sector.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH AIM**

Based on the context and problem statement, the primary objective of this study was to assess the effect of personnel turnover on the productivity of the selected South African agribusiness organisation which is central to the organisation's goal and objectives. Based on the primary object, the secondary research objectives of this study were:

#### **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- To explain the concept of "employee turnover" as used in agribusiness literature.
- To describe how "employee turnover" is incorporated into the short-term and long-term goals of selected agribusiness organisations.
- To identify the factors that cause employee turnover at South African agribusiness organisation
- To establish the management implication of "employee turnover" on the overall performance of the organization.

- To identify strategies that can be adopted by the management to reduce high employee turnover and improve performance.

## **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

From the background of the study, the problem statement and the research objectives, the following research questions have been proposed.

- How is the concept of employee turnover explained in agribusiness literature?
- How is “employee turnover” incorporated into the short-term and long-term goals of agribusiness organisations?
- How do agribusiness organisations use the concept of “employee turnover” to establish performance in agribusiness organisations?
- What factors contribute to employee turnover in .....
- What are the management implications of “employee turnover” on the overall performance of the organisation?
- What are the existing strategies used by agribusiness organisations to enhance the performance of employees?

## **1.7 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY**

Recognizing the major issues that personnel turnover in South Africa's agribusiness sector poses was what spurred this study. Increasing and high staff turnover in business organisations can lead to higher costs for hiring and training, lower productivity and business interruption (Thindisa & Urban, 2022). For establishing effective methods to solve this challenge, it was essential to comprehend the precise effect of personnel turnover on the operation of a selected agribusiness organisation in South Africa. The objective was to derive strategies and tactics that are context-

specific to improving employee retention and boosting overall performance in a cutthroat market climate. The study also seeks to understand the insights as they relate to employee turnover and propose suggestions to the agriculture business organisation under investigation in the South African context.

## **1.8 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

In research studies, while the delimitation described the restrictions and limitations that were placed on the investigation, the scope of this study refers to the boundaries within which the research was done. This study's scope is narrowly defined to include a selected South African agribusiness organisation. The study intended to explain the connection between employee turnover and its effect on the performance of the organisation. The focus of this study is on the agribusiness sector and this allows for the researchers to conduct in-depth research that is relevant and sector-specific to management in the agricultural industry (Thindisa & Urban 2022).

To gather information and explain the understanding of employee turnover and performance, the researchers will purposively interview selected individuals who are senior managers and executives in selected agribusiness organisations in South Africa until saturation is reached. The population of the study includes agribusiness organisations whose origin, formation and registration as a company was first done in South Africa. As a result, the sample size was determined by saturation plus 2 and a selection criterion was established to guide the process.

In South Africa, agribusiness organisations may vary in terms of size, geography, goals and performance indicators hence the findings of this study may not apply to organisations outside those selected for this study, but the methodology and design of this study may be used for further studies in other organisations in different sectors of the South African economy. It is important to keep in mind that, because this research is context-specific, its conclusions and suggestions could not apply to markets or regions of the world that are not in South Africa.

As a result, without drawing broader conclusions about other industries or nations, the emphasis is still on explaining the understanding of staff turnover and organisational performance within the South African agricultural industry. The researchers can ensure that the results are trustworthy and applicable to the setting under inquiry by precisely defining the scope and delimitations of the study. In doing so, they can build a clear knowledge of the boundaries and constraints within which the research was done.

## **1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

These definitions provide a basic understanding of the major constructs used in this study. In the context of the study, a clear definition of constructs ensures clarity and consistency in the understanding and application of these concepts.

*Employee turnover:* the rate with which employees leave a company and must be replaced is referred to as employee turnover. It includes both voluntarily and

involuntarily ended relationships, including terminations, layoffs, retirements and resignations.

*Organisational performance:* refers to the accomplishment of an organisation's aims and objectives. It covers a wide range of factors, including financial performance, operational effectiveness, customer happiness, innovation and worker productivity.

*Agribusiness organisations:* agribusiness organisations are commercial enterprises engaged in the production, processing and distribution of agricultural products as well as related operations. They include a broad range of organisations, including farms, agricultural cooperatives, food-processing businesses, agricultural input providers and enterprises that specialize in agricultural technology.

*Performance Evaluation:* the process of calculating and assessing how well an organisation accomplishes its goals and expected outcomes is known as performance measurement. To evaluate performance in several areas, including financial, operational, customer-related and strategic factors, key performance indicators (KPIs) must be identified and tracked (Meyer, 2005).

## **1.10 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

This study is significant as it has provided an in-depth understanding of how employee performance affects organisational performance in the South African agriculture industry. The study may aid in the development of practical guidelines for controlling employee turnover and enhancing organisational performance in the agribusiness sector. Organisations, decision-makers and researchers who are interested in enhancing the performance of the South African agriculture sector may find this study outcome useful (Thindisa & Urban 2022).

This study may also contribute to the existing body of knowledge on organisational performance and employee turnover, specifically in the context of South African agriculture. This study therefore may offer insights on how organisations can better manage their human resources to improve their performance by explaining the sector-specific strategies on how employee turnover can be managed to meet organisational goals. Additionally, the company used as a case study can benefit from the recommendations derived from this study in minimizing employee turnover and enhancing their performance, which in turn may limit the loss of organisational knowledge, enhance organisational culture and improve organisational performance by meeting the short and long-term goals of the company.

## **1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The study, which examines how employee turnover affects SENWES' performance as a significant player in the South African agribusiness market is summarised in this chapter. Employee turnover which includes both voluntary and involuntary departures is closely examined in light of its impact on performance and organisational objectives. In contrast to the quantitative methodologies that are often used in the literature, the study utilised a qualitative approach to capture the complex consequences of turnover on organisational performance, including financial results, operational efficiency and customer satisfaction.

The chapter presented the aims and research questions with the intention of analysing employee turnover and how it relates to organisational objectives and

performance. It also explores the reasons behind the study's purpose, emphasising the major expenses and disruptions brought on by the industry's high turnover rates. The scope is purposefully narrowed to SENWES, a particular agribusiness organisation, in order to provide in-depth analysis and context-specific insights. To provide a clear context for the study, key terms like organisational performance and employee turnover are specified. The study's possible contributions are highlighted in the conclusion. These include sector-specific methods for reducing turnover and improving performance as well as more general implications for human resource management in the South African agriculture industry. The next chapter will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the literature, scrutinising the extant literature on employee turnover and organisational performance, specifically in relation to South African agribusiness. It will provide a critical evaluation of the approaches and conclusions of earlier research, laying the groundwork for the distinctive qualitative methodology of the present study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

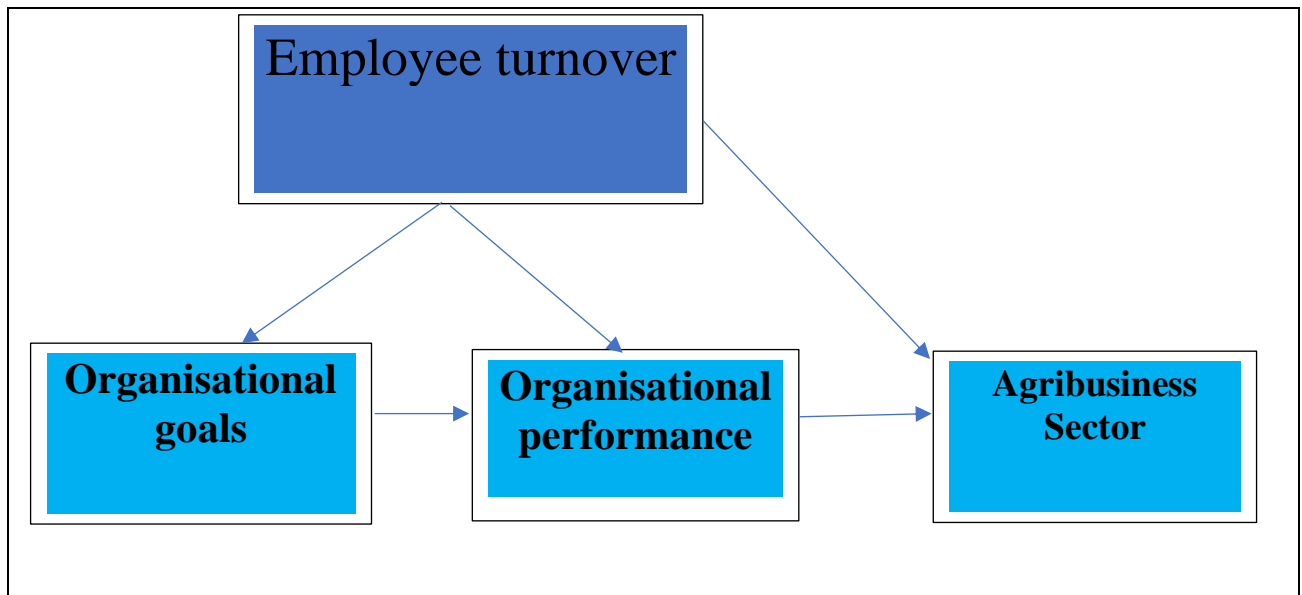
The previous chapter presented the aims and research questions with the intention of analysing employee turnover and how it relates to organisational objectives and performance. It also explores the reasons behind the study's purpose, emphasising the major expenses and disruptions brought on by the industry's high turnover rates. The scope is purposefully narrowed to SENWES, an agribusiness organisation in order to provide in-depth analysis and context-specific insights. While this chapter aims to provide a conceptual framework for a study that assesses the effects of employee turnover at a selected agribusiness organisation's performance in South Africa, the review will explore key concepts, theories and previous research to guide the study's design and hypothesis development.

#### **2.2 CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION OF THIS STUDY**

The study is grounded on three distinct constructs; namely, employee turnover, organisational goals and organisational performance in the South African agribusiness sector as shown in Figure 1. The figure represents the conceptual design for this study. The figure establishes “how” employee turnover could be described as having an influence on organisational goals which in turn influences organisational performance in the agribusiness sector. The conceptual design serves as a guiding foundation for the assessment of the effects of employee turnover on agribusiness organisations in South Africa. Though performance in most

management studies is measured quantitatively using production outputs, sales volume and profitability, there is limited evidence of a study that has measured performance against organisational goals quantitatively.

The basis for this approach is provided by current literature. For example, a study by Sihlobo and Qobo (2021) emphasises the direct effects of employee turnover on agribusinesses' operational capability, which may impede the accomplishment of organisational objectives. Thindisa and Urban (2022) provide proof that a high rate of employee turnover is associated with a decline in financial performance, which is a crucial measure of organisational success. Khokhar *et al.* (2022) expand on this topic by showing how employee turnover might interfere with the flow of information and abilities that are essential for achieving objectives. Furthermore, Kanyangale and Breen (2022) examine the indirect costs of turnover, which may further impact the achievement of strategic goals. These costs include decreased morale and higher training costs. Finally, Mamba *et al.* (2021) stress the need to coordinate human resource strategies with organisational objectives in order to lessen the negative impact of employee turnover on performance indicators. All of this recent research points to the fact that employee turnover is a complex problem that may compromise the performance and strategic goals of agribusiness companies. In the context of South African agribusinesses, this study intends to investigate the degree to which employee turnover contributes to this dynamic and to quantitatively quantify performance against organisational objectives, therefore addressing a gap in the literature.



**Figure 1: A conceptual design**

The Human Capital Theory, first proposed by Becker (1964), provides the conceptual foundation for this study along with the Commitment theory by Meyer and the Job-Demand Model. According to this theory, an individual's investment in education and training is comparable to a business's investment in physical capital. This notion suggests that workers are not only expenses but rather important resources whose skills, expertise and talents help the company gain a competitive edge. The foundational ideas of human capital theory indicate that spending on things like health, education and training for employees may have a major positive impact on organisational performance. Investments in human capital may be seen as a strategic approach to lower employee turnover, according to our linking of this to the study's constructs; namely, employee turnover, organisational objectives and organisational performance in the South African agribusiness industry. Nkomo (2019), who applied the Human Capital Theory to the South African context and discovered a correlation between employee development investments and improved organisational performance and decreased turnover rates, lends weight to this.

Moreover, the work of Van Zyl and Stander (2019), who defended its applicability in their study on employee engagement in the South African mining industry, demonstrates further application of this idea. They contended that performance is driven by the development of human capital, which is essential for keeping top personnel and accomplishing strategic organisational objectives. The Human Capital Theory is especially relevant to this study since it offers a perspective on how employee turnover affects organisational performance. Excessive turnover rates may be a sign of underinvestment in human resources, which might result in a drop in performance and an inability to meet organisational objectives. On the other hand, organisations may boost performance, lower turnover and increase work satisfaction by investing in their staff. Since, the Human Capital Theory directly tackles the link between employee investment and organisational success – a relationship that is essential to comprehending the dynamics of employee turnover and performance in the South African agribusiness sector – it is, therefore, the most relevant theory for this study.

### **2.2.1 Conceptual-based theory**

Employee turnover in the agribusiness sector of South Africa is a multifaceted phenomenon with far-reaching implications for organisational performance. The foundation of this study is built upon the Human Capital Theory as articulated by Becker (2009), which posits that employees constitute valuable assets whose skills, knowledge and experience directly contribute to an organisation's productivity and competitiveness. In the agribusiness sector, which relies heavily on specialized skills and industry-specific knowledge, the departure of employees can result in the

depletion of valuable human capital, which, in turn, can have a detrimental effect on organisational performance.

The Organisational Commitment Theory created by Meyer *et al.* (1991), is another important theoretical perspective that guides our comprehension of the relationship between employee turnover and organisational performance. Affective commitment, continuation commitment, and normative commitment are the three main dimensions covered by this approach. In contrast to continuous commitment, which is based on the perceived costs of quitting an organisation, affective commitment refers to employees' emotional relationship with the organisation. A responsibility to stick with the organisation may be shown in normative commitment (Asfaw *et al.*, 2021). A thorough understanding of these commitment dimensions is essential for developing retention strategies that may significantly reduce turnover in the South African agricultural sector.

According to Griffeth *et al.* (2000), employee turnover in the agricultural sector comprises both direct and indirect expenses. When replacing departed employees, direct costs include the costs associated with recruiting, selection and training. But Grosse *et al.* (2022) added that the indirect costs include a wide variety of issues, such as decreased productivity during the transition phase, possible team dynamics problems and a detrimental effect on employee morale. To maintain sustainable performance, organisations should manage the costs efficiently given the often resource-constrained environment in the South African agricultural sector.

Dividing employee turnover into its two main dimensions; namely, voluntary and involuntary is therefore crucial for this study. Employees who choose to quit the organisation willingly do so due to reasons including job discontent, a lack of professional advancement opportunities, worries about finding a work-life balance and many other reasons (Kacmar *et al.*, 2006). This is known as voluntary turnover. On the other side, organisations start involuntary turnover often because of factors associated with seasonal employee variations, economic obstacles or concerns with performance. An in-depth assessment of these dimensions may enable organisations in the South African agribusiness sector to develop targeted retention strategies, thereby preserving their critical workforce and enhancing organisational performance.

