UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Relationships between work-life balance practices and retention of academics at a South African University

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between work-life balance (WLB) practices and the retention of academic staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg campus. WLB practices have the ability to improve employee retention and this study sought to determine if perceptions on the University's WLB practices by academics have any impact on their decision to stay or leave the organisation. The retention of academic staff is of paramount importance to every institute of higher learning. With the current exodus of academics from one institute to another, universities are faced with a mounting task of retaining this group of individuals for their survival and success.

In order to carry out the stated evaluation a mixed method design was employed to gather primary data. Two non-probability sampling techniques were employed in the study. Convenient sampling for quantitative data with a sample size of N=111 and purposive sampling N=5 for the qualitative data. The key findings of the research are that there is a negative relationship between the existence and awareness of WLB programmes among academics and their intention to leave. Regression analysis indicated that a unit increase in WLB will positively increase organisational commitment by 0.349 units as measured on the 5-point Likert scale (regression coefficient=0.349, p-value<0.001). The study also established, through exploratory factor analysis, that staff retention can be factored into three dimensions, namely, Work Related Frustration or Dissatisfaction, Job Searching Drive and Risk Taking. If levels of these three dimensions are determined, then one will have a picture of how intent on leaving is academic employee. To university management, this implies that, when crafting retention strategies, they need to recognise how WLB practices can impact employee's organisational commitment and retention in institutions of higher learning. The study managed to contribute to literature by providing new knowledge that helps to address challenges of retaining employees in organisations especially academic staff in universities.

Key words: work-life balance, employee retention, organisational commitment, academics, intention to leave.

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List of Abbreviations used in the study

Abbreviation	Meaning
AC	Affective commitment
CC	Continuance commitment
HR	Human Resources
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
NC	Normative commitment
TIS	Turnover Intention Scale
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
WLB	Work-life balance

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND SYNOPSIS OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to give an introduction, background and significance of the study undertaken. An outline of the research problem, the research objectives and summaries of the research chapters are described in this introductory chapter.

Academics are considered to be the core of every high institute of learning as their services are critical to the survival and success of these institutions. Academic institutions' sustainability and quality over time is not assured without well qualified and committed academics (Pienaar and Bester, 2008). Samuel and Chipunza (2013) claim that the retention and adequate supply of academic staff in South African universities is of particular concern as they are seen to be continually attracted to better conditions of service in the private and public sectors. Available statistics indicate that between 5% and 18% of academic staff in South African institutions of higher education leave their employment for other sectors (Pienaar and Bester, 2008).

In fact, the retention of academic staff is a worldwide challenge in both developed and developing countries. A research conducted in Australian universities indicated that 68% of academics expressed some desire to leave their higher education positions (Yousaf, 2010; Anderson, Richard and Saha, 2002). According to Sanderson, Phua, and Herda (2000), in the United States, a survey carried out in the year 2000 showed that 40% of full time faculty members had contemplated leaving academia for other professions. Ng'ethe (2014) observed that most Kenyan academics were drawn more and more to destinations like Botswana, South Africa and other countries abroad in search of better opportunities.

Based on this background, the study seeks to add to literature, information to encourage universities to step up their efforts to select, recruit and retain the best academics by focusing on the relationships between work-life balance (WLB), organisational commitment and employee retention. These variables have been found to be connected to the retention of employees in past studies (Mohd Noor, 2011) but this kind of relationship has not been tested in the South African higher education setting.

For the past years, in the South African context, academics have been faced with increasing and challenging duties in their workplaces due to transformation (Barkhuizen, Roodt and Schutte, 2014; and Kotecha, Ukpere and Geldenhuys, 2014). Barkhuizen, Rothmann and van de Vijver (2014) comment that it seems the academics' job demands have escalated while the levels of support, including necessary resources, have deteriorated resulting in a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. On the other hand, this lack of support has caused them to shift their services elsewhere where they feel they will be appreciated better. The vacuum that is left by skilled people is usually difficult to fill and have negative consequences. Theron, Barkhuizen and Plessis (2014) reveal that the cost of replacing a skilled employee who resigns voluntarily is estimated to be between 100% and 150% in annual salaries. The future of universities and South Africa as a developing country hinges upon academics hence the need to develop talent retention strategies by human resources personnel that persuade them to stay with their institutions or rather within the academic profession.

1.2.   Background of the study

The challenge of juggling work and non-work duties has become a concern for both the employer and the employee. According to Adisa (2015) the issue of WLB dates as far back as the 1930s and its discussion continues up to this day. This discussion can be attributed to a growing interest in how employees juggle their work and other activities outside work (Wheatley, 2012). The problem of WLB is further worsened by globalisation which has brought its own changes to the workplace such as downsizing, mergers, takeovers and high competition which destabilises employees' work life (Darcy, McCathy, Hill and Grady, 2012). Furthermore, a diverse group of individuals has entered the workplace confounding organisations' challenges to meet the needs of this increasingly complex workforce.

Literature reveals that employers who fail to solve their employee's work-life conflict run the risk of facing increased turnover rates of the affected employees (Easton, 2007). Moreover, it is now a fact that employees these days are continuously seeking ways to derive satisfaction from both work and life outside work (Bell, Rajendran and Theiler, 2012). This view is consistent with that of Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) who noted that those employees confronted with an imbalance between work and life tend to display negative job attitudes including high leaving intentions.

Allen (2001) indicated that many organisations have implemented programmes or policies intended to take care of the needs of today's diverse workforce in order to address work life

balance (WLB) concerns. Advocates of work-family balance have since supported the adoption of a variety of family-friendly benefits (WLB practices) to positively impact work-family balance (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, and Weitzman, 2001). Allen (2001) explained that the organisation's purpose of providing WLB policies is to help to achieve a competitive advantage, increase morale, and to attract and retain a committed workforce in today's unpredictable work environment. To the employee, WLB policies help to improve the difficulty inherent in juggling work and non-work activities (Allen 2001). In other words, it is not only important for organisations to consider the social implications of introducing such policies, but, they also have to consider the financial and social cost of not taking any action (Arthur, 2003).

Employees spend the greater part of their lives at work and at the same time the type of work one does determines the quality of life. Clark (2000) contends that an individual gets to be satisfied personally and professionally as a result of proper distribution of resources such as energy, time and commitment across work and life dominions. Thus, the enhancement of successful work-life integration results in positive faculty performance, productivity, and retention (Ehrens, 2016). There are many ways an organisation can meet employee needs to achieve balance in their work-life. Available literature offers five distinct groups that denote organisational WLB programmes and policies, namely: flexible work arrangements; provision of health and wellbeing programmes; provision of childcare services or; provision of leave as needed to address family matters; and organisational support and understanding of individual needs (Zheng, Molineux, Mirshekary, Scarparo, 2015).

A number of studies have identified the inter-dependence of family and work domains, how the relationship between the two domains has evolved over time and how the two complement each other (Poelmans, Stepanova and Masuda, 2008; Kossek and Lambert, 2004; Kanter, 1977). Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) hypothesised a work-family scenario under which work and family are 'allies' as opposed to being enemies. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) label it as work family enrichment. Enrichment in this case is the view showing the positive outcome of work-family interface and is defined on the basis of the beneficial effects of work on an employee's performance and quality of life at home, and vice-versa (Grzywacz1, Carlson, Kacmar, and Wayne, 2007). On the other hand, there has been little evidence on the extent to which employees utilise family-friendly programmes in relation to how organisations directly benefit (Miller 2010; Frone, 2003). In addition, employers are

continually trying to understand why employees leave and to figure out what strategies might be implemented to retain them (Martins and Coetzee, 2007).

1.3. Problem Statement

Many organisations are battling to keep their skilled workers as their workers are constantly looking for organisations that offer better working environments that help them derive maximum satisfaction from both their work as well as their life outside work. Research has shown that high employee turnover rate leads to employees that remain behind being over-stretched in understaffed situations and as a result increases their stress levels. If not rectified, continuous stress is seen to have damaging effects to the welfare of workers as well as the organisation (Chiang, Thomas, Birtch and Kwan, 2010). A phenomenon has been highlighted in recent studies where some jobs are characterised by long working hours, erratic workflows, fast work pace with tight deadlines, work-related events outside business hours, and 24/7 worker availability to clients (MaCarthy, *et al*, 2012). This then requires organisations to find ways to manage employee work-life conflicts successfully.

1.4. Main research objective

The main research objective is to investigate the relationship between WLB and retention of academics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The study seeks to establish if organisational commitment to WLB practices has an influence on employees' (academics) decision to stay or leave.

1.5. Specific aims

The main objective can be broken down into the following sub-objectives**:**

- To identify academic staff's perception of the university's support and encouragement of the use of WLB programmes;

- To ascertain the effects of WLB programmes on the decision to stay by academics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal;

- To ascertain the impact of perceived WLB support on academics' commitment to the organisation and

- To explore ways in which academics can be assisted in achieving a balance between work and their personal lives.

1.6. Research questions

In order to address the above research objectives, the study seeks to respond to the following research questions:

- Do academics perceive the university as providing and encouraging the use of WLB programmes?
- To what extent do WLB programmes influence academic staff not to leave the University of KwaZulu-Natal?
- What relationship exists between perceived WLB support and academics' commitment to the organisation?
- Are there interventions that can be made in order to achieve a balance between work and the personal lives of academics with a view of retaining them?

1.7. Assumptions

Simon (2011) describes assumptions as events that are out of an individual's control but are presumed to be true. Upon embarking on this research, three assumptions were made and these are:

- That respondents would understand the contents of the questionnaire and truthfully and accurately answer the questions,
- That academic staff should be in a position to know available WLB policies in the organisation and
- That academic staff value support from the organisation in terms of their work and personal life.

1.8. Significance of the study

This research project sought to establish the effect of WLB practices on the retention of academic staff. Studies have shown that universities compete with one another for the services of academics and at times they lose them to the private sector. The study is based on the background and belief that academia is a profession which represents the backbone of universities which in turn are responsible for imparting knowledge and skills which are crucial for the development of societies. Therefore, the rationale of this study is to recommend ways that can be used in managing the attraction and retention of this group of

individuals. Findings of the study will help equip stakeholders such as institutions of higher learning, organisations and policy makers in coming up with strategies that address employee retention through achieving a balance between their work and life.

1.9. Outline of the study

The study is divided into six chapters which are as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and synopsis of the study

Chapter one introduces the study by providing the background information and outlining the significance of the study. The research problem, research objectives and research aims are also presented.

Chapter 2: Literature review

In this chapter, the available and relevant literature was surveyed. The ideas and issues debated in the review of literature form the basis for the research topic. Incorporated in the review of literature were the three research variables namely WLB, organisational commitment and employee retention. Included in this chapter is the theoretical integration of the relationships between the variables and the discussion of their practical implications.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter three describes the research methodology that was used in the course of the study. A mixed method approach was adopted because of the need to converge the findings in order to compare and contrast them. The chapter also provides an overview of the sample and population. The measuring instruments of the research were defined together with the justification for each instrument.

Chapter 4: Data analysis

The quantitative data gathered was captured and analysed using the statistical software SPSS Version 23. In this chapter, presentations of the findings were made in the form of graphs and tables in order to depict patterns and profiles inherent in the data collected and to investigate variable relationships. For in-depth interviews, themes were identified and the results were integrated with those from the quantitative survey.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 4, contrasting them with the findings from previous studies as discussed in the literature review of Chapter 2.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter provides conclusions that were drawn from the research results. Recommendations were also made to management and HR personnel in universities and similar organisations. Limitations to the study were also identified and suggestions and recommendations for future studies in the field were also made. The recommendations stand to serve as a consultation platform for universities who wish to adopt ways of improving academic staff retention strategies.

1.10. Summary

The study examines the relationship between perceived WLB and the retention of academic staff at University of KwaZulu-Natal. This chapter presents a layout and details of the study and procedures to be followed in order to achieve the research objective. The chapter provides the background to the study, the research questions, the research objectives and the research problem. The significance of the study and chapter plan of the whole study was also given in this chapter. It is expected that this study will add value by contributing to literature on WLB and its impact of employee retention. The findings will benefit institutions of higher learning and HR practitioners in other similar organisations. The next chapter will discuss literature that is relevant to the research topic.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.   Introduction

This chapter reviews literature from various sources available that are relevant to the study. The review starts with definition of terms and the discussion of the concept of WLB and its implication to academic staff. The theoretical perspectives in support of the concepts discussed are described. A discussion of the concept of organisational commitment and employee retention follows and how these are related. Workers worldwide perceive the ability to balance workplace's needs and personal life's needs as an important issue, in as far as it relates to organisational commitment. Therefore, exploring the dynamics between the welfare and retention of academic staff is a relevant higher education research topic with important implications for universities.

2.2.   Defining work-life balance (WLB)

Work-life balance is a term that is receiving a lot of attention from both academics and business circles. Most scholars assign varying meanings to the term. There is no one established definition of what makes up a WLB for an individual but the term is usually used in reference to support given by organisations for worker dependents' care, flexible work arrangements, and all forms of leaves (Estes and Michael, 2005). The reasoning for providing these benefits is to help workers cope with the difficulties encountered while trying to balance work and life's activities (McCarthy, Darcy and Grady, 2010).

Casio (2000) defines WLB as organisational efforts intended to improve employee experience of work and out of work activities. Osterman (1995) looks at it as those recognised basic and procedural measures and formal and informal practices that allow employees to deal with conflicting spheres of work and non-work activities with ease. In addition, Hill *et al* (2001) mentions WLB as the level to which a person is able to balance the emotional, behavioural and time demands of paid work, family and personal duties simultaneously.

The above definitions of WLB seem to suggest that there is an overlap of roles within work and life domains which when not handled with care can create work-life conflict. Work-life conflict according to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) is some sort of struggle where pressures

coming from work and family spheres are mutually irreconcilable in a way and it takes place when participation in one role interfere with participation in another. This work life conflict can be referred to as an absence of WLB (Zheng *et al*, 2015; Frone, 2003). Any imbalance which results from work and life creates more pressure/psychological involvement or satisfaction towards one role as compared to another role (Raisinghani and Goswami, 2014).

