A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION,
ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS AMONGST
CALL CENTRE AGENTS IN A CALL CENTRE IN THE WESTERN CAPE

by

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ABSTRACT

Research suggests that a positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and organisational commitment and increasing the job satisfaction and commitment of employees impacts positively on their job performance and productivity. In addition to this, research also shows that these attitudes have implications for positive job related behaviours such as reduced turnover and intention to quit.

The argument is that with the call centre industries’ expansion and subsequent rising turnover, the necessity to ensure a high level of satisfaction and commitment amongst call centre agents as to reduce intention to quit and eventual turnover has become of paramount importance. This study therefore investigated the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions among call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.

The sample group consisted of one hundred and seventy two (n=172) call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape. A biographical questionnaire, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and Intention to Quit Scale were administered to the respondents. Once the questionnaires were returned the raw data was captured into SPSS and statistically analysed. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilised to determine the relationships between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents. Furthermore multiple regression analyses was utilised to determine the variance between biographical variables (age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole), job satisfaction and organisational commitment
amongst call centre agents.

The results indicate that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst the sample of call centre agents. There was also a significant negative relationship between organisational commitment and intention to quit. In addition, there was a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and intention to quit.

Further findings of the current study point to a significant relationship in job satisfaction based on employees’ age and tenure in the call centre. However, no significant relationship was found between all the biographical characteristics of gender, age, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole and organisational commitment. Implications for the management of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions are provided based on the results which were obtained in the current study.

**KEYWORDS**

Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment, Turnover Intentions, Herzberg, Motivation, Call Centre, Call Centre Agents, Turnover, War for talent, Process Model
DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis “A study of the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape” is my own work, and that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university. All the resources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

___________________

Ricardo Sampson
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

In this chapter the motivation for the research is presented by discussing the contextual challenges facing a call centre based in the Western Cape with particular focus on job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to quit amongst call centre agents. The research questions are framed and the objectives of the research are discussed.

Research by Gordi (2005) suggests that within the South African context, there is a relative paucity of call centre research. Her research reveals that call centre agents generally experience low levels of job satisfaction due to the fairly low skilled nature of their work. Diamond (2010) found that high levels of stress amongst employees in call centres result from both the work tasks and the interactions with customers. Sadien (2010) reports that the increasing demand for client-centred services in a highly competitive business environment has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of call centres world wide. She maintains that, within the call centre environment specifically, turnover has been identified as one of the most pressing problems in terms of scope, and attributes their lack of job satisfaction to the monotony and repetitiveness of the job content which is exacerbated by a lack of opportunities for promotion and by stress (Sadien, 2010).

The present study focuses on a call centre in the Western Cape which is experiencing high levels
of turnover amongst its call centre agents. The call centre can be described as a demanding working environment. It requires call centre agents, both new and existing to operate at full capacity while abiding by tight time schedules and stringent policies and procedures. The job of the call centre agent consists of routine tasks which are highly monotonous and monitored with automated processes. The working environment is characterised by high pressure where high turnover is a constant reality. Furthermore, call centres invest substantial amounts in terms of talent development and technological advancement to remain competitive. It is suggested that understanding why employees exhibit intentions to quit could lead to greater understanding of why employees actually quit (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

It is likely that organisations that understand their call centre agents’ intentions of quitting would be better positioned to address those issues leading to actual quitting behaviour. Two constructs that have been shown to be strongly correlated to intention to quit are job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008). The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to quit amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape to get a better understanding as to why agents intend to quit.

Over the past few years organisations have realized the importance of understanding why employees intend to quit. A series of investigations (Claes & Van Der Van, 2002; Cohen, 1993; Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; McCulloch & Turban, 2007) have been conducted examining the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to quit with the aim of better understanding intention to quit. South Africa has also experienced an assortment of
publications with specific interest in examining the aforementioned relationships between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Studying the relationship between these variables in a call centre setting would most likely provide better insight as to why call centre agents intend to quit.

According to Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008), job satisfaction and organisational commitment have been found to be both positively related to one another, whilst being negatively related to withdrawal behaviours such as turnover and intention to quit. This would indicate that employees who experience job satisfaction and are committed to the organisation are less likely to have quitting intentions. Prior research has shown a link between job satisfaction and organisational commitment with increased productivity and decreased intention to quit (Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007). Furthermore a study conducted by Jacobs and Roodt (2008) looking at turnover intentions, found that there exists a strong positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment and that there exists a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and intention to quit, and organisational commitment and intention to quit.

Organisational commitment has been consistently found to have statistically negative relationships with intention to quit and actual turnover (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). Thus, it is likely that call centre agents quitting intentions would be reduced if their levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment should increase respectively. Literature reveals that organisations that ensure that their workforce is committed and satisfied would more likely experience reduced turnover behaviours and absenteeism (Greenberg & Baron, 2003) and instead may gain a workforce that may be more eager to make sacrifices for the organisation (Miller,
Haskell & Thatcher, 2002). It can be seen that job satisfaction does have a bearing on the likelihood that employees would stay in their jobs whilst being committed to the organisation than those who are dissatisfied and are more likely to turnover (Tietjen & Myers, 1998).

According to Wegge, van Dick, Fisher, Wecking and Moltzen (2006, p. 61), “call centres are a growing part of the service industry in many countries and a substantial amount of call centre agent jobs has been created in recent years.” The amount of resources invested in each call centre agent has resulted in many organisations investigating ways to minimise turnover while maximising job satisfaction and organisation commitment. It is likely that call centres stand to benefit from motivated and committed call centre agents with regards to return on investment. Literature reveals that employees who are committed to the organisation (Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007) and are satisfied with their jobs (Lund, 2003) are less likely to think about quitting as intention to quit cognitions are seen as a reliable predictor of turnover. Organisations are realizing the significance of intentions to quit and are taking strides into understanding why employees intend to quit (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). It is probable that by increasing call centre agents’ levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment would result in fewer thoughts about quitting. This would most likely also lead to motivated and committed call centre agents who would, in all likelihood, put in extra effort to add value to the organisation.

Theorists such as Herzberg have suggested that feelings of accomplishment and rewards have all contributed as causes of what employees would deem as experiencing satisfaction within their jobs (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Furthermore, Martin and Roodt (2008) reveal that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two separate and sometimes unrelated phenomena. They show that Herzberg’s
two factor theory model explains that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are determined by extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Extrinsic factors are called hygiene factors and look at the way the job was performed while intrinsic factors are motivators which involves aspects of the job itself.

Greenberg and Baron (2003) show that satisfaction and dissatisfaction come from the aforementioned moderating variables called motivators and hygiene factors, respectively. Job satisfaction is caused by these sets of factors called motivators. Examples of motivators include promotion opportunities, opportunities for personal growth, recognition, responsibility and achievement. On the other side of the scale, job dissatisfaction is caused by the set of factors called hygiene factors. Examples of hygiene factors are quality of supervision, pay, company policies, physical working conditions relations with others and job security.

Furthermore, Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008) reveal that job satisfaction is an important workplace construct that is linked to positive organisational outcomes and is also closely related to organisational commitment. It has further been found that those employees who are highly committed to an organisation, are more likely to expend effort and make sacrifices in order for the organisation to thrive (Miller et al., 2002) and less prone to leave the organisation (Muthuveloo & Che Rose, 2005). It is probable that call centre agents who experience high levels of job satisfaction would most likely experience commitment to the organisation and would less likely leave the organisation.

Call centres stand to benefit from call centre agents who are experiencing both high levels of satisfaction towards their jobs and commitment towards their organisations as this would lead to
lower turnover cognitions and quitting behaviour (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004).

In the following section the key constructs of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions are outlined:

(a) Job Satisfaction

For the purposes of this study, the intrinsic and extrinsic definition of job satisfaction will be utilised. Intrinsic satisfaction occurs when performing work and consequently feeling a sense of accomplishment, self-actualisation and identity with the task results. Extrinsic satisfaction occurs from the rewards given to the individual by peers, supervisors or the organisation and can take the form of recognition, compensation and advancement (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

(b) Organisational Commitment

For the purposes of this study, Meyer and Allen’s (1991) three component approach to commitment will be considered when defining and conceptualising organisational commitment. The components consist of affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. Affective commitment is a person’s desire to continue working for an organisation because they agree with its underlying values and goals. While continuance commitment is a person’s desire to continue working for an organisation because they believe it is too costly to leave, normative commitment is a person’s desire to continue working for an organisation because they feel pressure from others to stay (Cohen, 2007).
(c) Intention to quit

For the purposes of this study intentions to quit will be defined as the strength of an individual’s viewpoint that they do not want to stay with their respective employers (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008).

1.2. Motivation for study

The call centre industry-locally and internationally-has experienced tremendous expansion. According to Wallace and Eagleson (2004), the call centre industry is one of the fastest growing industries, both locally and internationally. In this regard, some countries have experienced growth rates of over 20% per annum (Carrim, Basson & Coetzee, 2006). The South African call centre industry has also experienced growth rates of up to thirty five percent since 1996, and in addition to this, experts have estimated growth rates of up to 25% to follow in subsequent years (Carrim et al., 2006). It has been estimated that the industry has the capacity to create another 50 000 to 100 000 jobs in subsequent years (Carrim et al., 2006).

Organisations such as call centres are being viewed as a social system (Mosadeghrad, Ferlie & Rosenberg, 2008) where talented people are the most significant aspect for ensuring effectiveness and efficiency (Swanepoel, Erasmus, van Wyk, & Schenk, 2003). However, one of the most serious issues facing the call centre industry today is that of rising turnover rates of agents in call centres (Carrim et al., 2006). The amount of resources invested in each call centre agent and the substantial cost associated with replacing them has led to many investigating this rise in quitting behaviour (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004).
Many call centre agents today interact with technology up to over eighty percent of the day (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004) and agents need to be highly competent in the roles they need to perform. Advancement in technology and service delivery requires organisations to invest in the development of competent agents. South Africa is currently finding itself in a situation where the demand for highly competent employees actually overshadows supply, leaving most organisations battling for this limited resource as the pool of talent becomes exhausted (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). Call centres that invest in developing their talent, but fail to recognise the importance of retention strategies, stand to lose highly competent agents to competitors. As such call centres constantly have to think not only about developing and attracting talent, but also retention strategies (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008).

Call centre agents often complain that tasks are highly structured and are constrained by detailed procedures and constant monitoring. This leads to the agents experiencing job dissatisfaction which in turn impacts on their commitment. According to Carrim et al. (2006), factors such as the monotony and repetitiveness of the job and lack of promotion opportunities may result in unhappiness amongst staff which in turn leads to turnover.

Call centres are commonly known for being very stressful environments in which to work (Gilmore, 2001). According to Fisher, Milner, and Chandraprakash (2007), the majority of call centres in South Africa follow an approach to work described as “the mass service” call centre model. The result of following this model typically leads to a demand for low skill levels yet highly repetitive tasks. The implications are significant as threats to call centre agents’ psychological well-being are usually at stake (Fisher et al., 2007).
Fisher et al. (2007) identified the following aspects as having strong positive effects on employee well-being; these include: autonomy, skill variety, task identity, performance management, talent development, a supportive supervisor, empowered work structures. The negative consequences of not attending to these aspects may result in increased absence and turnover rates; anxiety, depression and burnout (Fisher et al., 2007). Several key factors were identified that are commonly associated with burnout, low organisational commitment and turnover intention among call centre agents (Visser & Rothmann., n.d.). These include; work overload, monitoring and surveillance of employees, competing management goals, upward career movement, lack of skill variety, and emotional labour (Deery, Iverson & Walsh, 2002).

Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008) have illustrated that if employees are satisfied with their work, they would likely be committed to the organisation. The majority of conceptual frameworks and empirical research have focused on organisational commitment as the strongest construct to predict behaviour such as turnover while understanding an employee’s attitude and performance (Cohen, 2007; Martin & Roodt, 2008). Committed employees are less likely to resign and to be absent (Greenberg & Baron, 2003) and are more likely to stay on their jobs and report for work when they are supposed to (Muthuveloo & Che Rose, 2005).

Employees who are highly committed to the organisation are more likely to express effort and make sacrifices in order for the organisation to thrive (Miller et al., 2002) and less prone to leave the organisation (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Previous studies have shown that employees experiencing job satisfaction are more likely to stay in their jobs and be committed to the organisation than those who are dissatisfied who are more likely to turnover (Tietjen & Myers,
According to Wallace and Eagleson (2004), organisations are highly concerned about high turnover amongst employees. With a cost of replacing a single call centre agent being sizeable ranging in the thousands, identifying reasons as to why agents’ turnover has become a priority for organisations. Furthermore McCulloch and Turban (2007) highlight that this substantial replacement cost includes advertising, recruiting, screening and testing, interviewing and training. Greenberg and Baron (2003) indicate that the expenses involved in selecting and training employees and replacing those who have resigned can be quite sizeable ranging from 70 to 200 percent of the annual salary. The high levels of turnover amongst call centre employees across the globe as a result of job satisfaction (Carrim et al., 2006) and the lack of organisational commitment (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008) have provided an important impetus in researching the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

Studying the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions in the call centre setting would most likely provide better insight as to why call centre agents intend to quit. It is possible that call centre agents quitting intentions would be reduced if their levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment should increase respectively. This experience is consistent with findings by researchers (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008; Martin & Roodt, 2008) who all found positive correlations between job satisfaction and organisational commitment and negative correlations with intentions to quit.
The call centre environment is one that is target driven, stressful, and technologically sophisticated. The call centre environment success is dependant on its call centre agents’ interactivity with its customers which should foster positive customer relations. The challenges posed are the demands placed on call centre agents. These demands include, time limits, call scripting, monitoring and irregular work hours. Further to this, the general lack of job satisfaction and organisational commitment experienced by call centre agents is of concern as these constructs have been shown to be linked to intentions to quit (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

Call centre agents who experience promotion opportunities, opportunities for personal growth, recognition, responsibility and achievement would more likely experience job satisfaction. However, it is probable that call centre agents who are unhappy with regards to their quality of supervision, pay, company policies, physical working conditions relations with others and job security would most likely be experience job dissatisfaction. It is probable that call centre agents who experience high levels of job satisfaction would most likely experience commitment to the organisation and would less likely leave the organisation.

1.3. Research objectives

The aim of this research is to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.
More specifically, this research aims to address the following:

- To determine whether a positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.
- To determine whether a positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.
- To determine whether a positive relationship exists between organisational commitment and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.
- To determine the relationship between biographical characteristics, job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.

1.4. Hypotheses

Based on the objectives, the following research hypotheses have been formulated:

**Hypothesis 1**

There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intentions.
Hypothesis 3

There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 4

There is no statistically significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and job satisfaction respectively.

Hypothesis 5

There is no statistically significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and organisational commitment respectively.

Hypothesis 6

The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7

The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in organisational commitment.

Hypothesis 8

Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment will not statistically significantly explain the variance in intention to quit.
1.5. Chapter summary

The aim of this research was stated and the motivation for the research was discussed. The research objectives were highlighted and hypotheses formulated.

1.6. Delimitations of the study

Although the present study could potentially make a contribution to the body of knowledge on the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions with specific reference to call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape, a number of limitations are worth noting.

(a) Utilisation of a non-probability sampling method

(b) Low Generalisability of research findings

(c) The study was done in only one call centre; as such research findings cannot be generalised to other call centres with confidence.

1.7. Outline of the study

Chapter two provides a discussion of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions with reference being made to research done on the relationship between these three variables in the call centre industry. Definitions of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions are provided, as well as theories of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions are discussed.
Chapter three provides a detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in the investigation and outlines the sample, the manner in which the data was collected, as well as the statistical techniques employed in testing the research hypotheses and statistical analyses utilized in the current research.

Chapter four presents the research findings. This chapter provides an overview of the results based on the statistical analyses.

In chapter five, conclusions are drawn based on the results obtained in the study. In addition, the limitations of the research are highlighted and recommendations are made that may be of value in future research.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Call centres by nature are working environments that require utmost dedication from staff members in order to successfully achieve defined targets (Waite, 2002). Targets are set as a result of business need in ensuring market growth and sustainability (Carrim et al., 2006). Meeting the business need is dependant on how effective management motivates call centre agents (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). Management of call centre staff is typically governed by strict company policies that prioritize strategic business imperatives often overlooking the human element. As such many call centre agents have reported little in the way of job satisfaction (Belt, 2002) and many have been shown to leave their jobs (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008).

The expansion of the call centre industry has seen an increase in the demand for quality call centre agents (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). According to Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008), getting call centre agents into the organisation is one thing, but effectively managing and motivating call centre agent throughout their career is another. Research has shown that employees who are motivated and satisfied with their jobs are more likely to be committed and loyal to the organisation, and those who are not are more likely to harbour intentions of quitting (Martin & Roodt, 2008, Slattery & Salvarajan, 2005). Furthermore, the high prevalence of call centre agent turnover experienced locally and internationally has prompted research into understanding the relationship between these three constructs.
The following section commences with a definition of call centres, followed by a review of the role of the call centre environment and ends with a discussion on the topic of call centre agents.

2.2. The Call Centre

2.2.1. Definition of the concept: Call Centre

Call centres have been described as “tools for organising communication with customers... with the help of telecommunication” (Dormann & Zijlstra, 2003, p. 312). Furthermore the term “call centre, is a working environment within an organisation (inhouse) or outside the organisation (outsourced) where the call centre agent communicates, via the use of telecommunication, to provide the customer with support (inbound call centre). The call centre agent also acts as a sales channel through which new business is generated and present business is retained (outbound call centre) (Carrim et al., 2006, p. 66). Terms that are used to describe call centres include, contact centres, service centres and service desks.

Wallace and Eagleson (2004, p. 3) define call centres as “Those workplaces which involve substantial customer contact and in which the majority of all interactions (between customers, employees and management) are mediated by electronic means”. The definitions provide three key areas where call centres provide service. Firstly, these include providing support or sales to the customer. Secondly, the call centre agents provide the said service through the use of telecommunication and technological means. Thirdly, the communication is controlled by means of automated computer technology (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). According to Dormann and Zijlstra (2003), call centres can either be inhouse “part of the company” or external “service
bereaux” working on behalf of several companies.

From the above definition, it can be seen that there are two key components that define the call centre environment. Firstly, the use of telecommunication technology that acts as an interface between the call centre agent and the customer. Secondly, the people that make use of the technology to interact with the customers in order to provide service and generate sales.

In the following section a discussion of the call centre environment will ensue.

2.2.2. The call centre environment

It has been suggested by Dormann and Zijlstra (2003) that call centres provide a competitive advantage for organisations that utilize them which increases profitability and business growth. Furthermore, Waite (2002) is of the opinion that the call centre is the focal point for customers and prospective customers when dealing with the organisation. However, these advantages are only realized when the call centre has adequate facilities such as physical housing, equipment and live agents.

Waite (2002) describes the call centre environment as highly stressful. Communication with customers occurs through integrated telephone and computer systems. The amount of time that
each call centre agent spends with a customer is strictly monitored. Strict time limits are in place to keep calls as short as possible. The call centre agent would be required to communicate with the customer to address a variety of issues. These include taking orders, giving information about products, providing highly skilled IT services or legal advice, conducting consumer research, advertising, and hard selling.

The use of computer and telephonic technology plays a major role in the call centre (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). The majority of call centre environments today can be described in the following manner. They have a computer terminal for each call centre agent which are used while taking and receiving calls from customers. Most calls are generally scripted and very little if no deviation is allowed (Waite, 2002). Furthermore, the computers used will have advanced systems that allow for access to data. This includes access to data such as product detail information, contract history and many other types of data. The manner in which calls are handled requires call centre agents to communicate with customers, access data and wrap up calls all within a specific time limit.

Wallace and Eagleson (2004) state that achieving high customer satisfaction levels relies on call centres equipping the necessary technology to send and receive a large amount of calls by telephone in the shortest time possible. Many of these systems are automated in that they direct calls to call centre agents automatically. Calls are continuously fed through one after the other leaving little time between calls. (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). As such, call centre agents are expected to work with a fast pace at which calls are required to be handled whilst ensuring the high quality expected in delivering the best service to customers (Wegge et al., 2006).
The call centre environment can further be described as highly target driven. Many customers’ first point of contact with the organisation is through the call centre. It is for this reason that the interaction between customers, employees and management are carefully monitored and structured to ensure that all communication with the customer is in line with company values (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). The interaction between call centre agent and customer is managed early in the call centre agent’s career through training and development initiatives. These training and development initiatives also prepare the call centre agents to operate effectively in the call centre environment (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). Waite (2002) suggests that in order for the call centre to manage the ongoing customer relationship effectively, the organisation needs to set achievable goals for its call centre, and to measure the success of the call centre against its sales and customer satisfaction goals.