### **2.2.2 Job Demands (JD-R) Model**

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model provides a useful explanation for explaining how staff turnover affects organisational performance in the South African agribusiness sector. The JD-R model states that while job resources like social support and job autonomy can lead to positive outcomes like job satisfaction, engagement and retention, job demands like workload and job insecurity can result in negative outcomes like burnout and turnover (Brown, 2020; Singh & Sharma, 2021). Job demands are the elements of a job that call for sustained effort and specific prices and energy consumption. They might be physical, psychological, social or organisational. Workload, deadline pressure, role ambiguity and interpersonal difficulties are a few examples of these demands. When job demands are too great and resources are not properly allocated, stress, burnout and finally intent to quit might result (Barnard *et al.*, 2023).

Job resources, on the other hand, are the organisational, social, psychological and physical components of a job that are useful in accomplishing professional objectives, lowering workloads and promoting individual development (Brown, 2020). Social support, autonomy, feedback and chances for skill expansion and improvement are a few examples of job resources. These resources help to improve motivation, job satisfaction and intent to stay on the job (Barnard *et al.*, 2023). The primary constructs under investigation in this study, including employee turnover and performance, therefore, find resonance within the Job-Demand Model. Employee turnover is a result that can be influenced by how resources are allocated to job demands. Employees may feel more stressed and unsatisfied at work when there are high demands and insufficient resources, which increases the possibility of turnover (Brown, 2020). Furthermore, employee turnover may be influenced by job requirements such as low pay, unfavourable working conditions and job insecurity in the context of the South African agriculture sector.

As such, these demands on the job may have detrimental effects on the effectiveness of the firm, including decreasing productivity, higher costs and worsening morale among surviving personnel (Barnard *et al.*, 2023). On the other hand, as Brown (2020) demonstrates, employment resources including chances for advancement and development, fair and competitive pay and efficient engagement and communication can support employee happiness and retention. As a result of these employment resources, organisations may perform better overall because of enhanced productivity, lower costs, and greater employee motivation and retention. While the demands and resources of the job may have an impact on performance, if

turnover is not properly managed, high job expectations can negatively impact performance by overwhelming workers and diminishing their capacity to execute successfully. Thus, by giving workers the appropriate autonomy, support and opportunity for advancement, job resources can promote higher performance by boosting workers' motivation and output (Barnard *et al.*, 2023).

To investigate the effects of staff turnover on organisational performance in the South African agriculture business, the JD-R model can be employed as a theoretical framework. According to the approach, lowering job requirements and raising job resources can help to control employee turnover and improve organisational performance. Organisations in the agriculture sector can improve organisational performance by addressing these issues and fostering a healthy work environment that supports employee satisfaction, engagement and retention (Barnard *et al.*, 2023). The Job-Demand Model offers a thorough framework that explains how job demands, resources and employee outcomes like turnover and performance, making it the most pertinent theory for this study.

This study can shed light on how these constructs affect employee turnover and performance in the agribusiness sector by considering the job requirements and resources particular to the agribusiness sector in South Africa. The Job-Demand Model provides a theoretical basis for comprehending the complex nature of how the workplace affects employee behaviours and organisational outcomes. To boost employee well-being, lower attrition and improve performance in the agricultural sector, it helps identify potential intervention areas and offers insights into how

crucial it is to manage job needs and provide suitable job resources (Barnard *et al.*, 2023).

Therefore, three theoretical frameworks; namely the Commitment theory, the Job-Demand Model and the Human Capital Theory are integrated in this study to provide a thorough conceptual foundation. Every theory makes a distinct contribution to our comprehension of performance, organisational objectives and employee turnover in the South African agribusiness industry. The Human Capital Theory, for starters, holds that investments in training and development may improve an employee's skills and competencies, thus making them a valuable asset. Improved organisational performance is expected to result from this investment in human capital, which is closely related to the emphasis of our study on the effects of employee turnover on organisational objectives and performance.

Secondly, the Job-Demand Model provides a sophisticated viewpoint on how work demands, available resources and their interactions affect employee outcomes such as performance and turnover and how these interact. This model will be used to analyse the unique work requirements and resources found in the agribusiness industry, as well as how they relate to employee turnover and organisational performance. With the specific issues facing the industry and the possibility of focused interventions to improve employee wellbeing and lower turnover, this is especially relevant. Finally, the equilibrium between employee contributions and organisation incentives is emphasised by the Commitment theory. Sustaining organisational performance depends on preserving employee satisfaction and lowering turnover, both of which depend on this balance.

Therefore, the study offers a strong theoretical framework for investigating the complex relationship between employee turnover and organisational performance in the agribusiness industry by combining these three theories. A comprehensive analysis is made possible by the integration of different theories, guaranteeing that the study fully reflects the complexity of the interactions among performance, organisational objectives and employee turnover. This all-encompassing approach is essential for creating a firm grasp of the underlying dynamics and tactics that work to improve performance in the industry.

### **2.3 EMPLOYEE TURNOVER**

In the South African environment, employee turnover is a particularly important problem for organisations in a wide range of industries, including farming (Mahanjan *et al.*, 2021). The process by which employees leave their present roles and are subsequently replaced by new recruits within an organisation is referred to as employee turnover (Mamba *et al.*, 2021). Involuntary turnover, which happens when employees are relieved of their duties from the organisation due to events like layoffs or terminations, is distinct from voluntary turnover, which occurs when employees leave on their own accord (Nkosi *et al.*, 2021).

Muzekenyi *et al.* (2023) have established that in the agricultural sector, unlike other sectors of the economy, there exist sector-specific factors that contribute to higher-than-normal levels of employee turnover. Their study highlighted job discontentment as a crucial element that may be caused by a variety of issues such as insufficient pay, a lack of opportunities for professional advancement and difficult working

conditions. Brown (2020) further added that the physical and emotional work demands in the agricultural sector may be exhausting, which can result in burnout and a desire for other employment. As such, it is difficult for workers in this sector to properly manage their work-life balance since employees may be employed briefly and fired after the peak season passes, seasonal employee changes, which are typical in the agriculture sector therefore lead to involuntary turnover (Mofokeng, 2005).

Employee turnover in the South African agricultural sector is significantly influenced by economic conditions. Organisations' capacity to retain their employees may be impacted by market alterations, inflation and economic downturns, especially when the financial health of the organisation is in doubt (Nkosi *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, the management and leadership styles used in agricultural organisations may have a big influence on turnover. A bad employment atmosphere may be produced by ineffective leadership, subpar management techniques and insufficient communication, which eventually results in greater turnover rates (Muzekenyi *et al.*, 2023).

Employee turnover has far-reaching and complex effects on South Africa's farming sector. The expenditures of recruiting, selection and training for new recruits are the main costs that high turnover rates translate into for organisations (Singh *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, the disruption brought about by constant turnover may negatively affect team chemistry and overall productivity. According to Meyer *et al.* (1997), the time needed to onboard and educate new employees may lead to efficiency losses and reduced operational effectiveness. The loss of institutional knowledge and

experience inside organisations is one of the most serious effects of employee turnover. Operational efficiency and creativity are hampered when experienced employees leave because they leave behind significant insights and talents that are often difficult to replace (Brown, 2020). The departure of co-workers may also lower morale among the remaining employees, which might result in lower job satisfaction and possible stress rises.

### **2.3.1 Organisational performance**

In the agricultural industry, organisational performance refers to a company's capacity to carry out its missions in an effective and timely manner. It evaluates how well a company uses its assets, including human capital to provide products and services that satisfy the requirements and expectations of its stakeholders (Mahajan *et al.*, 2021). Singh and Sharma (2021) claim that a variety of metrics or indicators, including productivity, profitability, innovation and sustainability can be used to assess organisational success in the agricultural sector. Profitability is the ability of the business to make a profit from its operations, whereas productivity is the output per unit of input, for as yield per acre or animal. While sustainability refers to the organisation's capacity to balance economic, social and environmental objectives in its operations, innovation refers to the organisation's capacity to develop and apply new technologies and procedures to enhance its operations.

South Africa's socio-economic and political history is intricately intertwined with the history of agriculture on the continent. The introduction of commercial farming techniques and cash crops by European settlers, who arrived centuries ago, influenced the evolution of traditional subsistence farming practices. The

redistribution of land along racial lines, which produced significant inequalities in land ownership, had a significant impact on the agricultural sector and the development of South Africa's apartheid regime (Barnard *et al.*, 2023). The South African agricultural sector continues to play a significant role in the economy of the country. A sizable section of the population is gainfully employed from it, which contributes significantly to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Grain, fruits, vegetables, animals and wine are important agricultural goods. A crucial pillar of economic stability, the agricultural sector also plays a crucial role in providing food security for the nation and contributes to export revenues (Statistics South Africa, 2020).

The South African agricultural sector confronts several issues despite its importance to the economy. These include challenges with access to and reform of the land, a lack of water supply, the effects of climate change and changes in agricultural practices. Land reform has been a difficult and controversial subject, with attempts aiming at resolving past injustices and imbalances in land ownership (Thindisa *et al.*, 2022). Water shortages, worsened by climate change, pose a substantial challenge to agriculture, since many countries endure recurrent droughts and shifting precipitation patterns (Zvavahera *et al.*, 2020). Agricultural transformation projects attempt to promote the involvement of historically disadvantaged groups in the sector, correcting historical inequalities. However, the sector also brings opportunities. South Africa's different climatic zones allow for a broad array of agricultural operations, from fruit cultivation in the Western Cape to corn growing in the Free State (Singh *et al.*, 2021).

Moreover, there is an opportunity for expansion in agribusiness, including food processing, agri-tourism and value-added agricultural goods. Productivity and sustainability may be further increased by investing in agricultural technology and innovation. The agricultural sector plays a crucial role in evaluating employee turnover and organisational performance in South African agribusiness organisations. The distinctive features of the agricultural employee's force, which often consists of seasonal and migratory employees have an impact on employee turnover in agribusiness organisations (Schaufeli, 2017). Assessing the effects of turnover on organisational performance requires an understanding of the dynamics of the agricultural sector, its employees' practices and the issues encountered by farmworkers. Agricultural operations may be hampered by high employee turnover, especially during crucial planting and harvesting seasons. The budgets of agricultural organisations may be put under pressure due to the expenses of hiring and training additional seasonal personnel (Singh *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, turnover may have an impact on the consistency and quality of agricultural goods, potentially resulting in losses in income and market share.

Therefore, agribusiness organisations must consider the particular employee issues faced by the agricultural sector in South Africa to lessen the effects of turnover. Retaining skilled and seasonal farmworkers requires strategies including enhancing working conditions, ensuring fair pay, enabling opportunities for training and development and putting in place efficient retention programs (Sihlobo *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, for reducing turnover and improving organisational performance in this particular business, an awareness of the larger socio-economic environment of the agricultural sector, including land reform and access to resources is essential.

### 2.3.2 The South African Agriculture Sector

Farmers, agribusiness enterprises, governmental organisations and finally customers all have a role to play in South Africa's agricultural sector, which is a complex and dynamic ecosystem. The agricultural sector, which is the backbone of the country's economy has a significant influence across many industries. Nkosi *et al.* (2021) indicate that the sector not only contributes significantly to the creation of job opportunities but also to the nation's foreign currency revenues. Additionally, the business plays a crucial role in guaranteeing food security, directly impacting the general populace's well-being. Recent statistics and research, however, confirm that there are several issues confronting the South African agricultural sector (Munyaka *et al.*, 2020). Several important variables, such as inadequate training and resources and the cyclical nature of employee demand as a result of seasonality, worsen this issue. The competition for competent personnel from other industrial sectors just makes the already difficult position more complicated.

Productivity is hampered by a lack of tools and training, which also raises concerns about the long-term viability of agricultural methods. The poor adoption of contemporary agricultural practices is the result of insufficient training, which affects both production and quality (Ngwenya *et al.*, 2020). Employees may go for more reliable employment in other industries during the off-seasons, which results in a loss of important skills and experience from the agricultural sector. Seasonal employee demand further complicates workforce stability. A particularly important problem is the rivalry for personnel from other sectors (Nkomo *et al.*, 2020). The agricultural sector struggles to attract and keep competent workers since more profitable and

secure employment opportunities are available elsewhere. As a result, the sector loses ground in the competitive battle for skilled employees, which inhibits innovation and development in addition to causing a loss of human capital. Therefore, the difficulties confronting South Africa's agricultural sector are complex and multifaceted, necessitating coordinated efforts from all parties involved to find long-term solutions. This is important not just for the sector's own health but also for the country's overall economic and social well-being.

## **2.4 FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO EMPLOYEE TURNOVER**

In the context of South African agriculture, employee turnover acquires significant relevance. Employee turnover is a major challenge for organisations. Understanding these dynamics is essential for reducing the negative consequences of employee turnover in this industry, which is influenced by a number of variables. Employees who are unhappy with their responsibilities, working conditions or the organisational culture are more likely to look for new employment, which is a typical cause of turnover (Muzekenyi *et al.*, 2023). The South African agricultural sector often presents distinctive problems, such as physically taxing employees and exposure to unfavourable weather conditions, which might lower worker satisfaction (Nkomo *et al.*, 2020).

Another important consideration is work-life balance, particularly in a field where peak seasons like planting and harvesting are marked by lengthy working hours. According to Schaufeli *et al.* (2017), this might cause burnout, which has an effect on employees' wellbeing and job satisfaction. Employees may experience times of

heavy employment followed by periods of unemployment in agriculture, where seasonal employees' changes are prevalent, disrupting work-life balance (Price, 2011). This challenge may be reduced by using tactics like flexible scheduling and assistance during busy times.

Employee turnover is significantly influenced by economic conditions, both regionally and nationally (Nyamuhirwa *et al.*, 2022). Employees often look for more secure career opportunities during economic downturns and uncertainties. In South Africa, where the economy may be unstable, agriculture organisations can see a surge in employee turnover. Financial planning, revenue diversification and open communication with employees about the organisation's financial security are all effective methods for controlling turnover during these times. Employee turnover is significantly influenced by leadership and management strategies inside a business. Dissatisfaction and turnover may be caused by ineffective leadership, poor communication and a failure to acknowledge employee achievements (Morse, 2015).

Leadership techniques are particularly important in the agricultural industry since direct contact between employees and managers is very important. Reduced turnover may be achieved through strengthening management and leadership abilities and promoting a healthy workplace culture (Mahajan *et al.*, 2021). For talent to be retained, career development opportunities are crucial. According to Mayimbela *et al.* (2022), businesses that provide employees opportunities for promotion, mentorship and training are more likely to retain them. Offering competent employees in South Africa's agriculture organisations opportunities to develop their talents and grow in their careers may be a potent retention tool.

#### **2.4.1 Organisational factors affecting employee turnover**

Employee turnover intentions are influenced by numerous factors. Previous research suggests that the most important elements influencing employee retention are trust, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and managerial support. Additionally, encouraging worker well-being lowers worker turnover.

Understanding the organisational variables causing turnover is crucial when assessing the effects of employee turnover on the performance of particular agricultural organisations in South Africa. Employee turnover is a complex problem that is impacted by a wide range of variables, many of which are within the control of organisations. To affect employee turnover, effective leadership and management techniques are essential (Matlala *et al.*, 2021). Recent studies on employee turnover in the agricultural sector have also considered organisational variables. For instance, Mavimbela and Mavimbela (2022) showed that poor leadership, a lack of communication and insufficient opportunities for training and development were important predictors of turnover in the South African poultry sector.