Work-life balance is a broad term that is emerging in literature in reference to work or non-work conflict (Fisher, 2001, cited in Walila, 2012) and it is a more inclusive approach to study work or non-work conflict as compared to use of work family conflict. Work-life balance also incorporate negative and positive associations relating to a person's work and non-work activities, including family but also other relevant areas of commitment like sporting, recreational and community (Brough and O'Driscoll, 2010). It is because of this inclusivity that this study will use the term WLB as opposed to work family conflict.

2.3.   Understanding the concept of WLB

Work and family are central to the lives of every employed individual. The type of work an individual does determines their status in the society and one would say that an individual's quality of work life can have an impact on their work life satisfaction. Being successful in a job can result in interpersonal relationship and mental health inside and outside the workplace (Schadel, 2011). Jacobs and Gerson (2001) argued that the amount of time a person spends at work determines his or her contribution to the economy and thereby determining his or her earnings and income. By spending too much time at work an individual can undermine personal and family wellbeing, while spending too little time can compromise the family's economic security and reduce its standard of living (Jacobs and Gerson, 2001).

In light of the above, the following section seeks to link the relationship between work and life and how an individual goes about reconciling the two in order to achieve a balance. When referring to WLB, the term balance does not imply an equal distribution of time and resources, but an allocation that is satisfactory to the worker (Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw, 2003). An individual is likely to find his or her right distribution (balance) between work and life roles that will fit his or her own work duty and personal preferences (Ehrens, 2016). Hill *et al* (2001) suggest that flexibility in work processes can aid workers to cope with contemporary stresses related to balancing work and family issues. On the other hand, Wheatley (2012) explains the meaning of the word "work" in the context of WLB as a

connotation of paid and unpaid work done for an employer, while "life", in the same context, means non-work-related duties. Darcy *et al* (2012) argue that WLB is not a "one size fits all" concept, but instead, is a subjective concept which should be considered by the employee to match their objectives of attaining satisfaction, involvement and time balance.

Greenhaus *et al* (2003) proposed a WLB measured with three components, namely, time, involvement, and satisfaction. Time, as the first component involves the amount of time one spends at work and family activities. The second component assesses the level of involvement in one's work in comparison to involvement in family activities, and the third component measures the level of satisfaction from one's work as well as satisfaction with family activities. This is conceptualised as work-family conflict.

According to a study by Adam, King and King (1996) relationships between work and family seem to impact job and life satisfaction while the level of involvement the worker assigns to work and family roles was linked to this relationship. They also found the relationship between these domains to be instantaneously characterised by conflict and support. Higher levels of work and family conflict predicted lower levels of family emotional and instrumental support. At the same time, Adam *et al* found that higher levels of family emotional and instrumental support were linked to lesser levels of family work conflict.

As outlined by Greenhaus *et al* (2003), time balance between work and life roles is important where role engagement is represented by the time and psychological investments of an individual into their work and personal duties. In all of this, satisfaction is the favourable outcome that is to be attained within work and family duties. An individual's experience of WLB or work life imbalance depends on whether their time, psychological investments and satisfaction levels are high or low.

The amount of time involved and invested in an individual's multiple roles guards them from negative experiences in any one role and therefore contributes to WLB, satisfaction balance and one's welfare through decreasing work-life conflict and strain (Greenhaus *et al*, 2003). On the other hand, significant discrepancies of time dedicated to work or family time, or work involvement and family involvement, results in work-life conflict, strain, WLB, satisfaction imbalance and a poorer quality of life (Greenhaus *et al*, 2003).

Poulose and Sudarsan (2014) viewed WLB through three dimensional aspects of life which they named organisational, societal and employee's personal life. Poulose and Sudarsan

(2014) say that any imbalance between organisational and personal obligations and mismanagement of life priorities can result in grave consequences in any of these domains. Studies show that social support given from either work or family domains can bring a positive effect on an employee's wellbeing (Adam *et al*, 1996). This therefore, shows that WLB and workers perception of wellbeing are crucial for the growth and efficiency of an organisation.

Relationships between work and family domains are documented in literature as bidirectional, that is, work can interfere with family, and family can interfere with work. For example, the strain that one experiences at work can be transferred or 'spills-over' onto another role thereby reducing one's usefulness in the new role (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). However, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) contended that work and family responsibilities should not always clash as it has recently been seen to encompass the positive spill over which is referred to as family facilitation (Grzywaczl *et al,* 2007) or enrichment (Greenhaus and Powell, 2006). Furthermore, Shankar and Bhatnag (2010) commented that, conflict indicates the incompatibility within these two domains while enrichment reflects their compatibility. Work family facilitation was defined by Grzywacz *et al* (2007) as the degree to which a person's engagement in one social system, either work or family, contributes to growth in another social system.

Similarly, Wayne, Musisca and Fleeson (2004) made an interesting observation of how conflict and facilitation were related to work- family outcomes. They explained that conflict is related to affective outcomes in the originating role and with behavioral outcomes in the receiving role. As an example, they explained that Family Work Conflict (FWC) is negatively linked to family satisfaction and job effort. What it means in theory is that, when one role affects the other, the outcome is poor role quality or performance inside the role being affected. To add to that, it maybe that people psychologically give the blame for the interference to the source role, thereby experiencing negative effect towards that role (Wayne *et al,* 2004).

2.4.   Factors affecting WLB

Many studies in the work-life literature have categorised antecedents of WLB into three main groups which are demographic and personal characteristics, family or non-work characteristics and work-related characteristics (Koekemoer and Mostert, 2010). According

to Koekemoer and Mostert (2010) demographic and personal characteristics comprise of gender, age, family status, negative affectivity and personality. They indicated that family or non-work characteristics comprise of, parental stressors, social support, family role ambiguity and family stressors. Work stressors, work demands, hours spent at work, job stress, work support and flexibility are examples of work-related characteristics (Koekemoer and Mostert, 2010).

Demographic factors have an effect on WLB and several studies have looked at its impact within the working population. For example, Aryee, Srinivas and Tan (2005) found gender to be a predictor of WLB while some studies show that men and women actually have similar experiences regarding WLB (Aryee *et al*, 2005; Duxbury and Higgins, 2001). Tausig and Fenwick (2001) revealed that the major stress experienced by females comes from family demands as opposed to work demands especially when children are involved in that particular family.

The demographic composition of the workplace, especially with the influx of dual-career couple employees has meant that both male and female are now having substantial household duties on top of their workplace duties (Bond, Galinsky and Swanberg, 1998). In addition, technology has shaped a modern workplace that is in operation 24/7 where a person can work from anywhere at any time including working from home (Ehrens, 2016). Duxbury (2004) comments that these factors are distorting the boundaries between work and personal life, making the reconciling of work and private life an issue both essential and challenging to working individuals.

Smith and Gardner (2007) reported reliable patterns in the levels at which various initiatives can be utilised for different ages. For instance, younger employees were seen to be using initiatives like flexitime, compressed work weeks, telecommuting and working from home more than their older colleagues. On the other hand, older employees were seen to be making use of dependent care support like childcare, eldercare, paid maternity and paternity leave more than their younger colleagues. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) identified factors such as number of children, the employment of a spouse and support of a spouse as having an important role in the development of work-family conflict.

Results from a study of 147 British women conducted by Noor (2003) indicated personality as a variable that accounted for greater discrepancy in predicting family-interfering-with-

work conflict. According to Noor (2003), there are two personality traits that are widely researched which are neuroticism and extraversion. Neuroticism describes a relatively steady personality trait that leads an individual to highlight their negative experiences and is seen to be the only trait meaningfully linked to job satisfaction such that people with higher levels of neuroticism are less satisfied with their jobs (Wayne *et al*, 2004).

On the other hand, extraversion refers to a personality trait that influences one to experience positive emotional states and feel good about their surroundings and has been seen to be linked to positive mental health (Noor, 2003). Parasuraman and Greenhaus (2002) propose that individuals who are led by their personal attributes, not only interpret and react to a situation, but they also proactively influence the situation. In their study, Wayne *et al* (2004) examined personality as the antecedent of conflict and they found extraversion to be linked to better facilitation between work and family domains and do not relate to conflict, whereas neuroticism was linked to conflict by a greater extent but having a little link to facilitation.

Some of the factors affecting WLB include long working hours and time expectations by organisation. Grzywacz and Marks (2000) noted that demanding job characteristics such as long working hours, overload of work, role conflict and role ambiguity are linked to negative work to home conflict. Bond (2004) contends that an organisation with a predominantly long working hours' culture, cultivates stress and fatigue amongst its employees which usually detaches them from their personal lives. Wayne *et al* (2004) proposed that limiting work hours may be advantageous to workers as they may increase the level of work-family balance as fewer work hours may cause a decrease in work-family conflict. High degrees of job control plus social support at the workplace are motivational job characteristics related to low levels of negative interaction between work and non-work domains (Grzywacz and Marks, 2000).

After looking at these factors that affect WLB and the benefits that come as a result of achieving a work-life balance, it is important to understand these factors and their predictive relationship to WLB. To be specific, in the context of universities, it is critical to have an understanding of these factors when predicting WLB for academic staff.

2.5.   Consequences of WLB

Work-life balance has been found to affect both the employer and the employee. To employees, good WLB practices create a sense of reassurance that their organisation or

employer has an interest in their wellbeing (Baral and Bhargava, 2009). Beauregard and Henry (2009) assert that by offering WLB programmes, firms appeal to new employees while decreasing levels of work-life conflict amongst old employees thus improving organisational performance ultimately. Deery and Jago (2015) affirm WLB as a crucial variable used these days when discussing issues about employee management and retention.

Studies indicate that organisations providing a work environment that supports balancing work and non-work activities are likely to experience positive outcomes (Downes and Koekemoer 2011; Brough and O'Driscoll, 2010; Kinman and Jones, 2008; Richman, Civiana, Shannon, Hill and Brennan, 2008). Organisations interested in increasing these outcomes should develop an organisational culture that encourages employees to reach a balance and communicating their support towards WLB practices (Kar and Misra, 2013). Frone (2003) concurred by mentioning that assisting employees to achieve WLB can result in a more motivated workforce leading to decreased absenteeism and improved customer experiences.

Those employees, who have some control over their jobs and its outcomes, feel little stress and are more interested in the organisation and are motivated to stay (Kinyili, 2015). Downes and Koekemoer (2011), claim that WLB initiatives increase the autonomy of employees in the reconciliation of their work and personal lives. According to Kar and Misra, (2013), provision of WLB policies reduces work-life conflict and it is beneficial to both the employees and the organisations they work for.

Some studies were conducted linking WLB to employee retention or intention to stay, for instance, Mohd Noor (2011) found perceived WLB satisfaction as being negatively connected to intention to leave the organisation among academics at a Malaysian University. Mohd Noor also mentioned that being satisfied by one's job and organisational commitment to be the intermediaries connecting WLB and the decision to quit. Adams *et al* (1996) studied spillover experienced in work and life roles and discovered that work issues could affect family life and life satisfaction, thereby impacting on employee's work-life satisfaction.

According to Hill *et al* (2001), withdrawal from family interaction, increase in marriage conflict, little knowledge about children's experiences, and sometimes, the taking of non-genuine sick leave of absence are some of the examples of outcomes associated with negative work-to-family spillover (Hughes and Bozionelos, 2007). Boyar, Maertz, Pearson and Keough (2003) found family-friendly policies to be able to minimise stress from the family,

mitigate the interference between work and family, thereby allowing employees to concentrate in their work. Deery (2008) stress the importance for employers to implement WLB initiatives as an antagonistic approach to family-friendly policies may result in the failing of even the most innovative and sophisticated work-family policies (Darcy *et al*, 2012).

The WLB practices or initiatives that an organization can use, as outlined by Darcy *et al* (2012) are:

➢ temporal work arrangements that permit individuals to cut the number of hours they work;

➢ flexible work provisions like flexi-time that allows workers to pick their own preferred starting or finishing times and working from home thus giving the worker the ability to choose a place to work from;

➢ WLB supports like counselling of employees, employee assistance programmes and training on how to handle time and stress; or facilities located on site to cater for employees' children).

2.6.   Implications of WLB for academics

The challenges of balancing work and family have become a subject of concern among scholars. The nature of the job of an academic makes it even more difficult for one to strike a balance between work and family matters. Kinman and Jones (2008) pointed out that the academic profession is "open-ended" and academics normally play an assortment of roles which include instructive, managerial, technical and subject-designing roles. These multiple roles in the academic profession continually keep academics busy resulting in interference between work and personal life (Senthilkumar, Chandrakumaramangalam and Manivannan, 2012). Cannizzo and Osbaldiston (2015) report that academics are faced with pressure to establish their credentials through publications and as a result they end up working from home and in 'non-labour time' such as the after hour or weekends.

According to Kocheta *et al* (2014), 40 working hours per week with the weekend free is considered normal but in academia longer working hours is the norm. Winefield *et al* (2002), in their study, mention that over 30% of academics in Australia reported working over 55 hours per week. Research by Barkhuizen (2005) on South African Higher Educational

Institutions (HEIs) indicated that academic staff working for more than 50 hours a week, suffer high levels of fatigue due to increased job demands.

The gravity of the matter is that both imbalance in work-life and work overload have been linked to low psychological well-being amongst academic staff (Barkhuizen and Rothman, 2008; Kinman and Jones, 2003). Dorhety and Mafrendi (2006) believe that the persistence of the long working hours culture among professionals is because of the belief that doing so is some sort of commitment to one's work which would normally lead to promotion. Nonetheless, this kind of commitment is not a guarantee that one would get tenure, although research has shown that academics who work for more than 60 hours per week have better publishing success (Jacobs and Winslow, 2004). It must be pointed out however, that working for long hours at a job causes work-family conflict and the main challenge is to develop potential work standards for people in academia that matches their family life (Aslam, Shemaiah, Azhar and Sadaqat, 2011). Looking at these stated points, it would appear that academics are under a big pushing force towards working long hours in order to advance in their careers but at the same time trading their family interests for academic success. There is great need for balance between these two competing forces.

When academics are exposed to significant stress, they are most likely to be ineffective in their teaching and this gives a reason to closely keep in check their stress (Niven and Cutler, 1995). In addition, job stress in academia has also been seen to be the predictor of intention to leave the academic profession completely (Barnes, Agago, and Coombs, 1998). Since academic staff play a vital role in institutions of higher learning, it is critical to monitor their stress levels and ensure that they achieve balance in their work-life. In order to facilitate role balancing, universities should consider adopting WLB policies that lessen the demands of academic staff jobs in order to come up with more reasonable expectations (Jacobs and Winslow, 2004).