Hart, Chiang and Tupochere (2009) described two different call centre environments, namely utopian and dystopian. The utopian image is one that is positive and the workplace is described as knowledge-intensive, where agents are enthusiastic and co-operative and conduct themselves in a relaxed and professional manner. Furthermore, the utopian working environment is described as being more flexible than the dystopian working environment, which described contact centres as 21st century sweatshops. Compared to utopian call centres the dystopian contact centres feature constant monitoring, surveillance and controls, with staffing problems, high labour turnover, de-motivated staff, ever increasing production targets and overall stressful environments (Hart et al., 2009).

Call centres operate by means of monthly targets that need to be achieved. In order to meet
targets, effective customer relationship management strategies is pivotal in enhancing customer relations, improving efficiency, minimising costs while improving profitability (Nel & De Villiers 2004; Sprigg, Smith & Jackson 2003, as cited in Carrim et al., 2006). Managing the customer relationship has become a business imperative. Waite (2002) concludes that in order for organisations to coordinate all customer contact and support paths, channelling it into a seamless centralised system is advantageous. Many call centres dealing with customer complaints, queries and marketing opportunities possess the distinct advantage of effective time management. This requires them to operate seven days a week and 24 hours a day, as well as adjust to changes in environmental opportunities (Carrim et al., 2006). The implication of this is that call centre agents often have to work long and irregular hours (Waite, 2002).

One of the most serious challenges facing the industry today is that of towering turnover rates of call centre agents. In a study of 14 call centres in Switzerland, it was found that an annual turnover rate of 21% exists (Wegge et al., 2006). According to Jacobs and Roodt (2008), although call centre agents find their work somewhat stimulating, they experience low levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Prior research has shown a link between job satisfaction and organisational commitment with increased productivity and decreased intention to quit (Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007). This means that call centre agents would have a greater chance of intending to quit if they experience low levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

In the following section a discussion of the call centre agent will ensue.
2.2.3. The call centre agent

Call centre agents are often referred to as call centre representatives, contact centre agents and these terms are often used interchangeably. For the purposes of this study, the term call centre agent will be used.

Success at performing the job requires the call centre agent to execute several attention consuming, concurrent subtasks (Waite, 2002). Wallace and Eagleson (2004) state that these include:

(a) Activities such as controlling calls via complicated listening and questioning skills, operating a keyboard to input data into computers, reading often detailed information from a visual terminal, and speaking to customers.

(b) Tasks are often conducted under pressure and working irregular hours to ensure customer satisfaction.

(c) Phone calls with customers that are usually short, ranging from two to five minutes.

(d) A call centre agent often communicating with many different customers everyday; sometimes with about 100 customers during a typical 8 hour shift (Wegge et al., 2006).

Call centres make use of large numbers of people, handling large flows of customer calls. Generally, a call centre agent’s role is to operate as part of a team with a team leader overseeing their daily activities (Waite, 2002; Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). Call centre agents have to ensure that they follow company policy to the letter, when clocking into work, signing into the terminal, talking to customers, taking lunch breaks, and clocking out of work. Furthermore, there is
constant pressure to achieve targets under tight deadlines. Performance in this environment is often monitored through the use of electronic performance monitoring systems that are employed to operate at every step of the process. In most cases, call centre agents work according to the same scripts for long periods of time, often without breaks in between calls. These factors contribute to an extremely stressful and demanding working environment (Dormann & Zijlstra, 2003).

According to Deery et al. (2002), in the service industry, specifically within call centres, the call centre agent mostly performs emotional labour. Emotional labour is a form of emotional regulation in which employees are expected to display certain emotions as part of their job, and to promote organisational goals (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). The work of a call centre agent is regarded as one of the ten most stressful jobs in the present-day world economy (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). According to Deery et al. (2002), job related burnout is the most likely outcome of the performance of emotional labour in that call centre agents have very few opportunities to vary the nature of their displayed feelings, and as a result, may risk high levels of stress.

Employee turnover has become a prevalent problem for call centres and represents one of the biggest challenges needing to be addressed (Dormann & Zijlstra, 2003). Martin and Roodt (2008) are of the opinion that, in order for organisations to understand why call centre agents leave their jobs, they first need to understand why their call centre agents intend to quit. Jacobs and Roodt (2008) suggest that organisations that are aware of their employees intentions of quitting would be better positioned to reduce eventual quitting behaviour.
In conclusion, the demands placed on the call centre agent often requires them to operate at full capacity working through tight time schedules and hours to meet deadlines. The nature of their work leaves them with little room for initiative which has a bearing on their levels of satisfaction.

In the following section a discussion of burnout is provided.

### 2.2.4. Burnout in call centres

In a study by Banks and Roodt (2011) there was little evidence of an application of high commitment practices in call centres. What this suggested was that the focus was on the quantity of calls handled by call centre agents and meeting performance targets rather than on quality of these calls. Furthermore, managers were reluctant to compromise efficiency for quality service or employee well-being. Wallace, Eagleson and Waldensee (2000, p. 174) referred to the adoption of a ‘sacrificial HR strategy’. Managers sacrificed employee well-being to achieve efficiency and accepted burnout and high turnover as part of the management strategy.

The most accepted definition describes burnout as consisting of three separate but interrelated constructs, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). The first of these constructs, emotional exhaustion, is characterised by feelings of emotional depletion, extreme tiredness, a lack of energy and a feeling of being drained of emotional resources to cope with continuing demands (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). When employees reach this point of tiredness they withdraw from their work.
This leads to the second component of burnout, namely depersonalisation (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). Depersonalisation can be seen as a coping response that will protect the employee from further emotional depletion. According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), this form of coping has serious implications for a company that makes use of service workers to provide their services as they tend to be less responsive to, and involved with, the needs of their customers. According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), in the final phase of burnout, reduced personal accomplishment, employees compare their current levels of competence with their previous levels of competence before emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation had set in. If they see that they are not as competent and efficient as they used to be, feelings of incompetence, lack of achievement and lower productivity could follow. These in turn, could culminate in lowered job satisfaction, lowered organisational commitment and increase turnover cognitions.

According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), the following factors could lead to burnout in call centres, namely work overload, monitoring and surveillance of employees, competing management goals, lack of upward career movement, lack of skill variety, and emotional labour.

In the following section a brief description of the factors leading to burnout mentioned in the preceding paragraph will ensue.

(a) **Work overload**

Work overload is directly related to the development of emotional exhaustion (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). These include, high levels of client contact, not being able to take a break between calls, receiving calls on a continuous basis, perceived high target levels,
pressure to reduce wrap-up time, and continuous versus alternating demands (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.).

(b) Monitoring and surveillance of employees

According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), monitoring and surveillance of employees are seen as very prominent and invasive call centre practice. In call centres, management emphasis is on monitoring and measuring employees, and technology is used as a control device to manage the workplace, to ensure compliance with work procedures, to monitor the speed of production, to regulate the level of downtime, to assess the quality of customer interactions, to reduce variability in service delivery and to enforce high production standards (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.).

Long-term monitoring can have a negative effect on employees (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). Electronic performance monitoring is associated with stress (Wallace et al., 2000). According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), it causes employees to become more depressed and to develop higher levels of anxiety. Thus, employee monitoring is also linked to higher levels of emotional exhaustion, specifically in the case of employees who dislike having their performance scrutinised continuously (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.).

(c) Competing management goals

According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), employees are constantly monitored and pressurised to ensure high levels of productivity. This often in the form of high call volumes, brief talk times with customers and short wrap-up times, while the quality of
their customer interactions is simultaneously monitored with the purpose of improving customer service (Wallace et al., 2000). The perception of call centre agents is that the focus is more on throughput than on customer service making them feel the goals are incompatible and incongruent. Trying to fulfil both these goals results in high levels of frustration and emotional distress and could lead to burnout (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.).

(d) Lack of upward career movement

According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), when people experience greater upward career movement relative to their peers, it may serve as a form of feedback indicating that they are making a positive contribution to the organisation in the form of valued accomplishments. However, a lack of upward career movement is a predictor of emotional exhaustion; if it is perceived to be present in organisations, it will be associated with lower levels of burnout (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.).

(e) Lack of skill variety

Call centre work is seen as monotonous, as customer service representatives are required to perform the same activity over and over again. Experienced monotony is one of the most frequently cited reasons when employees resign (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.).

(f) Emotional labour

Emotional labour can be defined as the expression of appropriate emotions, as defined by the organisation, during interaction with customers (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.) Employees are expected to express socially desired emotions, to appear happy and eager to serve the
customer, to display positive emotions and suppress negative emotions (Visser & Rothmann, n.d.). According to Visser and Rothmann (n.d.), an important factor playing a role in the development of burnout, is the emotional dissonance component of emotional labour. Emotional dissonance results when employees display positive emotions, but feel quite differently within themselves. It makes call centre agents feel inauthentic and as a result could lead to burnout (Visser and Rothmann, n.d.).

Visser and Rothmann (n.d.) investigated the relationship between six characteristics of call centre work environments, burnout, affective commitment and turnover intentions found the following. In their research, emotional exhaustion was found to be a strong predictor of both organisational commitment and turnover intentions. Several studies reviewed by Burke and Richardsen (2001 as cited in Visser & Rothmann, n.d.) have found that turnover intention was significantly related to burnout. The argument is that the demands placed on the call centre agent often results in emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, factors such as work overload, monitoring and surveillance of employees, competing management goals, lack of upward career movement, lack of skill variety, and emotional labour could lead to burnout. Furthermore burnout has been shown to be related to turnover.

In the following section a discussion of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions is provided.
2.3. Job satisfaction

2.3.1. Introduction

The study of job satisfaction is one of the most widely researched variables in industrial and organisational psychology (Buitendach & De Witte, 2005, Veeran & Katz, 2002; Visser & Coetzee, 2005). The main reason for the focus on the construct can be attributed to the following reasons:

1. Organisations operate in a highly competitive environment requiring effective performance from everyone in order to survive. Employee’s satisfaction with their job is a critical issue (Greenberg & Baron, 2003).

2. Interest in Job Satisfaction: Positive correlations have been found between Job Satisfaction and withdrawal behaviours: turnover, absenteeism, psychological distress (Clay-Warner, Reynolds & Roman, 2005; Price & Mueller, 1981; Scott & Taylor, 1985).

3. Job Satisfaction is linked to physical and mental well being of employees (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1992).

2.3.2. Definition of job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a popular construct that is a widely researched in the field of organisational behaviour. Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 148) define job satisfaction as “an attitude that people hold either positively or negatively towards their jobs and the organisations in which they work”. They further view job satisfaction as an employee’s positive or negative attitude toward their job.
What is agreed is that, “stemming from cognitive processes, job satisfaction is a generalised affective work orientation towards one’s present job and employer” (Martin & Roodt, 2008, p. 23). Furthermore, it has been described as “a function of the perceived relationship from what one wants from one’s job and what one perceives it as offering” (Lund, 2003, p. 222). It is clear that if an individual perceives their job as offering what they want, their attitude towards their work would be favourable and they would be satisfied.

Job satisfaction has also been defined in terms of equity; where job satisfaction is determined primarily by the employee’s comparison of actual outcomes or by how well the outcomes meet or exceed expectations (Cranny, Smith & Stone, 1992; Luthans, 2002). Camp (1994) defines job satisfaction as referring to the needs and values of employees and the extent to which those needs and values are satisfied. Greenberg and Baron (2003) are of the opinion that the attitudes that people have toward their jobs contain three essential components. The first component, an evaluative component, speaks to the liking or disliking of specific aspects of the job which reinforces their attitude towards the job. Secondly, a cognitive component, which speaks to the belief that a person holds about their job and whether this belief is true or false. The final component, a behavioural component, which speaks to a predisposition of a person to behave in a certain way in accordance to their beliefs and feelings. Milkovich and Boudreau (1991) also define job satisfaction in terms of an affective reaction to their job, but elaborate further by stating that job satisfaction can be regarded as including the extent to which employees find pleasure in their job experiences. Wallace and Eagleson (2004) support this finding by defining job satisfaction as the positive emotional state
resulting from an appraisal from the job or job experience. These attitudes, both positive and negative, are what people hold towards their job and are known as job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction can be viewed in terms of two facets, namely intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Intrinsic satisfaction occurs when performing work and consequently feeling of accomplishment, self actualisation and identity with the task results. Intrinsic job elements include those values that the individual has or wants (Silverthorne, 2005), and are derived from internally mediated rewards such as, the job itself, opportunities for personal growth and promotion (Mosadeghrad et al., 2008).

Extrinsic satisfaction occurs from the rewards given to the individual by peers, supervisors or the organisation and can take the form of recognition, compensation and advancement (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Extrinsic job elements include those perceptions of how an organisation meets the individual needs or values usually in the form of externally mediated rewards such as satisfaction with pay and benefits, company policies and support, supervision, co-workers, job security and chances for promotion (Silverthorne, 2005).

2.3.3. Approaches to job satisfaction

In order to understand job satisfaction, it is important to understand what motivates people at work. In this regard, a number of theoretical approaches have been outlined to explain the causes and effects of job satisfaction. The following section will begin with an overview of job satisfaction and its relevance to the call centre environment.
Job satisfaction as a systematic science has its roots in history. Swanepoel, et al. (2003), identify that the first systematic form of study into job satisfaction began with the Hawthorne studies. Furthermore, they reveal that during this period, behavioural scientists were trying to understand what factors impacted on performance. According to Greenberg and Baron (2003), the Hawthorne studies were one way of identifying those factors. They state that this looked primarily at discovering the effect of diverse working conditions on an employee’s performance. Furthermore, they reveal that initial discoveries revealed that any changes made in the working environment resulted in a positive outcome on performance. Subsequent discoveries uncovered that the performance increase was due not only to changes in the physical environment, but to the individual’s awareness of being observed which was coined the Hawthorne Effect (Swanepoel et al., 2003).

Swanepoel et al. (2003) revealed that Taylor proposed an early approach to people management referred to as scientific management. Scientific management deviated from the Hawthorne studies in that it argued that in order to take full advantage of productivity, designing the job proficiently was vital as there was only one best way to do a job. Jobs were thus designed in such a way that productivity was maximized, leaving little consideration for the human element required to perform the job. Naturally this in effect left many employees worn out, unhappy and de-motivated (Greenberg & Baron, 2003).

These revelations brought about the belief that other factors are present that impact on job satisfaction and employee motivation (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). In order to understand job satisfaction better it is necessary to identify what motivates people. Two approaches that
Swanepoel et al. (2003) review are content and process theories.

2.3.3.1. Theories of job satisfaction

Swanepoel et al. (2003) categorized job satisfaction theories into either content theories or process theories. Content theories are based on various factors which influence job satisfaction and focus on factors such as needs that are postulated to motivate people. In terms of content theories, emphasis is placed on the type of goals that employees endeavour to achieve in order to be satisfied and succeed on the job (Lok & Crawford, 2001). Scientific management believed at first that compensation was the only motivating factor; later other factors also became common including; working conditions and supervision amongst others (Swanepoel et al., 2003). Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland and Herzberg focused on the needs of employees with respect to what motivates and ensures job satisfaction and performance (Swanepoel et al., 2003).

(i) Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

According to Latham (2007), the hierarchy of needs theory postulated by Maslow reveals the notion that people have five levels of needs that have to be fulfilled in order to reach a state of self fulfillment. Maslow proposed the notion that in order for people to progress up this hierarchy, they first needed to satisfy their lower order needs. The lower order developmental needs were crucial, as these needs looked at physiological, safety/security and love and belonging needs. According to Swanepoel et al. (2003), failing to satisfy these lower order needs could result in it reappearing later in life as developmental challenges.
Once these lower order needs had been satisfied, only then could an individual progress towards the second order growth needs. These second order growth needs include fulfillment of esteem needs and eventual self actualisation. One of the criticisms against Maslow’s theory is that the theory does not allow for an individual to regress to the previous level if fulfilled already (Lund, 2003). What this implies is that an individual would essentially be stuck on a particular level irrespective of the environment context they find themselves, in as that particular need has already been satisfied. Figure 2.1 further illustrates the Needs Hierarchy theory moving from physiological needs through to the eventual need for self actualisation.
According to Swanepoel et al. (2003), an individual strives to satisfy five needs.

1. **The physiological needs**

   These needs include the need for the essentials that are required for survival such as food, water, clothing and shelter. Once these needs are fulfilled the individual progresses to satisfy the next level in the hierarchy, being safety and security needs.

2. **Security and Safety needs**

   These needs include the basic need for security in both the family context and in larger
society. This includes safety and security that protects from hunger and violence. Once these needs are fulfilled, the individual progresses to satisfy the next level in the hierarchy being love and belonging needs.

3. **Love and belonging needs**

These needs include the basic need for forming and belonging in meaningful relationships, and includes the need to form friendships, give and receive love and affection. Once these needs are fulfilled, the individual progresses to satisfy the next level in the hierarchy being esteem needs.

4. **Esteem Needs**

These needs include the need for receiving recognition from others to experience self respect and to be a unique individual. Once these needs are fulfilled, the individual progresses to satisfy the next level in the hierarchy being self actualisation needs.

5. **Self Actualisation**

These needs include the need to experience self fulfilment, and to realise purpose and meaning in ones life and in all things one does.

(ii) **Alderfer’s existence, relatedness and growth theory (ERG)**

According to Swanepoel et al. (2003), Alderfer’s existential, relatedness and growth needs theory, abbreviated as the ERG theory, is based on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory. One important consideration to note is that, unlike Maslow’s needs theory, Alderfer's ERG theory allows for an individual to move back and forth between the existential, relatedness and growth needs (Swanepoel et al., 2003). For instance, an individual who has a house of their own, with a
steady income for their expenses and subsistence, could be seen as satisfying their existential needs. Alderfer’s ERG model would then dictate that this individual would move to satisfy their next need which is relatedness. If the individual should lose his/her source of income and house this would most likely result in them trying to satisfy their need for getting a steady income and a home thus, according to Alderfer’s ERG theory, regress from the relatedness need, back to the existential need. Figure 2.2 further illustrates the concept of the ERG theory moving from existence needs through to the growth needs regressing back to existence needs.

Figure 2.2: The Existence, Relatedness and Growth Theory

Swanepoel et al. (2003, p. 328)

According to Swanepoel et al. (2003), an individual strives to satisfy three needs, which are:

(a) **Existential needs**
Existential needs refer to those things that are required for survival. An example of this include food, clothes and shelter and is tied closely to Maslow’s physiological, safety and security needs. Once these needs are satisfied, the individual progresses to satisfy the next need being relatedness needs.

(b) Relatedness Needs

The need for relatedness looks at the desire of an individual to maintain and develop social relationships and is closely related to Maslow’s social and esteem needs. Once these needs are satisfied, the individual progresses to satisfy the next need being growth needs. However, if the previous existential need should become unfulfilled, the individual could regress back to satisfy that need before progressing again.

(c) Growth Needs

The need for growth looks at an individual striving to reach a state self-fulfillment and is closely related to Maslow’s self esteem and self actualisation needs. However, if an individual’s desire to maintain and develop relationships should become unfulfilled again, they would regress back to satisfy that need before progressing again.

(iii) Herzberg’s two factor theory of motivation

Martin and Roodt (2008) reveal that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two separate and sometimes unrelated phenomena. They show that Herzberg’s two factor theory model explains that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are determined by extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Extrinsic factors are called hygiene factors and relate to the way a job is performed while intrinsic factors are motivators which involve aspects of the job itself. Silverthorne (2005) is of the opinion that
job satisfaction is also influenced by the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that the job offers. Greenberg and Baron (2003) further elaborate that satisfaction or dissatisfaction come from the aforementioned moderating variables, motivators and hygiene factors, respectively. Experiencing satisfaction in a job is determined by the set of factors called motivators which include promotion opportunities, opportunities for personal growth, recognition, responsibility and achievement. On the other side of the scale is job dissatisfaction which is determined by the set of factors called hygiene factors which include the quality of supervision, pay, company policies, physical working conditions relations with others and job security. An important consideration to note is that an absence of motivators would not lead to a state of dissatisfaction, but would instead lead to a state of not being satisfied with the job (Lund, 2003). These motivators or hygiene factors when present, would determine the levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction that employees would experience (Swanepoel et al., 2003). Figure 2.3 further illustrates the concept of the two factor theory.
Figure 2.3: The Two Factor Theory of Motivation (Herzberg)

Motivators refer to factors intrinsic within the work itself like the recognition of a task completed. Conversely, hygiene factors tend to include extrinsic entities such as relations with co-workers, which do not pertain to the worker’s actual job (Tietjen & Myers, 1998).

a) Consequences of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction

An important consideration for organisations to note is that job satisfaction/dissatisfaction has a
tenuous correlation to withdrawal behaviour, tardiness, absenteeism, turnover and productivity which shall be explored below.