Likewise, Matlala *et al.*'s (2021) study on employee turnover in the South African citrus industry discovered that bad management techniques, a lack of recognition and inadequate pay and benefits were important predictors of turnover. A healthy employment environment may be created and employee turnover rates can be decreased through leadership that is supportive, communicative and attentive to the needs of the employees. The need for excellent leadership is particularly important in agricultural organisations, as employees often contact directly with managers and supervisors (Mamba *et al.*, 2021). Talent retention may be greatly improved by

making investments in leadership development and fostering an environment of trust and respect.

Organisational culture and values play a central role in shaping the employment experience and employee retention. A positive and inclusive organisational culture that aligns with employees' values and beliefs can boost job satisfaction and consequently diminish turnover (Kanyangale *et al.*, 2022). In the specific context of South African agribusiness organisations, nurturing a culture that acknowledges the contributions of farmworkers, fosters teamwork and emphasizes co-employees can exert a positive influence on retention efforts. Employee engagement and recognition are key components in mitigating turnover. Engaged employees tend to remain with an organisation and engagement involves feeling connected to the organisation's mission, having growth opportunities and receiving recognition for contributions (Grosse *et al.*, 2022). In the realm of agribusiness, where skilled employees hold significant value, acknowledging and rewarding employee efforts can elevate job satisfaction and strengthen commitment.

Offering training and development opportunities to employees can be instrumental in reducing turnover rates. Agribusiness organisations that invest in enhancing employees' skills and providing pathways for career growth are more likely to retain their talent pool (Chikoko *et al.*, 2021). In a constantly evolving agricultural sector characterized by technological advancements and changing practices, ensuring that employees have access to continuous learning opportunities becomes crucial. Competitive compensation packages, encompassing fair salaries, benefits and incentives are vital tools for attracting and retaining talent in agribusinesses

(Creswell, 2014). In South Africa's agribusiness sector, where employees' conditions can be physically demanding and challenging, the provision of fair and competitive compensation is imperative (Esuh *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, offering benefits such as healthcare, retirement plans and educational support can further bolster employee loyalty.

Balancing employment and personal life holds significant importance for employee well-being and consequently retention. The agribusiness sector's demands, often characterized by extended hours during peak seasons, can strain employees' work-life balance (Flick, 2011). Providing flexibility in employment arrangements, such as offering flexible schedules or remote employment options can facilitate employees in managing their responsibilities and ultimately, reduce turnover. For employee engagement and satisfaction, effective communication in a business is crucial. According to Gray (2017), employees are more likely to stay with the organisation if they feel appreciated and heard. Clear and open communication may assist employees in understanding their duties and expectations in the agricultural industry, where seasonal employees' variations and a range of jobs are common.

According to Kacmar *et al.* (2006), offering employees clear career routes and opportunities for promotion may increase their commitment and loyalty. A strong retention technique in the agriculture industry, where competent personnel are in high demand is to provide employees with opportunities for career advancement. Maintaining employees requires providing a secure and pleasant employment environment, especially in professions that require physically taxing employment (Bakker *et al.*, 2007). By providing the necessary training, tools and safety

precautions, agribusiness organisations must place a high priority on employee safety. Dealing with social and local issues may also affect turnover rates. Employee satisfaction and retention may be improved by organisations that interact with their workforce and local communities. Community support and engagement efforts might be helpful in South Africa because employees may quit their positions for better opportunities or for familial reasons (Clarke *et al.*, 2008).

#### **2.4.2 External factors affecting employee turnover in the agri-business.**

The majority of voluntary turnover is brought on by people looking for, among other things, better pay, better benefits, a better work/life balance, more career advancement opportunities, more time for personal matters like relocation or health issues, more flexibility, or a way out of a toxic or incompetent manager.

It is essential to consider the external elements that might have a substantial impact on this phenomenon when assessing the effects of employee turnover on the performance of certain agricultural organisations in South Africa. Employee turnover is influenced by a variety of external causes that organisations may have little control over, even if it is often based on internal organisational dynamics (Bakker *et al.*, 2010). The employee turnover rates in agricultural organisations may be significantly influenced by external economic situations. Job insecurity and financial instability for employees might result from economic downturns, recessions or changes in the agriculture market (Vo *et al.*, 2020). Unfavourable economic circumstances may cause an increase in turnover as employees look for more secure employment opportunities elsewhere, where the agriculture sector is intimately related to economic cycles. Organisations must devise plans to deal with economic difficulties,

such as diversifying their sources of revenue and keeping open lines of communication with employees about their financial security.

Mavimbela and Mavimbela (2022) discovered that economic instability and labour competition from other industries were important predictors of turnover in the South African poultry industry. In a similar vein, Matlala *et al.* (2021) found that employee turnover in the South African citrus sector is caused by external factors such as drought and market changes. An important factor in determining turnover is the external employees' market (Bayoli, 2010). Employees may be more likely to investigate alternative possibilities when the larger job market provides appealing opportunities. Agribusiness organisations in South Africa often face competition for competent employees, particularly during peak seasons. Organisations may need to stress their distinctive value offering, which includes opportunities for skills development and career growth to lessen the effects of employee market dynamics (Esterhuizen, 2006). The rates of turnover might also be impacted by rules and regulations from outside sources. Organisations are required to abide by employee' laws in South Africa, which are intended to safeguard employees' rights. Legal problems and reputational harm might result from non-compliance. While observing employees' regulations is important, agriculture organisations may find it difficult to navigate their complexity and this external element may have an indirect influence on turnover.

In the varied and multicultural background of South Africa, external social and cultural influences are very important. Employees' choices to remain or quit their positions may be impacted by cultural standards, family relationships or societal

influences. Organisations need to be aware of these external cultural variables and take them into account when developing retention strategies. Advancements in technology and mechanization in the agricultural sector can have dual effects on turnover (Visser *et al.*, 2015). On the one hand, technology can enhance operational efficiency, reducing the need for manual employees and potentially leading to workforce reductions. On the other hand, organisations that invest in technology and provide training to employees to adapt to technological changes may retain skilled workers who embrace these advancements.

### **2.4.3 The COVID-19 pandemic factor**

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected South Africa's agricultural industry, changing employment trends and raising staff turnover. In their study on the effects of COVID-19 on the South African agriculture industry, Thondhlana *et al.* (2021) revealed that the pandemic had increased employee turnover because of decreased demand, supply chain disruptions and financial restrictions. According to the study, the pandemic had impacted job stability and remuneration for many people in the industry, which increased the risk of turnover. In the same vein, Mavimbela and Mavimbela (2021) on the effect of COVID-19 on staff turnover in the South African poultry industry found that the pandemic had raised turnover because of decreased demand and market instability. The study also revealed that the pandemic had made people more stressed and anxious, which had boosted turnover rates. The COVID-19 epidemic also changed the labour market conditions in the agricultural industry. Thus, according to Mavimbela and Mavimbela (2021), the pandemic changed the

demand for labour, causing some workers to lose their jobs and others to be obliged to work longer hours.

In reaction to the pandemic's interruptions, agribusiness organisations had to quickly modify their operating methods. Production and distribution were impacted by logistical issues brought on by supply chain disruptions and lockdowns. Some organisations were forced to temporarily cut down on staff or shift employees to new positions as a consequence (Bayoli, 2010). As employees sought roles with more stability and continuity, these operational changes had an impact on employee satisfaction and led to employee turnover. Effective transition management improves an organisation's ability to retain people. The pandemic's economic effects, like inflation, consumer behaviour shifts and pressures from the recession had a significant impact on agricultural organisations. Because of the hazy market environment, revenue sources were impacted and cost-cutting measures were put in place (Bakker *et al.*, 2010). Workforce cutbacks and adjustments to remuneration structures were caused by this economic uncertainty. As employees look for more financially secure opportunities, these steps, although vital for financial stability may result in greater employee turnover rates (Renzaho, 2020). For agricultural CEOs, striking a balance between fiscal responsibility and employee retention has become a crucial task.

The epidemic brought home how crucial workplace health and safety are. To safeguard their employees from the pandemic, agribusiness organisations had to put in place strict health measures. These actions encountered pushback in several instances, which raised questions about worker safety and wellbeing. Employee

turnover was influenced by the likelihood of employees considering quitting their positions if they believed that their safety was not given sufficient priority. The organisations that proactively addressed these issues and maintained open communication about safety precautions, on the other hand, were more successful in keeping their staff (Clarke *et al.*, 2008). The epidemic hastened the adoption of digital and remote employment practices in a wide range of sectors, including farming. Organisations that accepted these adjustments were often better able to go on with business while reducing employee turnover. Remote employment arrangements provided employees with more flexibility and reduced the need for physical presence in the workplace (Mofokeng, 2005). However, they also introduced challenges related to managing remote teams and maintaining employee engagement. Organisations that effectively navigated this transition reduced the likelihood of turnover among employees seeking flexible employment options.

## **2.5 EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

Employee turnover in the South African agriculture industry was the subject of research by Munyaka and Roodt (2020), who revealed that it harmed organisational performance since it reduced productivity, raised expenses and demoralized the remaining workforce. Accordingly, Kanyangale and Breen (2021) showed that turnover had a negative influence on organisational performance since it resulted in poor knowledge transfer, decreased productivity and increased recruiting and training expenses. Their research focused on the South African sugarcane industry. Additionally, Matlala *et al.*'s (2021) investigation on employee turnover in the South

African citrus sector established that employee turnover had a detrimental impact on organisational performance since it resulted in decreased productivity, increased expenses and a decline in product quality.

Additionally, in the context of smallholder farming, the impact of employee turnover on organisational performance can be very important. According to a study by Asfaw *et al.* (2021), that examined employee turnover in smallholder farming in Ethiopia, turnover harmed farm production and profitability since it resulted in a shortage of workers and higher expenses for recruiting and training. When Kanyangale and Breen (2022) examined employee turnover in the South African sugarcane business found that competition for workers from other industries had a big impact on both turnover and organisational performance.

## **2.6 STRATEGIES TO MANAGE EMPLOYEE TURNOVER IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**

Implementing efficient hiring and selection procedures is one sound strategy. In their investigation of staff turnover in Zimbabwe's agricultural industry, Chikoko *et al.* (2021) showed that efficient hiring and selection procedures were crucial for lowering turnover. According to their survey, businesses should put their efforts into finding and luring people who fit well with the company culture and beliefs as well as those who have the qualifications to do their jobs well.

### **2.6.1 Employee growth and development opportunities**

The availability of employee growth and development opportunities in agribusiness organisations in South Africa plays a crucial role in assessing the impact of employee turnover on organisational performance. A comprehensive understanding of this aspect reveals how investments in employee development can either mitigate or exacerbate turnover rates, ultimately influencing an organisation's overall performance (Ngwenya *et al.*, 2020). Employee growth and development opportunities have a direct impact on turnover rates in agribusiness organisations. When employees perceive that their professional growth is limited in an organisation, they may seek opportunities elsewhere, leading to higher turnover (Chikoko *et al.*, 2021). In contrast, organisations that actively invest in employee development and provide clear pathways for career advancement can retain talent by offering the promise of personal and professional growth.

Additionally, the availability of growth and development opportunities has implications for employee engagement and job satisfaction. Even when faced with external opportunities, engaged employees are more likely to stay loyal to their existing business (Nkomo *et al.*, 2020). Organisations that emphasize employee engagement via training, skill upgrading and career planning are better able to lower employee turnover rates and retain a motivated workforce in agriculture, where specialized employees are often crucial. The agricultural sector is changing as a result of technology breakthroughs and shifting habits, necessitating ongoing skills and knowledge updates from employees. By enabling employees to adjust to these changes, organisations that provide access to continuing training and development opportunities are more likely to retain talent (Mayimbela *et al.*, 2020). On the other

hand, organisations that do not prioritize employee development may struggle to retain employees who want to advance their skillsets.

### **2.6.2 Ensuring competitive compensation**

Competitive compensation is a crucial factor in mitigating turnover rates. Employees are more inclined to look for other job opportunities when they believe that their salary and perks are below sector norms or behind the cost of living (Zvavahera *et al.*, 2020). Fair and competitive pay is essential to attracting and keeping talented and motivated employees in South Africa's agricultural industry, where working conditions may be physically taxing and difficult. Organisations with competitive remuneration packages are better equipped to keep a steady staff and decrease turnover. Furthermore, competitive compensation is closely tied to employee satisfaction and motivation. Employees who feel that they are fairly compensated for their contributions are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs and to remain committed to the organisation (Mavimbela *et al.*, 2021). In agribusiness, where skilled employees are often essential for efficient operations, satisfied and motivated employees can significantly impact performance through increased productivity, higher-quality work and reduced turnover-related disruptions.

Competitive compensation not only affects employee turnover but also indirectly influences organisational performance through its impact on recruitment efforts. When organisations offer competitive salaries and benefits, they are more likely to attract top talent, reducing the time and resources required for recruitment and training (Meyer *et al.*, 1997). This, in turn, can lead to a more skilled and capable

workforce that positively contributes to overall performance in South Africa's competitive agribusiness landscape.

Rewards and incentives can directly impact employee turnover rates. When organisations offer attractive compensation packages, performance-based bonuses and recognition programs, employees are more likely to feel valued and motivated to stay with the organisation (Hsieh *et al.*, 2011). In the context of South African agribusiness where employees' conditions can be physically demanding, offering competitive rewards and incentives can significantly contribute to employee retention by providing tangible benefits that acknowledge and reward their efforts. Employee turnover is often linked to a lack of job satisfaction and motivation. According to a study by Mavimbela and Mavimbela (2021) on staff turnover in the South African poultry sector, employing retention methods such as incentives and prizes was a successful strategy to lower turnover. According to the report, to boost job satisfaction and employee retention, businesses should create retention plans that are specific to the wants and needs of their workforce.

Organisations that implement rewards and incentive programs can positively influence job satisfaction by recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance (Mofokeng, 2005). Satisfied employees are more likely to remain engaged with their employment and committed to the organisation, ultimately reducing turnover rates. In contrast, organisations that neglect rewards and incentives may face higher turnover as employees seek recognition and appreciation elsewhere. Moreover, rewards and incentive programs can indirectly impact organisational performance by driving productivity and the quality of work. When employees are motivated by the prospect of rewards, they are more likely to exert additional effort and perform at higher levels

(Visser *et al.*, 2015). This increase in productivity and the delivery of high-quality employment can directly contribute to improved performance metrics, including increased operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. Effective rewards and incentive programs can also help organisations attract and retain top talent, mitigating the negative consequences of turnover. Competitive rewards and incentives are powerful tools for recruitment efforts, making it more likely for organisations to attract skilled professionals who value such benefits (Asfaw *et al.*, 2021). By building a reputation as an employer that values and rewards its employees, organisations can enhance their recruitment efforts, ensuring a high-quality workforce that positively impacts performance.

### **2.6.3 Working Conditions**

The quality of working conditions can significantly impact employee turnover rates. In the agribusiness sector, where employees are often involved in physically demanding tasks, harsh weather conditions and long hours during peak seasons, employees' safety and well-being are paramount (Bayoli, 2010). Organisations that prioritize safe and comfortable working conditions are more likely to retain employees who value their health and safety. Conversely, organisations with subpar working conditions are at a higher risk of turnover, as employees may seek opportunities that offer better working conditions. Working conditions also have a direct impact on employee morale and job satisfaction. Employees who face challenging or uncomfortable working conditions are more likely to experience job dissatisfaction and reduced morale (Nigmane *et al.*, 2022). Low morale can contribute to increased turnover rates as employees may actively seek alternative

employment options that promise a better employment environment. In contrast, organisations that invest in improving working conditions can bolster employee satisfaction, which in turn can lead to reduced turnover and a more engaged workforce.