Literature has reported an increase in work pressure, in recent years, within academia globally (Bell *et al*, 2012; Viljoen and Rothmann, 2009; Doherty and Manfredi, 2006; Tytherleigh, Webb, Cooper, and Rickettsa, 2005). This is caused by a number of factors which include restructuring, reduced government funding, call for accountability and poor management practices (Viljoen and Rothmann, 2009; Kinman and Jones, 2008). Excessive administrative paperwork, insufficient resources, ineffective organisational communication, unsupportive organisations, and an increase in workload due to increased number of students

are the most significant stressors among academics according to findings of a study conducted in the UK (Coetzee and Rothmann, 2005).

A report on UK academics by Bolden, Gosling, O'Brien, Peters, Ryan, Haslam, Longsworth, Davidovic and Winklemann (2012) indicates that, as a result of models being implemented at universities in the country, to validate academic professionalism, young career researchers and other marginalised groups find themselves with limited opportunity to experience autonomy. Furthermore, in a research carried out to track the work-related well-being of UK academics, from the period from 2008 to 2014, suggests that work features which used to traditionally protect academics from work-related stress, like autonomy, support and role clarity have diminished (Kinman, 2016). Barkhuizen *et al* (2014) are in agreement with this assertion as they also point out that academics' work demands were increasing while the levels of institutional support and other related resources were dwindling. Bolden *et al* (2012) argue that autonomy is central to an academic identity. All in all, the above findings point to a dwindling institutional support culture for academics which is expected, if not rectified, to put more pressure on academics in their quest to balance between work and life demands.

Even though academic work pressure is increasing, there is evidence showing that academics are still satisfied with their work even though their work environment is getting less favourable under managerial reforms that are taking place (Cheol and Jung, 2014). In contrast to Cheol and Jung's assertion, a research carried out on university employees in the USA, Canada and the UK indicates that academic staff constantly scored lower on work satisfaction variables when compared to non-teaching staff as they were seen to be more negative about their workload and work-family balance (Horton, 2006, cited by Rafnsdóttir and Heijstra, 2013). Cannizzo and Osbaldiston (2015) argues that although academics seem to be passionate about their work, low levels of organisational commitment are prevalent and connected to management practices which lead to work-role overload. The points above indicate that, while academics like what they do, there seems to be decreasing institutional appreciation of their roles and efforts.

Dissatisfaction at work may not be solely increased by an emerging culture of long working hours, but also by less institutional effort to lessen work-life conflicts (Cannizzo and Osbaldiston, 2015). Cannizzo and Osbaldiston (2015) further argued that, changes in academic governance, which put more emphasis on accountability and efficiency down to the level of the employee, diminish the possibility of using flexible working arrangements. The

amount of effort that academics are expected, by their institutions, to dedicate to their jobs, can create conflict between work and personal life and this is where distress can easily stem from (Kinman and Jones, 2008).

In their study Sharafizad, Pauli and Omari (2011) identified that the sheer provision of flexible work arrangements will not ensure employee participation in such arrangements as there is evidence to suggest that the access to some forms of flexible work arrangements are limited by a lack of understanding by those who approve of such arrangements. Doherty and Manfredi (2006) cited the resistance by line managers and poor communication as the main hindrances of diffusing WLB arrangements in organisations which include flexi-time. Moreover, in some instances, uptake of such WLB policies may be viewed as lack of commitment on the part of employees to the organisation (Bearuguard and Henry, 2009).

In a study conducted in Canada by Rafnsdóttir and Heijstra (2013), academics, especially women, highlighted high stress levels, exhaustion, fatigue and lack of sleep due to an attempt to build a career in academia and taking care of the family concurrently. The pressure to publish has been worsened by tendency to reward or punish the teaching staff or departments on the strength of research productivity (Rafnsdóttir and Heijstra, 2013). Academics are expected to bring funds into the university coffers through publications or research grants which is evaluated and funded by the government based on research productivity (Dickson-Swift James, Kippen, Talbot, Verrinder, and Ward, 2009).

Researches on academic staff in the UK and Australia carried out in the last decade have found levels of depression and anxiety that exceed many other professions (Kinman, 2016). Sharafizad *et al* (2011) argued that a rise in workload is, regrettably, making a career in academics less attractive. Furthermore, another study found burnout among academics, especially younger staff, to be similar to that found in 'high risk' groups like health and social care employee (Watts and Robertson, 2011, as cited by Kinman, 2016). Kinman and Jones (2003) suggest that working for long hours a day affects employees' psychological and physical wellbeing and that both factors lead to job stress in many professions. Therefore, WLB is critical to employees and any imbalance could humper their well-being and this could interfere with their performance at work and attachment to their organisation.

A survey in Australia by Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua, Hapuarachchi and Boyd (2003) revealed that the majority of academics indicate conflict between work and personal life.

According to Kinman and Jones (2008), UK academics who experienced more work-life conflict were seen to be less healthy, less satisfied with their work, and have high chances of considering leaving academia. Bell *et al* (2012) contend that, although there are provisions in place aimed at helping academics deal with job stress and work-life conflict matters like flexible working arrangements and stress management techniques, academics should be proactive in exploiting these initiatives. Academics have been traditionally known to be able to work flexibly (Doherty and Manfredi 2006) and they take this flexibility as one of the main advantages of working in academia which can give them the ability to balance work and family activities (Rafnsdóttir and Heijstra, 2013).

Technological advancement has brought some changes to the workforce and its impact is both positive and negative. Kotecha *et al* (2014) observed that the innovative Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) have allowed new work patterns which include working after hours and this has the ability to both enhance WLB and create work-life conflict as work and non-work domains are closely integrated. Walila (2012) argue that instead of bringing relief and leisure, technology has left employees particularly professionals, with less free time for other duties outside work. Moreover, technology has distorted the line separating work from personal life thereby enabling employees to be accessible for office work while at home (Walila, 2012). In essence, technology has had a bearing in the encroachment of work activities on the family life space.

A study by Kotecha *et al* (2014) to test if engaging in technology-assisted supplemental work (TASW) increases or reduces the work-life conflict faced by males and females in academia, showed that female academics experience more work-life conflict than their male counterparts, irrespective of the degree to which they engage in TASW. Therefore, this shows that gender has a moderating influence on the extent to which academic's experience work-life conflict due to engaging in TASW. A study by Rafnsdóttir and Heijstra (2013) reinforce the idea that man and woman experience work life conflict differently. The data they collected among professional man and woman show that men are more able to disconnect from work when at home than women, either to recharge their batteries or to work if they choose to.

Colbeck (2006) found that men spent slightly more time on work and less time on non-work activities as compared to women. Colbeck further asserted that the roles for women in both work and non-work domains were not mutually exclusive. The decision to have a family or

children is an important issue that affect academics and it is a crucial decision especially for women than man. A study by Prozesky (2008) describing women academics in the South African context explained that past South African history, especially the Apartheid era, created an environment characterised by gender-role stereotypes which tended to favour male dominance in universities.

2.7. Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework serves the purpose of depicting the relationships between independent, moderating and dependent variables. This study makes use of a conceptual framework by Mohd Noor (2011) as depicted by Figure: 2.1 below. The framework looked at perceived WLB satisfaction and intention to leave among academics at an institution of higher learning, with job satisfaction and organisational commitment mediating between the relationships. This research project contributes to the study of WLB phenomena through discovering academic staff's perceptions towards WLB and consequences of failing to achieve this balance. The current study's main objective was to establish the relationship between perceived WLB support, organisational commitment and the retention of academics at a South African University. It is because of this reason that the researcher found the framework by Mohd Noor suitable in achieving the objectives of the current study. The conceptual framework was deemed suitable for the research because of its tendency to associate WLB with occupational outcomes. This framework seeks to explore the perceived WLB support by employees and how it impacts their loyalty to the organisation and in turn their decision to stay or leave the organisation.

Figure: 2.1. Conceptual framework

Source: Adapted from Mohd Noor (2011, p.247).

Various studies have proposed a relationship between WLB and attitudinal job outcomes like organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Kim, 2014; Cegarra Leiva, Sa´nchez-Vidalb and Cegarra-Navarro, 2012; Doherty and Manfredi, 2006) which can be interpreted to mean that employees' experience of WLB improves their commitment to their organisation (Azeem and Altalhi, 2015). Organisational commitment and job satisfaction are different constructs but are somehow mildly related, each contributing distinctively to turnover intention (Baranik, Roling and Eby 2010; Tett and Meyer, 1993).

The presence of WLB policies in an organisation may not mean much to an employee if these are not supported and communicated to them by management. For example, Allen (2001) argued that work-family initiatives tend to be effective once employees believe the organisation is genuinely supportive of their needs to balance work and personal obligations. This then requires development of a supportive work-family culture which when an individual decides to use the available policies (for example taking leave in order to attend to family emergency) will not result in jeopardising their career (Baral and Bhargava, 2010).

Employee perceptions towards WLB support is critical for the organisation as they determine outcomes such as turnover and commitment. Employees who view their supervisors to be supportive of work-family issues are highly committed and satisfied with their jobs (Aryee *et al*, 2005). Muteswa and Ortlepp (2011) established the existence of bad relationship between an employee and his or her immediate manager as the common reason why employees leave organisations. Employees identify management with the organisation and their views contribute to perceived organisational support and, eventually, to job retention (Eisenberger Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades, 2002).

Life as an academic is characterised by work overload as academics usually work during evenings and weekends to cope with the increasing work demands and work pressures (Kotecha *et al*, 2014). This is more evident during exam marking periods or when certain research outcomes are expected, for example, when one is preparing a conference presentation. The work overload stems from increased pressure to publish and the escalating number of students that has seen higher student/staff ratio among other things (Catano *et al,* 2010). This however, has implications on academic's WLB as their work is eating their family time. This is a challenge for universities to develop and implement WLB policies that warrant higher level of job satisfaction and commitment of academic staff that contribute greatly to their decision to stay.

2.8. Theoretical perspective regarding WLB practices

Becoming successful in a job can have a bearing on interpersonal relationships and mental health, both inside and outside the workplace, and these relationships are parts of most need theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Schadel, 2011). Drawing from the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the study examines whether perceived WLB support can impact organisational commitment of academics and ultimately their retention. An employee's relationship with the organisation he or she works for is critical as their loyalty and strict adherence to work obligations can develop through perceptions they have on organisational support (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). This calls for the need for organisations to at least appear to be supportive of the non-work needs of their employees.

In a bid to find relevance of the social exchange and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to this study, it can be said that the employer and employee relationship particularly with regard to the employers provision of the employee non-work needs (in the form of WLB provisions), could affect the organisation positively or negatively as far as retaining staff in concerned. The focus here is for the university to promote social affiliation (a sense of belonging/attachment to the organisation) through providing a work environment that motivates employees to stay with the organisation.

In this study, both the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs were used to give a theoretical perspective in order to understand the relationship between perceived organisational support and the retention of academics as they clarify the nature of the employer and employee relationship. These theories have been used to focus on employee needs and the organisational support they desire, which can then impact the retention of employees. The social exchange theory is based on the idea that relationships characterised by more rewards than costs will produce lasting mutual trust and attraction (Blau, 1964). According to Yukl (1994) as quoted by Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006), these rewards and costs are social transactions which involve both material benefits and psychological rewards like status, loyalty and approval. For example, when employees receive favourable treatment from the employer, they will feel a sense of obligation to give back the favour through showing positive attitudes or behaviours towards the organisation (Beauregard and Henry 2009). These obligations may be fulfilled by way of improved commitment to the relationship, and as time goes on, a pattern of reciprocity develops, triggering perceived

balance in the exchange relationship (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Beauregard and Henry (2009) noted that, if employees perceive provisions of WLB practices as a sign of favourable treatment, they will react in ways that are beneficial to the organisation. On the contrary, if an individual perceives the cost of a relationship as outweighing benefits, the theory predicts that such an individual would opt out of the relationship (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006). Therefore, in the case of academics, if they perceive their relationship with the university to be reciprocal they would be expected to respond by choosing to stay with the organisation.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (see Figure 2.2 below), on the other hand, shows human needs as a pyramid with the very basic ones (physiological, and safety needs) at the bottom while the highest ones (affiliation, esteem and self-actualisation needs) located at the top. This theory explain motivation from a need based view. The theory helps to show how managers can motivate employees to become the best they can be (self-actualise) by providing a work environment that is conducive and can provide better business outcomes to the organisation (Jerome, 2013).