1. Withdrawal Behaviour

Employee withdrawal behaviour follows three historical theoretical viewpoints (Baker, 2004). The first viewpoint indicates that withdrawal behaviours are progressive. Individuals who left the organisational moved from absenteeism to eventual turnover. This implies a positive relationship between absenteeism and turnover. A second viewpoint is that absenteeism and turnover are viable alternatives to each other given the setting of the work situation. The resulting relationship between absenteeism and turnover would be negative. The final viewpoint is that these two variables form common causes but are not progressive, and as such, are not related to each other. Past research has found support for all three of these viewpoints (Wolpin & Burke, 1985).

2. Tardiness

Research suggests that it may be legitimate to include tardiness within the withdrawal rubric, that tardiness and absenteeism tend to be exhibited by employees simultaneously rather than alternatively, and that tardiness is related to some demographic/background variables, but not to attitudinal variables. Only moderate correspondence is detected among different tardiness measurements (Baker, 2004).
3. **Absenteeism**

Job satisfaction has been examined extensively in research as a predictor of employee absenteeism (Baker, 2004). Studies have shown weak negative relationships (Farrell & Stamm 1988; Hackett & Guion, 1985) and strong negative relationships (Scott & Taylor, 1985) between overall job satisfaction and employee absence.

4. **Turnover**

Job satisfaction has a high relationship with intention to quit. It has been found in research that job satisfaction relates negatively to intention to quit in an organisation (Martin & Roodt., 2008). Recent research has also shown that Intention to Quit can have effects like poor performance orientation, organisational deviance, and poor organisational citizenship behaviours (Krishnan & Singh, 2010). Job satisfaction has been shown to have weak negative relationships with turnover (Baker, 2004).

5. **Productivity**

An important finding for organisations to note is that job satisfaction has a rather tenuous correlation to productivity on the job. This is a vital piece of information to researchers and businesses, as the idea that satisfaction and job performance are directly related to one another is often cited in the media and in some non-academic management literature (Baker, 2004).
(iv) **David McClelland’s three needs theorem**

McClelland developed a theory that looked at the need for achievement, power and affiliation. The need for achievement looks at employees’ desire to exceed and achieve something in their life or career. Individuals with a high need for achievement prefer working environments of moderate risk, where knowledge of results is provided and where individual responsibility is provided. Under these circumstances high achievers would be strongly motivated (Swanepoel et al., 2003).

The need for power looks at the desire for influential status and relates to the desire to control others and be influential. Individuals with high need for power would typically make good managers (Swanepoel et al., 2003). The need for affiliation relates to the desire to have relations with others and is similar to Maslow’s love and affiliation need (Tietjen & Myers, 1998). Individuals with a high need for affiliation would typically excel in an environment that requires working as part of a team to achieve results. Examples include any team sports where success is not dependant on individual performance, but collective collaboration in order to achieve success (Swanepoel et al., 2003).

(v) **Adams’ Equity theory**

Adams (1965) posits the view that employees seek to maintain equity between the inputs that they bring to a job and the outcomes that they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of others. Inputs are the contributions made by the individual that is invested in a task for the organisation; this includes the work done by the employee or effort, education, time and
money. Outcomes are anything that the individual may receive such as money, recognition and praise. If these ratios are equal, a state of equality exists, and individuals perceive the situation as fair. However, if perceived ratios of inputs/outputs are unequal, the individual experiences inequity and perceives the situation as unfair. The individual would then be motivated to do something to equalize the situation (Swanepoel, et al., 2003).
(vi) Expectancy theory

Vroom’s expectancy theory holds that the tendency of individuals to act in a certain situation
depends on the motivational strength of the expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome, and on the degree to which the person desires that outcome (Swanepoel et al., 2003).

The following three variables underpin motivational strength according to Swanepoel et al. (2003).

(a) **Attractiveness**

The concept of attractiveness can be described as the individual’s perception of the importance and desirability of the potential reward. For example, if an individual employed as a call centre agent greatly desires a promotion, and if such an opportunity exists, they would put extra effort and work harder.

(b) **Performance – reward risk**

The concept of performance – reward can be described as the strength of the individual’s belief that the performance at the level required will result in the desired outcome. For example, if call centre agents meet their target in a given week, the outcome for such an action results in a call centre agents targets being met. Thus, it would be likely that call centre agents would perform at the required level as it will most likely lead to the desired outcome.

(c) **Effort-performance link**

The concept of effort-performance link can be described as the strength of the individual’s belief that the effort exerted will incur necessary performance levels required to achieve the desired result. For example, if a call centre agent who is capable of closing 100 calls is tasked by a manager to do so in the upcoming week, the chances of the call centre agent reaching the desired 100 calls target would attainable, if the necessary effort is expended. Thus, it would be likely that call centre agents would perform at the required
level as it will most likely always lead to the desired outcome (Green & Baron, 2003).

(vii) Goal Setting Theory

It has been suggested by Locke that, if individuals were presented with a definite goal to work towards, as opposed to working without a specific objective in mind, they would perform better (Swanepoel et al., 2003). They (Swanepoel et al., 2003) elaborate further and state that the Goal Setting Theory is based on the notion that the goals act as powerful motivators. For instance, if an individual were to be given an instruction to pick up the pace and to work harder, it would less likely motivate them to perform as opposed to a specific goal such as to increase units produced by thirty percent (Swanepoel et al., 2003).

2.3.4. Determinants of job satisfaction

According to Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 155), “research findings suggest that the larger the discrepancy between what people have and what people want with respect to various facets of their jobs, the more dissatisfied they are with their jobs. This relationship is greater among those who place a great deal of importance on that facet than those who consider it less important”. In this section, important determinants of job satisfaction, as discussed in the literature, are presented.

a) Work itself:

The notion of work itself is specified through the job characteristics model which states that enriching certain elements (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy
and feedback) of employee’s jobs, leads to three critical psychological states, experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced accountability for the outcomes and knowledge of the actual results (Greenberg & Baron, 2003).

The significance of this is that employees have a preference for jobs that give them the chance to make use of their talents on an assortment of tasks and which are intellectually challenging (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Furthermore, employees are more satisfied when they are stimulated mentally and physically through their work (Sempane, Rigour & Roodt, 2006).

Theorists are of the opinion that, if work provides little in the way of challenge or is intellectually not stimulating, this often results in the individual becoming bored and frustrated over time (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Latham, 2007).

Ruiter, Rosen and Rinkers. (n.d.) are of the opinion that employees who work more in line with their interests are more likely to be satisfied. According to Swanepoel et. al, (2003), tasks performed by call centre agents are structured and routine. Thus, the challenge in a call centre setting is to ensure motivated call centre agents. One way of doing this is matching the person’s preference to their work (Carrim et al., 2006). Thus, it can be seen that a key predictor of job satisfaction amongst employees is the content of the work performed by employees (Latham, 2007).

Empirical studies have indicated that employees, who were experienced to using a variety
of skills, can identify with their jobs, deem it to be significant and receive regular feedback in their job were more motivated and satisfied compared to their counterparts (Johns, Xie, & Fang, 1992). Similarly Greenberg and Baron (2003) are of the opinion that employees who choose the tasks they perform, are more likely to do the entire job, inspect their own work and keep records of their progress.

In support of this, Lahai, Sail, Muhamed and Suandi (2004) state that employees who derive a sense of responsibility due to the nature of their work are more likely to act in a positive manner, and experience positive states that impact on work produced, absenteeism, motivation, job satisfaction and turnover.

b) Working conditions:

According to Swanepoel et al. (2003), working conditions relates to an extrinsic factor and is more related to job dissatisfaction than job satisfaction. It refers to aspects such as lighting, environmental noise, air conditioning, office space and so forth. Luthans (1995) is of the opinion that the working environment is a significant consideration when managing performance.

Empirical evidence suggests that working conditions specifically that of co-worker relations, are a precursor of job satisfaction (Claes & Van Der Van, 2002; Morrison, 1997; Mowday & Sutton, 1993). Furthermore, the level of job satisfaction experienced by individuals might be a function of personal characteristics and the characteristics of the group to which they belong (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Swanepoel et al., 2003).
Marks (1994) is of the opinion that relationships between co-workers and supervisors are important as studies have shown that the better the relationship between co-workers, the greater the level of job satisfaction experienced by the individual (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Trimble, 2006; Wharton & Baron, 1991). According to Staudt (1997), when unity is evident inside a work group it usually leads to the job becoming more pleasurable and job satisfaction ensues. However, if colleagues are difficult to work with, this may result in a negative outcome on group dynamics and job satisfaction.

c) Pay:

Swanepoel, et. al. (2003, p. 488) define pay as “...the financial extrinsic rewards provided by an employer for the time, skills and effort made available by the employee in fulfilling job requirements aimed at achieving organisational objectives.”

Vandenberghe and Tremblay (2008) are of the opinion that the link between pay and job satisfaction is not how much the individual is paid, but the perceived fairness of the pay. When employees observe the ratio between their pay and work performed to be equitable when compared with that of relevant others, they are more satisfied with their pay (Greenberg & Baron, 2003).

Furthermore Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 201) highlight that “...people strive to maintain ratios of their own outcomes to their own inputs that are equal to the outcomes and inputs of others whom they compare themselves with”. This results in two conditions (overpayment inequity, underpayment inequity). Overpayment inequity results when the
ratio of one’s outcomes (pay)/inputs (work done) exceed the corresponding ratio of another person, resulting in feelings of guilt. Underpayment inequity results when the ratio of ones outcomes (pay)/inputs (work done) is less then the corresponding ratio of another person, producing feelings of anger.

d) Supervision:

Most empirical studies point to individuals being more likely to have high levels of job satisfaction if supervisors give them support when carrying out their work (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Cramer, 1993; Ting, 1997). Furthermore, studies have shown that dissatisfaction with management supervision is a predictor of job dissatisfaction (Staudt, 1997; Swanepoel et al., 2003). Chieffo (1991) maintains that supervisors who allow their employees to contribute to decisions that affect their own jobs will, in doing so, stimulate higher levels of employee satisfaction.

Some studies suggest adverse effects of performance monitoring on subordinates (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). Aiello and Kolb (1995) reported that, in a laboratory study, strictly controlled and monitored participants were more stressed than non-monitored participants. Furthermore, stress has been positively linked with turnover (Dubinsky, Dougherty & Wunder, 1990).

The process of monitoring is often thought to be used as a development tool rather than as a control mechanism (Frenkel, Tam, Korczynski & Shire, 1998; Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). In call centres, technology which monitors subordinate performance, when not enforced, has been shown to have positive effects on employees (Frenkel et al., 1998;
e) Promotion:

It is likely an employee’s opportunities for promotion exert an influence on job satisfaction (Kinicki & Vecchio, 1994; Landy, 1989; Larwood, 1984; Moorhead & Griffen, 1992). Promotions also provide opportunities for personal growth, enhanced responsibility, and better social status (Robbins, 1998).

Bull (2005), suggests that individuals experience satisfaction when they believe that their future prospects are good. Prospects may include career advancement and growth, or improved realistic chance of finding alternative employment. According to McCormick and Ilgen (1985), for employees to be satisfied with promotional opportunities, it is largely dependent on certain factors. These factors include the probability that the employees will eventually be promoted and how fair such promotions actually are. Visser (1990) is of the opinion that the individual’s perception of the standard of the promotion is really dependant on the personal characteristics and career aspirations.

According to Wallace and Eagleson (2004), promotion opportunities are associated with greater responsibility and more complex tasks, which might leave the individual unprepared and not wanting the promotion. If employees observe the promotion procedure as unfair, but do not want to be promoted, they may still be satisfied.

Staudt (1997) reports that studies have revealed that opportunities for promotion are a
common predictor of job satisfaction in family services agencies. Luthans (2002) is of the opinion that promotions can take on diverse forms and are generally followed by different outcomes. As such promotional opportunities thus have different effects on job satisfaction, and need to be considered when developing policies (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004).

f) Recognition:
Carrim et al. (2006) indicate that aspects related to job content such as variety, autonomy, recognition, performance opportunities, skills utilisation and responsibility as the major contributing factors to participants’ levels of job dissatisfaction. The closely monitored, highly fragmented, tightly controlled, highly routine, low-skilled, stressful and poorly paid nature of work in call centre environments appears to diminish employees’ experience of control over their working environment. These experiences generally increase call centre agents’ levels of job dissatisfaction.

2.3.5. Demographic variables and job satisfaction

The following section explores the demographic variables of age, gender, tenure and level of education and marital status and their impact on job satisfaction.

a) Age
Many investigations have been done between age and job satisfaction showing that it may be a contributing factor in the experience of job satisfaction (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008;
Research has shown a U-shaped relationship between age and job satisfaction (Clark, Oswald & Warr, 1996) and a positive linear relationship has also been established between employee age and job satisfaction. According to Clark et al. (1996), employees became more satisfied with their job as their chronological age progressed (Herrera, 2003; Ingersoll, Olsan, Drew-Cates, De Vinney & Davies, 2002). However, a negative linear relationship between age and job satisfaction has been found by Muchinsky (1978), meaning that as employees chronological age progressed, they became less satisfied with their jobs. Furthermore, an inverted U-shaped or inverted J-shaped relationship was found by Oswald (2002). This implies that job satisfaction declines from a moderate level in the early years of employment then increasing steadily up till retirement (Clark et al., 1996). There have also been cases of no significant relationships between job satisfaction and age (Chambers, 1999).

According to Claes and Van der Van (2002), older workers value job satisfaction significantly more highly than younger workers. Greenberg and Baron (2003) amongst others consider that the relationship between age, job satisfaction and with organisational commitment is positive. This view suggests that as employees chronological age increase, so does their job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

b) Gender

Studies have established that female workers tend to have lower levels of job satisfaction than their male counterparts (Bedeian, Farris, & Kacmar, 1992; Herrera, 2003). Studies
have also shown that gender did not significantly impact on overall job satisfaction scores (Brush, Moch & Pooyan, 1987; Cano & Miller, 1992; Witt & Nye, 1992). Putnam and Loppie (2000) revealed that the relationship between gender and job satisfaction is as a result of males and females having similar complaints about work in call centres. These complaints included, constant monitoring by supervisors, and constraining work schedules. In addition, they perceived their pay as being low and worked like “robots” because they were expected to follow scripted dialogues.

c) Tenure

According to Hunt and Saul (1975), job satisfaction has been found to be high when people begin their first jobs but decreases until people arrive at their late twenties to early thirties. Thereafter, it improves again. As employees mature they tend to adjust their ambitions and work expectations to a more realistic level. Thus, these new expectations become more attainable and satisfaction tends to increase.

Other studies have shown that overall job satisfaction increased as the years of experience increased (Chambers, 1999; Herrera, 2003). Job satisfaction was seen to follow a U-shaped relationship with tenure (Shields & Ward, 2001), with no relationship with years of experience (Bedeian et al., 1992; Bertz & Judge, 1994; Ma, Samuels & Alexander, 2003).

Blood, Ridenour, Thomas, Qualls and Hammer (2002) demonstrated that there is a statistically significant relationship between tenure and job satisfaction. Their research indicated that the longer employees remained in their jobs, the more likely they were to
report higher levels of job satisfaction.

d) Education

In a study by Carrim et al. (2006) it was found that call centre agents with post-school qualifications experience higher levels of job dissatisfaction as they generally have higher expectations in terms of work and career. They may therefore be likely to shift on to jobs that offer better prospects. It also appears that job dissatisfaction with regards to working conditions, supervision, promotional opportunities and company policy and practices raise over time, predominantly for call centre agents with post-school qualifications.

Belt (2002) indicates that agents with academic qualifications tend to move on to jobs with better prospects. They also tend to aim for higher positions within the call centre industry. Well educated people from both gender groups, especially university graduates, tend to move out of call centres quickly as they tend to have higher expectations in terms of the jobs they would like to get, but in reality, they are prone to experience no more dissatisfaction in call centres than those without degrees.

2.3.6. Job satisfaction in call centres

Job satisfaction in call centres can often times be lacking (Wegge et al., 2006). According to Jacobs and Roodt (2008), call centre agents experience little job satisfaction; motivation levels are usually low and they also feel little commitment. Call centre agents who experience job satisfaction, tend to be more productive and have fewer thoughts about quitting.
The lack of job satisfaction experienced by call centre agents can be attributed to the work itself whereby the call centre agent has to execute several attention consuming, concurrent subtasks (Carrim et al., 2006). These tasks include controlling calls, operating a keyboard to input data into computers, reading often detailed information from a visual terminal, and speaking to customers. Shift work, tight deadlines and large volume calls are what is expected of a call centre agent (Wegge et al., 2006). Furthermore, factors such as but not limited to; the monotony and repetitiveness of the job and lack of promotion opportunities are said to cause unhappiness amongst staff. This impacts on motivational levels and performance, and could lead to turnover (Carrim et al., 2006).

Low levels of job satisfaction have been shown to lead to turnover cognitions as it influences the degree to which people feel in relation to the future regarding other jobs which would provide better rewards which they desire (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). As a result this awareness has led them to search for more attractive employment alternatives (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Thus, if call centre agents do not experience much in the way of job satisfaction the result may be increased desires for alternative employment.

2.3.7. Definition to be used in this study

For the purposes of this study job satisfaction will be defined using Herzberg’s two factors theory of motivation, which stipulates that job satisfaction is dependent upon the presence of specific motivators and hygiene factors (Swanepoel et al., 2003).
2.4. Organisational commitment

The study of organisational commitment is a popular area of research in organisational behaviour (Martin & Roodt, 2008). In order to gain a better understanding of this complex construct, this section starts off by defining it. Following this would be a discussion of organisational commitment, specifically relating to previous research and theories.

2.4.1. Introduction

Over the past few years, there have been a series of studies examining organisational commitment in organisations (Beck & Wilson, 1998; Carrim & Coetzee, 2007; Martin & Roodt, 2008). Mutheveloo and Che Rose, (2002) are of the opinion that the concept of commitment lies at the heart of human resource management analysis. Furthermore, they postulate that the rationale for introducing human resource management policies is to increase levels of commitment to the organisation. Many studies on organisational commitment have been done (Aryee, Wyatt & Min, 2001; Aven, Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Baack, Luthans, & Rogers, 1993; Martin & Roodt, 2008), yet very little is understood in terms of what managers mean by the term commitment (Mutheveloo & Che Rose, 2002).

According to Mutheveloo and Che Rose, (2002) and others (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Martin & Roodt, 2008), literature defines the concept of commitment as an employee’s level of attachment to some aspect of work. One of the reasons why commitment has attracted research attention is that organisations are dependant on committed employees to create and maintain competitive
advantage and achieve superior performance (Mowday & Sutton, 1993). It is also acknowledged that commitment is a significant predictor of employee behaviours such as organisational citizenship behaviour (Meyer & Allen, 1997), absenteeism (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004) and turnover (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

Furthermore, employee commitment according to Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002), can be grouped into three foci, namely, the commitment to work/job, commitment to career/profession and commitment to organisation. This study specifically addresses organisational commitment or an employee’s commitment to the organisation.

The main reason for the focus on the construct can be attributed to the following reasons:

1. Organisations operate in a highly competitive environment requiring committed employees to achieve positive outcomes. Employee’s commitment to the organisation is a critical issue as they are loyal to the organisation (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Vandenberghe & Tremblay, 2008).

2. High levels of organisational commitment are associated with low withdrawal behaviours: turnover, absenteeism, job satisfaction (Beck & Wilson, 1998; Miller et al., 2002).

To further understand the construct better, the following section will define organisational commitment.
2.4.2. Definition of organisational commitment

Mosengrad et al., (2008, p. 212.) define organisational commitment as “a psychological state that characterizes the employee’s relationships with the organisation and has implications for the decision to continue membership in the organisation.” Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) define organisational commitment as “the degree to which an employee identifies with the goals and values of the organisation and is willing to exert effort to help it succeed’. Loyalty or commitment to the organisation is argued to be an important intervening variable between the structural conditions of work, and the values and expectations of employees, and their decision to stay or leave (Mutheveloo & Che Rose, 2002).

Meyer and Allen (1997) describe an organisationally committed employee as “… one who stays with the organisation through thick and thin, attends work regularly, puts in a full day (and maybe more), protects company assets, shares company goals, and so on.” Maharaj and Schlechter (2007) reveal that the development of commitment to an organisation goes beyond the mere provision of money but other challenging opportunities (that is work variety), and the potential to develop as a person.