Another strategy for controlling employee turnover in the agriculture business is to improve working conditions. In their study on employee turnover in the South African agricultural industry, Mavimbela and Mavimbela (2020) suggested that creating safe and healthy working environments was a good method to reduce turnover. According to the report, businesses should put their employees' physical and mental health first to increase job satisfaction and lower turnover. Employee turnover influenced by working conditions can also indirectly affect organisational performance. High turnover rates can result in increased recruitment and training costs as organisations continually replace departing employees (Becker, 2009). Additionally, the disruption caused by frequent turnover can lead to decreased productivity and operational inefficiencies, negatively impacting performance metrics. Therefore, organisations that prioritize better working conditions can help mitigate these financial and operational consequences by reducing turnover rates.

#### **2.6.4 Employee engagement**

High employee turnover can directly and negatively impact employee engagement in agribusiness organisations. When employees witness colleagues leaving frequently, it can lead to feelings of instability and insecurity, resulting in decreased engagement (Visser *et al.*, 2015). Additionally, improving communication and employee

engagement can aid in reducing attrition. According to Zvavahera *et al.*'s (2020) study on staff turnover in the Zimbabwean agricultural sector, improving employee engagement and communication through frequent feedback and acknowledgement was a good approach to reducing turnover. To establish a sense of belonging and boost employee loyalty, the report advises firms to develop a culture of open communication and collaboration. Engaged employees are connected to the organisation's mission, feel valued and are more likely to remain committed. On the other hand, when turnover is excessive, employees may get disengaged, which lowers their productivity and total value to the organisation. Job satisfaction and employee engagement are tightly related and turnover rates have a big impact on how satisfied employees are with their jobs. Particularly if they believe the organisation is not addressing the causes of employee turnover, high employee turnover may cause uncertainty and discontent among existing employees (Brown, 2020). Employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are less likely to be involved in them and are more inclined to look for other jobs. By lowering productivity and employment quality, this drop-in engagement may have a direct effect on the success of the organisation.

The long-term aims and objectives of the organisation are also more likely to be supported by engaged employees. High employee turnover might jeopardize this commitment since departing employees may take institutional knowledge and expertise with them (Asfaw *et al.*, 2021). The organisation's capacity to adapt to change and make wise strategic choices may be hampered by this loss of important information and experience, which might affect the organisation's overall performance. Customer connections and satisfaction are impacted by employee

engagement and these factors in turn affect organisational performance. Strong client connections and great customer service are more likely to be developed by engaged employees (Barnard *et al.*, 2023). On the other hand, disengaged employees may provide mediocre service, resulting in lower levels of client satisfaction and maybe decreased revenue. In the context of turnover, the impact of lower customer satisfaction on performance emphasizes the significance of employee engagement.

Therefore, employee engagement may serve as a mitigating element even if high turnover might provide problems to employee engagement and therefore, organisational performance. Even in the face of external opportunities, engaged employees are more likely to stay devoted to their firm. (Barnard *et al.*, 2023). By fostering a culture of engagement and providing opportunities for employees to connect with their work, colleagues and the organisation's mission, agribusiness organisations can reduce the negative consequences of turnover on performance.

### **2.6.5 Rewards and incentives**

## **2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The literature review in this chapter focuses on the impact of employee turnover on organisational performance, particularly in the South African agribusiness sector. The study explores three main constructs; namely, employee turnover, organisational goals and performance by employing a conceptual framework to examine their

interrelation. This research makes a significant contribution by filling crucial gaps in the literature related to understanding the complex employment turnover dynamics of South African agribusiness operations. The literature-emerging themes from the findings concordance increase the relevance and depth of the study. Using themes to detail the revolving major causes of turnover –dissatisfaction with pay, limited career advancement opportunities and workplace challenges – not only validates existing debates but also adds depth. In addition, the research sheds light on contributors to employee attrition such as workplace problems related to well-being and motivation considered together here. Notably, the study does not stop with understanding causes but delves into the various consequences of employee turnover on organizational performance. The main measures for this evaluation are key performance indicators such as quality, profitability, innovativeness and productivity. Therefore, this research does not only fill gaps but also offers practical implications for companies within the agribusiness sector on how they can improve their understanding and handling of employee voluntary turnover in a way that results in better overall performance.

The literature highlights the direct and indirect costs of high employee turnover, such as operational inefficiencies, financial performance decline, increased training costs and disrupted information flow. Emphasizing the need for aligning human resource strategies with organisational goals, the review cites various studies supporting these assertions. The Human Capital Theory, Commitment Theory and Job-Demand Model form the theoretical underpinnings of the study. The Human Capital Theory views employees as valuable assets, suggesting that investments in their development can enhance organisational performance and reduce turnover. Commitment Theory and the Job-Demand Model provide additional insights into

employee retention and the effects of job demands and resources on employee outcomes.

The review also delves into specific challenges in the South African agribusiness sector, including the physical demand for jobs, economic conditions and management styles. These factors contribute to both voluntary and involuntary turnover. The study then examines the Job Demands-Resources model, which explains the impact of job demands and resources on turnover and organisational performance. The review also highlights strategies to manage turnover, including effective hiring practices, employee development opportunities, competitive compensation and improved working conditions. The next chapter discusses the methodology employed in the study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter provided a conceptual framework for a study that assesses the effects of employee turnover on a selected agribusiness organisation's performance in South Africa. The review has explored key concepts, theories and previous research to guide the study's design and hypothesis development. Therefore, this chapter presents the methodology that has been adopted to answer the raised research questions and to achieve the set research objectives. The research paradigm, research approach, research design and methods of data collection and analysis are the main components of the research methodology.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

According to positivism, all true knowledge is either positive or true by definition, or a posteriori facts deduced from sensory experience using reason and logic. Other methods of knowing, including religious faith, introspection, or intuition, are disregarded or seen as useless.

The foundation of interpretivism is the idea that reality is socially created, multifaceted, and subjective. That is to say, we can only comprehend a person's reality by their own experience of it, which may differ from another person's due to the influences of their social or historical background.

In the arts, realism refers to the precise, in-depth, unadorned portrayal of nature or modern life. Realism favors careful examination of external appearances above

fanciful idealization. As a result, throughout history, realism in its broadest definition has included a variety of artistic movements.

In this study, an interpretivism research paradigm is followed. This paradigm places a strong emphasis on people's experiences in real-world contexts and how they view the world (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016). It aims to close the gap between theory and practice by using inductive techniques that are most suited for explaining why things happen the way they do in a specific context. A research paradigm entails a set of beliefs and assumptions held by a group of researchers about how data should be gathered, analyzed and interpreted (Creswell, 2014). The three primary research paradigms in the research methods are positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism. The interpretivism paradigm acknowledges that understanding and resolving complex problems can benefit from people's experiences and those who have in-depth knowledge of a particular setup. Interpretivism acknowledges the value of considering in-depth knowledge of contextual experiences, researchers' involvement and the viewpoints of different stakeholders (Eseh-Nnoko *et al.*, 2022).

According to Flick (2011) and Yin (2016), it is argued that reality is subjective and can be explained by explanations. While seeking to comprehend the social and cultural settings in which phenomena occur, interpretivism places a strong emphasis on the subjective meanings and interpretations of individuals. According to Saunders *et al.* (2016), it is predicted that people's experiences and viewpoints influence how they perceive the world and that reality is socially created. Gray (2017) on the other hand, stated that pragmatism emphasizes the applicability and relevance of research findings in addressing real-world problems because it eliminates the limitations of both positivists and interpretivists hence it is a flexible and practical approach to

research. It incorporates aspects of positivism as well as interpretivism, acknowledging the value of both objective analysis and subjective interpretation in comprehending social processes.

However the proposed study would investigate the highlighted problem using the interpretivism paradigm as the guiding principle to qualitatively explain how employee turnover is perceived by senior managers to be affecting performance in the agribusiness sector using a case study. To obtain a thorough grasp of the study problem, interpretivism research uses a mono-methodology strategy linked to qualitative methods. Interpretivism emphasizes the use of word data sources such as interviews, interview guides and organisational reports to get a comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied (Nyamuhirwa *et al.*, 2022).

The interpretivism paradigm is distinguished by its emphasis on context relevance, in-depth knowledge and the application of research findings to management decision-making towards change in an organisation. This paradigm promotes teamwork between the interviewee and interviewer. It uses findings in a specific context and an approach to explain the complexity and nuances of the study subject. The interpretivism paradigm could be used in the context of this study by considering the qualitative definition of employee turnover and organisational performance as well as the inclusion of experiences, understanding of the experiences and perceptions of organisational employees' stakeholders (Gray, 2017). A more thorough understanding of the effects of staff turnover on performance from a contextual perspective would be provided through a qualitative approach and it would also enable the formulation of useful strategies based on the results.

### **3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH**

Studies that are quantitative in nature depend on numerical or measurable data. When it comes to understanding people's thoughts and responses in society, qualitative studies are more reliant on first-hand accounts or archival materials.

According to Creswell (2014), the hallmark of qualitative research is its emphasis on gathering non-numerical data using methods including interviews, observations and document analysis. This strategy is precisely in line with the research's goal of exploring the subjective meanings, feelings and perceptions that people inside organisations associate with turnover and how it affects performance. This study therefore captures the diversity and complexity of people's experiences and perspectives in a South African agribusiness enterprise by using qualitative research methodologies. It aims to identify the fundamental constructs that in this environment explain the relationship between employee turnover and organisational performance.

In this study, a mono-approach is more appropriate since it allows for a thorough explanation of employee turnover and organisational goals and objectives. Researchers can learn more about the phenomena and capture its subtleties by integrating qualitative data on employee turnover and how it affects the performance of an organisation using experiences and contextual factors. The triangulation of data is facilitated by this method thus enhancing the trustworthiness of the study. Additionally, it enables a more contextual account of circumstances and difficulties experienced by agribusiness organisations in South Africa.

### **3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

There are various categories of research designs in qualitative studies (Yin, 2016). Flick (2011), Morse (2015), and Saunders *et al.* (2016) explain the use of a case study research design to fully comprehend a specific phenomenon. The study used an explanatory research design to explain the research questions that are associated with the research objectives. The descriptive case study approach and thematic research method are appropriate for explaining patterns across constructs. Research design is an overall strategy the researcher adopts to answer research questions (Morse, 2015). A case study research design entails an in-depth analysis of a single instance or a limited number of examples (Creswell, 2014). Descriptive qualitative case study design on the other hand entails describing and documenting a phenomenon or a recollection of phenomena based on people's experiences. This method frequently serves as a starting point for new research and the generation of new theories that can be confirmed using quantities (Saunders *et al.*, 2014).

### **3.5 TARGET POPULATION**

Agribusiness organisations that are based in South Africa make up the target population for this research study. These organisations cover a broad variety of agricultural operations, such as raising crops, raising animals, processing food and offering associated services. Commercial farms, smallholder operations, agro-industrial businesses, cooperatives and different agricultural service providers make up the population. The South African agribusiness sector is diverse, reflecting the vast range of agricultural operations carried out throughout the nation (Creswell,

2014). Large-scale commercial farms are among this variety, and these operations are often distinguished by enormous landholdings and cutting-edge farming techniques. On the other hand, many smallholder agricultural activities are crucial to the local and regional food industry. The population also includes one organisation that provides agricultural services, such as input suppliers, logistics providers and research institutes, as well as agro-processing businesses that add value to agricultural goods.

Geographically, the target population is dispersed throughout the many landscapes of South Africa. As a reflection of the nation's many agricultural regions, agribusiness organisations are in rural, peri-urban and metropolitan locations. This population's geographic dispersion is important because it influences regional differences in agricultural methods, employees' markets and environmental circumstances (Flick, 2011). Understanding how employee turnover affects organisational performance in various geographic settings requires an understanding of these regional variations.

SENWES is an organisation that operates in the vast and varied terrain of the agricultural sector in South Africa and therefore makes a suitable case study for this research. The organisation operates throughout the country's many geographic areas and participates in a broad range of agricultural operations. Therefore, the organisation lends itself as a unique case study when qualitatively investigating the understanding of employee turnover and organisational performance in the South African agricultural sector. The total population of this study is senior managers at SENWES.

SENWES has been selected as the study's primary subject for several reasons. First, SENWES is one of the top agricultural businesses in South Africa, making it a good case study for figuring out how staff turnover affects business performance in this industry. Second, SENWES operates in a distinct environment with difficulties and possibilities that are pertinent to the study's goals. The study of SENWES can yield methodologies and suggestions that can be used by other agribusiness organisations in South Africa. Finally, SENWES' readiness to take part in the study displays its dedication to ongoing development and knowledge of ways to handle employee turnover in the company.

### **3.5.1 Sampling strategy**

Using probability sampling, which selects at random, you can draw robust statistical conclusions about the entire group. Non-probability sampling makes data collection easier by selecting participants non-randomly based on convenience or other factors.

In this study, the sampling strategy is purposive which is a sub-type of non-probability sampling. Participants are purposively targeted based on their length of stay in the company at the managerial level, experience in the agribusiness sector, and in-depth knowledge of the concepts of employee turnover and its effects on a company's goal. The focus is on knowledge and experiences about employee turnover and organisational performance in agribusiness organisations (Nkosi & Visser, 2022). 14 senior managers are chosen based on their qualifications, roles, experience in the agribusiness sector, length of stay in SENWES and involvement in developing organisational goals. Such an approach ensures that the sample involves

people who can offer detailed and insightful information that is consistent with the research questions and objectives. To help with the selection process, academic literature on purposive sampling and qualitative research methods was thoroughly explored. The goal of this study is to illustrate the viewpoints of participants using qualitative data techniques and tools. This technique increases the credibility of the research results and provides a nuanced understanding of how employee turnover affects organisational performance in the agribusiness sector.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS**

Yin (2016) describes a research data collection tool as an instrument used to collect data from a population sample. This study utilised an interview guide as well as SENWES strategic guidelines and policy documents. The guide consists of 5 sections with two open questions each that are intended to elicit a detailed description of the concept of employee turnover and how it relates to organisational performance. The interview guide consists of five sections with two questions each that respond to an objective as stated in Section 1.4. The sample size was determined by saturation plus two as suggested by Saunders *et al.* (2016).

#### **Literature review and objective alignment**

To develop questions that were used to explain employee turnover and organisational performance in the context of agribusiness, a thorough review of the literature was performed which is encapsulated in Chapter 2 of this study.

#### **Conflict of Interest**

The researcher currently works for SENWES, and this has implications for conflict of interest. To manage conflict of interest, the researcher has identified a former post-Doc researcher who is experienced in conducting interviews to collect and transcribe the data. The identified interviewer took the following steps in line with the rules formulated in the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI) (Act 4 of 2013) as follows:

1. Contact the head of SENWES through email with a copy of the permission letter from the company.
2. Schedule a face-to-face appointment with the Head of SENWES and explain the reason for the meeting.
3. Request the head of SENWES to schedule a face-to-face meeting with all the key stakeholders.
4. During the stakeholder meeting, participants are informed of the purpose of the meeting and given the informed consent form to complete.
5. Once the informed consent form is completed, participants who are accepted to be part of the research are identified and a face-to-face or virtual interview is scheduled.
6. The venue, time and mode (whether face-to-face or virtual) using either WhatsApp, Zoom or Teams will be at the convenience of the interviewee.