Figure 2.2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
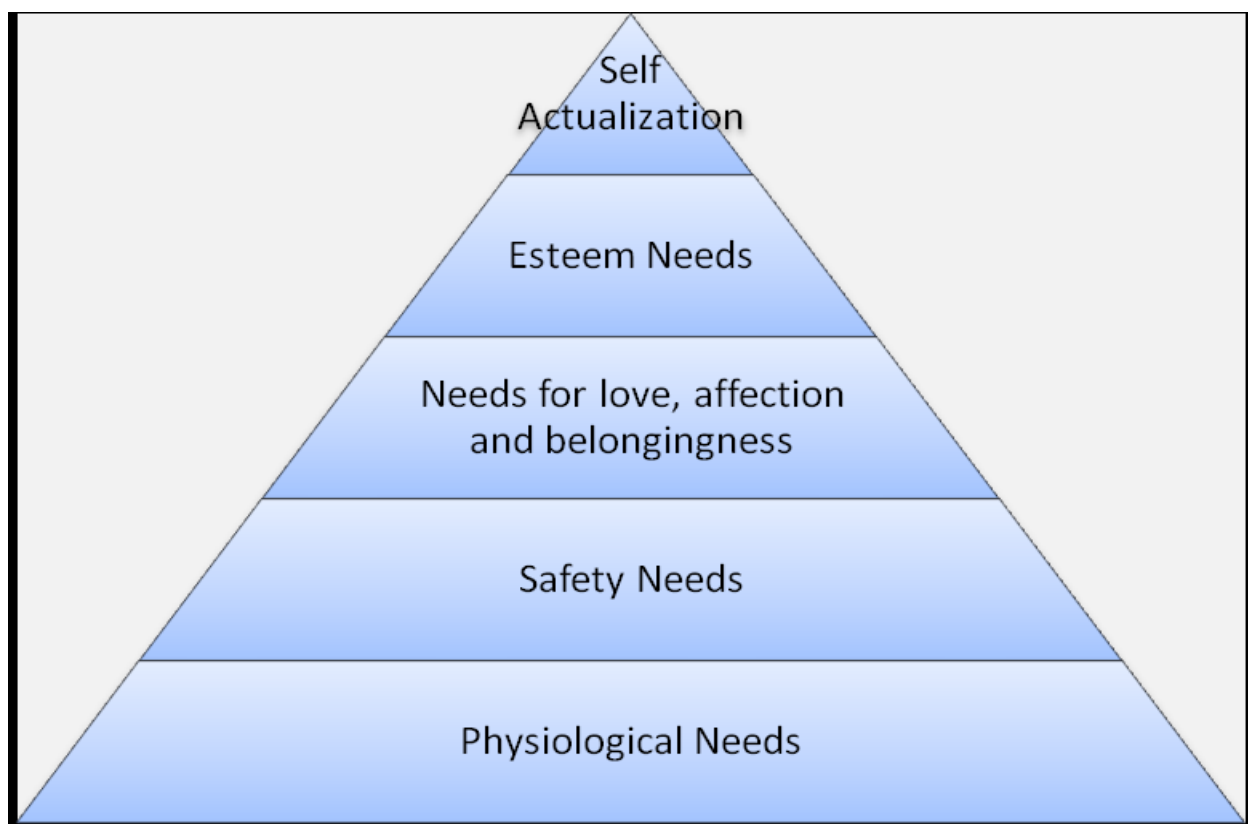
Source: Adapted from Jerome (2013, p.41).

According to Ramlall (2004), Maslow's Hierarchy of needs gives managers and leaders some insights regarding employee needs to be met. The need for affiliation is an essential human motivator and there are different levels of affiliation (Lee, 2003). Jerome (2013) states that, upon discovering that their organisation cares so much about their developmental needs, employees tend to offer their best for the welfare and success of the organisation. In essence Maslow's theory has played a big role in bringing an understanding to managers on how they can motivate their employees. At the same time it served as a platform for other scholars to improve on it for example Alderfer's ERG Theory of Motivation. In spite of its extensive reference in motivational literature it has faced criticism, for instance Bushe (2012) mentioned its weakness in assuming that individuals focus their attention on a single need. In the context of this study, the implication of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is that managers and HR personnel at UKZN should provide the supportive environment that academics need, be it manager, supervisor or co-worker support. This kind of support will help the academics to achieve a balance while performing both their work and personal duties.

2.9.   Organisational support in attaining WLB

According to Lobel and Kossek (1996), the provision of family-friendly benefits (WLB programmes) does not go far enough to solve employee issues unless these provisions are also accompanied by a change in organisational culture with regards to the addressing of work life issues. For example, Allen (2001) explains that the availability of WLB programmes is often masked by organisational culture, especially a culture that deters employees from utilising available benefits. Lack of informal or even formal support from immediate supervisors can mask the visibility of WLB programmes that might be in existence in an organisation. It is the organisation's responsibility to ascertain the visibility of any WLB programmes that already exist and strive for identifying even more programmes.

Brough and O'Driscoll (2010) reported some incidents of discrimination or disadvantages faced by employees who utilise WLB benefits and noted that it is a commonly held view that employees who accesses these benefits are basically less committed to work. This is not a good thing as this hinders employees from using these benefits and in some cases the availability of these programmes are not even communicated to the employees.

There is evidence that shows the relationship between perception on WLB support from the organisation and better employee loyalty (Cegarra *et al*, 2012; Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne,

2007). Therefore, provision and encouragement of the use of these benefits gives an organisation an edge over other organisations that do not offer them. McCathy, Cleveland, Hunter, Darcy and Grady (2013), assert that, a supportive organisation may contribute to employee utilisation of WLB programmes through the support of gatekeepers of work-life programmes like HR managers and immediate supervisors, thereby ensuring that role conflicts are avoided.

A survey of 1187 employees carried out on organisations in New Zealand by Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne (2007), found that perception by employees that the organisation was supporting WLB practices enhanced their job satisfaction and decreased work pressures resulting in reduced leaving intentions. The study also produced evidence that, practices which staff take to mean WLB support, can affect the organisation, where a probable reduction in staff turnover is likely due to decreased intention to leave.

In view of the above, it is crucial to determine the perception held by the employees concerning the support they get from the organisation. In his study Behson (2005) found informal means of organisational work-family support to be more effective than formal ones in explaining variance in employee affective, intentional, and behavioural outcomes. In their study, Wong and Ko (2009) give a background to the understanding of important factors that make WLB. They discovered that factors associated with flexibility and support by the organisation on WLB, allegiance at work and having sufficient time off, were the basis for employee positive perceptions of WLB and hence these factors gives insights into retention strategies (Wong and Ko, 2009).

Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) indicated that perceived organisational support (including fairness, supervisor support and organisational rewards) helps to improve job satisfaction, affective commitment and performance, and reduce withdrawal behaviour. Ahmad and Omar (2010) in their study concluded that employees who perceive the existence of family-supportive culture in their organisation, characterised by high responses to work-family matters, are more likely to stay with the organisation and have an improved sense of affective commitment to the organisation. The concept of organisational commitment will be discussed fully in section 2.10.

2.9.1. Definition organisational support

Organisational support can be described as the belief by employees that their organisation is concerned with their wellbeing and values the contributions that they make to the organisation (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Individuals assign human characteristics to the organisation through personification of the organisation, and perceive agents' actions within the organisation (such as managers) as actions by the entire organisation (Loi, Hang-Yue and Foley 2006). Organisations that are concerned with the welfare of their employees can show support through implementing programmes and policies that emphasise WLB through its management or supervisory personnel (McCarthy *et al*, 2013). It is of vital importance for organisations to realise the impact of support to employees on their behaviours.

This study seeks to find the relationships between the academic staff perceived WLB support and organisational commitment and how this affects their decision to stay. The following section looks at the organisational support employees can get in the form of manager support, supervisor support and colleague support.

2.9.2. Manager support

It is important for employees to know that they have the backing of their superiors all the way. According to Farren and Kaye (1998), manager support refers to a manager's ability to care for the professional development of their subordinates and teams. A number of employees make a decision to leave the organisation due to conflicts they may be experiencing with their immediate managers (Muteswa and Ortlepp, 2011). Blake (2006, p.2) made a statement to the effect that "people leave managers, not organisations". It has also been observed that employee participation in an organisation is lessened as a result of a lack of manager support and such employees may not utilise family-friendly programs offered by the organisation (Blair-Loy and Wharton, 2002).

2.9.3. Supervisor support

Kottke and Sharafinski (1988) defined supervisor support as an employee's perception of the support given by their immediate supervisor in connection with their general wellbeing and work-related interests. In the same way that employees form perceptions about their evaluation by the organisations they work for, they also form general views about the level

with which supervisors value their contributions and in turn care for their welfare, that is, perceived supervisor support (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Taking into consideration the significant positive relationships between job characteristics plus supervisor support with work-to-family enhancement and job outcomes, organisations may improve the quality of workers' work and personal lives by redesigning jobs and improving supervisor support (Baral and Bhargava, 2010).

The fact that supervisors play a role as agents of the organisation as they have the duty to direct and evaluate the performance of subordinates, employees view their supervisor's favourable or unfavourable judgement toward them as an indication of support by the organisation. Moreover, the immediate supervisor has the ability to reduce the degree to which an individual work role impedes with his or her family role through acknowledging employee's family obligations (Baral and Bhargava, 2008). Therefore, the supervisor's care for an employee and their eagerness to assist them with work has the ability to reduce the negative spillover between work and family life, thereby decreasing work-life conflict (Chan, 2009). It is imperative therefore, that supervisors must be aware of their roles and the influence such roles will have on the wellbeing of their subordinates. Supervisor maturity is of great importance as dwelling on petty issues or being domineering might cultivate a negative image of the organisation in the minds of those subordinates that are affected. Moreover, a supervisor who has issues with a subordinate is less likely to communicate WLB programmes or events to such a subordinate.

2.9.4. Co-worker/colleague support

Colleague support is also important in enhancing effectiveness of uptake of WLB programmes. Co-worker support falls in the category of informal organisational support as outlined by Brough and O'Driscoll (2010). Brough and O'Driscoll state that informal organisational support provisions are acknowledged, most commonly, through the support and attitudes of colleagues. George (2015) noted that support from both work colleagues and supervisors is important for the motivation of employees when performing their duties while relationships between co-workers was frequently featured among work place stressors. In addition, a study by Pitts, Marvel and Fernandez (2011) as cited by George (2015) gives evidence that suggest that employees' satisfaction with the way they relate to their co-workers is linked to employee retention. Muteswa and Ortlepp (2011) mentioned the incidence of contagion turnover, which is the decision to leave the organisation based on the

influence of colleagues after noticing them constantly searching for employment elsewhere. This means that the influence of colleagues can either be positive or negative. Colleagues who do not speak well of the organisation and constantly show intentions to leave might influence others to do the same. On the other hand, colleagues who speak well of the organisation and are quick to point out upcoming WLB events are more likely to make other employees feel at home in the organisation.

2.10. Organisational commitment

Most organisations expect to attain committed professionals who are the key assets, critical for the sustenance of the organisation to achieve its competitive advantage. One of the objectives of this research project is to ascertain the perceptions of academics WLB support accorded to them by the organisation and related this to their commitment to the organisation. Therefore, understanding of the concept of organisational commitment becomes necessary in order to outline this relationship. Bushe (2012), states that, it is not only desirable for any organisation to retain their competent staff, but also to acquire their commitment to the organisation. Martin and Roodt (2008) explained that organisational commitment is now considered to be a bond or link between an employee and the organisation.

2.10.1. Background of organisational commitment

According to Azeem and Altalhi (2015), organisational commitment is a vital job attitude that has been widely studied over the years, which depicts a relationship between attitude and behaviour. In the same vein, Cascio (2006) concurred by mentioning that organisatonal commitment should be a valuable employee's attitude that the organisation should treasure since committed employees' chances of leaving are slim as they perform their duties and they easily adjust to change. Thus, it becomes critical for organisations to create a work environment that encourages employees to be committed to the organisation thereby motivating them to stay (Cascio, 2006). Organisational, commitment strategies help to form desired employee attitudes and behaviours through forging psychological links between goals of the employer and employee. The emphasis is to develop committed individuals who the organisation can trust to use their discretion to perform their duties in ways that are consistent with organisational goals (Dockel 2003).

2.10.2. Defining organisational commitment

Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) define organisational commitment as an individual's strong belief in, and acceptance of organisational goals and values, their preparedness to invest substantial amount of efforts and a deep desire to continue to belong to an organisation. Perryer, Jordan, Firns and Travaglione (2010) assert that organisational commitment is regarded as a stable attitude, generally indicating an affective response to the organisation as a whole, and that it is generally regarded as more stable and universal than employee satisfaction. As a result, organisational commitment is closely connected to the achievement of long-term organisational goals because of its broader reaching implications.

Furthermore, organisational commitment is about an employee's positioning within the organisation with regards to loyalty, involvement and identification (Robbins, 1998) and it revolves on the entire organisation, and places greater emphasis on the "congruence between individual and organisational goals" (Darly and Dee, 2006, p.786). There is empirical evidence that reveal that lower levels of organisational commitment result in outcomes like the tendency to search for other employment, leaving intentions, and turnover (Mowday *et al*, 1982).

To the employee, commitment to the organisation refers to expectations to be respected and trusted as well as a sense that it is worth 'going the extra mile' for the employer. To the employer, commitment of the employee to the organisation are expectations of the organisation that its workers will perform their jobs to the best of their ability at the same time being loyal and dedicated to the employer (Cartwright and Cooper, 2002, as cited by Darly and Dee, 2006).

2.10.3. Understanding the concept of organisational commitment

Acocoding to Allen and Meyer (1990) organisational commitment is viewed as a multi-dimensional construct involving affective, normative and continuance commitment. The following sections discuss these three types of organizational commitment.

2.10.3.1.   Affective commitment (AC)

 Affective commitment (AC) is concerned with an attachment grounded on a sharing of values with colleagues at work. Those workers possessing a strong affective commitment

stay with the organisation because they want to stay (Meyer and Allen, 1991) and would readily accept change as long as such change is not compromising the basic values and goals of the organisation; and is viewed as beneficial to the organisation, because organisational commitment indicate beliefs in organisational values and goals (Viljoen and Rothmann, 2009). Bushe (2012) argue that, having employees possessing affective commitment is an indication that the organisation would have succeeded in creating enough reasons or conditions making employees to be emotionally attached to its goals thereby deciding to remain.

2.10.3.2.   Normative commitment (NC)

Normative commitment (NC) involves a sense of obligation to the organisation and the belief that to stay is the right thing to do. Those employees with strong normative commitment stay in the organisation because they feel that they ought to do so (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Balassiano and Salles (2012) simply referred to normative commitment as the degree with which employees commit to their orginsistion due to their moral duty.

2.10.3.3.   Continuance commitment (CC)

Continuance commitment (CC) is concerned with an employee's perception that he or she has no valuable choice or valuable choices besides staying with the organisation. According to Meyer and Allen (1991), employees with strong continuance commitment stays with the organisation because they have to do so. Viljoen and Rothman (2009) state that employees with strong continuance commitment decide to stay because they have to do so, either because they perceive little options or because of greater personal sacrifice linked to parting with the organisation. Meyer and Allen proposed that employees have a commitment profile indicating their level of desire, need, and obligation to stay, and the possibility of leaving the organisation decreases after any one of the three components of commitment increases in strength.

2.10.4. Factors affecting organisational commitment

There are a number of factors that affect an employee's organisational commitment and knowing these is critical in understanding the connection between organisational commitment and intention to remain in an organisation. The following section discusses these factors.

> **Age**

Age has been established in literature as a factor in attaining organisational commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) explained that this is so because as employees grow older, chances of getting other employment opportunities dwindles, making their existing jobs more appealing. Likewise, the older employees may possess strong continuance organisational commitment due to the fact that, the lengthier they grow, the better history they make with the organisation than younger employees, which results in investment accruals (Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005).