Organisational commitment has been defined as a psychological attachment to, and identification with the organisation (Cohen, 2007). Furthermore, Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002) describe organisational commitment as an attachment to an individual, object or organisation. Cook and Wall (1980. p. 40) define organisational commitment as “feelings of attachment to goals and values of the organisation, one’s role in relation to this, and attachment to the organisation for its
own sake rather than for its strictly instrumental value”. Moreover, Miller et al. (2002, p. 16), define organisational commitment as “…the relative strength of an individuals identification with, and involvement in, a particular organisation.” Further to this, Miller et al. (2002) state that the construct is characterised by three factors (a) believing in, and accepting the organisation’s goals, (b) being prepared to exert effort on the organisations behalf and (c) a strong desire to remain a member with the organisation. These three factors are affective commitment (namely employees feel they ought to remain due to their belief in the organisations’ underlying goals and values), continuance commitment (that is, an employee’s awareness of the consequences of leaving an organisation); and normative commitment (that is employees feel that they ought to remain with an organisation owing to an obligation mindset) (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

2.4.3. Overview of organisational commitment

Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002) reveal two dominant conceptualisations of organisational commitment in sociological literature. These, according to them, are an employee’s loyalty towards the organisation and an employee’s intention to stay with the organisation. Loyalty, they claim is an affective response to, and identification with, an organisation, based on a sense of duty and responsibility.

Organisational commitment is seen as a subset of overall employee commitment (Muthuveloo & Che Rose, 2005) and is seen as the degree to which an employee identifies with goals and values of the organisation and is willing to exert effort to help it succeed (Cohen, 2007). It is important to distinguish between the different foci of commitment.
a) The employees’ commitment to their career

According to Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002), career commitment refers to identification with, and involvement in, one’s occupation. According to them, it is similar to related concepts such as: occupational commitment, professional commitment, career salience, the cosmopolitan/local distinction, and professionalism. Common to all these, is the critical notion of being committed to one’s career, or occupation, rather than to the organisation which employs one.

b) The employees’ commitment to their work

Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002), maintain that work commitment refers neither to the organisation nor to one’s career, but to employment itself. Employees committed to work hold a strong sense of duty towards their work, and place intrinsic value on work as a central life interest.

c) The employees’ commitment to their organisation

Of particular relevance to this study is the concept of organisational commitment. According to Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002), organisational commitment refers to an employee’s loyalty towards the organisation and an employee’s intention to stay with the organisation. Loyalty is an affective response to, and identification with, an organisation, based on a sense of duty and responsibility.

The relevance of studying the construct of organisational commitment is that it has been found to be an important predictor of turnover behaviour (absenteeism, quitting) and performance (Lambert, Hogan & Barton, 2001; Lahai et al., 2004; Martin & Roodt, 2008). When looking at
the definition of organisational commitment, loyal, committed employees are less likely to resign and to be absent (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Mosadeghrad et al., 2008) and are more likely to stay on in their jobs and show up when they are supposed to (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; Latham, 2007; Muthuveloo & Che Rose, 2005). Furthermore, they would be less likely to harbour any intentions of quitting (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

Literature shows that those employees who are highly committed to the organisation are more likely to exert effort and make sacrifices in order for the organisation to thrive (Miller et al., 2002) and are less prone to leave the organisation (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, Muthuveloo & Che rose, 2002). Thus, organisations that strive to ensure that employees remain satisfied and committed at work (Claes & Van de Ven, 2002) are most likely to experience diminished turnover and absenteeism rates (Greenberg & Baron, 2003) and in turn may gain a workforce that may be more eager to make sacrifices for the organisation (Miller et al., 2002). One of the antecedent factors of organisational commitment is thought to be job satisfaction (Beck & Wilson, 1998).

2.4.4. Job satisfaction as an antecedent to organisational commitment

Job satisfaction is an important workplace construct that is considered to be an antecedent to positive organisational outcomes and is also closely related to organisational commitment (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Trimble, 2006). Literature illustrates that job satisfaction has a bearing on whether employees are more likely to stay in their jobs and be committed to the organisation (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; Swanepoel
et al., 2003; Tumwesigye, 2010; Tietjen & Myers, 1998). Furthermore, employees, who receive opportunities to grow, learn and develop within the organisation, have been seen to experience an increased level of commitment to stay with that particular organisation (Hagen & Nelson, 2001). Thus, in order to ensure motivated staff, strong, effective motivational strategies are required at various levels in the organisation (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Warsi, Fatima & Sahibzada (2009) found that employees who experience high levels of satisfaction with their jobs, were also loyal and committed to the organisation. This is a result of how well the organisation meets their employees’ expectations. It can therefore be that, employees experiencing high levels of job satisfaction, would naturally tend to be more committed to the organisation (Greenberg & Baron, 2003) and would further identify more readily with the norms and values than those who are not satisfied (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

Generally speaking, organisational commitment is regarded as a bond towards the organisation and can be viewed as an antecedent to turnover intentions and eventual turnover behaviour (Baack et al., 1993; Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Martin & Roodt, 2008). Furthermore, if employees are highly satisfied with their work, co-workers, pay, and supervision and derive high level of overall job satisfaction with their jobs, they are more likely to be committed to the organisation than if they are not satisfied. The focus on these two key concepts cannot be overstated because job satisfaction and commitment are primary determinants of employee turnover, performance, and productivity (Warsi et al., 2009). Committed and satisfied employees are normally high performers that contribute towards organisational productivity (Warsi et al., 2009).
Employees who are committed are less likely to be absent, and are less likely to quit or harbour thoughts of quitting than less committed employees (Miller et al., 2002). Organisational commitment is viewed as an employee’s attitudinal attachment to the organisation (Steers, 1974). When this attitudinal attachment is positive and committed towards the organisation increases, it usually results in the employee displaying committed observable behaviours such as less absenteeism and lowered intention to quit than those who do not (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008).

Commitment has been consistently found to have statistically negative relationships with intention to quit and actual turnover (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). A further argument for using organisational commitment in relation to turnover intentions is that high levels of organisational commitment are associated with low turnover. It would be expected that a person who experiences little in the way of commitment, most likely also intends to leave the organisation (Miller et al., 2002).

2.4.5. The development of organisational commitment

According to Maharaj and Schlechter (2007; Lahai et al., 2004), the development of organisational commitment goes beyond the superficial. Furthermore, employees may see organisations as providers of new opportunities, meeting and working with different people, and interpersonal development. Meeting or exceeding these expectations determines the level of commitment experienced by the employees. Understanding the causes and effects of organisational commitment has continued for many years (Aryee et al., 2001; Aven et al., 1993;
Baack et al., 1993; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Mathieu & Hamel, 1989). However, the development of commitment requires better understanding (Lahai et al., 2004).

According to Muthuveloo and Che Rose (2005), when employees freely choose to behave in a particular way and find it difficult to change their behaviour, they tend to develop attitudes consistent with their choice of behaviour. Furthermore, this behaviour results in committed attitudes and subsequent committed actions. Martin and Roodt (2008) amongst others (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Swanepoel et al., 2003) support this notion that the attitudes and behaviours evolve from the job and as a result strengthen the employee’s commitment to the organisation. The important issue according to them, is not whether the commitment process begins with either attitude or behaviour, but that the development of commitment may involve the subtle interplay of attitudes and behaviours over a period of time (Muthuveloo & Che Rose, 2002). They further state that the process through which commitment is developed may involve self-reinforcing cycles of attitudes and behaviours that evolve on the job, and, over time, strengthen employee commitment to the organisation which is corroborated by Greenberg and Baron (2003).

Muthuveloo and Che Rose (2002) are of the opinion that there are two major theoretical approaches to the development of organisational commitment:

The first component, namely the commitment attitude behaviour, speaks to commitment being viewed as an attitude of attachment to the organisation, which leads to particular job-related behaviours (Abraham, 1999; Martin & Roodt, 2008). Committed employees are less often
absent, and is less likely to leave the organisation voluntarily, than are less committed employees (Cohen, 2007).

The second component, namely the commitment behaviour attitude, focuses on the implications of certain types of behaviours on subsequent attitudes (Mutheveloo & Che Rose, 2002). Employees who freely choose to behave in a certain way, become committed to the chosen behaviour and develop attitudes consistent with their choice.

Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002) state that attitudinal and behavioural commitment are reciprocally-related over time. In other words, commitment attitudes lead to committing behaviours that subsequently reinforce and strengthen attitudes; and committing behaviours lead to commitment attitudes and subsequent committing behaviours. Furthermore, the development of commitment is highlighted by affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

2.4.6. Approaches to organisational commitment

Meyer and Allen’s (1991) three component approach to commitment is considered as the dominant approach to conceptualising organisational commitment (Cohen, 2007; Martin & Roodt, 2008). The dimensions that will be discussed include affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (Cohen, 2007).

2.4.6.1. Affective commitment
2.4.6.1. Definition

Affective commitment can be described as a person’s desire to continue working for an organisation because they agree with its underlying goals and values (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007; Swanepoel et al., 2003). Individuals feeling high degrees of affective commitment desire to remain in their organisations because they endorse what the organisation stands for and are willing to help in its mission (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Maharaj and Schlechter (2007) found that employees with strong affective commitment were motivated and engaged in extra-role behaviour and contributed meaningfully to the organisation. Furthermore, employees with strong affective commitment were also found to report lower absenteeism rates and better performance than employees with weak affective commitment (Miller et al., 2002).

Cohen (2007) defines affective commitment as the relative strength of an individual identification and involvement with an organisation. According to Greenberg and Baron (2003), when an organisation is undergoing change, employees may wonder whether their personal values continue to be inline with that of the organisation in which they continue to work. When this happens, they may question whether they still belong, and if they feel they do not they may resign.

2.4.6.1.2. The concept of affective commitment

The concept of affective commitment differs from job satisfaction in several ways (Jaaron & Backhouse, 2010). Affective commitment as defined earlier, is the employee’s psychological
attachment to and involvement in the organisation (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). As a result, employee strongly identify with the goals of the organisation, desire to remain a part of the organisation and remain a part of the organisation because they want to do so (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Job satisfaction, on the other hand, as defined earlier, is an employee's attitude towards job aspects (Swanepoel et al., 2003; Weiss, 2002). Affective commitment is a more universal construct that emphasises the strength of bonds with the company as a whole, including its values and objectives (Porter, Steers & Boulian, 1974), while job satisfaction —emphasises the specific task environment where an employee performs their duties (Mowday et al., 1979). In addition, affective commitment is more stable over time than job satisfaction that may vary according to events at work as they develop (Jaaron & Backhouse, 2010).

According to Jaaron and Backhouse (2010), the development of affective commitment is based on the exchange principle. Employees commit themselves to the organisation in return for the rewards received or the punishments avoided (Cohen, 2007). Managerial practices and organisational structures in call centres typically involve standardised work procedures, monitored dialogue, mechanisation of customer contact and an emphasis on quantity, volume and activity statistics and targets rather than quality of interaction measures (Jaaron & Backhouse, 2010). As such call centre agents experience reduced empowerment in making decisions and as a result, the lack of affective commitment impacts on service quality and results in other high cost implications for the organisation such as increased employee turnover and increased absence rates (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

2.4.6.1.3. Antecedents of affective commitment
According to Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002), the antecedents of affective commitment include perceived job characteristics namely, task autonomy, task significance, task identity, skill variety and supervisory feedback, organisational dependability (the extent to which employees feel the organisation can be counted on to look after their interests), and perceived participatory management (the extent to which employees feel they can influence decisions on the work environment and other issues of concern to them).

Affective commitment, according to Malhotra and Mukherjee (2004), was found to be more effective than job satisfaction in influencing the service quality delivered by call centre agents. Furthermore, these effects can be explained by considering the antecedents of affective commitment introduced by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982); and Van Emmrik, Hetty and Sanders (2005). These antecedents include:

a) **Employee's personal characteristics**: if the organisation provided the chance for its employees to accomplish their personal ambitions; desire or achievement, autonomy, and a sense of control on what the employees have, then employees are more likely to develop affective commitment with their employer (Jaaron & Backhouse, 2010).

b) **Organisational structure and job-related characteristics**: Affective commitment is related to the employer ability to distribute decision making processes to be at the employee’s level. This gives employees a feeling of personal meaning and value in the organisation. In addition, role clarity and constructive relationships with employees is particularly important in this regard (Jaaron & Backhouse, 2010).
c) **Psychological contract**: The psychological contract refers to the expectations set by employees and employer concerning each other's responsibility (Van Emmrik et al., 2005). Employees generally have hopes of job promotion, employer loyalty and preferences for work, and not meeting these expectations, could result in dissatisfaction and ultimately turnover.

d) **Work experiences**: The psychological contract is partially responsible for how good or bad an employee working experience will be, other dimensions such as objective and subjective matters of the work could have their impact on the issue as well. Generally, employees whose working experiences were rewarding and fulfilled their own aspirations, were ready to exert more effort on behalf of the organisation to deliver high levels of service quality than those whose working experiences were less rewarding (Meyer & Allen, 1991, Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993).

Van Emmrik et al. (2005) studied the relationship between employee working hours and affective commitment. The results indicated that employees experiencing a mismatch in their working hours are less likely to experience affective commitment with their organisations as a result of their working experience. Furthermore, a study by Malhotra and Mukherjee (2004) established that organisational commitment and job satisfaction have a significant impact on service delivery in call centres. Consistent results in literature reveal that a strong relationship between commitment and performance exists when using affective commitment as the valid measure (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Furthermore, shared values and ethical norms have been found to be positively related to the development of affective commitment in business relationships (De
According to research done by Steers (1974), Mottaz (1988) and Rowden (2003), situations that are satisfying to the individual, are intrinsically favourable to the development of affective commitment. Age and organisational tenure are considered to be positively associated with affective commitment (Martin & Roodt, 2008). It is hypothesised that employees with low affective commitment will choose to leave an organisation, while employees with a high affective commitment will stay for longer periods, as they believe in the organisation and its mission (Cohen, 2007).

2.4.6.2. Continuance commitment

2.4.6.2.1. Definition

Continuance commitment refers to the strength of a person’s desire to remain working for an organisation due to their belief that it may be more costly to leave. The perception is that the longer people remain in their organisations the more they stand to lose in the way of benefits accrued over the years. As a result, individuals displaying continuance commitment remain in their jobs for fear of risking the loss of these investments over the years. Such individuals are said to have a high continuance commitment (Aryee et al., 2001; Cohen, 2007; Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Mutheveloo & Che Rose, 2002). Cohen (2007) defined continuance commitment as “the extent to which employees feel committed to their organisations by virtue of the costs that they feel are associated with leaving”. Furthermore continuance commitment can be expected to be related to anything that raises the cost associated with leaving the organisation.
2.4.6.2.2. The concept of continuance commitment

Meyer and Allen (1991) warn that not all forms of commitment are the same and that organisations concerned with retaining employees by strengthening their commitment should carefully consider the nature of commitment infused (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In other words, the benefits of reduced turnover should not come at the cost of poor performance, otherwise service quality suffers. Literature reveals that not all forms of commitment can be associated with high job performance (Meyer & Allen 1991). The concept of continuance comment according to Jaaron and Backhouse (2010), suggests that employees only commit to the organisation because of the high cost associated with leaving it (for example monetary losses such as pension accruals, lower salary elsewhere, transport costs to other locations, social costs such as loss of friendships). Employees remain a part of the organisation because they feel it is too much trouble to move.

2.4.6.2.3. Antecedents of continuance commitment

According to Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002), potential antecedents of continuance commitment include age, tenure, career satisfaction and intent to leave. Furthermore, biographical variables such as age and tenure can function as predictors of continuance commitment; this is because of their role as substitute measures of investment in the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Meyer and Allen (1997) claim that tenure can be indicative of non-
transferable investments such as close working relationships with co-workers, retirement investments, career investments and skills unique to the particular organisation. In addition to this, they state that age can also be negatively related to the number of available alternative job opportunities. Furthermore, factors such as career satisfaction provides a more direct measure of career related investments, which according to them, could be at risk if the individual leaves the organisation. In general, they feel that whatever the employee perceives as ruined cost resulting from leaving the organisation, are the antecedents of continuance commitment.

2.4.6.3. Normative commitment

2.4.6.3.1. Definition

Normative commitment refers to employees’ feelings of obligation to stay with the organisation because of pressure from others. People that have high degrees of normative commitment are greatly concerned about what others would think of them leaving. They are reluctant to disappoint their employers and are concerned that fellow employees would think poorly of them resigning (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). Normative commitment develops as a result of beliefs that are internalized through socialization processes, both familial and cultural, that occur both before and after entry into the organisation (Cohen, 2007).

2.4.6.3.2. The concept of normative commitment

Normative commitment has not been discussed as extensively in literature as the other two constructs have (Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2003). The concept is simply that the employee feels
obliged to work for the organisation. This may be because of a feeling of being locked in (that is the organisation has some form of golden handcuff arrangement or contractual binding of the employee) or because there is no perceived alternative employment opportunities (Jaaron & Backhouse, 2010).

2.4.6.3.3. Antecedents of normative commitment

According to Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002), the potential antecedents for normative commitment include co-worker commitment which includes the affective and normative dimensions, as well as commitment behaviours, organisational dependability and participatory management. Co-workers’ commitment is expected to provide normative signals that influence the development of normative commitment (Commerias & Fournier, 2002; Dodd-McCue & Wright, 1996).

2.4.7. Demographics and organisational commitment

The following section explores the demographic variables age, gender, tenure, level of education and marital status and their impact on organisational commitment.

a) Age

According to Martin and Roodt (2008), there are contradictory findings with regards to the relationship between age and commitment. Some studies have found no relationship between age and commitment (Knoop, 1986; Müller & Roodt, 1998); others have found
that commitment has been positively related to age (Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990; Ingersoll et al., 2002; Lok & Crawford, 1999). Hall, Schneider, and Nygren (1970) found that age was a statistically significant predictor of organisational commitment.

b) Gender

Conflicting results are also presented with regards to gender. Some studies that were conducted on gender found women to be more committed than men (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990), while others found that men are more committed to the organisation than their female colleagues (Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990). Researchers have also found that gender was not related at all to commitment (Aven et al., 1993; Kacmar & Carlson, 1999; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992).

c) Tenure

Studies have shown a positive relationship between tenure and affective and continuance commitment (Hackett, Bycio & Hausdorf, 1994). Furthermore, studies have also found that the longer employees worked in a particular organisation, the higher their levels of commitment to an organisation (Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990) while others have found no meaningful relationship between tenure and organisational commitment (Lok & Crawford, 1999; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Reilly & Orsak, 1991).

d) Marital Status

Belt (2002) is of the opinion that single people from both gender groups, especially university graduates, tend to move out of call centres quickly. This group has higher
expectations in terms of the jobs they would like to get and their career, but they tend to experience no more dissatisfaction in call centres than people without degrees.

e) **Education**

Studies have revealed significant relationships between organisational commitment and the highest academic qualification of the respondent, Cohen and Lowenberg (1990) found that organisational commitment decreased as the level of education increased (Martin & Roodt, 2008). These findings support the findings of several studies such as those of, Dornstein and Matalon (1989), Mathieu and Hamel (1989). Martin and Roodt (2008) explain that a higher academic qualification resulting in more job opportunities could be the rationalisation behind this result. Furthermore, they state that commitment may not be a psychological pre-disposition, but rather in this case the confidence one has about finding alternative work. Therefore, commitment to the organisation will be lowered as less dependence is placed on the organisation.

f) **Race**

Martin and Roodt (2008) found significant relationships between organisational commitment and the race of the respondent. The findings indicated that black respondents from the sample were more positive about their commitment to the organisation than white respondents. Vallabh and Donald (2001) found in a comparison of black and white employees’ and job mobility, that white employees were more committed than their black colleagues. Martin and Roodt (2008) further state that South Africa is continually changing, rectifying inequalities of the past, and as such black
people would more likely feel committed to the changes than their white counterparts, who may feel intimidated by changes which are beyond their control.