### **Informed Consent**

The participants received a thorough explanation of the research's goals, methods and any risks and benefits before any data collection activities. The participants were

informed of the nature of the research and the reasons behind the study. A consent form was sent to participants explaining the purpose of the study, interaction with participants, confidentiality, data protection, the voluntary participation clause, data management, data access and the rights of participants. The participants were allowed to seek clarity if they had any doubts before they decided whether to participate in the study or not with knowledge and understanding.

### **Interview timetable and duration**

Interview schedules were developed and appointments were set up after receiving participants' permission to take part in the study. Interviews lasted anywhere between 30 and 45 minutes, depending on the extent of participants' knowledge and probing from the interviewer. The participants had enough time to share their knowledge, opinions and experiences about employee turnover and organisational effectiveness. The interview was face-to-face and took place in a venue that was convenient for the interviewee.

### **Inform consent and data privacy**

Data from the participants including any personal identifying information (for example, demographics) were handled in line with the rules formulated in the POPI Act (Act 4 of 2013). The following is important to note in line with the Act:

- You are also under no obligation to complete personal information (i.e., demographics).

- There will be no negative consequences to you if you decide not to provide personal information (i.e., demographics).
- You can request access to your details at any time to change the information.
- Only the student and her supervisor will have access to the data and it will not cross the borders of South Africa.
- The findings from this research will be published in the form of an article or conference paper.
- The information (raw data) provided is accessed by the supervisor (s) and the student and the data were put in a secure drawer with a key to prevent any unauthorized access by persons who are not involved in the study.
- The final ethics number upon approval from FEMS-Rec will be inserted on the cover of the mini-dissertation report and the letter attached as an addendum. The number will also inserted on the cover page of any article or conference paper that is extracted from this mini dissertation in the future.

Before starting the interview, participants are given a consent statement that requests voluntary participation, and participants may indicate their unwillingness to continue with the interview even after they initially agreed to be interviewed. The confidentiality of the data and the planned use of the data is for research purposes only and the identity of the participants is not requested during the interview (Annexure 1). The participants can be guaranteed that their answers are securely saved, anonymized and aggregated as per the POPI Act and the interview was recorded for future transcription.

## **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS**

### **3.7.1 Qualitative Data Analysis**

To describe and explain the meaning of the collected data gathered through interviews, data analysis was performed using a thematic analysis approach (Annexure 3) with the aid of ATLAS.ti version 23. The actions listed below were taken:

#### **Identification and Recruitment of Participants**

Using purposive sampling, the participants were chosen based on their position in the organisation, their knowledge of the constructs of employee turnover and performance and their relevance to the organisational goals as conceptualized in Section 2.1. Access to participants was possible by reaching out to them personally, asking important stakeholders for recommendations or through professional networks. The selection of participants was based on their knowledge of the constructs to contribute insightful information and their desire to engage.

### **3.7.2 Data analysis**

The qualitative research method was applicable in this study because a more in-depth and holistic understanding of the implementation of the stage gate mode can be provided. Saunders *et al.* (2019:640) provided an overview of three key techniques that are commonly used in analyzing qualitative data, which are the summation method, content analysis method and thematic analysis method. In this study, summation and thematic analysis methods are ideal for analyzing this type of

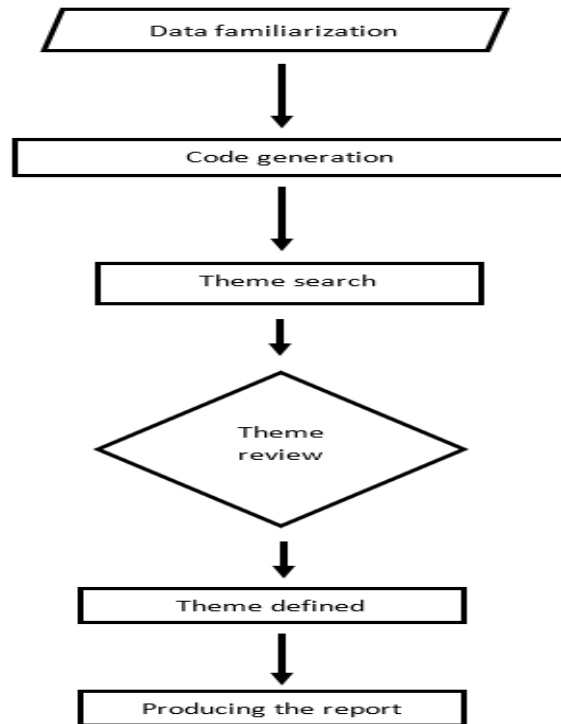
qualitative data because they focus on identifying themes and patterns in the data. Moreover, Saunders *et al.* (2019:640) explain that in qualitative research, data collection and analysis are interconnected activities.

Thematic analysis was also used to analyse the data qualitatively. Thematic analysis is one technique employed by researchers for data analysis and involves coding qualitative data to identify recurring patterns and themes related to the research questions (Saunders *et al.*, 2019:651). Thematic analysis is a structured and adaptable method that provides researchers with an approach to analyzing data effectively. Braun and Clarke (2006:79) define thematic analysis as a qualitative data analysis approach that involves identifying, evaluating and reporting on recurring patterns. The technique requires interpretation in the processes of choosing codes and generating themes, making it a data description approach. According to Saunders *et al.* (2019:652), there are four aspects of thematic analysis; namely, familiarizing with the data, coding, discovering themes and detecting links and refining themes and testing propositions. Overall, thematic analysis is a crucial method for analyzing qualitative data in a structured and effective manner.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006:79), the thematic analysis comprises six steps as indicated in Figure 1: data familiarization, code generation, theme search, theme revision, theme definition and producing a report. Data familiarisation is the process of becoming acquainted with data gathered during the interview sessions (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). This includes transcribing data and reading the data to identify initial ideas. Code generation is identifying the most interesting features of the data and coding systematically throughout the entire dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006), while

searching for themes refers to coding data into prospective topics and collecting all data relevant to each potential theme. The reviewing of themes entails the evaluation to determine if the themes function in connection to the coded extracts and the complete dataset, followed by creating a thematic 'map' of the analysis (Salleh *et al.*, 2017).

The definition of the themes step entails continuous analysis to fine-tune the specifications of each theme as well as the prior analysis, resulting in unambiguous definitions and names for each theme, producing the report that deals with the final analysis and linking this with the research topic and literature and finally producing a report. Figure 1 shows some illustrations of thematic analysis (Khokhar *et al.*, 2020). In this work, a qualitative data analysis software known as ATLAS.ti will be employed to perform thematic analysis. ATLAS.ti is a qualitative research tool that can be utilized for coding and analyzing transcripts and field notes, making literature reviews, developing network diagrams, formulating data visualization concepts and thematic analysis.



**Figure 2: Flow chart for thematic analysis.** Source: Khokhar et al., 2020:426

### 3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness in qualitative research enhances the comprehension and interpretation of study findings and enables people to have faith in the quality of the research (Daniel, 2019). Credibility, authenticity, dependability and confirmability are the four qualities of trustworthiness in qualitative research (Bryman *et al.*, 2014:44). The transcribed recordings will be validated with each participant to ensure that the results are interpreted accurately. In this study, trustworthiness will be preserved based on the qualities explained below:

*Credibility:* To ensure credibility in this study, independent coding will be done during data analysis to eliminate data interference by the researcher based on his preconceived expectations (Connelly, 2016).

*Confirmability:* A peer debriefing will be done to ensure confirmability (Creswell, 2014:251; Ary *et al.*,2014).

*Dependability:* This will be ensured by briefly explaining to the participants the study area, population, sampling techniques, data collection process and data analysis techniques (Connelly, 2016).

*Authenticity:* The transcribing tool will be monitored in real-time to ascertain if it is indeed transcribing exactly what has been said by the participant's voice recordings. Furthermore, the voice recordings and transcribed data will be repeatedly read and listened to in order to ensure that the views of the participants are fully understood.

### **3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The term "ethics" in the context of research refers to moral principles that guide your conduct towards the rights of individuals who participate in or are impacted by the research process. To prevent damaging the relationship between the parties involved, it is appropriate to guarantee that the research process is carried out morally and that sensitive results are handled and disseminated delicately (Akaranga *et al.*, 2016). Four ethical research principles were deemed to be relevant and considered in this study, including informed consent, confidentiality, research integrity and beneficence.

#### **Informed consent**

Informed consent is an ethical and legal prerequisite when conducting research that involves human participants (Esterhuizen *et al.*, 2006). According to Njomane *et al.* (2022), informed consent entails providing the targeted participants with enough information to allow them to decide whether to participate in the study or decline the invitation to partake. The participants should participate in the study voluntarily and are free to withdraw from the interviews at any time. Therefore, a consent form is provided to the participant before the interviews.

### **Confidentiality**

The right of privacy of the participants is ensured by preserving their anonymity, meaning collecting the pictures, names and identity numbers is prohibited in this study. Therefore, participants are reminded not to provide their personal information.

### **Research integrity**

To avoid plagiarism and its consequences, secondary data included in the study must be properly cited. A researcher may have a tendency or a temptation to manipulate or withhold important information. Other academics and independent statisticians may be involved throughout the research process to ensure integrity.

### **Beneficence**

The well-being of the study participants should be a priority for researchers and the benefits of the research should exceed the risks (Daniel *et al.*, 2022). According to Thindisa *et al.* (2022), the benefits of participating in the study must be communicated by the researcher to the participants. Throughout the research process, the researcher should inform the participants that the research study is not intended for the researcher's financial benefit, but it is for academic purposes. The participants should not feel exploited. The findings will possibly be published in scientific articles and will also be available to the participants upon request at the

North-West University. Ethical considerations to be followed in this research include the values and rules that researchers should follow when doing their research.

Principal moral considerations comprise:

- i.) *Informed consent*: To ensure that all potential participants are freely involved in the study and are aware of its goals and requirements, the researcher sends prospective participants an informed consent letter (Saunders *et al.*, 2016).
- ii.) *Avoidance of harm*: The researcher encourages the respondents to stop participating in the study if they feel they cannot continue. This protects the respondents from suffering bodily or psychological injury (Morse, 2011).
- iii.) *Confidentiality*: In keeping the data and presenting the results, the researcher keeps the participant's identities confidential (Saunders *et al.*, 2016).

### **3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter outlined the methodology for investigating the impact of employee turnover on the performance of a selected South African agribusiness organization. It encompasses key components of the research process: the research paradigm, research approach, design, target population, sampling strategy, data collection tools, methods of analysis and ethical considerations. The research paradigm chosen is interpretivism, prioritizing the understanding of people's real-world experiences and subjective viewpoints. It aims to bridge the theory-practice gap through inductive techniques. Pragmatism, briefly discussed, combines positivism and interpretivism to address practical issues. The research approach is qualitative,

delving into subjective meanings, feelings and perceptions regarding employee turnover's influence on performance. A mono-approach is used for in-depth exploration and data triangulation enhances trustworthiness.

The research design employs a descriptive case study method, focusing on SENWES, a prominent South African agribusiness to explore the employee turnover-performance relationship. The target population comprises various agribusinesses in South Africa, while SENWES is the primary case due to its industry significance. Senior managers at SENWES form the total population. Purposive sampling selects participants based on qualifications, roles, experience, tenure and involvement in organizational goals. Data collection tools encompass an interview guide, SENWES guidelines and policy documents. Thematic analysis, supported by ATLAS.ti software is used to identify recurring patterns and themes. Ethical considerations include informed consent, confidentiality, research integrity and beneficence. Informed consent forms are provided, ensuring participant privacy. Research integrity is maintained by proper citation and participants are informed about the study's purpose and potential risks. Therefore, Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the research methodology, ensuring the research's credibility and ethical conduct.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 4 discusses the study's findings on personnel turnover in South African agribusiness. Atlas. ti, a qualitative solid data analysis software was used to analyse the data. Atlas. ti carefully organized and analyzed the data to understand the study's participants. A detailed descriptive analysis was possible by coding the interview transcripts into themes and categories (Soratto *et al.*, 2020). This program helped organize and understand qualitative textual and visual data, which was vital to the study (Rambaree, 2018). The important data findings and trends from the theme analysis are presented in this chapter. The findings shed light on personnel turnover in a South African agribusiness, revealing their challenges and potential. Data analysis began with a qualitative thematic analysis to find and describe patterns or themes. Atlas. ti helped organize and code interview transcripts. Each interview was carefully transcribed and examined for descriptive study topics and codes (Ronzani *et al.*, 2020). These themes and codes provided a structured framework for analysis, helping to understand South African agricultural personnel turnover.

#### **4.2 THEMES**

Atlas. ti found four employee turnover themes:

##### **4.2.1 Major Employee Turnover Causes**

Employee turnover causes are examined in this theme. Sub-themes include dissatisfaction with compensation, professional progression prospects, poor working

conditions, no employee aid programs, restricted decision-making power and feeling undervalued.

#### **4.2.2 Employee Quitting Plan**

This theme explores employees' job-quit plans. This category's sub-themes include work atmosphere, motivation and goals to find new jobs within a certain timeframe.

#### **4.2.3 Performance and Employee Quitting Intention**

This theme explored how an employee's intention to quit affects performance and organizational effectiveness. Sub-themes include diminished motivation, productivity and the company's mission and job quality.

#### **4.2.4 Strategies to Lower Turnover**

This theme examines ways to reduce staff turnover. This category's sub-themes include developing employee connections, recognizing and rewarding successes, improving career progression chances, improving work environments and supporting employee decision-making.

These four main themes explain the causes, intents and effects of employee turnover and other methods to reduce turnover and promote employee satisfaction and retention.

### **4.3 THEME 1: MAJOR EMPLOYEE TURNOVER CAUSES**

The participants' comments indicated various sub-themes that explain employee turnover. Verbatim quotes from participants support three main sub-themes:

#### **4.3.1 Unhappiness with pay**

Many participants complained about their pay. Employee 1 said:

*"I like the compensation; however, I think the work environment could be better to boost job satisfaction."*

This shows how complicated remuneration is for employees. Employee 5 said:

*"I am happy with my income, but my company's lack of professional advancement has disappointed me."*

Compensation dissatisfaction contributes to participant turnover thoughts.

#### **4.3.2 Few Career Advancements**

The participants stressed the lack of job progression opportunities. Employee 1 said:

*"Career growth is unavailable in my company,"*

It is clear that the employee years for professional development. Employee 5 said:

*"My lack of growth and development chances in my current career makes me frequently consider quitting."*

These verbatim quotes show how limited career growth opportunities affect employees' job decisions.