> **Gender**

There are several results with regards to the effect of gender on organisational commitment. For example, a study by Mathieu and Zajac (2005), looking at gender and affective commitment, suggested that gender may have some effect on employee's decisions on staying with the organisation. Others indicate men to be more committed to the organisation than their female counterparts (Cohen and Lowenberg, 1990 as cited by Martin and Roodt, 2008).

> **Job satisfaction**

Martin and Roodt (2008) affirms that the greater the job satisfaction of an individual, the less likely they are to quit their job, while the higher their level of commitment, the lower the predicted intention to leave. In addition, there is evidence to prove that organisational commitment and job satisfaction correlate with each other with positive relationship (Martin and Roodt, 2008).

> **Tenure**

A study by Mathieu and Zajac (2005) indicates a positive connection between tenure and affective commitment. Mathieu and Zajac further assert that those individuals having long service may choose to stay within the organisation because they are familiar with the aims of the organisation and have become used to working towards achieving those goals. These individuals are eager to perform their duties and are keen to be part of the organisation.

➢ **Qualifications**

The level of education has an impact on organisational commitment. According to Affum-Osei, Acquaah and Acheampong (2015) a strong relationship between level of educational and organisational commitment exists. They argue that it is probable that employees in possession of high educational qualifications are usually in higher ranks of the organisation implying more responsibilities which perpetually necessitate more commitment to the organisation. However, Al-Kahtani (2012) discovered the level of education to be negatively related to organisational commitment as more educated individuals might have high aspirations which the organisation may fail to provide for.

2.10.5. Consequences of organisational commitment

Some studies have documented positive effects of organisational commitment such as improved efficiency, reduction in absenteeism and turnover (Azeem and Altalhi, 2015; Tett and Meyer, 1993). These effects are seen to be due to the relationship between the employee and the organisation, and are caused by employees developing some attachment to the organisation while they in turn get certain esteemed rewards or payments from the organisation (Bushe, 2012). A study by Lee and Mowday (1987) discovered that job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job involvement had a bearing on the intention to leave, which ultimately, predicted actual turnover. Similarly, Daly and Dee (2006) suggest that affective response towards the organisation in the form of rganisational commitment, precede intentions to quit or stay.

Begley and Cazjka (1993) noted that employees who are committed to their jobs have positive attitudes and thus are less distressed by occupational stress and therefore perceive little stress. Such employees are eager to offer something to contribute to the wellbeing of the organisation Mowday *et al* (1982). Meyer and Herscovitch (2003) stated that the consequences of organisational commitment differ according to employee's basis for his or her attachment and they can be either positive or negative to the employee and the organisation. Organisational commitment has an impact on organisational productivity and performance of the employee (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2003).

2.11. Understanding the concept of retention

The retention of talented individuals with critical skills is acknowledged by organisations as important for achieving business growth and the development of organisational competencies. Most organisations strive to become the 'employer of choice' through creating a conducive environment and providing challenging assignments that encourage constant personal growth (Samuel and Chipunza, 2013). Another study found out that employees are comfortable staying in their organisations provided they are well informed about relevant matters regarding their welfare as well as the organisation (Selesho and Naile, 2014). This section will look at the background and various definitions provided in literature on the retention concept, intention to leave or stay as well as a description of the retention model relevant to this study. It ends with the description of the consequences of intention to leave by academic staff.

2.11.1. Background to the retention of academics

The retention of employees is vital in an organisation especially these days where success of the organisation is, to a large extent, determined by its intellectual capital. Intellectual capital has the ability to give a competitive edge to an organisation (Takawira, Coetzee and Schreuder, 2014) while the quality of the workforce in an organisation has a direct effect on the organisation's success (Du Toit, Erasmus and Strydom 2008, as cited by Bushe, 2012). Organisations are competing for skilled workers and once an organisation succeeds in securing such workers, the next step is to invest in them so as to stop them from leaving the organisation (Selesho and Naile, 2014). Higher learning institutions are entrusted with the responsibility to mould future talent hence the importance of retaining qualified academic personnel responsible for nurturing such talent.

Furthermore, the 'war for talent' requires organisations to look for ways to improve their strategies, policies and practices in order to attract, develop, deploy and retain talent for survival of the business (Samuel and Chipunza 2013). The retention of employees is the most imperative target for the organisation as hiring of qualified personnel is vital for an organisation but their retention is more important than hiring because large sums of money are used for the orientation and training of new or prospective employees (Irshad and Afridi, 2012). Naseem, Hassan, Hassan and Khan (2011) argue that, when employees quit their jobs, the organisation loses both the employee and those customers or clients who were loyal to the

employee. Employees carry with them knowledge of their own profession and knowledge of the organisation and by losing them, the organisation will be at risk of losing confidential information to their competitors (Govaerts, Kyndt, Dochy and Baert 2011).

Although academic staff recruitment and retention is not a major challenge in some parts of the world, it is a different matter altogether in African universities (Bushe, 2012). Samuel and Chipunza (2013) are of the opinion that the attrition and retention issues of academics in developing countries, has not been adequately recorded in literature as different from that of brain drain. There is concern about the assurance of enough future supply of academic staff in South Africa as some are moving to the public and private sectors and the fact that universities are also competing among each other as well with other research institutions (Samuel and Chipunza, 2013).

According to Theron *et al* (2014), the demand for academics in higher education institutions is growing worldwide and is anticipated to keep growing. At the same time, retention issues are worsening the matter, confounded by an alleged academic 'retirement swell' which is beginning to manifest itself as academic staff from the expansion of the 1960s come to their retirement ages (Samuel and Chipunza, 2013). Therefore, the retention of academic staff should be a strategic priority, as the replacement of their knowledge, skills and experience is difficult (Pienaar and Bester 2008).

2.11.2. Definition of retention

Retention is, according to Chaminade (2007) as cited by Kinyili *et al* (2015), a voluntary move by an organisation to form a work environment which is able to engage employees for a longer period of time. Cascio (2003) defines retention as initiatives management take in order to keep employees from leaving the organisation, such as rewards given to employees for doing their jobs efficiently, ensuring pleasant working relationships between employees and managers and sustaining a safe environment that is healthy.

Bernthal and Wellins (2001) define employee retention as the opposite of turnover and that both ought to be understood well so as to analyse retention predictions. Likewise, Dockel and Coetzee (2006) defined retention as an effort by the organisation to mitigate employee's intention to leave their jobs. However, numerous studies state that turnover and retention are not two sides of the same construct (George (2015) but instead the two constructs are inversely related, meaning that poor retention simply indicate a higher rate of turnover (Cardy

and Lengnick-Hall, 2011). Therefore, the focus should be on 'will they stay' as opposed to turnover or 'will they go' like many studies do (Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011).

From the argument above, one would conclude that, aspects causing retention may not be the same as those causing turnover, and obviously, decisions to address both are different. Cardy and Lengnick-Hall (2011) seem to suggest that an organisation's decisions or efforts to increase retention, aligns with concerns for employees and a need to make a conducive work environment which is as ''sticky'' as possible with the purpose of retaining employees. While organisational decisions or efforts to decrease turnover, in contrast, can be taken as motivated to minimise or evade a cost. Generally, retention and turnover constructs are different and the efforts to influence these outcomes should also be distinguished (Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011). Therefore, efforts by the organisation to increase favourable outcome can result in a different framework and be viewed more favourably than organisational efforts to decrease unfavourable outcome (Cardy and Lengnick-Hall, 2011).

Based on the above definitions, it is clear that one cannot talk about retention without mentioning turnover. Therefore, in order to fully understand retention, it is imperative to discuss the intention to leave or stay and turnover constructs.

2.11.3. Intention to leave or stay

Research on turnover is continuing to enlighten the current understanding of the retention of employees. Studies on retention often make use of measurements of either intention to quit or leave, or actual voluntary turnover and then report linkages with constructs that are theoretically related to retention (Theron *et al*, 2014). Empirical evidence is available, to show behavioural intention to leave as an antecedent to actual turnover (Fox and Fallon, 2003; Tett and Meyer, 1993). Bothma and Roodt, (2012) propose that, the intention to leave behaviour is a reliable cause of actual behaviour, implying that turnover intentions can be used reliably in place of actual turnover and it is usually related to job search behaviour (Takawira *et al*, 2014).

Tett and Meyer (1993) define turnover intentions as a conscious and wilful desire to leave an organisation. They further explained that intention to leave the organisation represent a series of withdrawal cognitions that results in actual turnover. According to Daly and Dee (2006), intention to leave means the degree of possibility that an employee will terminate his or her employment from his or her organisation. On the other hand, intention to stay means the level

with which an employee wishes to remain with his or her employer. Rahman and Nas (2013) noted that, although intention to leave is different from actual turnover, some studies establish that this intent has direct pivotal effect on turnover decisions.

It is problematic to study actual turnover since it is a challenge to locate employees who have left and their response rates to surveys are usually low (Daly and Dee, 2006). Perryer *et al* (2010) contend that turnover intention (decision to leave) is an attitude that can be tested together with factors that are causing the turnover intention itself, leading to a clearer understanding of the causes. In addition, as managers have the power to influence employee decisions if they are yet to leave, they are able to influence the factors triggering employees' intentions to leave. By so doing, management can use the knowledge to address these factors to prevent and mitigate problems related to the consequences of actual turnover (Perryer *et al*, 2010).

2.11.4. Retention model

George (2015) developed a model which proposed that management, conducive environment, social support and development opportunities be grouped under "organisation" while autonomy, compensation, workload and WLB be grouped under "job". These two groups predict each employee's intention to stay in the organisation.

Figure 2.3: Model for retention of professional workers.
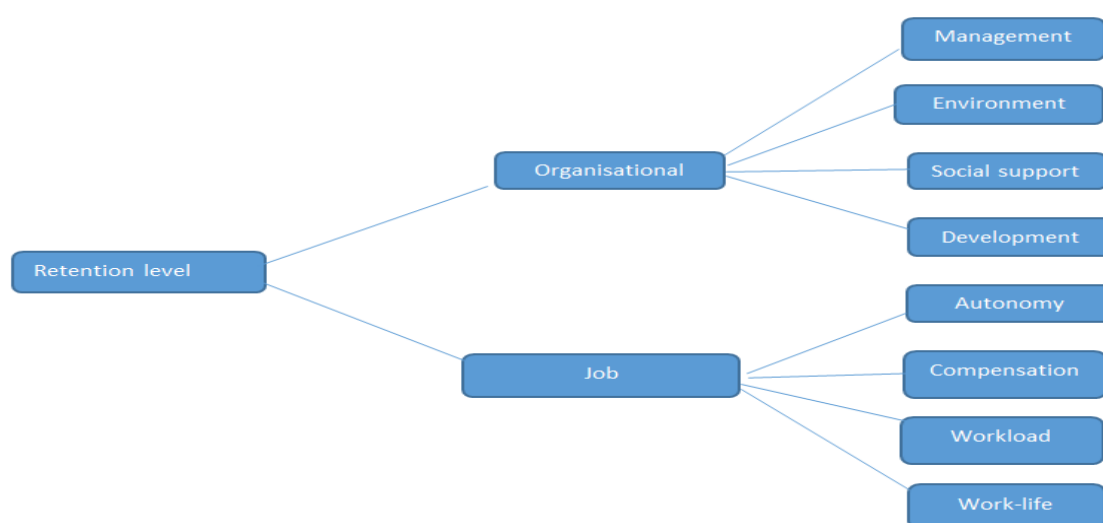
Source: Adapted from George (2015, p.109).

The model proposes eight broad factors which are significant for retaining workers. George's model as presented in Figure: 2.3 above, seem to suggest that professional workers would most probably stay in organisations where they consider the management style to be suitable and where there is a pleasant working experience, enough resources, some level of flexibility, recognition and supportive colleagues and the availability of opportunities to acquire new skills or to get a promotion. These are placed at the organisational level.

The table below summarises George's model presented in Figure 2.3 above:

Table 2.1: Factors in the retention of professional workers.

Level	Retention Factors	Characteristics
Organisational	Management	Appropriate style of Leadership, Support from top and other levels of management
	Conducive environment	Fun/pleasant place to work adequate resources, Flexibility
	Social support	Feeling part of the team, Friendly and caring colleagues, Colleagues who are available for consultation
	Development opportunities	Potential to develop new competences, Promotion/career prospects
Job	Autonomy	Possibility of choosing how to do one's work, Having influence over one's work, Flexibility in workload decisions
	Compensation	Transparent pay decisions, A "fair" salary based on performance and effort
	Crafted/sculpted workload	Full skill utilisation, Being creative,
	Work-life balance	Being able to find sufficient time for activities other than work

Source: Adapted from George (2015, p.108)

At the job level, professional workers would most probably decide to stay within their jobs if; some degree of autonomy is experienced; if they are allowed to be flexible in making decisions about workloads; if transparent and fair pay decisions exist; if there is room for workers to craft their jobs and if there are appropriate WLB programmes (George, 2015). The job level group of factors represents areas where HR personnel have some impact on influencing the perception of the support the organisation offers for the uptake of

organisational policies (McCathy *et al*, 2013). Below are the descriptions of the eight factors identified by George (2015):

> **Management**
>
> Management represents people at the top in an organisation, whose conduct can affect the welfare of employees and their decision to remain in the organisation. Management seems to possess two aspects that are crucial for retention which are "appropriate style of leadership" and perceived management support (George, 2015, p.104). Duffield and O'Brien-Pallas (2003), as cited by Kossivi, Xu and Kalgora (2016), affirm the correlation between leadership and retention of employees while employee's participation in decision making enables them to have a sense of belonging to the organisation thereby increasing their loyalty to the organisation (Noah, 2008).
>
> Some studies have noted that, employees' feelings about the support they get from their managers is crucial for employee retention more than the feeling of support from the organisation (Paillé, 2013; Eisenberger *et al*, 2002). High levels of perceived organizational support are seen to cause feelings of trust, long-term obligations, and employees' increased sense of identifying with the organisation (Jawahar and Hemmasi, 2006).
>
> **Conducive environment**
>
> A conducive work environment seems to be a vital factor in the retention of employees and it is characterised by a pleasant working experience, adequate resources as well as some room for flexibility. A study by Loan-Clarke, Arnold, Coombs, Hartley and Bosley (2010), indicated flexibility as an important factor in retaining allied health professionals. Results from a study by Spence Laschinger, Leiter, Day, and Gilin (2009) also revealed that, favourable working environment contributes to the retention of employees. Basically, a conducive environment entails availability of enough resources for employees to perform their duties, flexible work arrangements and a fun filled workplace.
>
> **Social support**
>
> Social support mostly refers to employee's level of satisfactory relationship with co-workers or fellow employees. The level of teamwork and honesty between co-workers

is considered to be one of the factors used by organisations to outperform competitors (Samuel and Chipunza 2013). Social support can be taken to mean feelings of belonging to a team of friendly and caring counterparts who are available for consultation when required (George, 2015) and, at the same time, being satisfied with relationships with workmates was recognised as a retention factor (Kossivi *et al*, 2016). Employee's relationships with colleagues appear to be the determinant factor of retention.