**2.4.8. Definition to be used in this study**

Commitment is a multi-faceted concept (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Meyer & Allen, 1997, Martin & Roodt, 2008). As such this study utilises Meyer and Allen’s (1991) three dimensional model comprising affective, normative and continuance commitment in defining commitment. Affective commitment was defined by Meyer and Allen (1997) as emotional attachment to an organisation; a strong belief in, and acceptance of the organisations goals and values which results in willingness to exert optimal effort to achieve the organisation’s goals. Normative commitment is an employee’s feeling of obligation to continue working for an organisation. The third component, continuance commitment, refers to the desire to maintain membership in an organisation for fear of forfeiting valued rewards (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

**2.5. Turnover intentions**

The study of turnover intentions is of particular relevance in a call centre setting. In order to ascertain a better understanding of this complex construct this section will start off by defining it. Following this, would be a discussion of turnover intentions specifically relating to previous research and theories.
2.5.1. Introduction

Various studies have attempted to identify attributes of the call centre environment that contribute to high levels of employee turnover (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). Call centre work is itself demanding, repetitive, and often stressful (Taylor & Bain, 1999; Wallace et al., 2000). According to Muthevello and Che Rose (2002), intent to stay is portrayed as effectively neutral, and focuses on an employee’s intention to remain a member of the organisation. It is much closer to economists’ ideas on weighing the costs of leaving versus staying.

According to Martin and Roodt (2008), turnover behaviour is a process that includes attitudinal, decisional and behavioural components. The immediate precursor of behaviour is thought to be intentions, and consequently the best predictor of turnover should be intention to turnover. Mobley (1977), however, has suggested that there are several alternative turnover cognition types of interest to add in the withdrawal decision (the decision to quit a job), highlighting notions such as thinking of quitting, followed by the intention to search for alternatives. Jacobs and Roodt (2008) are of the opinion that intention to turnover results from an individual’s mental decision to stay or leave the job. It can be seen as the strength of an individual’s viewpoint that they do not wish to stay with their employer (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008).

Martin and Roodt (2008) are of the opinion that in order for organisations to understand why call centre agents leave their jobs, they first need to understand why their call centre agents intend to quit. Jacobs and Roodt (2008) suggest that organisations that are aware of their call centre agent’s intentions of quitting would be better positioned to reduce eventual quitting behaviour. The following reasons are stated by Carrim et al. (2006) as to why call centre agents may not experience job satisfaction and thus leave.
a) Call centre tasks are highly structured and are constrained by detailed procedures and constant monitoring
b) Call centre tasks are highly routine and simple
c) Calls are short and are expected to be completed in a specific time
d) Agents are not expected to display initiative
e) Irregular hours and short lunch breaks interfere with activities outside work
f) Work is monotonous and repetitive
g) Agents tend to be paid low salaries.

Martin and Roodt (2008) highlight the following biographical variables in relation to intention to turnover.

a) The younger the age at the organisation the higher the turnover cognition.
b) Gender was found to have no significant relationship with intention to turnover whilst another study reported significant negative relationships with women having higher turnover intentions.
c) In terms of race it was found that it proved a poor and inconsistent variable. However, in a study amongst African professionals, it was found that black managers were far more prone to turnover than their white counterparts.
d) Tenure was found to have conflicting results with some studies supporting the results of statistically significant positive relationships between tenure and intention to quit, while others found significant negative relationships.
The theory of planned behaviour suggested that behavioural intention is a good predictor of actual behaviour. It has been successfully demonstrated in previous studies that behavioural intention to leave is consistently correlated with turnover (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008). In order to remain competitive, organisations need to understand and manage the psychological mechanisms that prevent talented employees nurturing thoughts of quitting (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008).

Numerous studies have continually shown the effect of both job satisfaction and organisational commitment on turnover intentions. It is for this reason that both job satisfaction and organisational commitment are viewed as essential components of turnover models as their relationship with turnover intentions has been consistently illustrated (Martin & Roodt, 2008). The main reason for the focus on the construct can be attributed to the following reasons:

1. Understanding the precursors of intention to quit would place the employer in a better position to address or affect this intention (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; Miller et al., 2002).

2. In the main, the literature has focused on issues of pay (Belt, 2002; Taylor & Bain, 1999) and satisfaction and commitment (Deery and Walsh, 2001; Frenkel et al., 1998) as antecedents to subordinate intention to turnover.

3. Subordinate intention to turnover have been found to be a reliable predictor of actual turnover (Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000).

Generally speaking, turnover intention is regarded as the intervening mental decision individuals make to either stay or leave their job (Martin & Roodt, 2008).
2.5.2. Definition of turnover intentions

Sager, Griffeth and Hom (1998, p. 255) referred to turnover cognitions “as mental decisions intervening between an individual’s attitude regarding the job, and decision to leave or stay”. Elangovan (2001, p. 162), regards intention to leave as an attitudinal orientation or a cognitive manifestation of the behavioural decision to leave. Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008) define intention to quit is the strength of an individual’s view that they do not want to stay with their employer (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). People who intend to quit are usually psychologically detached, less motivated and unwilling to contribute effectively to the organisation as they are not engaged (Meyer & Allen, 1997). According to Maertz and Campion (2004, as cited in Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008), the process model of turnover looks at how people quit while the content model of turnover looks at why people quit. Based on the process model, people who generally become dissatisfied with their jobs tend to: think about leaving the job, search for better job or organisational alternatives, form intentions to quit and finally quit.

2.5.3. Antecedents of turnover intentions

Behavioural turnover intentions have been seen with moderate to strong correlations with turnover (Martin & Roodt, 2008). According to Ajzen (1991), intention to either quit or stay is the most important and immediate individual-level antecedent to actual turnover. Furthermore, intention to quit has been shown to be a predictor of turnover decisions (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

Various studies have also attempted to identify attributes of the call centre environment that
contribute to high levels of employee turnover (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). One such attribute is the lack of career path available to call centre agents (Belt, 2002). According to Stanworth (2000; Taylor & Bain, 1999), call centres are relatively lax, with employers accused of providing large numbers of low-skilled, repetitive, dead-end jobs. Crone, Carey and Dowling (2001) report a significant negative relationship between employees’ pay rates and turnover. Other studies report high levels of turnover being associated with levels of employee stress and dissatisfaction (Houlihan, 2001) and the absence of managerial strategies designed to achieve high commitment from staff (Frenkel et al., 1998). Employee organisational commitment has also been correlated with subordinate intention to turnover. Deery and Walsh (2001) found that employees in an outsourced call centre who had low levels of commitment, also had high levels of intention to turnover.

2.5.4. Demographics and turnover intentions

The following section explores the demographic variables age, gender, tenure, level of education and marital status and their impact on turnover intentions.

a) Age

Baack et al. (1993) found that age positively correlated with protestant pastors’ turnover intention yet tenure negatively correlated with intention to leave. According to Martin and Roodt (2008), turnover intentions had a significant relationship with age; as age increased, intentions to stay improved. These findings supported the research of Lambert et al. (2001). An older respondent does not necessarily equate to a more qualified one –
hence the fact that this relationship holds value. Older respondents place more investment within an organisation, hence their intention to stay longer.

b) Gender

Martin and Roodt, (2008) found a relationship between race and gender and turnover intentions. They found that white males and black females scored higher than the black males and white females. Jacobs (2005) found similar findings while investigating the development of a predictive model of turnover intentions of professional nurses. Findings revealed that black females are very sought after in the workplace (more so than black males and white females) and this drives their turnover intentions into the negative. On the other side of the spectrum, white males were previously the dominant role players in the workplace and this drive and focus are still maintained today, thereby reducing their intentions to stay.

c) Tenure

Trimble (2006) found that tenure in the organisation was a stronger predictor of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention than was age. Furthermore, Martin and Roodt (2008) found that turnover intentions had a significant relationship with the tenure of the respondent where turnover intentions increased initially as tenure increased, and then decreased once a peak is reached. The peak in this case is six to ten years. This may be due to the fact that the new employees are experiencing their twilight years while at the organisation and are also naïve about the organisation as a complete whole, while those who are very experienced are attached to
the organisation after investing many years of service in it. Those in the six to ten years
category feel that they have experienced the organisation sufficiently and therefore feel a
need to change.

d) Marital Status

Baack et al. (1993) found that age was positively related to persistence for unmarried
missionaries and negatively related for married missionaries. Thus, older singles intended
to extend their term of service, as did younger married missionaries.

2.5.5. Definition used in the study

Intention to quit in this study was defined using Boshoff et al.’s, (2002 as cited in Kahumuza &
Schlechter, 2008) definition which states that intention to quit is the strength of an individual’s
intention to stay with their employer.

2.6 The relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and turnover
intentions

2.6.1. Introduction

Numerous studies have shown the effect of both job satisfaction and organisational commitment
on turnover intentions (Aryee et al., 2001; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Slattery & Salvarajan, 2005).
The interest in studying these constructs is that organisational commitment and job satisfaction
are viewed as an essential component of turnover models because of their empirical relationship with voluntary turnover and turnover intentions (Cohen, 1993; Lee, Carswell & Allen, 2000; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002; Tett & Meyer, 1993). When employees are satisfied and happy with their jobs, they may exhibit commitment behaviours, which might lead to them not thinking about leaving the organisation. Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2002) support this notion in that those positive and rewarding features of work have been shown to be an antecedent to organisational commitment (Warsi et al., 2009) are expected to increase loyalty which, in turn, may reduce the likelihood of employees leaving.

The importance of studying these constructs is further highlighted by Lahai et al. (2004) who found that satisfaction with a supervisor, good supervision and pay may translate into the willingness on the part of the employees to go beyond the norm in complying, becoming loyal and staying with the organisation and accepting its goals. Furthermore, these feelings have been linked with increased job performance and productivity (Chambers, 1999; Greenberg & Baron 2003) and have also been linked to a decrease in turnover intentions (Luddy, 2005).

The main reason for the focus on the relationship between the constructs can be attributed to the following reasons:

1. Organisational commitment and job satisfaction are essential components in turnover models (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Martin & Roodt, 2008).

2. Understanding the antecedents of turnover intentions would place an organisation in a better position to limit actual turnover behaviours (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004).
3. Particularly the greater the job satisfaction, the less the likelihood that the individual will leave the organisation, and, the higher the commitment levels of the employee, the lower the predicted turnover intentions (Greenberg & Baron 2003, Muthuveloo & Che Rose, 2005).

2.6.2. The relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

According to Warsi et al. (2009), investigating the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment is essential as it has been shown that both constructs influence employees’ intention to quit. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs have been shown to experience less in the way of stress on the job and are generally happier in their workplace (Ma et al., 2003) and would also lead to higher levels of commitment (Cote & Heslin, 2003; Greenberg & Baron, 2003). The main view in literature is that job satisfaction is an antecedent to organisational commitment and that increasing an individual’s satisfaction in the job would result in more loyal and committed employees (Slattery & Salvarajan, 2005).

Employees who are highly satisfied with their workplaces, co-workers, pay, and supervision are more likely to be committed to the organisation’s values, goals and mission, than those who are not satisfied (Warsi et al., 2009). Job satisfaction and organisational commitment are also primary determinants of employee turnover, performance, and productivity (Okpara, 2004) and committed and satisfied employees have been found to be engaged employees that contribute meaningfully towards organisational goals, are less absent, perform better and generally stay longer with the organisation (Samad, 2007).
According to Lahai et al. (2004), the reason that employees with high levels of job satisfaction tend not to seek out other employment opportunities, is they find meaning in their current roles and by this virtue are committed to the organisation. As such, an assumption would be that the more satisfaction employees experience in performing their jobs, the stronger their commitment to the organisation would be.

Research done by Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) and Warsi et al. (2009) found positive correlations between job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst employees. They further found that job satisfaction is more strongly associated with organisational commitment as compared to work motivation. Cetin’s (2006) study of Turkish academics found significant positive correlations between job satisfaction and affective and normative commitment, respectively. Aryee et al. (2001) also found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Similar findings are reported by Parker and Kohlmeyer (2005); Freund (2005) and Abraham (1999).

Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) further found that job satisfaction dimensions such as nature of the job, management and supervision, task requirement, co-workers, job security, and recognition and promotion had more effect on employees’ organisational commitment. Nature of the work, co-workers, and management and supervision had the most effect on affective commitment. Management and supervision, nature of work and job security had the most effect on continuance commitment. Finally, nature of the job and co-workers had the most effect on normative commitment. On the other hand, affective commitment had more effect on employees’ job satisfaction. Lahai et al. (2004) concluded that two hygiene factors (relationship with
supervisor and industry policy and administration) and three motivator factors (advancement, achievement and work itself) are good predictors of organisational commitment.

2.6.3 The relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

The absence of job satisfaction amongst call centre agents is one of the most frequently cited causes of employee turnover in call centres (Belt, 2002; Korczynski, 2001). Belt (2002) amongst others (Stanworth, 2000; Taylor & Bain, 1999) argue that call centres are complacent and accused of providing large numbers of low-skilled, repetitive and tedious jobs. As a result, job satisfaction amongst call centre agents has been reported to be low (Belt, 2002). Employees with low levels of job satisfaction tend to seek out other employment opportunities, as they do not find meaning in their current roles and by this virtue they are not committed to the organisation (Lahai et al., 2004). The more satisfaction employees experience in performing their jobs, the stronger their commitment to the organisation would be and the less inclined they would be to think about quitting (Fox, 1980; Martin & Roodt, 2008). Carrim et al. (2006) are of the opinion that while call centre agents tend to be highly focused on their jobs, the nature of their work has a bearing on their level of job satisfaction which in itself is an important predictor of intention to quit.

Examining the associations between job satisfaction and turnover intentions is of key concern for the following reasons.

1. Motivated employees are more likely to be engaged and less likely to harbour
thoughts of quitting (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Swanepoel et al., 2003).

2. Job satisfaction has been shown to be an antecedent to organisational commitment (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Tumwesigye, 2010).

In a study by Crone et al. (2001) significant negative relationships were found between employees’ pay rates and turnover. In other words employees who felt that they were being underpaid exhibited increased turnover behaviour. Other studies found similar results in that high levels of employee turnover were associated with high levels of employee stress and dissatisfaction with the job (Houlihan, 2001). Furthermore the lack of managerial plans designed to high commitment from staff resulted in increased levels of turnover (Frenkel et al., 1998).

According to Mosadeghrad et al. (2008), job satisfaction is a significant predictor of turnover intention. A study by Jacobs and Roodt (2008), looking at turnover intentions of nurses found that there exists a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and intention to turnover between nurses. The results of the simultaneous multiple regression models indicate that together, these two variables explain 22.5% of the variance in employees’ turnover intention. Job satisfaction further explained the largest amount of the variance 19.2% followed by commitment. Findings by Martin and Roodt (2008) revealed through a study of perceptions of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intentions in a post merger tertiary institution found significant negative relations between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Both job satisfaction and organisational commitment have both been shown to be strongly correlated to intention to quit.
2.6.4 The relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

Literature on turnover intentions (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, Miller et al., 2002) indicates that employees who are committed to the organisation are more engaged and less likely to leave. Research has also shown that employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more committed and less likely to quit or harbour thoughts about quitting (Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). Managers who desire to reduce turnover intentions and related withdrawal behaviours, need to take steps to understand factors influencing organisational commitment (Tumwesigye, 2010). Turnover intention has been suggested as the most important immediate predictor of actual turnover (Tumwesigye, 2010), paying attention to factors that promote commitment could also reduce actual turnover of call centre agents.

Examining the associations between organisational commitment, and turnover intentions is of key concern for the following reasons.

1. Motivated employees are more likely to be committed to the organisation, less likely to harbour thoughts of quitting as well as actually quitting (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Swanepoel et al., 2003).

2. Organisational commitment has been shown to be an antecedent to intention to quit (Jacobs & Roodt, 2008; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Miller et al., 2002; Tumwesigye, 2010).

Tumwesigye (2010) found strong negative relationships between all three dimensions of
organisational commitment and turnover intentions. Furthermore, overall employee organisational commitment has also been correlated with subordinate intention to turnover (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Deery and Walsh (2001) established that employees in a call centre who had low levels of commitment also had high levels of intention to turnover. Jacobs and Roodt (2008), however, found that the relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intentions was not significant.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter elaborates on the selected research design and methods used in the study. It addresses the sampling procedure and data collection. A comprehensive discussion on the statistical methods employed in the analysis of data is also included.

3.2 Research methodology

The nature of the data to be collected and the problem being studied, determine the research methodology to be followed. Methodology according to Leedy and Ormrod (2001), is an operational structure in which the facts are planned in order to get a clear understanding of the research. Research methodology is defined by Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005, p. 108) as “a systematic focused and orderly collection of data for the purposes of obtaining information from them to solve a particular research problem or question”.

3.3 Research design

The research design is the blueprint that guards or shows how the researcher is going to conduct the research (Mouton, 2001). It shows the plan on how the data is collected, the measuring instruments used to collect information, how the information collected will be processed and
analysed so as to explain the research findings. It is important to note that a research design should be effective in producing the wanted information within the constraints put on the researcher (Ghauri & Grouhaug, 2005). This implies that a research design should be planned mindful of the constraints such as time frame and financial constraints the researcher may face.

In this study, a quantitative research approach and design were used to investigate the research question. In the social sciences, a quantitative research design follows the utilization of numerical techniques to analyse data and enables the researcher to quantifiably deal with questions about the relationships between the variables under investigation (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The most efficient way to investigate properties of research with large data is through the use of a quantitative design method (Ghauri & Grouhaug, 2005).

### 3.3.1. Population

Struwig and Stead (2004) define the target population as the total collection of all elements the researcher wishes to draw inferences from regarding the total collection of study elements. Population elements are then selected on the basis of their availability (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). For the purposes of the present study, the call centre in which the study was conducted was situated in the Western Cape. The call centre has two departments, the first being customer services and the second being collections. The population for this study comprised of two hundred and fifty call centre agents in the collections department of the call centre.
3.3.2. Sample

Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 164) define sampling “as a process of selecting observations”. The purpose of sampling is to select a set of elements from the population in such a way that they accurately reflect the characteristics of the population from which they were drawn. This is to ensure that the sample remains representative of the population.

In the selection of the sample, a non-probability sampling method was utilized in this study, in the form of convenience sampling. Non-probability sampling techniques provide the opportunity to use subjective judgment to select a sample (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In deciding on the size of the sample to be drawn, the following issues were considered. The sample had to be representative of the call centre agents and also had to be large enough to allow for precision, confidence and generalisability of the research findings.

Babbie and Mouton (2001) refer to the following benefits of non-probability sampling: a) a non-probability, convenience sample would allow for the most available subjects to be chosen, b) all call centre agents who are conveniently available at the time would be chosen as subjects, c) the rationale for using a non-probability sample over a probability sample is that the former method of sampling is much more cost effective, quick and convenient to do, d) when using a non-probability convenience sample, the sample selected should still be adequately large enough to ensure representativeness. A disadvantage is that results obtained from the sample cannot be extrapolated to the population with confidence (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).
3.3.3. Sample size

Two hundred call centre agents were invited to participate in the study. One hundred questionnaires were distributed to the call centre agents working on the day shift, and one hundred questionnaires were distributed to the call centre agents working on the night shift. Of the two hundred questionnaires given out, a total of one hundred and seventy two questionnaires was returned, yielding a response rate of eighty six percent which is well over the acceptable response rate of thirty percent (Sekaran, 2000) and fifty percent (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

3.3.4. Data collection

The method of data collection in this study was the utilisation of a self administered questionnaire. Self administered questionnaires are described as a written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives. Furthermore, they are convenient and less time consuming to administer (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), there are certain advantages for using self administered questionnaires these advantages include: a) usefulness in describing the characteristics of a large population, b) they make large samples feasible as it is inexpensive, c) they are flexible they allow you to develop operational definitions based on actual observations, d) standardized questionnaires have an important strength in regard to measurement in general, e) it can be kept anonymous. Some disadvantages include: a) can only be a viable option if the population under study is literate, b) can result in incomplete questionnaires, c) the researchers lack of opportunity to address question as they arise (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).
The present study utilized four self-administered questionnaires. These questionnaires were distributed to the call centre agents by their respective team leaders. Covering letters, detailing the nature of the study and assurances of confidentiality, were included with the questionnaires. Detailed instructions were provided to respondents on how questionnaires were to be completed and returned.

Participants were encouraged to participate in the study through a cover letter which was constructed and attached to the questionnaire. This letter introduced the researcher to the participant and also reflected upon the rationale for the research. Furthermore, it outlined the procedure to be followed as well as highlighted that participation was completely voluntary and that any participation would remain completely confidential.

Verbal permission was obtained from the call centre collections manager to conduct the study. The study was conducted over a period of one day with two one hour time slots allocated to each shift. Two hundred questionnaires were distributed and instructions read out by the team leaders. Cover letters attached to the questionnaire informed respondents of the study, covering issues such as anonymity and confidentiality, the questionnaires’ structure and the procedure that would be followed.

Participants were briefed that participation was voluntary and all information would remain confidential and the results would only be used for the research purpose. The researcher was also present to address any questions that may have arisen.
3.4. Measuring Instruments

Four measuring instruments were used to gather the data, namely a biographical questionnaire, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), and Turnover Intention Questionnaire.