#### **4.3.3 Workplace Challenges**

Participants cited workplace issues that made them consider quitting. Employee 1 said:

*"I think the work environment could be better to boost job satisfaction".*

This implies that workplace circumstances were important. Employee 8 stated:

*"The many problems I have at work make me want to quit and look for a new career within a year."*

These verbatim quotes emphasize the sub-theme of workplace challenges and the impact of poor working conditions, the lack of employee assistance programs and limited decision-making power on job satisfaction. These findings match employee turnover research. The study proves that compensation, professional progression and the work environment affect turnover intentions. The current study supports this literature by identifying participant concerns and difficulties (Kaihlanen *et al.*, 2020). These findings and past research emphasize the importance of addressing these factors to reduce staff turnover and promote job satisfaction and retention in firms. The stability of these findings across studies makes them important in the context of employee turnover (THU, 2022).

#### **4.4 THEME 2- EMPLOYEE QUITTING**

The analysis of participants' responses to the "Employee Intention to Quit" theme revealed various sub-themes that explain why employees consider quitting. Verbatim quotes from participants support these three main sub-themes:

##### **4.4.1 Workplace Issues**

Many participants reported work environment problems as a primary reason for quitting. Employee 2 stated:

*"Job environment concerns have made me consider quitting and looking for another job within a year".*

Employee 4 added;

*"Unfortunately, work environment concerns have made me frequently consider quitting my job."*

These quotes show how workplace issues like working conditions and atmosphere affect employees' intentions to quit.

#### **4.4.2 Want a Motivating Workplace**

A common sub-theme was a more cheerful and motivating workplace. Employee 2 said:

*"I would like to stay with this company if the workplace is more positive and motivating."*

Employee 5 added:

*"I want to stay at this company, but the work climate must change to encourage personal and professional growth."*

These verbatim quotes emphasize the importance of a supportive and motivating work environment in retaining employees.

#### **4.4.3 Well-being and Motivation Impact**

The participants also said their intention to resign was linked to how their job affected their well-being and motivation. Employee 10 said:

*"The workplace harms my health, and my motivation has waned."*

Employee 11 added:

*"The work atmosphere negatively influences my well-being, and motivation has entirely evaporated."*

These quotes show how the workplace affects employees' well-being, motivation and intention to quit.

These findings are consistent with employee turnover research. It is well known that work environment concerns and the desire for a positive workplace affect employees' intention to quit. Well-being, motivation and turnover intentions are also consistently linked in the literature (Thu & Watanabe, 2022). These findings confirm that resolving workplace issues and creating a positive and encouraging atmosphere reduces turnover intentions (Schiess, 2022). The current study recognizes these elements, confirming the impact of work conditions on employee intentions to resign and the need for proactive actions in firms to retain their staff.

#### **4.5 THEME 3: EMPLOYEE QUITTING AND PERFORMANCE**

The study of participants' responses under the "Employee Intention to Quit and Its Link to Performance" theme revealed many sub-themes illuminating the complicated relationship between employees' intention to quit and their performance. Quotes from participants support three main sub-themes:

##### **4.5.1 Impact on Motivation and Productivity**

The participants' replies showed that quitting hurt their drive and productivity. Employee 11 stated:

*"High turnover intention can hurt organizational effectiveness. Employee motivation and productivity collapse when they feel underpaid and work in poor conditions".*

Employee 13 added:

*"Clear job expectations and frequent opportunities to use my abilities have increased my employment happiness. These aspects benefit me and improve the organization".*

#### **4.5.2 Company Mission and Quality**

Quitting could affect their organization's mission and work quality, according to several individuals. Employee 11 said:

*"Lack of advancement opportunities might increase turnover intention and hamper organizational effectiveness."*

Employee 13 added:

*"The organization's mission and quality are severely hampered."*

These verbatim quotes show how employees understand how quitting will affect the organization's mission and work quality.

#### **4.5.3 Staff morale and commitment**

The impact of turnover intention on staff morale and commitment was a major finding. Employee 11 said:

*"Lack of supporting supervisors, growth opportunities, and employee feedback lowers morale, compromising the company's mission and job quality."*

Employee 13 added that clear job expectations, access to the necessary supplies and frequent recognition and appreciation boost morale. These statements demonstrate how turnover intention affects employee morale, dedication and performance.

These findings match turnover intention-performance research. Multiple studies have demonstrated that high turnover intention lowers employee enthusiasm, productivity and commitment thus impacting an organization's mission and job quality (Yusoff *et*

al., 2022). The current study provides particular instances of how turnover intention affects employee performance and the organizational climate thus supporting this literature. These findings and past studies emphasize the importance of managing turnover intentions to improve organizational performance and employee well-being (THU, 2022). These sub-themes underscore the complex relationship between employee intentions to resign and organizational effectiveness.

#### **4.6 THEME 4: TURNOVER REDUCTION STRATEGIES**

Employees' "Strategies to Reduce Turnover Rate" replies highlighted many sub-themes that shed some light on their approaches and solutions to reduce turnover. Verbatim quotes from participants support three main sub-themes:

##### **4.6.1 Improving Employee Relations**

A major sub-theme was building employee connections to prevent attrition. Employee 3 said:

*"maintaining solid employee relationships and celebrating their achievements are essential to a healthy and engaging workplace".*

Employee 13 said:

*"Our Company has great employee relationships, which creates a friendly and engaging workplace".*

These verbatim quotes emphasize the importance of positive employee relationships to reduce turnover.

#### **4.6.2 Awards for Success**

Recognition and appreciation for staff achievements was another sub-theme.

Employee 3 said:

*"Rewarding employees for their achievements promotes morale and strengthens their loyalty to the company."*

Employee 13 agreed, emphasizing the necessity of recognizing success. These quotes emphasize the importance of recognizing and appreciating employee contributions to reduce turnover.

#### **4.6.3 Career Growth and Development**

According to participants, offering career progression and development opportunities regularly reduced turnover rates. Employee 3 advised:

*"Offer training, coaching, and clear promotion chances".*

Employee 13 advised:

*"The organization must provide organized career development tracks to reduce turnover intention and boost job satisfaction."*

Career growth and development help retain employees.

These findings match previous research on turnover reduction measures. Positive employee connections, recognition and rewards and career advancement and development have been demonstrated to improve employee retention. The current study provides particular instances of employee-recommended strategies to support this literature (Hoque *et al.*, 2021). These findings and past studies emphasize the necessity of addressing these areas to reduce turnover and improve employee happiness and commitment. These sub-themes stress employee-centric techniques to reduce turnover and align with retention strategy literature.

The study's findings answer the research questions by examining employee turnover in agribusiness, its integration into organizational goals, its impact on performance, existing strategies to improve employee performance and management implications on organizational performance (Svotwa *et al.*, 2019). The study explained employee turnover in agricultural literature. The results show that agricultural literature understands the complex nature of employee turnover, particularly in the context of job discontent, career progression prospects and workplace problems. These reasons increase staff turnover in agribusiness, according to the literature. Thus, the study demonstrated that agricultural literature portrays employee turnover as a complex interaction of factors that affect workforce dynamics.

The research has successfully addressed how agribusinesses incorporate staff turnover into their short and long-term goals. The study shows that agribusinesses know employee turnover affects performance and sustainability (Thu & Watanabe, 2022). To maintain a steady and engaged staff, organizations aim to prevent employee turnover. This answer stresses that agribusinesses view employee turnover as a key aspect in both short and long-term success.

The study demonstrated how agribusinesses use staff turnover to measure performance. High turnover rates hurt employee engagement, productivity and commitment. Agribusiness firms know that employee retention is crucial to performance and the study shows that lower turnover rates inspire and satisfy workers, improving performance and aligning with goals. The study effectively addresses agribusinesses' staff performance initiatives (Schiess, 2022). The findings

show that these companies value positive employee connections, recognition and rewards and career development (Thu & Watanabe, 2022). This answer shows that agribusinesses actively seek to improve staff performance by following industry literature.

The management of the consequences of employee turnover on agricultural performance is well examined in the study. The data suggests that high turnover rates hurt an organization's performance. The study shows that management must handle employee turnover to create a more stable and motivated staff, which improves organizational performance (Yusoff *et al.*, 2022). The study's findings answer the research questions by revealing how employee turnover is explained in agribusiness literature, integrated into organizational goals, used to establish performance, existing strategies for improving employee performance and management implications on overall organizational performance in the sector (Svotwa *et al.*, 2019).

The perceptions of career advancement options within selected agribusiness organizations in South Africa were explored as a crucial factor in a study analyzing the factors contributing to staff decline in these organizations. The data collected and presented brings insights into how participants perceive the availability of opportunities for career advancement. When coupling these data to the question regarding the reasons for staff turnover, it is apparent that a significant proportion of those surveyed do not view the absence of chances for promotion as a primary cause of employee turnover in their company. Most participants believe that such chances exist, implying that factors other than limited possibilities for advancement

may be a larger contributor to staff turnover. This finding underlines the complexity of employee decline and the need to consider several variables when attempting to reduce it. Even though career advancement opportunities are an essential element of employee satisfaction and retention, it is obvious from this sample that they are not the main determinant of employee turnover (De Winne *et al.*, 2019). Other aspects of workplace culture, work-life balance or job satisfaction may be more influential, showing the need for a holistic approach to handling employee turnover in South African agribusiness businesses.

In the research study researching the factors contributing to staff churn in selected agribusiness groups in South Africa, participant satisfaction with their working conditions was one of the least significant indicators examined. The data obtained and presented provides insights into how people perceive their companies' working conditions and whether these conditions contribute to team attrition. Connecting the results to the query about the causes of staff departures reveals that an important percentage of the people polled have expressed discontent with their working conditions. If these individuals sense that their working conditions are a major cause of discontent, these conditions are likely to lead to staff turnover within their company.

A large number of participants agree with the statement which indicates that working conditions in these agribusiness organizations might need to be revised. Such unrest can majorly impact employee morale, job satisfaction and ultimately staff turnover. To boost employee retention and overall group performance, organizations must resolve the issues raised by their personnel regarding working conditions (Han, 2020). This

finding illustrates the need for organizations to prioritize enhancing working conditions and consider employee input and concerns to reduce staff turnover and grow a more positive and productive work climate in the South African agribusiness sector.

In the research study aimed at identifying the factors contributing to staff attrition in selected agriculture organizations in South Africa, the extent of employee involvement in their organization's decision-making processes was considered a crucial factor. The data provide valuable insights into how people perceive their level of engagement with decision-making and whether or not that aspect contributes to workplace turnover. As indicated by these results, a substantial number of participants are excluded from decision-making processes in their company. The overwhelming consensus indicates a pervasive issue with the dearth of staff involvement in making decisions, which can have profound implications for staff happiness, participation and overall organizational performance.

When coupling these data to the query about the causes of layoffs, it becomes clear that the perception of a lack of involvement in decision-making is an important worry among the participants. This view may contribute to worker attrition, resulting in feelings of weakness, lack of motivation and decreased job satisfaction (Mohsin *et al.*, 2023). Personnel not feeling heard or valued in decision-making may be more likely to pursue jobs elsewhere, resulting in increased staff turnover. This finding highlights the value of organizations fostering a more inclusive and collaborative work culture where workers can engage in decision-making processes. By solving this concern and actively involving employees in decisions that affect their work and

the organization, agribusinesses in South Africa could lower staff turnover and nurture a more committed workforce. The presence or absence of assistance for employees was one of the areas examined in the research study intended to identify the factors contributing to employee decline in selected agribusinesses in South Africa. The results presented participants' perceptions of the availability of such initiatives and whether their absence is a potential cause of job loss.

According to the participants' ideas, employee assistance programs are generally available in their organizations. However, it is important to note that a significant proportion of participants stated uncertainty about such programs, which could point to a need for more knowledge or awareness about these support services. When relating these results to the question about the causes of employee turnover, only a small percentage of respondents might think of the absence of employee assistance programs as a potential cause of employee turnover. Employee assistance programs can be helpful assets for addressing satisfaction with work, providing support for both personal and professional challenges and reducing stress and attrition (Basnyat & Clarence Lao, 2020).

While the majority of those participating do not regard the absence of these programs as an important driver in employee turnover, businesses must ensure that their employees are conscious of and have access to these support services to foster a healthy and supportive work environment. By having these programs and effectively promoting them, organizations can better address the holistic demands of their employees and potentially reduce staff turnover resulting from personal and professional challenges. The extent to which staff felt their input was important at

their workplaces was one of the factors studied in the research study aimed at finding factors contributing to employee decline in selected agribusiness groups in South Africa. These responses reveal a clear and concerning trend: a substantial proportion of the participants feel that their contributions and ideas need to be sufficiently recognized and valued in their workplaces. The overwhelming number of people in strong agreement indicates a widespread problem with the perceived lack of appreciation for staff input, which can have profound implications on staff participation, unfulfillment and overall organizational performance. When relating the results to the query surrounding the causes of layoffs, it becomes clear that the participants view the lack of appreciation for their contributions as a significant issue.

Many participants who strongly concur with this statement indicate that the reported lack of appreciation is an important root cause of workplace dissatisfaction. This frustration may result in feelings of disengagement, a lack of inspiration and ultimately, staff turnover. Employees who do not feel valued or known in their organizations may be more likely to look elsewhere for job possibilities where their input might be valued (Al-Suraihi *et al.*, 2021). Consequently, these findings highlight how important it is for organizations to actively foster a culture that recognizes and values the contributions of their employees to cultivate a happier and more dedicated workforce thereby reducing staff turnover and increasing overall organizational performance. In the research study targeted at identifying the factors relating to staff turnover in selected agribusiness groups in South Africa, the perception of work tedium as a potential cause of staff turnover was one of the aspects studied.

The participants' opinions on work boredom as a primary factor in layoffs are divided according to their insights. Others disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition that work boredom contributes greatly to employee turnover. While a problem in some workplaces, boredom at work may not be viewed as the primary driver of turnover among workers in this context. This variation in responses reveals that for some participants, other factors, such as job satisfaction, workplace culture and possibilities for career advancement, may play a greater part in agribusiness organizations in South Africa in terms of employee destruction (Lin & Huang, 2021).

Ultimately, this finding underlines the complexity of employee decline and the need for organizations to deal with various contributing factors. By evaluating the multifaceted nature of employee experiences, organizations can create better strategies to reduce staff turnover and boost overall employee satisfaction and performance. The participants were asked for an estimate of how often they thought about leaving the job they had. When relating these data to the primary intention to quit, it is essential to consider the factors leading to these ideas. The results show that while some participants contemplate stepping down, most are still unsure of their intentions. The reasons for deliberating quitting can vary among job satisfaction, work-related stress, opportunities for career advancement and other workplace factors.

These findings underscore the need for further investigation and understanding of the key variables contributing to employees' quitting intentions. By identifying and addressing the specific reasons, businesses can reduce employee turnover and enhance employee satisfaction (Al-Suraihi *et al.*, 2021). These findings motivate

organizations to engage in an open dialogue with their employees to understand their concerns better and work collectively to create a more positive and interactive workplace. When comparing this data to the overall effect of staff resignations on the performance of selected agriculture organizations in South Africa, it is critical to consider the impact of employees' intentions of looking for new employment. A large proportion of those polled who stated uncertainty and the smaller proportion who are actively pondering leaving their current positions indicate that employee retention may be difficult in this context. Job dissatisfaction, a lack of career advancement and other factors might contribute to these intentions to seek new employment. Organizations must consider these signals and address the fundamental problems that trigger these intentions (Ganji *et al.*, 2021). Proactive efforts that boost job satisfaction, chances for advancement and overall employee engagement can play a major part in reducing staff turnover and improving the performance of agriculture businesses in South Africa.