➢ **Development opportunities**

Govaerts *et al* (2011) asserts that the learning and development process is a strong retention activity when combined with a fair promotion and salary action. Deery (2008) provides evidence to suggest that employees' job training raises retention and commitment and Cardy and Lengnick-Hall (2011) concur.

➢ **Autonomy**

Autonomy is seen as capability to decide how an individual can perform their work while having some influence over their work and flexibility in decisions on workload (Kossivi *et al*, 2016). The opportunity to act autonomously is an important matter with regards to employee retention. The level of autonomy given to employees is a function of the leadership style at organisational and other levels (George, 2015). Spence Laschinger *et al* (2009) found significant relationships between autonomy and employee retention through mediating effects of job satisfaction. They found autonomy to be a predictor of job satisfaction.

➢ **Compensation**

Compensation is often presumed to be a key factor in the retention of employees. Igbaria and Greenhaus (1992) as cited by Dockel *et al* (2006) found salary to be positively connected to organisational commitment and negatively connected to turnover. Pay associated with performance has been seen to be a retention facilitator (Kossivi *et al*, 2016).

➢ **Crafted/sculpted workload**

The individualisation of the work place and the acceptance of the new psychological contract have likewise been seen in the inclination of employees to craft their jobs according to their different strengths, lifestyle and preferences (George, 2015).

Therefore, another key aspect is having a workload that is adapted to the resources and/or the capabilities of the employer, with opportunities to be innovative and to utilise full individual skills.

- ➢ **Work-life balance**

  Loan-Clarke *et al* (2010) found that work that allows the employee the possibility to achieve his or her family duties raises employee retention. Balancing work and other life demands means that some professional employees will sacrifice some degree of success in their work-life if this allows more time for other areas of life (George, 2015). She gave an example of some professional mothers who, for example, strategise their work schedules alongside their children's as well as home schedules, permitting dedicated time for both. Loan-Clarke *et al* (2010) discovered that, work that fits in with family duties, was another reason for remaining in NHS employment. In other words, the ability to find enough time for other activities besides work is one of the key retention characteristic.

2.11.5. Factors affecting employee retention

Several studies have identified factors that affect employee retention. It appears, according to Cardy and Lengnick-Hall (2011), that there are countless factors that affect the decisions to stay. Govaerts *et al* (2011) states that, retention factors are situated at the organisational and employee levels as well as at the job level such as autonomy, that is, work-schedule flexibility and social support. Factors on the organisational side are, for example, the existence of challenging and meaningful work, opportunities for progression, empowerment, responsibility, managerial integrity and quality and new opportunities/challenges. On the other hand, at the employee level, factors affecting employee retention include age, seniority and level of education. An investigation on age was inconclusive as age was found to have a positive influence on retention (Govaerts *et al*, 2011).

Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens and Amar (2005) proposed that recruitment and retention is affected by the whole employment package, that is, the rewards and benefits of the job in comparison to other employment. The whole employment package comprises of pay and fringe benefits, intrinsic aspects of the job such as teaching and research for academics, job security, work organisation, autonomy, progression, WLB practices, colleagues' congeniality and the

working environment. The more attractive the whole package, the more the likelihood of attracting applicants and retaining employees (Samuel and Chipunza, 2013).

Bushe (2012) summarised the key retention and recruitment factors for academics as follows:

- ➢ non-pecuniary aspects of academic work, (such as relations with supervisors);
- ➢ pay and fringe benefits;
- ➢ intrinsic job factors;
- ➢ good working conditions;
- ➢ variety;
- ➢ freedom to use own initiative;
- ➢ seeing tangible outcomes from their jobs;
- ➢ autonomy;
- ➢ opportunities to do research and control of their research works;
- ➢ career prospects;
- ➢ collaboration and flexibility of working hours;
- ➢ good physical working conditions;
- ➢ job security;
- ➢ family-friendly practices;
- ➢ nature and tenure of contract;
- ➢ career breaks;
- ➢ citizenship; and hours of work.

In addition, a study by Ng'ethe, Iravo and Namusonge (2012) to see the determinants of employee retention in public Universities in Kenya, listed the determinants as follows:

- ➢ Leadership – being the relationship by which an individual has an influence on the behaviour or actions of others;
- ➢ Distributive justice – being the level with which rewards and punishments are associated with job performance and involves fair allocation of outcomes like promotions and pay;
- ➢ Work environment – Decision to stay is affected by work environment for example if people are not happy with things like office space, air conditioning, equipment comfortable chairs and so on;

- ➢ Salary - Attractive compensation packages is a vital retention factor as it fulfils both material and financial desires. Dissatisfaction with salaries is another important factor undermining academics' commitment to their institutions and careers, and subsequently their decision to leave (Tettey, 2006, as cited by Ng'ethe *et al*, 2012);
- ➢ Training and development – training means a form of human capital investment regardless of whether the investment was made by the employee or by the organisation and gives employees specific skills to improve their performances, whereas development is an effort to give employees the abilities the firm requires in the future.

A study by Dockel *et al* (2006) examined specific retention factors that induced the organisational commitment of high technology employees and the results indicated compensation, job characteristics, supervisor support and WLB practices as having a statistically significant impact on the building of organisational commitment of high technology employees. In their study, both supervisor support and WLB practice factors were seen to have a substantial impact on the development of both affective and normative commitment, which ultimately have a bigger impact on the decision to stay or leave.

2.11.6. Consequences of intention to leave by academic staff

Most professional workers, who are also known as knowledge workers, have over the years shown a high turnover all over the world (George, 2015). Knowledge workers are regarded as those individuals whose knowledge have high competitive value and have high levels of expertise, education, or experience, and the core purpose of their jobs include the creation, distribution or application of knowledge (Kinyili *et al*, 2015). Academic staff are also categorised as such as they are the ones who impart knowledge to the student and supervise research which is basically knowledge generation.

Review of literature shows that the intention to leave an organisation is another indication of turnover (Bothma and Roodt, 2013). Turnover has major costs and negative repercussions to both the organisation and the individual. Daly and Dee (2006) state that faculty (academic) turnover involves negative consequences such as costs for finding replacements, decreased integration in academic departments, disturbance of course offerings, and low morale amongst the remaining employees in the organisation.

For an individual, he or she may lose non-vested benefits and be subjected to the "grass looks greener" syndrome, only to experience disappointment later (Rosser, 2004). To add on to that, Selesho and Naile (2014) noted that high employee turnover has serious effects on quality, consistency, and stability of academic institutions. However, employee turnover can be advantageous for higher education institutions as these institutions may find opportunity to save financially with the reduction in remuneration packages if less trained or experienced workers are recruited as replacements (Rosser, 2004). Generally, these consequences give a basis for more research to look into the retention of academics.

Powell (2010) maintain that turnover can have damaging implications on students and remaining academics who may find it difficult to offer and receive quality service when new replacements are inexperienced personnel. According to Daly and Dee (2006) high turnover rates of faculty can have cost implications to the reputation of an institution as well as the quality of teaching. Johnsrud and Rosser (2002) point out that, most of the time, academics who leave are the ones the orgnisation would want to retain. Therefore, retention of the best professionals is of enormous practical significance to an institution as it eliminates problems associated with replacement plus it allows continuity, expertise, and encourages a culture where merit can be rewarded (George, 2015).

Pienaar and Bester (2008) establish that retention of academics is becoming increasingly challenging due the fact that an academic career is possibly not as desirable and attractive as it was believed to be in the past. Barkhuizen *et al* (2014) suggest that the academic profession seem to be failing to attract novice scholars to fill vacant posts with the effect that older and more seasoned academics are then left with mounting workloads (Pienaar and Bester, 2008). Kinman and Jones (2003) report that, young academics experience higher levels of job demands due to work politics, conditions of work and job significance as compared to older ones.

Very few organisations can afford to lose their most treasured and talented workers when their replacement is difficult (Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla, 2005). In South Africa and other developing countries, the future of higher education depends on skills of academic staff. It is therefore imperative that higher education institutions consider addressing talent management as well as human resource management practices in these institutions in order to retain academics (Barkhuizen *et al*, 2014).

2.12. Relationships between WLB, organisational commitment and employee retention

Guest (2002) asserts that it is possible to investigate the trend of WLB and its development the influence it has on an individual's welfare and job outcomes at the workplace. A number of studies are still indicating the impact of organisational commitment on turnover intentions. Job satisfaction and organisational commitment are seen as crucial turnover components as their empirical link with voluntary turnover has been recognised over many meta-analyses, where negative link with turnover intentions has been frequently proved (Martin and Roodt, 2013).

Researches have been carried out about the relationship between WLB and job attitude outcomes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Cegarra-Leiva *et al*, 2012; Mohd Noor 2011; Doherty and Manfredi 2006). The greater the job satisfaction, the lower the possibility that the employee will leave the organisation, plus, the higher the employee level of commitment, the lesser the predicted turnover intentions (Martin and Roodt, 2013). These studies indicate that WLB is positively linked to organisational commitment. This suggests that WLB might have a positive relationship with intention to stay among academics.

Research by Johnsrud and Heck (1994) found that demographic variables and perceptual variables regarding work life in the organisation were significant in distinguishing those faculty staff who remained from those who left. The findings from a study by Rosser (2004) show a direct and powerful connection between faculty members' perceptions of their work-life satisfaction and intention to leave. Therefore, a combination of work-life perceptions of faculty members' professional and organisational matters and satisfaction elicits an individual's behavioural intentions and the aspiration to leave for a new position and/or a change of career. Rosser (2004) emphasises the importance of quality of faculty members' work-life as it is crucial for their satisfaction and their decision to leave.

Maintaining a positive WLB, increasing job satisfaction and organizational commitment are some of the strategies documented in some of the retention researches as vital to the retention of talented staff (Deery and Jago 2015). For example, results from a study by Noor and Maad (2008) reveal work-life conflict as having a significant positive relationship with turnover intentions. While Mohd Noor's study (2011) indicated WLB as playing a significant role in lessening high levels of intention to leave and decreasing actual turnover rates.

Usually employee's perceptions about the organisation are that the organisation encourages them to dedicate their time and efforts to their work at the expense of their personal lives (Lobel and Kossek, 1996). According to Allen (2001) the implementation of WLB practices may fail to have the intended effect if employees do not perceive the work environment to be conducive for them to achieve a balance between work and life. A perception of WLB support from employers is related to improved loyalty to the employer (Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne, 2007).

Barkhuizen and Rothmann (2008) mentioned that the strongest predictor of employee commitment to the university was the trust they put in senior management. Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) noted that the perception by employees that the organisation is offering effective support has been shown to be causally linked to affective commitment and ultimately to voluntary employee turnover. Therefore, the organisational commitment concept is critical for the retention of academic staff as securing their commitment should not only be for them to stay but also to ensure high performance to achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation (Bushe, 2012). Furthermore, there is no academic institution that is guaranteed sustainability and quality over a long period of time without well qualified and committed academics (Pienaar and Bester, 2008).

Barkhuizen and Rothman (2008) observed that the results and conclusions concerning commitment among academic staff continue to be confusing and confounding. According to Winefield *et al* (2002) some evidence is available to suggest that, on average, academics seem to be committed to their organisations though suffering stressors and strains. Similarly, Cannizzo and Osbaldiston (2015) suggested that low levels of organisational commitment are prevalent and related to management practices which cause work role overload. The heavy workloads in academia which consist of assignments to teach huge classes may create hostility towards the organisation and reduce levels of academics' commitment to their institutions and this result largely to low employee retention (Daly and Dee, 2006). In addition, the heavy workload which is the main employee work attitude underpinning employee turnover in the seminal turnover literature, was seen to have some effect on WLB with emotional exhaustion playing a mediator role (Deery and Jago, 2015).

2.13. Summary

The chapter discussed the concept of WLB and its dimensions and its impact on job outcomes such as organisational commitment and employee retention. Some insights were revealed into how perceived support from the organisation through managers, supervisors or co-workers can contribute to employee retention. Positive relationships between human resources innovative practices such as WLB initiatives have been highlighted and how they impact organisational commitment and employee retention. The literature also underscored employees' decision to stay or leave as the predictor of turnover. These findings are critical for this study as they help in providing insights as to how organisations, institutions of higher learning in particular, can formulate strategies to allow academic staff to attain balance between work and their personal lives.

The following chapter (Chapter 3) outlines the research methodology which is going to outline in detail how the study was carried out at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The research methodology chapter will be followed by the results presentation chapter which is based on methods described in the methodology chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1.   Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the theoretical aspects on which the study is based and this chapter highlights the research methods used and explains the methodological approach and the rationale behind the choice of the methodology used. This study used a mixed methods approach chosen because of its merits which are outlined in this chapter. According to Welman, Kruger, and Mitchell (2007), a research methodology is the clarification and the logic followed in research methods and techniques. This chapter is arranged in such a way that explains the research philosophy, research design, sampling strategies, data collection and the data analysis techniques that were used. It then concludes with ethical issues and the limitations encountered during the course of the study.

3.2.   Research Philosophy

According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2008), a research philosophy is a belief concerned with how research should be carried out and how research reasoning (theory) and observations (information or data) are linked. Hussey and Hussey (1997) state that there are mainly two research philosophies, that is, positivist and phenomenological or interpretivist philosophies. The phenomenological philosophy, according to Tobin (2006), is founded on the conviction that the world is socially constructed and independent, while the researcher (one observing) and the subject (that being observed) are inseparable. In a phenomenological approach a researcher is inclined to underscore meanings rather than truths (Tobin 2006).