3.4.1. Biographical questionnaire

For the purposes of this study, biographical data was obtained from each respondent with the use of a self developed biographical questionnaire. Questions relating to age, gender, race, work arrangement, educational level and tenure were included.

3.4.2 Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire (MSQ)

3.4.2.1. Nature and composition

According to Martin and Roodt (2008), the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) is designed to measure an employee’s satisfaction with their job. It provides more specific information on the aspects of a job that an individual finds rewarding, than do more general measures of job satisfaction. The short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire was used in the present study. This form consists of 20 items from the long form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire which consists of 100 items that best represent each of the 20 scales. The purpose of the short form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire is therefore to determine the degree of job satisfaction in characteristics associated with the task itself (intrinsic satisfaction), in non-task characteristics of the job (extrinsic satisfaction) and in overall job satisfaction (total satisfaction).
satisfaction). It provides specific information with regards to aspects of the job that the employee finds rewarding (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short form can be utilized for the measurement of job satisfaction of call centre agents (Martin & Roodt, 2008; Weiss, Dawis, England & Lofquist, 1967). The results can therefore be utilized to assess the level of satisfaction experienced by call centre agents.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short form consists of twenty items that are answered on a five point Likert scale focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic reinforcement factors of employee attitude (Martin & Roodt, 2008). The response alternatives range from "Very Dissatisfied" (weighted 1) to "Very Satisfied" (weighted 5) for each of the twenty factors (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) is self-administered and there is no time limit for completing the questions. However, the average person can complete the instrument in five minutes (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

The questionnaire measures job satisfaction on three facets namely intrinsic, extrinsic and general satisfaction dimensions. The MSQ measures an individual’s satisfaction with 20 aspects of the work environment (Martin & Roodt, 2008). These include: a) ability utilization—doing something that makes use of abilities, b) achievement—feeling of accomplishment from the job, c) activity—being able to keep busy all of the time, d) advancement—chances of advancement on the current job, e) authority—chance to tell others what to do, f) company policies and practices—the way company policies are put into practice, g) compensation—pay for the amount
of work done, h) coworkers—the way coworkers get along with one another, i) creativity—chance to try own methods of doing the job, j) independence—chance to work alone, k) moral values—ability to do job without going against conscience, l) recognition—praise for doing a good job, m) responsibility—freedom to use own judgment, n) security—providing for steady employment, o) social service—chance to do things for other people, p) social status—the chance to “be somebody” in the community, q) supervision/human relations—the way the supervisor handles supervisees, r) supervision/technical—competence of supervisor in making decisions, s) variety—the chance to do different things from time to time, t) working conditions—overall working conditions

3.4.2.2. Questionnaire properties

3.4.2.2.1. Validity of the MSQ

According to Sekaran (2000), validity demonstrates whether an instrument measures what it is supposed to and is justified by the evidence. Essentially, it entails the extent to which an instrument actually measures the aspects that it was intended to measure.

According to Mitchell (1994 p. 961), “the validity of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) as a measure of general job satisfaction, comes from the test’s performance according to theoretical expectation and from construct validation studies based on the theory of work adjustment”. As such, the questionnaire is assumed to be a valid measure of job satisfaction as, a) the results of the short form MSQ parallel those of the long form MSQ and b) the relationship between satisfaction and satisfactoriness are independent variables (Fields, 2002).
3.4.2.2. Reliability of the MSQ

Reliability refers to whether an instrument is consistent, stable and free from error, despite fluctuations in test taker, administrator or conditions under which the test is administered (Sekaran, 2000).

The reliability estimates for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) appeared to be satisfactory. Studies have found Cronbach Alpha ranging from 0.88 to 0.96 (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). According to Labuschagne, Bosman and Buitendach (2005, p. 29), “The alpha coefficients for the MSQ 20 range from 0.87 to 0.95, which supports the internal consistency of the scale”. Furthermore Buitendach & Rothman (as cited in Labuschagne et al., 2005, p. 29) “obtained a reliability coefficient for the MSQ 20 of 0.82 for the extrinsic job satisfaction scale and 0.79 for the intrinsic job satisfaction scale”.

According to Fields (2002), the MSQ was factor analysed which yielded two factors. The first looked at assessing satisfaction with intrinsic aspects of the job and the other assessing extrinsic aspects. Taking all this into account, it is thus clear that the MSQ is both a valid and reliable measure for assessing job satisfaction.

According to Weiss et al. (1967), the reliability coefficient obtained for the MSQ was high. For the intrinsic satisfaction scale, the coefficients ranged from .84 (for assembrler groups) to .91 for engineers. For the extrinsic satisfaction scale, the coefficients ranged from .77 (for electronic assembrler) to .82 for engineers.
3.4.3 The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire

3.4.3.1. Nature and composition

Meyer and Allen (1984, as cited in Cohen, 2007) initially made distinctions between two types of commitment namely, affective commitment and continuance commitment. Affective commitment signified a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the organisation, whereas, continuance commitment emphasized the perceived costs of leaving the organisation. Subsequent to this Allen and Meyer (as cited in Cohen, 2007) introduced a third dimension of commitment namely, normative commitment. Normative commitment reflected the perceived obligation to remain with the organisation.

According to Maharaj and Schlechter (2007), the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was designed to measure an employee’s commitment to the organisation. Specifically providing specific information around the three dimensions namely, a) affective commitment, b) normative commitment and c) continuance commitment. The Organisational Commitment Questionnaire was used in the present study. This scale comprises of a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree and consists of 24 items with each subscale, namely affective, normative and continuance commitment consisting of eight items each. The purpose of the OCQ is therefore to determine the degree of normative, affective and continuance organisational commitment that the employee experiences. Further to this, is its purpose to determine overall organisational commitment (Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007).
3.4.3.2. Questionnaire properties

3.4.3.2.1. Validity of the OCQ

Meyer and Allen (1997) found that the correlation between the OCQ and antecedent variables provides evidence that the scale is indeed a valid measure of organisational commitment and can be used for future research. Furthermore, construct validity has been found within the dimensions of the OCQ based on the fact that they have correlated as predicted by Meyer and Allen (as cited in Manetje & Martins, 2009).

3.4.3.2.2. Reliability of the OCQ

The reliability estimates for the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) appeared to be satisfactory. Studies have found a Cronbach alpha of 0.75 to 0.84 which is sufficient (Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007). According to Manetje and Martins (2009), the reliability estimates of this scale show internal consistency and temporal stability. Meyer and Allen (1997 as cited in Manetje & Martins, 2009 p. 100) found “the internal consistencies of the OCQ dimensions varying between 0.85 for affective, 0.79 for continuance and 0.73 for normative”. The overall reliability estimates exceed 0.70 which is satisfactory (Meyer & Allen 1997).

Taking all this into account it is thus clear that the OCQ is both a valid and reliable measure for assessing organisational commitment.
3.4.4 The intention to quit measure

3.4.4.1. Nature and composition

According to Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008), the Intention to Quit Scale is designed to measure an employee’s intention to quit. Furthermore, Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008) proposed a three item scale that measures an employees intention to leave the organisation. This scale provided more specific information on three aspects of quitting intentions that an individual might harbour namely: a) thoughts about leaving the organisation, b) search for alternative to current organisation, c) leaving the organisation when able to. The questionnaire consists of three items measuring the aforementioned three aspects. The purpose of the Intention to Quit Scale is therefore to measure the employees quitting intentions. For the present study turnover intentions was measured using Cohen’s (1993, as cited in Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008) intention to quit scale. The scale is represented on a seven point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

3.4.4.2. Questionnaire properties

3.4.4.2.1. Reliability and Validity of the Intention to Quit Scale

The reliability estimates for the Intention to quit scale appeared to be satisfactory. A study by Kahumuza and Schlechter (2008) examining the influence of transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, trust, meaning and intention to quit on organisational behaviour indicated that the Cronbach Alpha for this scale was found to be 0.91 and is considered to be adequate
Cohen (2007) found in a study of turnover among staff nurses that intentions to quit have a key mediating role between attitudes and turnover and are the immediate determinant of actual turnover. Although the intentions to quit are thoroughly covered within research, there is a need to validate the scales formally to represent turnover cognitions (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008). Construct validity could accordingly be assessed at face value as there was no reason to suggest that this would be an inappropriate measure of intention to quit (Kahumuza & Schlechter, 2008).

3.4.5 Rationale for inclusion of instruments

All the instruments were selected mainly as they have been validated and considered to be suitable for the study within a South African context.

3.5 Procedure and ethical issues

There was necessity for communicating the intention of conducting the study to the company. As such, permission was requested by the researcher from the call centre manager in this regard. The call centre manager then communicated the need to his team leaders. The team leaders played a crucial role in communication with the participants. Following this was a cover letter explaining the rationale and the conditions under which the study would be conducted. Participants were assured that their anonymity would by no means be compromised. Participants were also informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that the information and
3.6 Data capturing and methods used for data analysis

Data was captured by the researcher using Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet and analysed using the statistical program for social sciences (SPSS). For the purposes of testing the hypotheses a number of statistical methods were used. These included:

a) Descriptive statistics

According to Sekaran (2000), descriptive statistics are used to describe the phenomena of interest and is used to analyse data for classifying and summarizing numerical data. This includes the analysis of data using frequencies, dispersions of dependent and independent variables and measures of central tendency and variability and to obtain a feel for the data (Sekaran, 2000). The mean and standard deviation will primarily be used to describe the data obtained from the MSQ, OCQ and Turnover Intentions Questionnaire.

In this study the results of the biographical questionnaire is based on the frequencies and percentages obtained based on the sample characteristics.

b) Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics allow the researcher to present the data obtained in research in statistical format to facilitate the identification of important patterns and to make data analysis more meaningful. According to Sekaran (2000), inferential statistics are
employed when generalisations from a sample to population are made. The statistical methods used in this research include the Pearson Product Moment Correlation as well as multiple regression analysis. A more detailed discussion on Pearson Product Moment Correlation will follow.

3.6.1 Pearson product moment correlation coefficient

For the purposes of determining whether a statistically significant relationship exists between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used.

It provides an index of the strength, magnitude and direction of the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions (Sekaran, 2000). The Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is, therefore, suitable for the purposes of the present study since the study attempted to describe the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

3.6.2 Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression is a multivariate statistical technique that is used for studying the relationship between a single dependent variable and several independent variables. It provides a method to predict the changes in the dependent variable in response to changes in more than one independent variable. Hence, it allows the researcher to determine the relative importance of
each predictor as well as to ascertain the collective contribution of the independent variables (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In determining the extent to which the biographical variables explain the variance in job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intentions multiple regression analysis was employed.

For the purposes of this study Multiple Regression Analysis was used to determine the variance between age, gender, tenure on job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

3.7 Hypotheses

The following research propositions were investigated.

**Hypothesis 1**
There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment

**Hypothesis 2**
There is no statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

**Hypothesis 3**
There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions

**Hypothesis 4**
There is no statistically significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and job satisfaction respectively.
Hypothesis 5
There is no statistically significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and organisational commitment respectively.

Hypothesis 6
The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7
The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in organisational commitment.

Hypothesis 8
Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment will not statistically significantly explain the variance in intention to quit.

3.8 Strength of study

Numerous studies have been conducted around the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions (Martin & Roodt, 2008) yet very few if any have been conducted in the call centre setting. The aim of this study was not to break new ground but to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in investigating the relationship between, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape in order to gain a better understanding of the relationship between these three variables.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

The current chapter outlines the results obtained in the study and discusses the findings of the research. The chapter commences with an overview of the most significant descriptive statistics with respect to the independent and dependent variables and provides a description of the most salient sample characteristics which are depicted in graphical format. Thereafter, the inferential statistical results are presented, followed by a brief interpretation of these.

4.2. Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics calculated for the measuring instruments are provided in the sections that follow.
Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics for job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to quit questionnaires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>58.22</td>
<td>58.00</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>15.498</td>
<td>240.173</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>-.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention to quit</td>
<td>15.55</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.677</td>
<td>32.226</td>
<td>-.864</td>
<td>-.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td>66.10</td>
<td>67.00</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.254</td>
<td>175.669</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>1.912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td>20.42</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.481</td>
<td>30.046</td>
<td>-.359</td>
<td>.489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td>23.70</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6.096</td>
<td>37.160</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>-.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td>21.98</td>
<td>23.00</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.414</td>
<td>29.315</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>2.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to job satisfaction, the descriptive statistics reveal a mean of 58 (s.d = 15.498). Considering that a mean score of 60 indicates average job satisfaction, this suggests that the sample was slightly less satisfied than average. However, the standard deviation is relatively large which indicates that respondents experienced varying levels of job satisfaction. Since the skewness is 0.66, the data reveals a right skewed distribution, with most values being concentrated on left of the mean, with extreme values to the right. The data also shows a
platykurtic distribution, with a flatter than a normal distribution and a wider peak. The probability for extreme values is less than for a normal distribution, and the values are wider spread around the mean.

The mean for turnover intention is 15.55 (s.d = 5.677). Since the standard deviation is not that small, this suggests that respondents did not differ that much in terms of their intentions to quit. The relative high mean score suggests that the sample had higher than average intentions to quit. Moreover, since the skewness is -0.864, the data reveals a left skewed distribution, with values being concentrated on the right of the mean, with extreme values to the left. The data also reveals a platykurtic distribution (-0.164), with a flatter than a normal distribution and a wider peak. The probability for extreme values is less than for a normal distribution, and the values are wider spread around the mean.

With respect to organisational commitment and its dimensions, a similar trend can be seen, with a mean value for organisational commitment being 66.10 (s.d = 13.254), for affective commitment (mean = 20.42, s.d = 5.48), for normative commitment (mean = 21.98, s.d = 5.414) and for continuance commitment (mean = 23.70, s.d = 6.096). The data for these variables indicates a left skewed distribution with most being concentrated on the right of the mean and with extreme values to the left. The data also reveals a platykurtic distribution, which suggests a flatter than normal distribution with a wider peak. The probability for extreme values is less than for a normal distribution, and the values are wider spread around the mean.
4.2.1 Results of the biographical questionnaire

The descriptive statistics calculated for the biographical questionnaire is presented in graphical format, followed by a description of the most significant sample characteristics in the form of frequencies and percentages.

Figure 4.1: Gender of respondents

The gender of the respondents is presented graphically in Figure 4.1. There are a larger number of female respondents (n=110), which constitutes 64% of the sample. The male respondents (n=56) comprise 32.6% of the sample. Six (n=6) respondents, representing 3.5% of the sample, did not indicate their gender.
The age of the respondents is presented graphically in Figure 4.2. It can be seen that the majority of the sample (n=137), constituting 79.7%, falls into the age category of 18 to 29 years old. This is followed by the age category 30 to 39 years old, (n=30) which comprises 17.4% of the sample. Only four respondents are in the age group of 40 to 49, representing 2.3% of the sample. One respondent (n=1), making up 0.6% of the sample, did not indicate their age.
The tenure of respondents in the call centre is presented in figure 4.3. The majority of the respondents (n=94), comprising 54.7% of the sample, have between six months to two years of service with the call centre. This is followed by fifty respondents (n=50) constituting 29.1% of the sample that have between three years and five years of service with the call centre. Only 8 respondents (n=8) representing 4.7% of the sample have been with the call centre for more than five years. Nineteen respondents (n=19) making up 11% of the sample have been with the call centre for less than six months. One respondent (n=1), forming 0.6% of the sample, did not indicate their length of service in the call centre.
The tenure of respondents in the organisation is displayed in figure 4.4. The majority of the respondents (n=89) comprising 51.7% of the sample have between six months to two years of service with the company as a whole. Fifty two respondents (n=52) constituting 30.2% of the sample have between three years and five years of service with the company as a whole. Only fourteen respondents (n=14) making up 8.1% of the sample have been with the company as a whole for more than five years. Seventeen respondents (n=17) forming 9.9% of the sample have been with the company as a whole for less than six months.
4.3. Inferential statistics

In the sections that follow, the results of the inferential statistics employed to test the hypotheses in the study are presented. For the purposes of testing the stated research hypotheses, Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated, and multiple regressions were performed. With the aid of these statistical techniques, conclusions are drawn with regards to the population from which the sample was taken and decisions are made with respect to the research hypotheses.

a) Hypothesis 1

There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

Table 4.2: Correlation between job satisfaction and organisational commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Commitment</td>
<td>0.559**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < 0.01

Table 4.2, indicated that there were significant positive correlations between job satisfaction and organisational commitment (r=0.559) with the correlation being significant at the 99% confidence level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.
b) **Hypothesis 2**

There is no statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

**Table 4.3: Correlation between organisational commitment and turnover intention.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnover Intentions</th>
<th>Organisational Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-0.220**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05  
** p < 0.01

Table 4.3 indicated significant negative correlations between organisational commitment and intention to quit (r=-0.220) with the correlation being significant at the 99% confidence level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

c) **Hypothesis 3**

There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

**Table 4.4: Correlation between job satisfaction and turnover intention.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnover Intentions</th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-0.400**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05  
** p < 0.01
Table 4.4, indicated significant negative relationships between Job Satisfaction and Intention to Quit (r=-0.400) of which the correlation being significant at the 99% confidence interval. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

d) **Hypothesis 4**

There is no statistically significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and job satisfaction respectively.

**Table 4.5: Inter-Correlation matrix for the relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and job satisfaction respectively.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.162*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the call centre</td>
<td>0.168*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the organisation as a whole</td>
<td>0.074</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < 0.05
** p < 0.01

Table 4.5, indicated moderately positive correlations between the biographical characteristics age and tenure in the call centre of the sample and their levels of Job satisfaction. The correlation coefficients varied between 0.162 (age and job satisfaction) to 0.168 (tenure in the call centre and Job satisfaction) at the 95% confidence level. The results depict weak, non-significant relationships between the biographical characteristics of gender and Job satisfaction (r=-0.038).
Furthermore, the results indicate weak to non-significant relationships between tenure in the organisation as a whole and job satisfaction ($r=0.072$). Therefore the null hypothesis is partially rejected in that there are statistically significant relationships between demographic variables age and tenure in the call centre and job satisfaction.

e) **Hypothesis 5**

There is no statistically significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and organisational commitment respectively.

**Table 4.6: Inter-Correlation matrix for the relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and organisational commitment respectively.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Organisational Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the call centre</td>
<td>0.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the organisation as a whole</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$
f) **Hypothesis 6**

The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in job satisfaction.

**Table 4.7: Multiple regression analysis of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole against job satisfaction.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple R</th>
<th>0.244&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R Square</td>
<td>0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Square</td>
<td>0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard error</td>
<td>15.240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees of Freedom - Regression</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2.514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign F</td>
<td>0.044&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>-0.820</td>
<td>0.414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>1.361</td>
<td>0.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the call centre</td>
<td>.385</td>
<td>2.291</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the organisation as a whole</td>
<td>-.302</td>
<td>-1.829</td>
<td>0.069</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.7 it can be seen that the multiple correlation among the four demographic variables and job satisfaction is 0.244, as indicated by R. Furthermore, given the R Square value of 0.059,
it may be deduced that only 5.9% of the variance in job satisfaction can be accounted for by these four demographic variables.

The F-statistic of 2.514 at 4 and 159 degrees of freedom is significant. On the basis hereof, it may be concluded that the four demographic variables of gender, age, tenure in call centre and tenure in organisation as a whole together significantly explain 5.9% of the variance in job satisfaction. In effect, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It should be noted, however, that the variance accounted for by these four variables is relatively small, with the remaining 94.1% of the variance being explained by factors other than those considered.
g) **Hypothesis 7**

The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in organisational commitment.

**Table 4.8: Multiple regression analysis of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole against organisational commitment.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>-0.969</td>
<td>0.334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>1.009</td>
<td>0.315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the call centre</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>1.165</td>
<td>0.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure in the organisation as a whole</td>
<td>-0.183</td>
<td>-1.089</td>
<td>0.278</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 4.8 it can be seen that the multiple correlation among the four demographic variables and organisational commitment is 0.151, as indicated by R. Furthermore, given the R Square value of 0.023, it may be deduced that only 2.3% of the variance in organisational commitment can be accounted for by these four demographic variables.

The F-statistic of 0.930 at 4 and 159 degrees of freedom is not significant. On the basis hereof, it may be concluded that the four demographic variables of gender, age, tenure in call centre and tenure in organisation as a whole cannot significantly explain 2.3% of the variance in organisational commitment. In effect, therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.
h) **Hypothesis 8**

Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment will not statistically significantly explain the variance in intention to quit.