When connecting the findings to the overall effects of layoffs on the performance of selected agribusiness groups in South Africa, it becomes clear that quite a few participants are considering leaving their current employers. This strong propensity to leave is a crucial indicator for organizations. High staff turnover can be disruptive and costly, negatively impacting overall performance, team dynamics and productivity. Organizations need to take proactive measures to lessen employee turnover and enhance organizational performance (Lin & Huang, 2021). Retaining valuable talent necessitates dealing with factors contributing to job dissatisfaction, providing job advancement opportunities and nurturing a supportive work

environment. This knowledge highlights the significance of these efforts in guaranteeing the stability and success of South African agribusinesses.

When relating such results to the overall effects of staff departures on the performance of selected agriculture organizations in South Africa, the importance of paying attention to employee intentions to quit and future turnover becomes evident. The small number of participants who strongly concur with the statement represents a critical area of concern for organizations, even though most of those quizzed express uncertainty. Immediate departures can disrupt workflow, bring about the loss of knowledge and skills and incur recruitment and training costs. Organizations need to prioritize retention strategies to mitigate these challenges and boost organizational performance.

Retaining talent and ensuring the long-term health and prosperity of agribusiness organizations in South Africa depends on addressing factors contributing to employee frustration, promoting advancement in one's career and fostering a positive work environment (Djajasinga *et al.*, 2021). This data demonstrates the significance of these efforts in lessening the potential impact of loss of employees. In a study assessing the factors contributing to staff loss in selected South African agribusinesses, volunteers were questioned about their knowledge of their job responsibilities. Most of those who took part perceived an apparent understanding of their roles and responsibilities given the correlation with this data and the overall impact of turnover intentions on organizational effectiveness. Such clarity can contribute to higher employee performance, job satisfaction and a decreased sense to quit an organization. Employees who know their obligations are more likely to be

engaged, productive and content. This can result in better efficiency at work and decreased employee turnover (*Al-Suraihi et al.*, 2021). Other factors, which include job satisfaction, workplace culture and opportunities for professional development can also play significant roles in determining whether or not an employee stays or quits an organization. In this context, it is essential to take a holistic approach to address the loss of staff to raise the organization's overall performance.

When relating these outcomes to the overall impact of turnover intention on organizational efficiency, it appears that, in this particular context, the participants are not overly worried about the availability of materials and equipment. This positively affects their job satisfaction since they will be able to perform the tasks at hand effectively and efficiently. Employees with access to essential supplies and equipment are more likely to be productive and satisfied with their current roles. In turn, this can result in increased efficiency in the organization and possibly decreased turnover intent. A well-equipped workforce is needed to sustain high performance and limit the likelihood of employees pursuing jobs elsewhere. However, it is essential to remember that the availability of materials and equipment is just one part of the work environment (*Basnyat & Lao*, 2020). Other variables, such as job satisfaction, workplace environment and opportunities for professional development can also impact decline intentions. Therefore, a holistic strategy to address the decrease in South African agribusiness groups should consider these factors to improve corporate efficiency and effectively reduce staff turnover.

Coupling this data with the overall impact of planned turnover on organizational efficacy demonstrates that the participants could have given cause for concern. A

large percentage of employees who believe they cannot utilize their talents and do what they do best daily may report lower job satisfaction and participation. This, in turn, can contribute to intentions to quit. Employees who believe their strengths and skills should be more utilized or recognized may become disengaged and actively seek employment opportunities that let them use their abilities more effectively. This can result in a higher decline rate, which may harm the general well-being of South African agribusinesses. To address this issue and improve organizational performance, organizations must provide frequent chances for employees to utilize their strengths and skills in their positions of responsibility (Dwesini, 2019). Creating an environment where individuals can excel and feel valued will boost job satisfaction, employee engagement and possibly lower turnover. Enhancing the organization's effectiveness in this context needs a holistic approach that considers multiple factors that influence intentions to quit.

Rewards and accolades are essential for enhancing morale among staff members, motivation and job satisfaction. Employees who feel that their efforts go unnoticed or unrecognized may become disengaged and unhappy, which can contribute to their intention to leave their current employer. When employees do not feel that their contributions matter, they may be more likely to pursue employment opportunities where their work is valued. This result underlines the value of a positive work culture that promotes recognition and praise for outstanding results (Juvitayapun, 2021). To reduce employee turnover and improve organizational efficiency, organizations should regularly acknowledge and appreciate the achievements and contributions of their employees. Recognizing and rewarding excellent work may result in a more

engaged and satisfied workforce, which will ultimately enhance the performance of South African agribusiness groups.

A concerning pattern arises when coupling these responses to the effects of turnover intention on organizational efficiency. The absence of personal care and support from supervisors or fellow employees, encouragement for professional development and the perception that one's opinions do not matter may all contribute to low job satisfaction, disengagement and a greater willingness to consider leaving the organization. Employees who do not feel regarded as individuals, lack opportunities for growth and development and believe their opinions are not taken seriously may become dejected and seek out more friendly and encouraging work environments. This type of situation can result in increased turnover rates, which may negatively affect South African agribusiness organizations' overall performance and efficiency (Kelly *et al.*, 2021). To deal with these issues, organizations must prioritize the creation of a positive and supportive work culture that values employees as individuals, supports their growth as professionals and involves employees in decision-making. Such efforts may significantly lower intentions to quit and improve the business's overall performance and effectiveness.

Many factors become obvious when connecting these responses with the impact of the intention to quit on organizational efficacy. Alignment with the mission and purpose of a business is associated with a sense of significance in one's work, lowering potential intentions to quit. In contrast, a lack of perceived enthusiasm for quality work among friends may contribute to dissatisfaction and hinder employee retention. Positive interaction and progress discussions at work can benefit job

satisfaction and professional development, thus lowering the likelihood of employee turnover.

Organizations that encourage a sense of purpose, quality work commitment and opportunities for progression discussions are more likely to retain their employees and thus improve their overall performance and effectiveness (Al-Suraihi *et al.*, 2021). To improve organizational performance in South Africa's agribusiness sector, enterprises may concentrate on fostering a sense of purpose, fostering a culture of quality work commitment and providing regular opportunities for employee development and progress discussions. These efforts can lead to elevated job satisfaction and diminished turnover rates.

Employees who think that their professional development receives encouragement and support are far more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. They are, therefore, more likely to be engaged and committed to their roles. It may also raise retention rates. When employees can acquire new skills and advance their careers throughout the organization, they are less likely to pursue employment elsewhere. Finally, it contributes to organizational performance development. Continuously learning and growing employees are more likely to contribute new knowledge and skills to their roles, boosting the entire organization (Sainju *et al.*, 2021).

Employees who have positive relationships at work generally feel more satisfied with how they work. They feel valued, respected and considered, reducing the likelihood of seeking jobs elsewhere. Strong work relationships minimize the possibility that employees will think about leaving their current positions. They could experience a

sense of belonging and camaraderie that keeps them from seeking different job opportunities (Djajasinga *et al.*, 2021). Positive workplace interactions can increase working together, more vital interaction and enhance organizational effectiveness. Teams that collaborate effectively are more likely to succeed in achieving their goals and contribute to the organization's achievements.

A workplace with beneficial connections fosters a positive culture, which attracts and retains top talent. Improving professional relations between employees is a strategic approach to reducing intent to leave in the context of the agribusiness industry in South Africa, where turnover rates may affect organizational performance. It can result in a more stable, happy and productive workforce, ultimately improving the performance and usefulness of the selected agribusiness groups (Juvitayapun, 2021). Organizations should consider working together, interacting and using employee engagement tactics for marketing to address this aspect. This may involve team-building exercises, interpersonal communication training or initiatives to recognize and reward collaborative efforts. Organizations can reduce staff vacancies by cultivating positive workplace relationships while enhancing overall performance.

Motivating and raising employees' morale, and acknowledging their efforts and contributions increases motivation and job satisfaction. Workers who feel valued and recognized are less likely to consider quitting their current positions. They feel a sense of appreciation and identity, which fosters their loyalty. Recognized and motivated employees tend to perform better, contributing to more robust organizational effectiveness and productivity (Al-Suraihi *et al.*, 2021). The proper compensation is crucial for attracting and retaining talented staff members, which is

essential in the fiercely competitive agribusiness sector. Improved job satisfaction and fair compensation helps the financial well-being of employees, which decreases financial stress and related intentions to quit.

In the context of agricultural businesses in South Africa, where attracting and retaining talent is of the utmost importance for business success, it is impossible to overstate the value of recognition and reasonable compensation. These elements create a positive work environment where staff feel valued and their contributions are treated fairly. This, in turn, results in increased job satisfaction, decreased intention to leave and better organizational effectiveness. Organizations should consider setting up recognition programs and ensuring that their salary structures are industry-competitive (Yaseen, 2020). By doing so, they can contribute to the reduction of intention to quit and positively influence the performance of South African agribusiness groups.

#### **4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In Chapter 4, Atlas. ti analysis of participants' comments identified four primary themes connected to employee turnover, revealing the causes, intents and consequences of turnover and recommended solutions to reduce turnover. The first major theme, "Major Causes of Employee Turnover," examined the causes of employee turnover. This topic had sub-themes on compensation dissatisfaction, career progression and workplace problems. The participants cited wage dissatisfaction, professional growth possibilities and workplace difficulties as reasons

for resigning. The second key theme, "Employee Intention to Quit," examined employees' job-quit plans.

The influence on well-being and motivation, work environment issues and a desire for a happy and motivating workplace were sub-themes. The participants stressed the need for a more positive and encouraging workplace. They also noted that work atmosphere, well-being and motivation directly affect quitting intentions. The third key theme, "Employee Intention to Quit and Its Link to Performance" studied how quitting can affect performance and organizational effectiveness. Sub-themes included decreased motivation, productivity and the company's mission and job quality. The participants acknowledged that turnover intention hurts employee motivation, productivity, morale and dedication as well as the organization's mission and job quality.

The fourth key theme, "Strategies to Reduce Turnover Rate" offered staff turnover reduction strategies. Enhancing employee relationships, rewarding success and career advancement and development were sub-themes. The participants suggested developing healthy employee connections, recognizing and valuing employee achievements and providing professional development opportunities to reduce turnover. These findings support the literature on turnover causes and effects, emphasizing the importance of salary, career progression and work environment. The data also illustrate that employee-centric initiatives, including building connections, acknowledging achievements and offering development opportunities reduce turnover. The chapter provides a complete overview of employee turnover, its facets and ways firms can improve employee satisfaction and retention.



## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

The participants' responses in Theme 1, "Major Causes of Employee Turnover" showed various sub-themes illuminating the main causes of employee turnover. These sub-themes include unhappiness with remuneration, possibilities of career advancement and workplace challenges. Dissatisfaction with pay influenced employees' intention to quit. Many participants complained about their pay. Employee 1 liked the remuneration but wanted a better work environment to promote job satisfaction. This complexity shows that employees regard compensation as part of job happiness. Employee 5 added to this sub-theme by saying they were happy with their pay but disappointed by the lack of professional progress. This highlights how remuneration and professional progression prospects affect individuals' inclinations to leave their jobs (Kamaruddin *et al.*, n.d.).

Career progression opportunities could have been better for participants. Employee 1 said they needed career development because their firm did not offer it. Employee 5 also stressed the importance of growth and development opportunities saying that without them, they often considered resigning. The lack of career growth chances is a major factor in individuals abandoning their jobs (Nsiah *et al.*, 2022).

Another important sub-theme was workplace challenges. The participants reported workplace difficulties as reasons for resigning. Employee 1 noted that the work environment needed change to promote job satisfaction, demonstrating the importance of working conditions on intentions to quit. Employee 8 described their workplace troubles as so severe that they wanted to quit and find a new job within a

year. This reinforces the sub-theme of workplace problems by showing how bad working conditions, lack of employee assistance programs and limited decision-making capacity affect job satisfaction (Mahendra *et al.*, n.d.).

These findings are consistent with employee turnover research. The study proves that compensation, professional progression and the workplace affect intentions to quit. This study complements the literature by addressing participant concerns and perspectives. It emphasizes the necessity of addressing these issues to reduce staff turnover and improve work satisfaction and retention (Schiess, 2022). Since these findings match prior studies, they are important in the context of employee turnover. Dissatisfaction with remuneration, restricted professional progression prospects and workplace obstacles precipitate intentions to quit. This study found that addressing these elements is essential to retaining a happy, dedicated staff (Kalyvaki *et al.*, 2023). This research fills a gap by revealing how these reasons appear and emphasizing their relevance in modern work contexts.

Work environment concerns were a key sub-theme, with many participants claiming workplace troubles as a primary reason for quitting. Employee 2 reported that work environment challenges had pushed them to consider searching for another employment within a year. Employee 4 reiterated this sub-theme, saying work environment issues often made them consider resigning. These statements emphasize the importance of working environment, atmosphere and workplace quality in deciding employee turnover. Also popular was the need for a positive and motivating workplace (Schiess, 2022). Employee 2 wanted to stay in the workplace and was more cheerful and motivated. Employee 5 stressed the need for a change

in work culture to foster personal and professional growth. These statements underline the importance of a helpful, engaging and encouraging workplace in employee retention.

Also important was the impact on well-being and motivation. The participants said they wanted to quit because their job was bad for their health and motivation. Employee 10 said the workplace was unhealthy thus lowering motivation. Employee 11 also noted that the workplace negatively impacts well-being and motivation, causing them to lose motivation (Schiess, 2022). These insights show how the work environment, employee well-being and motivation affect intentions to quit. These findings support previous research on employee turnover, showing that work environment issues, the desire for a happy workplace and well-being and motivation affect employees' intentions to quit (Junior & Gameiro, 2020). The literature shows that a poor work environment hurts employee morale and commitment and that an inspiring and supportive workplace is essential. Numerous research studies have linked well-being, motivation and intentions to quit (Krissman, 2021).

The current study supports these findings by offering participant examples and statements, emphasizing the importance of addressing these aspects in minimizing turnover intentions. It also emphasizes the significance of proactive actions to build a positive, well-being and motivating workplace. In conclusion, this study supports previous research (Rambe & Khaola, 2022) by emphasizing the need for organizations to address work environment issues, create a positive and motivating workplace and prioritize employee well-being and motivation to reduce turnover

intentions. The three sub-themes explain why employees consider leaving their jobs and can help companies increase employee retention and happiness.

Previous studies on intention to quit and performance supports these conclusions. High turnover intention reduces employee enthusiasm, productivity and commitment, impacting an organization's mission and work quality, according to research. This study supports this literature by presenting examples and participant quotations, underlining the need for companies to address and minimize intentions to quit (Berezhnytska *et al.*, 2023). The findings highlight the complex relationship between employees' intentions to quit and organizational effectiveness. It shows how intentions to quit can hurt employee performance, work quality, the company's mission morale and dedication (Serrat *et al.*, 2019). Organizations can consider these findings when creating measures to lower intentions to quit and improve performance and employee well-being.

Theme 4, "Strategies to Reduce Turnover Rate" matches existing literature on employee turnover mitigation measures. Previous research supports improving employee connections, recognition and awards for accomplishments and career advancement and development. These sub-themes stress employee-centric techniques to reduce turnover and align with retention strategy literature. Numerous studies have shown that positive employee connections reduce turnover. The study emphasizes the importance of employee relationships (Krissman, 2021). Positive interactions create a healthy, engaged workplace where employees feel appreciated and connected. A setting like this can boost job satisfaction and reduce turnover. Creating a welcoming and engaging environment is crucial to employee retention

and these findings support the relevance of interpersonal interactions (Akol & Abuga, 2023).