The positivist approach is based on the belief that creation may be defined by means of unbiased facts, that may be scrutinised (Blumberg *et al*, 2008) and it holds the claim that, knowledge is considered where phenomena can be observed and measured while a researcher remains distant and objective (Collis and Hussey, 2009). According to Charmaz (2006) positivistic inquiry's goal is to discover and establish general laws that give an explanation of the phenomena under study and its objective approach views information as concrete and consisting of facts into the known world (Charmaz, 2006). Therefore, it is of great importance to pay attention so as to ensure that observations are really objective facts. The

study is adopting both approaches with the aim of converging the findings and making comparisons.

3.3.   Research Design

A research design represents the main plan stating the procedures and processes for gathering and examining the required material (Zikmund, 2003). Welman *et al* (2007) refers to research design as a plan explaining how the participants in the research are chosen and how the information is collected from the participants or respondents. Blumberg, Cooper and Swindler (2008) further defined it as the plan for achieving the study's outcomes. A well organised research design can result in more precise information which is consistent with the research objectives.

This study takes a mixed method approach to explore the relationship between academics' perceived WLB support, organisational commitment and their retention. The mixed methods approach is concerned with gathering and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, and then depicting interpretations based on the results (Creswell, 2015). The purpose of this form of research is to combine both qualitative and quantitative research in order to give a better understanding of the problem than either research approach alone could provide.

The data for this study were integrated using a concurrent triangulation approach which involves collection of both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously and then compare them to determine if there was convergence, differences or some combination (Creswell, 2003). Some researchers refer to this comparison as *confirmation, disconfirmation, cross-validation,* or *corroboration*. In the triangulation approach, the mixing of results from the qualitative and quantitative data is presented in the interpretation or discussion sections where results are merged, that is, data forms are transformed to a similar format for easy comparison (Creswell, 2003).

According to Creswell (2003), the advantages of using this type of mixed method model is that it is familiar to many researchers and it can result in well-validated and substantiated findings. Furthermore, the simultaneous collection of data results in a shorter data collection time frame. However, this method has its own limitations which includes the challenge of comparing the results of two analyses using data of different forms and also a researcher may be uncertain of how to resolve inconsistencies arising from comparing the results (Creswell, 2003). Below is a diagram depicting how the study's data were collected and analysed.

Figure 3.1 Concurrent Triangulation Design
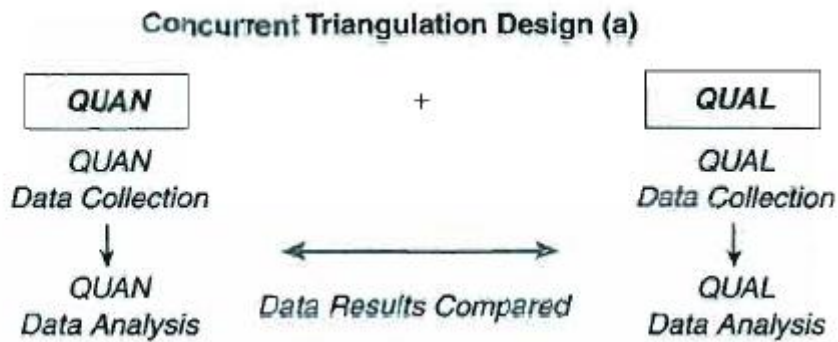
Source: Adapted from Creswell *et al* (2013).

This study is both exploratory and descriptive in nature. It is exploratory in nature due to the fact that it is making an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon that is being examined. Zikmund (2003) defines exploratory research as initial research done to clarify and define the nature of a problem and is usually conducted where very little knowledge or information is available on the subject under investigation. Exploratory researches are valuable ways of finding out what is happening, seeking new insights and asking questions and assessment of a phenomenon in a new light (Saunders Lewis, and Thornhill (1997).

The study is also taking a descriptive approach as it seeks to describe a target population (academics) and how they perceive WLB support so as to make a direct comparison between groups in the target population. Welman *et al* (2007) assert that a descriptive study has two goals, namely, explaining a phenomenon and predicting behaviour and in this case the behaviour is the intention to stay or leave. According to Zikmund (2003) a descriptive study attempts to give answers to questions such as who, what, where and how. Therefore, since the study is both explorative and descriptive in nature, qualitative and quantitative research approaches were combined during data collection. Through analysing quantitative data it was possible to minimise the impact of single experiences of single individuals in order to obtain an overall perception of academics on WLB support (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). On the other hand, qualitative data explore personal experiences through in-depth interviews on WLB and offers a deeper investigation of individual viewpoints of how their current position is involved with issues of WLB (Creswell, 2015). Maxwell (2005) argues that the participants' viewpoints are not only a description of events and actions, but part of the reality the researcher is expecting to understand. Collection of the qualitative data was solely

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for the purpose of complementing the findings from the quantitative data in order to achieve a better understanding of the information gathered.

3.4. Study Site

The research was done at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) Pietermaritzburg campus. The University of KwaZulu-Natal was formed in 2004 after the merging of the University of Durban-Westville and the University of Natal (About UKZN, 2017). The merging was done in accordance with the government's restructuring in higher education that started in the 1990s (About UKZN, 2017). According to the UKZN Merger report (2007), the merger was complex and volatile in terms of organisational culture and ethos as one university was perceived as white elitist and colonial while the other lobbied from a standpoint of addressing the historically disadvantaged sectors of the population. The merging of campuses brought its own challenges. The early years of restructuring were met with challenges that included an industrial action in 2006 over salary disputes coupled with problems of "merger fatigue" and "residual merger resistance" (Merger report, 2007). Discrepancies in salaries and other conditions of service, even for employees who are on the same levels of employment, remain a grievance among employees at UKZN, including academics, that needs to be addressed up to this day.

The merger also resulted in the re-organisation of the University's management structure where the faculty system was abandoned and a college system was instituted. Today UKZN is comprised of five campuses of which Pietermaritzburg is one and is located in the city of Pietermaritzburg, the capital city of the KwaZulu-Natal province. The other four campuses are all located in the City of Durban.

The University of KwaZulu-Natal has four colleges, namely, the College of Humanities, the College of Agriculture, the College of Engineering and Science; the College of Health Sciences; and the College of Law and Management Studies. Each college is comprised of various schools within which are different disciplines.

3.5. The Target Population

Zikmund (2003) defines the target population as the precise, broad group applicable to the study. The target population for this study was made up of all academics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg campus. The designation of academic staff varies from Full professor, Associate professor, Professor, Senior lecturer, lecturer, senior tutor and tutor.

There is a total of 304 academic staff at the Pietermaritzburg campus comprising of 263 permanent, 41 on contract.

3.6.   Sampling Strategies

This section discussed the processes that were used to select the research participants. The sampling method, the sample frame and the sample size are explained in the sections that follow.

3.6.1. Sampling Method

Pickard (2007) describes sampling as a procedure of choosing a little from the several so as to carry out a practical investigation. To put it in another way, a sample represents a subset carefully chosen from the target population (Zikmund, 2003). This study makes use of two non-probability sampling techniques, that is, convenient sampling for quantitative data and purposive sampling for the data collected through in-depth interviews. The convenient sampling method involves the selection of subjects due to their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). The advantages of using convenience sampling are that, the relative cost and time needed to come up with a convenient sample are small as compared to those needed for probability sampling techniques and this enables the researcher to achieve the desired sample size in a relatively fast and inexpensive way (Laerd Dissertation, 2012). Although convenience sampling may be helpful in collecting useful data and information that would have been impossible when using probability sampling techniques, which needs more formal accessible list of the population, it is not without flaws.

One major disadvantage of using convenience sampling is biases as it can lead to the over or under-representation of a particular group within the sample. In addition, since it is a non-probability sampling technique, it is not based on a representative sample that is randomly drawn. Thus, the results of the study cannot be generalised to the entire population of academics from other universities in the country. Nevertheless, a convenient sample makes use of any available research subject thus it can achieve a better response rate than a probability sample as some subjects selected for the probability sample might not be reachable. Since a convenient sample has this advantage of having a better response rate, this study, which makes use of it, can produce results that will add some important input to a body of literature on WLB and the retention of academics in the country.

Purposive sampling which was used for qualitative data involves, as Trochim (2006) claims, sampling with a purpose in mind. It is also referred to as judgemental, selective or subjective sampling (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). In this current study the researcher had the purpose of obtaining the views of senior academic staff with regards to their perceptions on support of WLB practices at the university.

3.6.2. The Sample Frame

According to Zikmund (2003) a sample frame is a list of elements where a sample may be taken from and is also referred to as a working population. It is sometimes not possible to access the whole target population hence one would be limited to those members of the target population that are accessible. The set of accessible members of the target population make up the sample frame which also called the sampling frame. In this study, the university website was used to compile a list of all academic staff at UKZN Pietermaritzburg campus which provided useful details such as email addresses, location and designation. Such information was available on the websites of the various schools in the university. Unlisted members of staff were left out of the sampling frame as it was not possible to know of their whereabouts.

3.6.3. The Sample and Sample Size

The sample size should adequately represent the target population. In a quantifiable inquiry, the idea is to select a segment then make some inference regarding the whole target population. It would be much more informative to study the whole population if it is possible to do so but it is often impossible due to cost and time constrains (Pickard, 2007). The use of an adequately representative sample helps to come up with results illustrating characteristics of the entire populace (Saunders *et al*, 1997). The desired sample size for this study was a minimum of one hundred and seventy (170) academic staff drawn from the sampling frame of all listed academic staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Pietermaritzburg campus. The MonkeySurvey (1999) sample size calculator was used to obtain the sample size of 170 academic staff and a 95% confidence level was chosen giving a 5% margin of error which was considered appropriate for the study (MonkeySurvey, 1999**).**

After approaching all selected prospective respondents, the responses were as summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 3.1. Break down of the study sample responses.

Research activity	Participants	Number of participants
Questionnaires	Academic staff	111
In-depth interviews	Senior academic staff (at least three years teaching experience)	5
Total		116

3.7. Data Collection Methods

Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires and in-depth interviews which were done concurrently. The researcher made use of primary data collection methods in order to collect data that addressed the research objectives. Primary data refers to the original data that the researcher collects with the sole purpose of solving the problem in his or her own study (Welman and Kruger, 2000), usually by making use of data collection tools like a questionnaires or other measuring instruments. Secondary data can be defined as information gathered by people or agencies other than the researcher (Welman and Kruger, 2000). Secondary data can be obtained from sources like publications, textbooks, newspapers, magazine articles, historical accounts, criticisms, and commentaries on experiences, events or phenomena (Quinlan, 2011). There was no secondary data usage in this study.

3.7.1. The Questionnaire

The aim of a survey according to Zikmund (2003), is to look for associations amongst exact variables which are known from the study's onset and listed as research questions or hypotheses to define some features within the populace. A questionnaire, according to Cavana, Delahaye and Sekeran (2001), is a research instrument consisting of a pre-formulated written set of questions where the participants record their responses. Welman (2001) asserts that information such as opinions, beliefs and convictions about any topic; attitudes; and typical behaviour can be obtained through the use of a questionnaire.

A questionnaire was designed to collect data that helped to address the research objectives of the study. A total of 170 questionnaires were self-administered to academics who were conveniently available to the researcher and a total of 111 were completed and returned representing a 65% response rate. The researcher physically distributed the questionnaires to academic staff, guided by the compiled list (see section 3.6.2), then collected the questionnaires after they were completed.

The questionnaire was designed in such a way that it addressed the research questions. The research questionnaire consisted of six sections that attempted to meet the research objectives of the study and these sections were as follows:

➢ Section A asked demographic questions about the participants;

➢ Section B consisted of questions on academic perceptions on WLB support;

➢ Section C had questions about organisational commitment, that is, the feelings that the academics have towards the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

➢ Section D asked questions that addressed academic staff's intention to stay or leave;

➢ Section E consisted of questions about WLB; and

➢ Section F consisted of questions that sought to provide some insights and recommendations to the problem.

The questionnaire contained mainly Likert scale questions which are mostly used to measure things such as attitudes and perceptions. Two open ended questions were also included in the questionnaire to allow the researcher to collect extra information from the respondents. The advantage of an open ended question is that the respondent's opinions are not affected by the researcher's structured questions (Welman *et al,* 2007). The strength of questionnaires as compared to other survey methods, like telephone interviews, is that it is relatively cheaper. It is also simple to administer and relatively easy to analyse. The disadvantages of a questionnaire are that it is difficult to tell how truthful a respondent is. If it contains standardised answers it may lead to frustrations by the respondents. There is also a possibility of misinterpretations of questions as people see things differently.

To counter this disadvantage, a pilot study was conducted. A pilot study is construed as a small-scale trial run of all the features intended to be used in the key investigation (Monette *et al,* 1998, cited in de Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport 2005). Five academic staff members were chosen to participate in the pilot study to see if they could answer the questionnaire in a systematic way. All five questionnaires were returned and it was established that all participants interpreted the questionnaire correctly without misunderstanding the questions included in it. The pilot can be used to modify the questionnaire in order to mitigate chances of misinterpretations by the participants. In addition, the researcher was available to assist respondents on areas where they did not understand and possible areas of misunderstanding were ironed out.

3.7.2. In-depth interviews

According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2009), interviews are tools mostly used to probe interviewees' ideas, perceptions, attitudes, experiences and their honest feelings on a particular subject or topic. Boyce and Neale (2006), claim that the advantage of collecting data through in-depth interviews is that they give much more detailed information than what the researcher would get from other methods such as surveys. However, it is a challenging task, as various skills such as intensive listening and careful note taking are required together with careful planning and enough preparation (Qu and Dumay, 2011).

Five (5) senior academic staff members were chosen conveniently from the compiled list of senior academics. Creswell (1998) recommends between five to 25 participants for a qualitative study. Due to time and financial constraints, five participants were chosen with at least one academic staff chosen from each college represented at the Pietermaritzburg campus. The participants were chosen based on number of years served as an academic and position held. Seniority and tenure was necessary for the in-depth interviews as data gathered from senior and long serving members was deemed to be well informed as such members are assumed to know in depth functionalities of the university. Long serving members of stuff were expected to have deeper knowledge and experience of policy issues and their implementation. Such in-depth knowledge aided in achieving the research objectives.