**Table 4.9: Multiple regression analysis job satisfaction and organisational commitment against intention to quit.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple R</th>
<th>0.400(^a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R Square</td>
<td>0.160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Square</td>
<td>0.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard error</td>
<td>5.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees of Freedom - Regression</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>16.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign F</td>
<td>0.000(^a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.402</td>
<td>-4.734</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Commitment</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.955</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.9, it can be seen that the multiple correlation among job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to quit is 0.400, as indicated by R. Furthermore, given the R Square value of 0.160, it may be deduced that only 16% of the variance in organisational commitment
can be accounted for by these two variables.

The F-statistic of 16.067 at 2 and 169 degrees of freedom is significant. On the basis hereof, only 16% of the variance in intention to quit can be accounted for by job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In effect, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

4.4. Reliability analysis

Cronbach’s Alpha is viewed as an index of reliability associated with the variation accounted for by the true score of the original construct (Cronbach, 2004). Alpha coefficients range in value from 0 to 1 and may be used to explain the reliability of factors extracted from dichotomous and or multi-point formatted questionnaires or scales. However, there is no lower limit to the coefficient, the closer Cronbach’s coefficient alpha is to 1, the greater the internal consistency of the items of the scale (Cronbach, 2004).
Table 4.10: Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, Organisational Commitment Questionnaire and the Intention to Quit Scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Organisational Commitment</th>
<th>Intentions to quit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>0.923</td>
<td>0.769</td>
<td>0.843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of items</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to research, such a score can be regarded as excellent in terms of the reliability of the instrument. Nunnally (1978) has indicated 0.7 to be an acceptable reliability coefficient but lower thresholds are sometimes used in the literature. Hence, with the current study as indicated in table 4.10, the three scales (Job Satisfaction, Intention to Quit and Organisational Commitment) had co-efficient that exceeded 0.7, indicating a sufficient degree of reliability.
4.5. Conclusion

This chapter presented the descriptive and inferential statistics which emerged from the data analysis. The various hypotheses which were developed were tested and the most salient sample characteristics were presented. In the following chapter, the data is compared to previous research findings, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made to improve job satisfaction, enhance organisational commitment and reduce turnover intentions within the call centre where the research was undertaken.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results described in Chapter 4 are discussed in detail and where appropriate, existing literature is integrated into the discussion. In addition, this chapter explains some of the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are addressed. The information and discussions provided in the previous chapters serve as background against which the contents of this chapter are presented and interpreted. The discussion includes descriptive demographic information about the sample, and then presents the inferences which can be drawn based on the inferential statistics which emerged. Conclusions are drawn based on the results obtained.

5.2 Descriptive statistics for the sample

The sample consisted of one hundred and seventy two call centre agents working in a call centre situated in the Western Cape.

The majority of the respondents were in the age group 18-29, constituting 80.1% of the sample, with the sample being more representative of females 66.3% than males 33.7%. Most of the respondents have been in the service of the call centre for between 6 months and 2 years 54.7%, and in the organisation as a whole between 6 months and 2 years 51.7%.
5.3 Descriptive statistics for the job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to quit questionnaires.

The respondents’ job satisfaction was determined to be slightly lower than average, they had higher than average intentions to quit and the values were wider spread around the mean. Moreover, with respect to organisational commitment and its dimensions, a similar trend emerged. The probability for extreme values is less than for a normal distribution, and the values are wider spread around the mean. Hence, while some individuals may have been experiencing job satisfaction, on average, this was not the case. Moreover, some individuals showed lower affective, normative and continuance commitment, and combined with lower job satisfaction and organisational commitment, were likely to show higher levels of intention to quit.

5.4 Inferential statistics

The discussion of results will be presented in sections as per the hypothesis in chapter 1.

5.4.1 Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment

This study set out to assess the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents. The current research indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Findings revealed that call centre agents who were more satisfied with their jobs had higher
levels of organisational commitment. The result supports Hypothesis 1 which states that job satisfaction is related to organisational commitment. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

In support of the findings, Warsi et al. (2009) examined the relationship between work motivation, overall job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst 191 private sector employees. Using questions adapted from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, significant relationships between job satisfaction and organisational commitment were found. Similar results were obtained by Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) who investigated the relationships between job satisfaction and organisational commitment of employees, and their impact on turnover intentions at Isfahan Hospitals in Iran, in 2005. They found that those hospital employees who were satisfied with their jobs were also committed to their organisation. This positive correlation was expected as those employees who were highly satisfied with their jobs, were more likely to be committed to the organisations values, goals, mission, than those who were not satisfied.

Additional support of the findings was provided by Cetin’s (2006) study of Turkish academics which found significant positive correlations between job satisfaction and affective commitment and, more specifically, with normative commitment. A study conducted by Schappe (1998) investigating the influence of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and fairness perceptions on organisational citizenship behaviour amongst 150 employees at a mid Atlantic insurance company found significant positive correlations between job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

Aryee et al. (2001) investigated the antecedents of organisational commitment and turnover
intentions among 245 professional accountants in different employment settings in Singapore. They found that job satisfaction significantly contributed to the accountant’s organisational commitment. Likewise, Parker and Kohlmeyer (2005) found a strong correlation between job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Similarly Abraham (1999) found that the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment was significant.

According to Hackman, Oldham, Janson and Purdy (1995), Fox (1980) and Martin and Roodt (2008), the predominant view in literature is that job satisfaction is an antecedent to organisational commitment. Numerous studies looking at the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment have shown direct positive correlations (Cetin, 2006; Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Morrison, 1997; Wallace & Eagleson, 2004). The current study looked at job satisfaction within the call centre environment, which in itself often times could be lacking (Wegge et al., 2006).

Belt (2002), amongst others (Maharaj & Schlechter, 2007; Stanworth, 2000; Taylor & Bain, 1999) argue that call centres are complacent and accused of providing large numbers of low-skilled, repetitive and tedious jobs. As a result, job satisfaction amongst call centre agents has been reported to be low (Belt, 2002). When considering the above, the following becomes clear: call centre agents whose levels of job satisfaction are low, are more likely also to not be committed to the organisation than those call centre agents whose levels are high. As a consequence, increasing an individual’s satisfaction in the job would most likely result in committed employees (Slattery & Salvarajan, 2005).
5.4.2. Hypothesis 2

There is no statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

The current study set out to assess the relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intention amongst call centre agents. The results indicate that there is a significant negative correlation between organisational commitment and turnover intentions. Findings revealed that call centre agents who were more committed to their organisation had fewer thoughts of quitting. The result supports hypothesis 2 in that organisational commitment is related to turnover intentions. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

In support of the current research findings, studies have shown a direct negative relationship between organisational commitment and turnover intentions (Slattery & Salvarajan, 2005). Furthermore, Slattery and Salvarajan (2005) found that both temporary employee attitudes toward the client organisation and the temporary employee attitudes toward the agency, there was a negative association between organisational commitment and turnover intention. Martin and Roodt (2008) obtained similar results while examining employee perceptions of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intentions of a post merger South African Tertiary institute. Using the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire and Turnover Intentions Questionnaire they found that amongst 367 employees, organisational commitment has a direct positive correlation with intention to quit. Furthermore, examining the associations between organisational commitment and turnover intentions was of key concern to the current research as general consensus indicates that motivated employees are more likely to be
committed to the organisation, less likely to harbour thoughts of quitting as well as actually quitting (Greenburg & Baron, 2003; Martin & Roodt, 2008; Swanepoel et al., 2003).

Literature on turnover intentions (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Jaaron & Backhouse, 2010; Miller et al., 2002; Wallace & Eagleson, 2004) indicate that employees who are satisfied with their jobs tend be committed to the organisation and are less likely to leave organisation than those who are not. Similarly, Deery and Walsh (2001) found that employees in an outsourced call centre who had low levels of organisational commitment also had high levels of intention to turnover.

Abraham (1999) examined the impact of emotional dissonance on organisational commitment and intention to quit. The results indicated that affective organisational commitment was related to intent to leave and that continuance organisational commitment was not related to any turnover intentions. Furthermore, a study by Tumwesigye (2010) investigated the role played by organisational commitment in the relationship between perceived organisational support and turnover intentions. The sample comprised of 297 postgraduate students in private, public and NGO sectors of Uganda. The results of the study revealed that organisational commitment was negatively associated with intention to quit. Furthermore, the results indicated strong negative relationships between all three dimensions of organisational commitment (namely, affective, normative and continuance commitment) and turnover intentions (Tumwesigye, 2010). Deery and Walsh (2001) established that employees in a call centre who had low levels of commitment also had high levels of intention to turnover.

In contradiction to this, Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) found in their study at Isfahan Hospitals in
Iran, that there is no significant negative relationship between turnover intention and employees’ commitment. This may be due to external factors, such as job market conditions and workforce mobility, which may influence perceived opportunities for career advancement elsewhere.

In conclusion, organisational commitment can be seen as a factor or antecedent to intentions to quit. Literature emphasises the direct negative correlation between organisational commitment and intentions to quit. Although very few studies have been found to discredit the above notion, the present study, as well as previous studies, have indeed found a direct negative correlation between the two variables (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday et al., 1982 as cited in Slattery & Salvarajan, 2005; Wallace & Eagleson, 2004).

5.4.3. Hypothesis 3

There is no statistical significant relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions

The current study set out to assess the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention amongst call centre agents. The results indicate that there are significant negative correlations between job satisfaction and turnover intentions amongst call centre agents. Findings revealed that call centre agents who were more satisfied with their jobs had fewer thoughts of quitting. The result supports hypothesis 3 in that job satisfaction is related to turnover intentions. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

Studies have found similar results in that high levels of employee turnover were associated with
high levels of employee stress and dissatisfaction with the job (Houlihan, 2001). The nature of call centre work is of itself demanding, repetitive, and often stressful (Taylor & Bain, 1999; Wallace et al., 2000). As such Baker (2004) maintains that a consequence of job dissatisfaction is turnover. According to Crone et al. (2001), job related factors such as pay rates also had a significant relationship with turnover. Employees who felt that they were being underpaid became increasingly dissatisfied with their jobs and exhibited increased turnover behaviour. Furthermore, the lack of managerial plans designed to ensure job satisfaction in the call centre resulted in increased levels of turnover (Frenkel et al., 1998).

Literature reveals that job satisfaction is a significant predictor of turnover intention (Greenberg & Baron, 2003; Lambert et al., 2001). In support of the current findings, a study was conducted by Jacobs and Roodt (2008) which examined whether organisational culture predicts turnover intentions. They found that amongst the sample of 530 professional nurses in Johannesburg, significant negative relationships between job satisfaction and intention to quit existed. This is consistent with findings obtained by Martin and Roodt (2008) looking at perceptions of organisational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intentions in a post merger tertiary institution. Findings indicated significant negative relations between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.
5.4.4. Hypothesis 4

There is no statistically significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and job satisfaction respectively.

The current study set out to assess the relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole on job satisfaction. The results from the current study indicate that a moderately positive correlation existed between the biographical characteristics age and job satisfaction and tenure in the call centre and job satisfaction. Findings revealed that call centre agents who were older and served longer in the call centre were more satisfied with their jobs. The results also depicted weak, non significant relationships between the biographical characteristics of gender and job satisfaction as well as non significant relationships between tenure in the organisation as a whole and job satisfaction.

On the basis hereof, it may thus be concluded that while age and tenure in the call centre are significantly correlated with job satisfaction, gender and tenure in the organisation as a whole do not correlate with job satisfaction based on the sample of call centre agents. Therefore, the null hypothesis is partially rejected.

5.4.4.1. Age and job satisfaction

The results of the current research indicate a statistically significant relationship between age and job satisfaction amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.
Hunt and Saul (1975) investigated the relationship between age, tenure and job satisfaction in male and females and found that age had a strong linear relationship with overall job satisfaction supporting the findings of the current study. Furthermore, age had a stronger relationship with job satisfaction in males than in females. Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) investigated the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention among hospital employees, the results indicated significant U-shaped relationships between age and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the U-shaped relationship between age and job satisfaction can be explained. Firstly, among younger employees, a higher level of satisfaction may be due to the fact that inexperienced employees have fewer duties and responsibilities, less pressure and fewer demands from colleagues. Furthermore, they may also be less exposed to work-to-family conflicts. In contrast, among older employees, higher satisfaction could be explained by a better knowledge of hospital working, by benefits linked to seniority and by fewer external demands. In addition, they state that it is also possible that older employees refocus their priorities to factors outside the work setting, such as family and/or planning for retirement.

Studies by Jacobs and Roodt (2008), Martin and Roodt (2008) and Wallace and Eagleson (2004) concluded that overall job satisfaction is related to age. While many studies suggest a linear relationship between age and job satisfaction (Chambers, 1999; Herrera, 2003), other studies (Shields & Ward, 2001) report a U shaped relationship. According to Clark et al. (1996), significant variations across age are commonly found, with older employees tending to report higher satisfaction than younger ones (Clark et al., 1996). Further, they suggested that younger workers may feel satisfied because they have little experience about the labour market against which to judge their own work.
Claes and van der Van (2002) findings revealed that job satisfaction was above the midpoint of the scale for both age groups of young employees and older employees, but older employees rated both attitudes significantly more highly than their younger counterparts. Greenburg and Baron (2003) amongst others (Swanepoel et al., 2003, Martin & Roodt, 2008) considers that the relationship between age, job satisfaction and organisational commitment to be positive. Furthermore, findings indicated that age had a robust U-shaped effect on employees overall job satisfaction. Arrowsmith and McGoldrick (1996), found that the positive relation between age and job satisfaction; and age and organisational commitment indicated the advantage of retaining older workers.

5.4.4.2. Gender and job satisfaction

The results of the current research indicate there is a weak non significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.

In a study conducted by Bedeian et al. (1992) exploring the relations amongst age, tenure and job satisfaction found that female workers had lower levels of job satisfaction than their male counterparts. Similar results were obtained in a study by Herrera (2003) in which a demographic questionnaire and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire were handed to 240 athletic trainers. The findings of the study indicated that the male trainers expressed significantly more satisfaction with their jobs than their female counterparts. However, studies have found that gender did not always feature significantly in terms of overall job satisfaction scores (Martin & Roodt, 2008). Ma and Macmillan (1999) conducted research on the influences of workplace conditions on
teachers’ job satisfaction and found that female teachers appeared to be more satisfied with their professional role than are their male colleagues.

Blood et al. (2002) conducted research among a sample of teachers in public schools and their results indicated that there was no significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction supporting the findings of the current study. Similarly, in a study by Brush et al., (1987) investigating the relationship between individual demographic differences and job satisfaction, found no significant relationships between gender and job satisfaction. An investigation by Cano and Miller (1992) examining gender analysis of job satisfaction, job satisfier factors, and job dissatisfier factors of agricultural education teachers, found that male and female agriculture teachers in Ohio are satisfied with their jobs, and they do not differ significantly in terms of their overall job satisfaction scores. Putnam and Loppie (2000) revealed no significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction. Furthermore, these results should not come as a surprise as both males and females had found to have similar complaints work.

In conclusion, studies have found significant and non significant relationships between gender and job satisfaction. The present study focused on the relationship between gender and job satisfaction which was found not significant.

5.4.4.3. Tenure and job satisfaction

The results of the current research indicate there is a significant relationship between tenure in the call centre and job satisfaction and no significant relationship between tenure in the
organisation as a whole and job satisfaction amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.

It is suggested that advancing age alone can increase one’s prestige and confidence, likewise contributing to increased job satisfaction. However, the work of White and Spector (1987 as cited in Bedeian et al., 1992) suggests that older workers may experience job satisfaction not only because of what they getting in terms of benefits but also due to their longer tenure. Furthermore, job satisfaction was seen to follow a U-shaped relationship with respect to tenure in current position (Shields & Ward, 2001), while no relationship has also been indicated (Bedeian et al., 1992; Bertz & Judge, 1994; Ma et al., 2003).

Blood et al. (2002) conducted a study which compared the job satisfaction ratings of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) working in schools with other workers on a standardized index and examined whether geographic setting, specific demographic variables, and practice-related variables, predict job satisfaction among SLPs working in public schools. The results of their study indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between tenure and job satisfaction. Furthermore, their research indicated that the longer employees remained in their jobs, the more likely they were to report higher levels of job satisfaction. Similar results were obtained by Bedeian et al. (1992) who investigated age, tenure and job satisfaction, found that tenure (however measured) was a more stable and consistent predictor of job satisfaction than chronological age.

Tirmizi, Malik and Hasan (n.d.) investigated the relationship between age, tenure and job
satisfaction amongst white collar employees. Their results indicated that tenure hold very weak relationship with job satisfaction. According to Maharaj and Schlechter (2007), the need for employees to achieve a balance between work and life is pertinent to improving the tenure of employees. Many rewards for work-related achievements are provided to promote the sense of recognition, and social activities are arranged for staff to emphasize the need to find a balance between work and play.

5.4.5 Hypothesis 5

There is no statistical significant relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender and tenure and organisational commitment respectively.

The current study set out to assess the relationship between the biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole on organisational commitment. The results from the current study indicate that no significant correlations existed between all the biographical characteristics of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole and organisational commitment.

On the basis hereof, it may thus be concluded that age, tenure in the call centre, gender and tenure in the organisation as a whole do not correlate with organisational commitment based on the sample of call centre agents. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.
5.4.5.1. Age and organisational commitment

The results of the current research indicate there is no significant relationship between age and organisational commitment amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape. According to Martin and Roodt (2008), there are contradictory findings with regards to the relationship between age and commitment. Some studies have found no relationship between age and commitment (Knoop, 1986; Müller & Roodt, 1998), others have found that commitment has been positively related to age (Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990; Ingersoll et al., 2002; Lok & Crawford, 1999).

In support of the current findings, a study by Knoop (1986), investigating job involvement amongst 926 secondary school teachers found that the relationship between age and organisational commitment was relatively weak. Similar results were obtained by Cohen (1993) who investigated age and tenure in relation to organisational commitment. The relations between these variables and organisational commitment were found to be relatively weak. According to Cohen (1993), the main argument is that age as an organisational commitment determinant is exposed to factors external to the organisation and the work itself. An explanation of these weak relations was proposed by Meyer and Allen (1984 as cited in Cohen, 1993). They argued that younger employees may be more committed because of their awareness that, with less work experience, they often have fewer job opportunities. As they gain experience alternate employment opportunities may increase; this decreases the magnitude of one important cost of leaving, that of having no job.
A study by Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) investigating the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention among hospital employees, found a significant relationship between age and organisational commitment. Specifically age was found to be related to affective and normative commitment. Findings of the study indicated that older employees were more committed due to feelings of obligation and emotional attachment.

Mutheveloo and Che Rose (2005) investigating the typology of organisational commitment found that age and organisational commitment are considered to be positively associated with affective commitment. Martin and Roodt (2008) investigated the perceptions of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions in a post merger South African institute found that organisational commitment had a significant relationship with the age of the respondent. There results indicated a trend emerging in which commitment to the organisation increases as age increases. Lok and Crawford (1999) found that the older the participant, the greater was the degree of commitment.

In conclusion, some studies have found no significant relationship between age and organisational commitment while others have. The present study aimed to assess the relationship between age and organisational commitment amongst call centre agents, however results indicated that weak non significant relationships. Previous studies have found contradictory results, with some supporting the current studies findings and others not.

5.4.5.2. Gender and organisational commitment

The results of the current research indicate there is no significant relationship between gender
and organisational commitment amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.

Conflicting results are present in research with regards to gender and its relationship with organisational commitment. A study by Mathieu and Zajac (1990) investigating the antecedents, correlates and consequences of organisational commitment, have found that women were more committed than men. Contradictory findings by Cohen and Lowenberg (1990) found that men were more committed to the organisation than their female colleagues in their re-examination of the side-bet theory as applied to organisational commitment.

The current research findings are supported by Martin and Roodt (2008), who investigated the perception of job satisfaction organisational commitment and turnover intentions and found no significant relationship between gender and organisational commitment. Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) found no significant relationship between gender and organisational commitment while investigating the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention among hospital employees. In a study by Kacmar and Carlson (1999) the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire and the Organisational Commitment Scale were examined to establish similarities and differences in the measures. Furthermore, they examined the antecedents of age, gender, marital status, leader-member exchange, and justice and the consequences of job satisfaction, life satisfaction, nonwork satisfaction, intent to turnover, and job involvement were examined in relation to each scale. The results indicated that gender was not related at all to commitment. Studies conducted by Aven et al. (1993) and McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) found similar results.
In conclusion, some studies have found no relationship between gender and organisational commitment while others have. The present study focused on the relationship between gender and job satisfaction which was found to be non significant.