Employee turnover studies have shown the importance of rewarding employees for their accomplishments. The study supports this literature by showing how rewarding employees for their achievements boosts morale and corporate loyalty (Byamukama *et al.*, n.d.). Employees that feel valued for their work are more engaged and satisfied. These findings suggest that recognition and awards reduce intentions to quit and boost employee engagement.

Career growth and development have been shown to reduce employee turnover in numerous studies. The participants stressed these chances throughout the trial. The findings support previous research showing clear promotion opportunities, training, coaching and coordinated career development tracks minimize turnover intention and increase work satisfaction. Offering professional development increases employee retention (Smith *et al.*, 2023). These findings emphasize the need for career progression and learning frameworks. The study supports turnover-reduction measures in the literature. Research suggests employee interactions, recognition and awards and career growth opportunities help retain employees (Gusakova *et al.*, 2020). These findings suggest that firms should invest in employee-centric ways to reduce turnover, and boost happiness and commitment. By concentrating on these methods, firms may create a more engaging and supportive workplace, increasing retention and employee satisfaction.

#### **4.9 MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS OF OUTCOMES (Incomplete) Use research objectives)**

The managerial implications drawn from the data emphasize the need for a holistic approach. The statistics suggest a holistic approach to reduce staff turnover and improve organizational performance. These main themes can help South African agribusinesses develop a work environment that boosts employee satisfaction, retention and dedication, improving productivity and effectiveness. For example, most employees are dissatisfied with their salaries, suggesting that remuneration significantly influences turnover intentions (Djajasinga *et al.*, 2021). Companies should conduct wage evaluations, ensure industry-competitive compensation and adopt performance-based incentives. Salaries can influence employee retention and company success. Moreover, career development opportunities affect turnover intentions. Clear career paths, training and development and mentorship can help firms retain talent (De Winne *et al.*, 2019). Encourage employees to see a long-term future in the company to reduce turnover and improve commitment.

The research shows that many employees are unhappy with their working conditions and need more decision-making power. Organizations should prioritize workplace improvements, inclusiveness and involvement and employee assistance programs to solve these concerns. An employee-centric workplace can boost job satisfaction and reduce attrition. In addition, reducing turnover intentions requires staff recognition and engagement. Organizations should implement recognition programs, regular feedback and employee voice chances (Han, 2020). This can boost job happiness, engagement and retention. Finally, these themes emphasize investing in employees'

skills development. Businesses can profit from continual training, supporting education and allowing people to improve. Encouraging personal and career development shows a commitment to employee success and this can reduce turnover and improve organizational effectiveness. The study's findings have major managerial implications for companies seeking to reduce employee turnover and improve performance and well-being. These consequences fall under three categories:

#### **4.9.1 Development of Retention Strategies**

Retention strategies might be based on the top employee turnover causes. Organizations must address dissatisfaction with compensation, professional progression opportunities and workplace challenges. This data can help management design compensation packages that meet employees' needs and provide career development opportunities (Schiess, 2022). To promote job satisfaction and prevent turnover, firms could improve working conditions, introduce employee assistance programs and give employees more decision-making power.

#### **4.9.2 Improving Workplace**

The results of employee intention to quit stress the necessity of improving the work environment. Addressing employee workplace problems should help management create a positive and motivating workplace. This includes improving working conditions, creating a supportive environment and encouraging personal and professional growth. Management should prioritize employee well-being and

motivation (THU, 2022). An atmosphere that appreciates these elements can reduce turnover and promote staff retention (Schiess, 2022).

### **4.9.3 Focus on Performance and Mission**

The link between employee intention to quit and performance and the organization's objective is important for management. Management should regularly monitor and address turnover intentions to improve performance and work quality (Qablan & Farmanesh, 2019). This includes setting clear job requirements, allowing employees to use their skills and offering career progression. Since turnover intentions affect employee morale and commitment, management should encourage supervisors, provide feedback and recognize employees' efforts.

These findings emphasize the need for proactive employee retention and performance improvement. The relationship between employee intentions to quit and organizational functioning should be recognized by management (Yusoff *et al.*, 2022). Addressing intentions to quit fundamental causes can help firms retain employees, motivate them and improve performance and quality. These managerial implications are critical for companies seeking to reduce turnover, boost employee happiness and keep workers engaged and productive (Yusoff *et al.*, 2022). They offer solutions to the identified difficulties and align with employee turnover, performance and well-being literature.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

South African agribusinesses must reduce employee turnover to improve stability and performance. According to the study, numerous solutions might be proposed to reduce high intentions to quit:

#### **Competitive Pay Strategies**

Offer competitive compensation that matches industry standards and rewards employees' abilities and accomplishments (Dwesini, 2019).

#### **Clearly Defined Career Paths**

Performance reviews and mentorship can help employees see their future in the organization (Djajasinga *et al.*, 2021).

#### **Improve Working Conditions**

Improve working conditions for safety, comfort and productivity. Safety, ergonomics and well-being programs can achieve a positive work environment (Yaseen, 2020).

#### **Foster Good Workplace Relationships**

Create initiatives to improve employee relations. Team-building, open communication and dispute resolution promote workplace harmony (Han, 2020).

#### **Awards and Recognition**

Create official recognition and award programs to honour employees' achievements and contributions. Rewarding staff for their hard work can boost morale (De Winne *et al.*, 2019).

#### **Skills Development Investment**

Provide continuing agribusiness-specific training and skills development. Educating workers about modern farming, pest management and sustainable practices can boost job satisfaction and productivity (Dwesini, 2019).

### **Protect Health and Safety**

Given agribusiness's physical demands and risks, prioritize workplace health and safety. Reduce workplace accidents and injuries with thorough safety measures, training and equipment maintenance to increase retention (Han, 2020).

### **Local Community Participation**

Improve relationships with agribusiness communities. Investing in community development, education and local hiring can make the company an appealing employer.

### **Mentorship, Succession Planning**

Mentorship programs and succession planning help organizations transfer knowledge and experience. Facilitating employee growth and giving clear advancement tracks can boost work satisfaction and company loyalty (Djajasinga *et al.*, 2021).

### **Performance-Based Rewards**

Introduce performance-based incentive schemes to compensate personnel for meeting agricultural output or quality goals. Rewarding outstanding performance can inspire employees and boost organizational efficiency (Lin & Huang, 2021).

These proposals are customized to South African agribusiness needs and concerns. Agribusinesses can boost employee retention and performance by investing in skills development, health and safety, community engagement, mentorship and performance-based incentives. These suggestions can help South African agribusinesses reduce turnover, boost job happiness and boost performance

(Dwesini, 2019). To retain and attract people in this competitive industry, address compensation concerns, provide advancement possibilities, improve working conditions, promote strong work relationships and recognize employees' accomplishments. These ideas will help South African agribusiness thrive.

## **5.1 FUTURE RESEARCH**

South African agribusiness research should focus on many crucial areas to fill gaps in our understanding of intention to quit and organizational performance. Why these future research recommendations are crucial:

## **5.2 INVESTIGATING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Agribusiness leadership and management should be studied further. Leadership styles, communication and decision-making procedures affect employee turnover and performance. Understanding how they affect attrition might help reduce it. Leadership shapes company culture and employee engagement (Djajasinga *et al.*, 2021). Organizations can improve by understanding how leadership practices affect turnover intentions and performance.

## **5.3 LONGITUDINAL EMPLOYEE RETENTION STUDIES**

Longitudinal studies of employee turnover and performance can reveal trends and patterns. Researchers can study turnover rates, their causes and organizational success. Seasons and economic situations challenge agribusinesses (*De Winne et al.*, 2019). Longitudinal studies can capture these changes and reveal turnover and performance trends.

#### **5.4 THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY**

Technological advances and digitalization in agribusiness must be studied. Technology integration affects job responsibilities, skill needs, employee satisfaction, turnover intentions and organizational performance. Research should examine these effects (Djajasinga *et al.*, 2021). Agribusiness is changing swiftly because of technology. Future competitiveness depends on understanding its implications on the workforce and how firms might react.

#### **5.5 EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT**

The physical and emotional health of agriculture workers should be studied. How employee well-being affects turnover intentions and organizational performance can highlight the necessity of holistic support systems (De Winne *et al.*, 2019). Employee well-being is increasingly linked to job happiness and performance. The agribusiness job is tough; therefore knowing its effects is crucial.

#### **5.6 COMPARISONS TO OTHER SECTORS**

Comparing agricultural turnover and performance to other sectors might provide useful benchmarks. Such research can help agribusinesses analyze their retention and performance in the economy. Agribusinesses can better understand their strengths and limitations by benchmarking against other industries (Ureña-Espailat *et al.*, 2023).

#### **5.7 IMPACT OF SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES**

Examine how sustainable farming and business practices affect employee satisfaction, turnover intentions and agribusiness performance. Sustainability goals

and staff engagement must be assessed (De Winne *et al.*, 2019). Agriculture is increasingly concerned with sustainability. As firms adopt sustainable practices, it is crucial to understand their effects on employees and performance. Future South African agribusiness research should focus on leadership and management, longitudinal studies, technology, employee well-being, comparative sector analysis and sustainability. Agribusiness firms need research in these areas to reduce attrition and improve performance.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

This research study illuminated staff turnover factors and their effects on a selected South African agribusiness firm. In some companies, salary discontent may not be the main cause of turnover. It is important to remember that employee turnover is affected by more than pay. This shows that there may be other causes of employee turnover than limiting career opportunities. Other workplace factors likely influence attrition more. Dissatisfaction with the working environment can seriously impact morale, job content and turnover. To reduce turnover and improve morale, companies should address working conditions. This view might cause job dissatisfaction and personnel turnover. Creating an inclusive and collaborative workplace where employees may participate in decision-making can reduce employee turnover.

The study did not find convincing evidence that work ennui drives employee turnover, but it stressed the importance of considering many factors. To reduce staff turnover and improve employee satisfaction and performance, firms must address all aspects of employee experiences. The study also revealed that many employees

were unsure about quitting. This suggests that more research is needed to understand and address these thoughts. This study highlights the complexity of staff turnover in South African agribusiness and the necessity for organizations to consider various issues. These elements can improve workplace morale, productivity, turnover, performance and competitiveness. Thus, this extensive research study has illuminated the causes of staff turnover in a selected South African agribusiness. The study examined employee intentions, job satisfaction and work environment views. The data revealed a comprehensive understanding of employees' intention to quit dynamics, which can greatly impact these firms' success. Many participants needed guidance on whether to seek new jobs or leave their current positions, suggesting a retention issue. While most did not plan to leave immediately, addressing the reasons for uncertainty and intentions to leave is essential for organizational stability and success.

According to the research, working circumstances, employee involvement in decision-making and recognition of accomplishments affect job satisfaction and turnover. Negative views on these may cause employee disengagement and turnover. The outcomes of assessing the effects of employee turnover on selected agribusiness performance in the South Africa study were derived from participant answers to several questions and statements. These results underline the need for agribusiness to invest in their employees, cultivate supportive work environments or align their compensation and recognition practices with workers' expectations. By addressing these critical areas, organizations can reduce resignations, increase job satisfaction and improve their ability to compete in the highly competitive South African agribusiness market.

In conclusion, this study's findings shed light on the age range of participants, their levels of satisfaction with salary and working conditions and the variables that can influence attrition intentions. These findings highlight the necessity of addressing salary joy, career advancement opportunities and relationships at work in the South African farming sector to reduce turnover while increasing organizational performance. To address these difficulties, organizations must prioritize a supportive and collaborative workplace. Most participants were not concerned about tools and equipment, suggesting resource satisfaction. However, this is only one aspect of the workplace and job satisfaction and professional advancement are also vital. Future studies should examine the causes of doubt, inclinations to quit and agribusiness retention measures. Exploring how turnover affects productivity, team dynamics and expenses would help clarify the issue. This study has major consequences for South African agribusinesses. It emphasizes the need to address all areas of employee experiences, from working conditions to career advancement, to reduce attrition and improve performance. These companies' long-term health and competitiveness depend on proactive worker satisfaction, engagement and retention tactics. Understanding and resolving employee turnover is crucial for South African agribusinesses' survival and growth in a fast-changing job market with strong demand for competent workers.

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## APPENDIX A: ETHICS APPROVAL



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South Africa 2320

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Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Senate Committee for Research Ethics

Tel: 018 269-684

Felicia.Matene@nwu.ac.za

06 September 2023

### ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)** on 25/08/2023 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.

**Study title:** Assessing the effect of employee turnover on selected agribusiness organisations' Performance in South Africa

**Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher:** Prof JC Botha and Prof J Lekunze

**Student:** G Linde (26137860)

**N W U - 0 1 8 3 0 - 2 3 - A 4**

Institution Study Number Year Status

Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation

**Application Type:**

**Commencement date:** 06/09/2023

**Risk:** Minimal

**Expiry date:** 06/09/2024

**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):**

+

**General conditions:**

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the EMS-REC:
    - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and
    - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.
  - The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the EMS-REC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
  - Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.
  - The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRE and EMS-REC reserves the right to:*

- request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
- to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;
- withdraw or postpone approval if:
  - any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;
  - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the EMS-REC or that information has been false or misrepresented;
  - submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or
  - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.

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

Yours sincerely,

**Mark  
Rathbone**

Digitally signed by Mark Rathbone  
DN: cn=Mark Rathbone, ou=North  
West University, ou=Business  
management,  
email=mark.rathbone@nwu.ac.za,  
c=ZA  
Date: 2023.09.06 14:27:09 +0200

**Prof Mark Rathbone**  
**Chairperson: NWU Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee**

## ANNEXURE B: TURNITIN REPORT

26137860:GERHARD\_LINDE\_FINAL\_SUBMISSION\_26137860....

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Mariam Al Akasheh, Esraa Faisal Malik, Omar Hujran, Nazar Zaki. "A decade of research on machine learning techniques for predicting employee turnover: A systematic literature review", Expert Systems with Applications, 2024

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Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Interview Protocol**

### **Introduction**

- Welcome the participant and clearly state the purpose and process of this research. Thank you very much for taking the time to participate and be interviewed voluntarily.
- Clearly state the rights of participants in terms of voluntary involvement, confidentiality, and risk in line with the North-West University Ethical Process and Rules.
- If not obtained already, obtain and confirm each participant's permission on the Consent Form.
- Agree on the interview approach and recording—explain the process and timeframe, which should be approximately 60 min.

### **Interview**

- The interview will focus on response regarding the impact of turnover intention on organisational effectiveness and how to reduce the rate.

**The concept interview questions to be posed by the researcher will be:**

#### **Interviewee background:**

- How long have you worked in the company?
- What is your gender?
- In what age category do you fall?

1. With which of the following do you most strongly agree are causes of staff turnover in your company?
2. Why do you think your colleagues and co-workers quit their job?
3. What suitable impact do you think this turnover has on your organisation?
4. What will help to reduce the high turnover rate experienced?

### **Conclude**

Thank the participant.

Participants to consent to contacting them again, where necessary, for clarity of data collected (referred to in qualitative research as 'member-checking')