5.4.5.3. Tenure and organisational commitment

The results of the current research indicate there is no significant relationship between tenure in the call centre and organisational commitment and a non significant relationship between tenure in the organisation as a whole and organisational commitment amongst call centre agents in a call centre in the Western Cape.

In support of the current research findings Martin and Roodt (2008) investigated the perception of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions found no significant relationship between tenure in the organisation and overall organisational commitment. Supporting findings come from Lok and Crawford’s (1999) investigation into the relationship between commitment and organisational culture, subculture, leadership style and job satisfaction in organisational change and development. There findings revealed no significant relationship between tenure and organisational commitment. Similarly, other studies have found no meaningful relationship between tenure and organisational commitment (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

Tumwesigye (2010) found a significant relationship between tenure in the organisation and overall organisational commitment while investigating the role played by organisational commitment in the relationship between perceived organisational support and turnover.
intentions. In addition, the findings revealed that the correlations between demographic variables of the respondent’s age and tenure demonstrated insignificant correlations with normative commitment. However, age and tenure were significant positive correlates of affective commitment and continuance commitment (Tumwesigye, 2010). Further studies by Hackett et al. (1994) have shown a positive relationship between tenure and affective and continuance commitment. Furthermore, studies have also found that the longer employees worked in a particular organisation, the higher their levels of commitment to said organisation (Cohen & Lowenberg, 1990).

According to Lok and Crawford (1999), studies have indicated that position tenure described as the length of service in the position and organisational tenure (Mathieu & Hamel, 1989; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) have positive effects on commitment. This, according to Lok and Crawford (1999), can be explained as a result of the organisation's socialization process. The length of service in an organisation is positively related to the level of internalization of organisational values which results in greater commitment from the individual.

In conclusion, some studies have found no relationship between tenure and organisational commitment while others have. The present study focused on the relationship between tenure in the call centre and job satisfaction, and tenure in the organisation as a whole and job satisfaction both which was found to be non significant.
5.3.6 Hypothesis 6

The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in job satisfaction.

The current study set out to assess whether the biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole will explain the variance in job satisfaction. The results of the regression analysis, regressing the biographical variables against job satisfaction indicate that together approximately 5.9% of the variance in job satisfaction can be accounted for by the biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole. It should be noted, however, that the variance accounted for by these four variables is relatively small, with the remaining 94.1% of the variance being explained by factors other than those considered. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

In support of the current findings, a study by Bedeian et al. (1992) investigating age, tenure and job satisfaction found results consistent with the current study. In their study, the variance attributed to age on job satisfaction was low explaining only 1.9% on the variance on job satisfaction. Similarly the unique variance with job tenure on job satisfaction was also low with only 2% of the variance being explained by job tenure. The unique variance with organisational tenure on job satisfaction was low with only 1.7% of the variance being explained by organisational tenure. Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) found that organisational, social, job and individual factors overall explained 98.8% of the variance in employees’ job satisfaction. Organisational factors explained the largest amount of the variance (94.3%), followed by job,
social and individual factors. With regards to organisational factors, management and supervision explained the largest amount of the variance, followed by promotion, task requirement, security, and salaries and benefits.

Tirmizi et al., (n.d.) used multiple regression analysis to determine the degree of relationship between age, tenure and job satisfaction. Their results indicated that only 5% of the variance in job satisfaction could be accounted for by these two demographic variables. Similar results were obtained by Gibson and Klein (1970 as cited in Tirmizi et al., n.d.) and Arvey and Dewhirst (1979, as cited in Tirmizi et al., n.d.) while investing the relationship between age, tenure on job satisfaction.

In conclusion, the results of the regression analysis, regressing the biographical variables against job satisfaction indicated that together the variance accounted for by age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole variables was relatively small. These findings are consistent with previous research.

5.4.7. Hypothesis 7

The biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in the call centre, tenure in the organisation as a whole will not statistically significantly explain the variance in organisational commitment.

The current study set out to assess whether the biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole will explain the variance in organisational
commitment. The results of the regression analysis, regressing the biographical variables against organisational commitment indicate that together approximately 2.3% of the variance in organisational commitment can be accounted for by the biographical variables of age, gender, tenure in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole. However the four demographic variables of gender, age, tenure in call centre and tenure in organisation as a whole could not significantly explain 2.3% of the variance in organisational commitment. In effect, therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

In support of the current study Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) found that organisational, social, job and individual factors overall explained 44.7% of the variance in employees’ organisational commitment. Organisational factors explained the largest amount of the variance (33.3%), followed by job, individual and social factors. With regards to organisational factors, management and supervision accounted for the largest amount of the variance, followed by organisation policies and job security. Employees’ characteristics explain a lower degree of variation in commitment. This, was primarily the result of the effect of the employee’s age and education. These findings are consistent with findings from Cohen (1993) and Lok and Crawford (1999) who found a lower degree of variation being attributed by the demographic variables of age, gender and tenure. A study by Knoop (1986) investigating job involvement amongst 926 secondary school teachers found that the biographical variable age could not significantly explain the variance in organisational commitment. Furthermore, the relationship was also found to be relatively weak.

In conclusion, the results indicated that together the biographical variables of age, gender, tenure

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in a call centre and tenure in the organisation as a whole could not significantly explain the variance in organisational commitment. These findings are consistent with previous research.

5.4.8. Hypothesis 8

Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment will not statistically significantly explain the variance in intention to quit.

The current study set out to assess whether job satisfaction and organisational commitment will explain the variance in intention to quit. The results of the regression analysis, regressing the two independent variables of job satisfaction and organisational commitment against intention to quit can significantly explain 16% of the variance in intention to quit. In effect, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

In support of the current research a study by Mosadeghrad et al. (2008) found that employees’ job satisfaction and commitment are significant predictors of turnover intention. Furthermore, the results of their simultaneous multiple regression model indicated that together, these two variables explained 22.5% of the variance in employees’ turnover intention. Job satisfaction explained the largest amount of the variance (19.2%) followed by commitment. Martin and Roodt (2008) employed a systematic model-building process incorporating various techniques, among others structural equation modeling and step-wise linear regression. The final predictive model explained 47% of the variance in turnover intentions. Contrary to expectations, commitment does not correlate more strongly than satisfaction does with turnover intentions.
In contradiction, to the findings Baker (2004) found that job satisfaction does not have a significant impact on the withdrawal behaviours such as absenteeism or turnover furthermore it accounts for only 6.3% of the variance in intention to turnover. However, a study by Tumesigye (2010) found that components of organisational commitment would significantly and inversely predict turnover intentions, is fully supported. This finding is consistent with Martin and Roodt (2008) who found significant impact on turnover intentions as accounted by job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

In conclusion, the results indicated that together job satisfaction and organisational commitment could not significantly explain the variance in organisational commitment. These findings are consistent with previous research.

5.5. Limitations of the study

The following section presents some thoughts on the limitations of the present study.

In this study, call centre agents’ participation was voluntary and was conducted in one call centre in the Western Cape. The findings should be interpreted with caution as the participants were call centre agents from a particular province of South Africa. From a methodological point of view, this study followed a non-probability; convenience sampling method. A disadvantage of following a non-probability, convenience sampling method is that of low generalisibility. This means that the results would not be able to be extrapolated from the sample to the population with confidence (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).
The cross-sectional design of this study also meant that the results only indicated a snapshot at that given time.

5.6. Conclusions

The objective of this study was to determine the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intentions to quit amongst call centre agents. This study revealed significant positive relationships between job satisfaction and organisational commitment and significant negative relationships between job satisfaction and turnover intentions and significant negative relationships between organisational commitment and turnover intentions which are consistent with research findings. These findings can serve as an important tool for management in managing call centre agents job satisfaction. This could enable management to strive to ensure that call centre agents are satisfied with their jobs, which could potentially impact on their levels of commitment and concomitantly reduce their turnover intentions.

It would be suggested that management effectively plan talent retention strategies aimed ensuring job satisfaction and organisational commitment amongst call centre agents. Although the findings of the current study were limited to one call centre in the Western Cape, the following suggestions could aid to promote job satisfaction in call centre settings:

a) Induction to the call centre environment and job to ensure the call centre agent is orientated to the ethos of the call centre and their role in it from the outset of the employment relationship,
b) managing performance, determining performance standards, the optimal number calls each agent deals with daily and advising management when staff cannot handle an increase in volumes,

c) technological advancement and assisting agents to keep abreast of any technological changes and the promotion of continuing education and training, and

d) participation in change management, so that staff remain information about any changes or adjustments in order to ensure their buy-in is obtained from the outset.

e) Management might be able to increase the level of organisation commitment in the organisation by increasing employees’ satisfaction with their jobs. Changes in organisational variables, such as benefit scales, employee input in policy development and work environment, could then be made in an effort to increase employees’ job satisfaction, organisational commitment and decrease subsequent turnover.

Fluss (2008, p. 12) suggests that “the following these steps would improve job satisfaction in call centres:

a) Advise management when staff cannot handle the increasing volume of randomly arriving calls, especially once it starts impacting on performance.

b) Determine how many calls arrive every half hour of every day, the average amount of time to handle a typical call and the average after-call time needed to fulfil customer
requests or process orders.

c) Figure out how many people are needed every half hour of every business day to handle the call volume, after-call work, and normal non-call activities. Discuss this with management and create schedules so that the right number of people is available to handle projected call volumes throughout the day.

d) Speak to either the technology staff or the telephony carrier and find out if the existing phone system has any automatic call distribution capabilities.

e) Provide or order the software required to operate as a small contact centre.

f) Explain the changes to teammates, get their buy-in, and distribute new schedules.

In addition, Greenberg and Baron (2003), offer the following suggestions:

a) Make jobs fun – Employees who enjoy the work that they do will result in them feeling more satisfied. There is no disputing that some types of work are innately boring, therefore it becomes important to make the workplace environment a fun place to be. Alternatively, ‘fun days’ can be organized to infuse an element of fun to regular routine by having fun activities and events outside of the working environment.
b) Pay people fairly – Employees who are of the perception that their organisations’ pay and benefit system is inherently unfair tend to have a high level of dissatisfaction with their jobs. Also, when employees have a choice in selecting their fringe benefits that they desire most, job satisfaction will in all likelihood increase. At the same time the remuneration component can influence job satisfaction by allowing people to structure their pay to sustain their financial needs and to have flexibility with whether more disposable income is required on a monthly basis compared to having an annual bonus at a particular time of the month or whether more or less leave is required.

c) Match people to jobs that fit their interests – It is important that people engage themselves in work activities that they enjoy and have a strong interest in, as they spend most of their time involved in workplace activities. Organisations should therefore seek to conduct regular assessments of people and their interests and as far as possible match their personality and work preferences to what they are involved in at work. This match is important to ensure that people’s interests are sustained in the workplace, leading to a satisfied employee on the job.

d) Avoid boring repetitive jobs – The majority of the workforce is at some point engaged in workplace tasks that are repetitive and administrative in nature. Employees, who do not have a flair for this kind of work, will find little satisfaction in routine jobs. It is therefore important for organisations to explore alternative roles and development of employee skills to prevent boredom.
5.7. Recommendations

The following section presents some recommendations for further research, and managerial implications.

It would have been beneficial for this study to follow a probability sampling method but due to constraints such as time, cost implications and the researchers own development opportunities’ a non-probability convenience sample was selected. The use of only one call-centre limited to one geographical location implies that findings would be severely limited in terms of generalisability. A more longitudinal study would have been beneficial but due to time and cost implications, a cross-sectional design was selected. The use of multiple call centres at a national level would have been beneficial had time and resource constraints permitted.

If this study also incorporated call centres from different geographical locations with a larger, more representative sample based on a stratified random sample, it would likely have increased the generalisability of the findings. Hence, it would be beneficial for future research to include call centres from different geographical locations as so to compare and generalize the results. It would also be beneficial for future research to explore the effects of the variables that were not measured in the current study which may also directly or indirectly influence feelings of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions. Variables such as organisational culture, leadership style (Lok & Crawford, 1999), stress, burnout, emotional labour (Sadien, 2010), organisational climate and job tension (Fisher et al., 2007). Furthermore, it may be beneficial for future research to include a more in-depth analysis of the impact of affective,
normative and continuance commitment dimensions in the study (Meyer & Allen, 2008).

The current study examined total job satisfaction in relation to total organisational commitment and turnover intentions. It would be beneficial for future research to investigate the individual facets of job satisfaction in relation to organisational commitment and turnover intentions. This would result in a more holistic view of the findings.

The current research relied on a cross sectional design which may have posed certain limitations. Moreover, triangulated approach involving the use of qualitative information would have assisted in gaining a deeper insight into job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intentions. This is of particular importance given the forced choice format in the quantitative measures. Qualitative interviews or focus groups may have provided additional, rich and meaningful information against which to compare the quantitative data. More studies, which involve call centre agents from other geographical locations, would enrich the literature on call centre agents’ job satisfaction and commitment, which in turn could generate strategies to improve the national retention of new call centre agents.
REFERENCES


ADDENDUM A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant

Introduction and Purpose:

You are asked to participate in this research conducted by Ricardo Sampson, currently enrolled for a Masters degree in Industrial Psychology in the Department of Industrial Psychology at the University of the Western Cape. The results of this study will contribute to his thesis which will be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the attainment of the Masters degree. The purpose of the current study is to get a better understanding of the relationship between job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intention to quit in the call center environment. As such, we need your assistance in completing this survey.

Procedures:

Please be aware that participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to answer the questions/statements on the questionnaire in all honesty and to the best of your knowledge.

Confidentiality:

As a matter of confidentiality, you will not be asked to indicate your name and/or identify on this questionnaire. It will therefore not be possible for you to be traced to the questionnaire you have completed. Data will be stored under maximum computer security, the questionnaires will also be secured in the Department of Industrial Psychology and data analysis will be computerized. Both the data and the questionnaires will be accessible only to the student involved, and Dr. Leon Bosman, acting as Academic Supervisor to this study.

Identification of Investigators/Researchers:

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

- Ricardo Sampson, 268 First Avenue Lotus River, Grassy Park Tel. (076) 1300544, email: 2333340@uwc.ac.za
- Dr. Leon Bosman, Department of Industrial Psychology, UWC, Tel. (021) 959-3181, e-mail: lbosman@uwc.ac.za

Structure of the Questionnaire:

The questionnaire comprises of four main sections, i.e.

- Section 1: Biographical (personal) information, which is intended for research purposes only.
- Section 2, 3 and 4: Sub-measuring scales, focusing on the following 3 constructs:
  (a) Job Satisfaction;
  (b) Organisational Commitment;
  (c) Intention to Quit

Please tick below to indicate that you have read and understood the information provided above and agree to participate in this study under the conditions stated above:

[ ]

It will take approximately 45 minutes to complete

Your participation is appreciated

Regards

Ricardo Sampson

Researcher
**Section 1 Biographical Details.** Please complete the following biographical details (Research purposes)

1. **Male** [ ]  **Female** [ ]  (Indicate by placing a X in the appropriate block) V1

2. **Educational Qualification** V2
   - Grade 12
   - Bachelors Degree
   - Honours
   - Masters
   - Other

If you selected other please specify: ........................................

3. **Age** V3
   - 18 – 29 years
   - 29+ – 39 years
   - 39+ – 49 years
   - 50+ – 59 years
   - 59+ years and older

4. **Race** (Used for research purposes) V4
   - African [ ]  Coloured [ ]  Indian [ ]  White [ ]

5. **Length of service in current role within Call Centre Agency** V5
   - Less than 6 months
   - 6 months – 2 years
   - 2 years+ – 5 years
   - 5 years+ and above

6. **Length of service within Company as a whole** V6
   - Less than 6 months
   - 6 months – 2 years
   - 2 years+ – 5 years
7. Work arrangement

- Night Shift
- Day Shift
Section 2

The purpose of the following questionnaire is to provide you with an opportunity to tell how you feel about your current job, what things you feel satisfied with and what things you are not satisfied with. On the basis of the answers given by yourself and those like you we hope to gain better insight into things people like and dislike about their jobs.

Following the instruction and examples you will find statements about your present job,

- Read each statement carefully
- Decide on how satisfied you feel about the stated aspects of your present job

Keeping the statement in mind answer in the following manner

- If you feel your job gives you more than you expected, make a Cross in the Box numbered 5 indicating very satisfied as in the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- If you feel your job gives you what you expected, make a Cross in the Box numbered 4 indicating satisfied as in the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- If you feel you cannot make up your mind whether or not the job gives you what you expected, make a Cross in the Box numbered 3 indicating neither satisfied or dissatisfied as in the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- If you feel your job gives you less than you expected, make a Cross in the Box numbered 2 indicating dissatisfied as in the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- If you feel your job gives you much less than you expected, make a Cross in the Box numbered 1 indicating very dissatisfied as in the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Do this for all the statements
- Be honest and frank
- Give a true picture of your feelings about your current job

Please proceed to the next page and complete the questionnaire.
The following questionnaire measures how you feel about your current job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08 Being able to keep busy all the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 The chance to work alone on the job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 The chance to do different things from time to time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 The chance to be somebody in the community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 The way my boss handles his/her workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 The competence of my supervisor in making decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Being able to do things that goes against my conscience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 The way my job provides for steady employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 The chance to do things for other people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 The chance to tell other people what to do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 The way company policies are put into practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 My pay and the amount of work I do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 The chances of advancement on this job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 The freedom to use my own judgment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 The chance to try my own methods of doing the job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 The working conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 The way my co worker get along with each other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 The praise I get for doing a good job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please turn over and continue on the next page
Section 3

The purpose of the next questionnaire is to provide you with an opportunity to tell how you feel about your current organisation. On the basis of the answers given by yourself and those like you we hope to gain better insight into what people feel towards the organisation.

Following the instruction and example you will find statements,

- Read each statement carefully

Keeping the statement in mind answer in the following manner

- You will find statements as in the example below where you would need to respond on a scale from one to five by making a Cross next to the corresponding number.

- If you Strongly Disagree with a statement then cross out number 1, If you Disagree with a statement then cross out number 2, if you feel you neither Agree or Disagree then cross out number 3, if you feel you Agree then cross out number 4, if you feel you Strongly Agree then cross out number 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Do this for all the statements
- Be honest and frank
- Give a true picture of your feelings

Please proceed to the next page and complete the questionnaire.
This Questionnaire measure how you feel towards the organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really feel as if this organisation’s problems are my own.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think that I could easily become as attached to another organisation as I am to this one.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ in my organisation.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organisation.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be very hard for me to leave my organisation right now, even if I wanted to.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organisation now.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It wouldn’t be too costly for me to leave my organisation now.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right now, staying with my organisation is a matter of necessity as much as desire.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I have too few options to consider leaving this organisation.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organisation would be the scarcity of available alternatives.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organisation is that leaving would require considerable sacrifice. Another organisation may not match the overall</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I think that people these days move from company to company too often.  

I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organisation.

Jumping from organisation to organisation does not seem at all unethical to me.

One of the major reasons I continue to work for this organisation is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.

If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere, I would not feel it was right to leave my organisation.

I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organisation.

Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organisation for most of their career.

I do not think that wanting to be a ‘company man’ or ‘company woman’ is sensible anymore.
Section 4

The purpose of the next questionnaire is to provide you with an opportunity to tell about your propensity or likelihood to stay with current organisation. On the basis of the answers given by yourself and those like you we hope to gain better insight into what people feel about staying with the organisation.

Following the instruction and example you will find statements,

- Read each statement carefully

Keeping the statement in mind answer in the following manner

- You will find statements as in the example below where you would need to respond on a scale from one to five by making a Cross next to the corresponding number.
- If you Strongly Disagree with a statement then cross out number 1, If you Disagree with a statement then cross out number 2, if you feel you Disagree but are not to sure then cross out number 3, if you feel you neither Agree or Disagree then cross out number 4, if you feel you Agree but still not too sure then cross out number 5, if you feel you Agree then cross out number 6, if you feel you Strongly Agree then cross out number 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Do this for all the statements
- You will find a questionnaire of 3 items on the next page. Please answer every item.
- Be honest and frank
- Give a true picture of your feelings

Please turn over and complete the questionnaire on the next page
This questionnaire measures your propensity to stay with the organisation

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 52 | I think a lot about leaving the organisation | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly Agree |
| 53 | I am currently searching for an alternative to this organisation | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly Agree |
| 54 | When I can I will leave the organisation | Strongly Disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Strongly Agree |

This concludes the Questionnaire; please ensure that you hand it in to the researcher once you have completed or alternatively have it ready for collection.

Once again thank you for your participation!