3.8. Data Quality Control

According to de Vos *et al* (2005) dependability of a measurement process is the trustworthiness or standardisation of that measurement – meaning that an identical result will be obtained if the same variables were to be measured under the same conditions elsewhere. For the quantitative study, a reliability analysis to measure internal reliability will be conducted by use of Cronbach's alpha. Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010) claim that a Cronbach's alpha value that is above 0.7 is said to be satisfactory, whereas a Cronbach's alpha value over 0.8 becomes desirable.

Patton (2001), as cited by Golafshani (2003), asserts validity and reliability as two factors which any qualitative researcher should take into consideration when designing a study, analysing results and judging the quality of the study. It is important for a researcher to persuade his or her audiences as to why they should pay attention to his or her research findings (Golafshani, 2003). Judgement of the current study through terms used for each

paradigm can be done through various approaches. For example, reliability and validity are essential criterion for quality in quantitative paradigms, while in qualitative paradigms the terms Credibility, Neutrality or Confirmability, Consistency or Dependability and Applicability or Transferability are to be the essential criteria for quality (Golafshani, 2003). These terms and how they were achieved, are discussed in the following sections of the study.

3.8.1. Validity

Validity as defined by de Vos *et al* (2005) means the extent to which an apparatus is serving its purpose. They further explained that a valid apparatus must deliver sufficient, or representative sample of all content, or elements of the phenomenon to be measured. Through a thorough review of literature and consideration of similar studies a questionnaire was designed containing sections covering all the research questions. For the qualitative inquiry, this study's validity was established through its participants' accounts. The qualitative paradigm is based on the assumption that reality is socially constructed and it is what participants perceive it to be, suggesting the importance of proving the accuracy with which participants' realities have been represented in the final account (Creswell and Miller 2000).

According to Zikmund (2003) validity is evaluated in three ways, namely, face validity or content validity, criterion validity and construct validity. These three approaches are described below.

3.8.1.1. Face validity/content validity

Content validity refers to the professional agreement that a scale reasonably appears to accurately measure what it is meant to measure (Zikmund 2003). In order to ensure the content validity of the study, the researcher exhaustively reviewed the relevant literature on WLB practices that may assist academics to meet their work and life's demands. Furthermore, findings from this study were compared to other similar studies conducted before.

3.8.1.2. Criterion Validity

Criterion validity is the capability of some measure to relate to other measures of the same construct. It is categorised as either concurrent or predictive validity where concurrent validity occurs when the new measure is taken at the same time as the criterion measure,

while predictive validity occurs where a new measure predicts a future event (Zikmund, 2003).

3.8.1.3. Construct validity

An instrument is said to have construct validity if it is able to measure the constructs that it is intended to measure. This is established during the statistical analysis and it implies that the experimental results generated by a measure are consistent with the theoretical logic about the concepts (Zikmund, 2003). For this study the questionnaire was subjected to pre-testing using the pilot study data so as to see if it was able to fulfil the research objectives.

3.8.2. Reliability

Bryman and Bell (2007) refers to reliability as the consistent measure of a concept. It is the level with which measures are free from error and as a result are able to yield consistent results (Zikmund, 2003). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) further explains that reliability is the degree with which data collection techniques and analysis procedures will produce consistent results. Primary data was gathered in two ways, that is, through in-depth interviews and questionnaires. This was done to mitigate biases that may occur through the use of only one method. To further ensure reliability, the use of the Cronbach alpha coefficients help in establishing internal consistency and reliability of the measuring instrument and its constructs.

According to Golafshani (2003), reliability and validity of qualitative methods encompass transferability, credibility and trustworthiness. For a qualitative research to be credible, it is important for a researcher to show to the participants that the research findings are believable. Mackey and Gass (2015) argues that transferability of findings depends on the similarity of the context. To determine the similarity of findings 'thick descriptions' are used which involves the use of multiple perspectives to explain the insights drawn from the research and taking into account the participants' perspectives. Thick descriptions are used with the aim of giving enough details for the reader to understand the context and participants, so that they will be able to compare the research situation with their own and determine which findings to transfer to their own.

In this current study, credibility and trustworthiness were met as participants were asked to give an honest and dependable account of their experiences (Neuman, 2006). To ensure reliability, the researcher used an interview schedule to ask participants the same questions in

the same order resulting in consistency in how she made her observations (Neuman, 2006). Furthermore, the study is deemed to have demonstrated its reliability and validity provided the qualitative results have the support of literature on WLB (Hubburd, 2016).

3.9. Measurements

A structured questionnaire was used in this study for the collection of the quantitative data. The structured questionnaire sought to measure the human resources constructs in this study, namely, WLB, organisational commitment and employee retention. Below are some brief explanations of the construct measurements.

3.9.1. Perceptions on work-life balance

To measure perceptions on WLB, a 14 item-scale developed by Allen (2001) was used. These items sought to find out the extent to which participants believed to be the philosophy/beliefs of their organisation, for example, the questionnaire item phrased as: "It is best to keep family matters separate from work", sought to measure what the respondents believed was their organisation's stance on mixing family matters with work. These items were rated on a 5-point response Likert scale ranging from 1: strongly disagree to 5: strongly agree. Higher scores showed a greater degree of positive perceptions.

3.9.2. Organisational Commitment

The 15-items scale developed by Mowday and Steers (1979) was used to measure organisational commitment. Examples of the questions asked include: "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation" and "I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected". Responses to these items were rated on a five point Likert scale similar to the one in Section 3.9.1 some items were reverse coded and were carefully re-coded at the data capturing stage.

3.9.3. Intention to leave or stay

Turnover Intention Scale (TIS) by Roodt (2004) was used to measure intention to leave and this scale include questions like "How often have you considered leaving your job?" and other questions that address this construct. The 15 - items scale were used and were rated on a five point Likert scale where higher scores showed greater intentions to leave the job.

3.9.4. Work Life Balance

To measure WLB a 12-items scale was used to assess employees' experience in the balance between their work and non-work life, for example, the questionnaire items: "The demands of my job interfere with my life outside work" and "I have to put some of my work on hold due to my family demands" directly address how the respondents are dealing with work life balance issues.

3.10. Data Analysis

The study adopted a mixed research approach. Data gathered by the structured questionnaire require statistical analysis and the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, Version 23) was employed for data analysis. The output from the SPSS package was then summarised in excel in order to come up with unified tables, graphs and charts for better illustration of the data as the SPSS package produces excessive output of which some is not needed in the results discussion. Descriptive statistics (frequency distributions, means, and standard deviation) were considered for basic exploration of the data. Inferential techniques like the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), regression and correlation analysis were used to investigate relationships between variables (perceived WLB support, organisational commitment and employee retention). For data collected through in-depths interviews, data was analysed through content analysis. Analysis of variance, correlation analysis, regression analysis and content analysis are described in detail below:

3.10.1. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

According to Shavelson (1996) one way ANOVA is used to analyse data from designs with one independent variable that gives two or more groups of subjects. In this study ANOVAs will be carried out in order to find out if a relationship exists between perceived WLB support, the organisational commitment or the retention of academics (dependent variables) and the demographic variables (independent variables). Shavelson (1996) further describe one-way ANOVA's purpose as the comparison of the means of two or more groups to determine if the observed differences between the groups are due to chance or by some kind of systematic effect. Comparing the variability of scores in a group with the variability between the group means does the identification of the differences. When the variability between groups is bigger in comparison to variability in groups, the result is an indication of a substantial group difference (Shavelson, 1996).

3.10.2. Correlation

Field (2009) defines correlation as the degree of strength of the relationship between two variables. In this study correlation coefficients will be computed to determine the relationship between WLB, organisational commitment and retention of academic staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal as these are Likert scaled variables. According to Field (2009) negative correlations are depicted by values close to -1.00 while 0.00 is an indication of no correlation and values close to +1.00 signify positive correlations.

3.10.3. Regression Analysis

According to Weirs (2008) regression analysis is the fitting of an equation to the data so as to explain the connection between variables. A regression model can be either a simple linear regression model, which explains the change in one response variable as a simple linear function of one independent variable, or a multiple linear regression model, which explains the change in one response variable as a linear function of more than one independent variable. Multiple linear regression is useful if the effects of several independent variables on the response variable are to be evaluated simultaneously.

3.10.4. Content Analysis

The technique applied in the analysis of the qualitative data as collected from the in-depth interviews is content analysis. Holsti (1969, p.14) as cited by Bryman and Bell (2007, p.302) defines content analysis as "*any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages*". Denscombe (2003) claims content analysis to be a method that assists in the analysis of the contents of documents and can also be used with any information text like writing, sound or pictures. Content analysis can also be regarded as a flexible method for analysing data that is in text format (Cavanagh, 1997). Content analysis involves the analysis or investigation of the contents of the sources in a systematic manner in order to record the relative incidences or frequencies of themes and how they have been appearing (Welman and Kruger, 2001).

In this study, content analysis was used to extract themes from the information obtained from the interviews. Data from the in-depth interviews and open ended questions were transcribed, and re-read to make sense of the data (Creswell, 2002). To identify themes, patterns, or categories that were repeated from the interview transcripts, open coding was used. Trochim defines open coding as a process of grouping qualitative data and for describing the

implications and details for these groupings. The researcher clustered the first set of codes into categories according to their common codes and then categories were then highlighted with different colours to aid in the analysis of the data and in this way, themes were established. The main categories were further perfected by several comparisons until a representative synopsis was attained.

The advantages of using content analysis are that the use of a coding schedule and coding manual makes the process transparent. Content analysis is useful for investigating relationships and trends in data over a period of time. Its disadvantages are the fact that it does not necessarily give an understanding of the underlying reasons for relationships and data trends. The analysis is dependent on the accuracy of the coding done (Krippendorff, 2004).

3.11. Ethical Considerations

The way a researcher treats human subjects and the way data is safeguarded during and after the research, are vital aspects of the research project. Ethical measures are taken to protect the interest of participants when conducting a study. It is important to respect participants' confidentiality. For this study to go ahead the researcher complied with the ethical procedures of the University of KwaZulu-Natal where the study was conducted Hofstee (2006). It is the researcher's duty to make sure that the respondents are aware of the expectations and also to explain to them that their participation is by choice (Blanche, Durrheim and Painter 2006). For this reason the respondents were asked to complete a consent form before completing the questionnaire as a sign that their participation in the project was voluntary. It is also critical for the researcher not to misinterpret or manipulate the data in order to suit his or her needs as doing so is considered unethical. Permission to conduct the study at University of KwaZulu-Natal was granted and an ethical clearance certificate is attached as Appendix C.

3.12. Conclusion

This research project was based upon a mixed methods research design where convenient sampling was utilised to select the participants from academic staff based at University of KwaZulu-Natal's Pietermaritzburg campus. Data was gathered through the use of a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews, based on an open ended questionnaire, to obtain the views of academic staff on their perceptions of WLB, organisational commitment and their

intention to leave or stay at the university. The next chapter will look at the analysis of the research findings.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

The statistical techniques employed to carry out data analysis for this study were outlined in the methodological framework discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter seeks to present the research findings from the data gathered through the quantitative and qualitative questionnaires. The research mainly examined the link between WLB practices and the retention of academic staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The mixed methods design was adopted in this study where data was gathered in two forms, that is, through qualitative and quantitative survey interviews. The two sets of data were first analysed independently then the general findings were combined to address the set objectives. The results are presented following the sequence of the research's objectives. Section 4.2 and its sub-sections present the quantitative results while Section 4.3 and its subsections present the qualitative results.

4.2. Quantitative analysis

This section presents the analysis from data gathered through the structured questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of six sections with questions aimed at addressing the research objectives. Most of the questions were measured on five point Likert scales.

4.2.1. Demographic profile of the study sample (respondents)

In this section, the general demographic background of the individuals who responded to the questionnaire is presented. The results presented in Table 4.1 show that there was a bigger representation of males (67.6%) than females (32.4%), most of whom were married (72.1%) and had children (72.1%). This, points to the fact that most of the respondents were married family men and women. Only 26.1% of the respondents were single with 1.8% divorced. There were two dominant racial groups represented in the study with the majority being black (59.5%) followed by White (26.18%) and Indian (11.7%). Most of the respondents were older than 25 years with the majority being in the age group 26 to 45 years.

Table 4.1. Personal information of research respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
A1. Gender	Male	75	67.6%
	Female	36	32.4%
A2. Marital Status	Married	80	72.1%
	Single	29	26.1%
	Divorced	2	1.8%
A3. Do you have children	Yes	80	72.1%
	No	31	27.9%
A4. Race	White	29	26.1%
	Black	66	59.5%
	Indian	13	11.7%
	Coloured	3	2.7%
A5. Age group	25 years or younger	3	2.7%
	26-35 years	25	22.5%
	36-45 years	39	35.1%
	66-55 years	23	20.7%
	56-65 years	20	18.0%
	66+ years	1	0.9%

Results in Table 4.2 show that, as far as academic qualifications are concerned, most of the research participants had doctorates (65.8%) which means that they could be very marketable to other universities which might have a bearing on their propensity to leave. The majority were in the lecturer grade (54.1%) with 16.2% in the senior lecturers' grade and 23.4% being associate and full professors. Only 6.3% of the respondents were in the tutor or senior tutor grade. There were varying levels of experience among the academic staff who responded to the questionnaire with each of the categories of experience fairly represented. There is a considerable presence of new comers to the university as 37.8% of the respondents had been with the university for less than 5 years and 36.0% had been with the university for 6 to 10 years. Of all the research participants, 87.4% were employed on a permanent basis, which might mean that most of the respondents feel secure at their employment. It is expected that

permanent staff are less likely to leave than those who are employed on a fixed contract basis (Ismail, 2015).

Table 4.2. Professional information of research respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
A6. Highest qualification	Honours	6	5.4%
	Masters	30	27.0%
	Doctorate	73	65.8%
	Other	2	1.8%
A7. Designation	Tutor	6	5.4%
	Senior Tutor	1	0.9%
	Lecturer	60	54.1%
	Senior Lecturer	18	16.2%
	Associate Professor	14	12.6%
	Full Professor	12	10.8%
A8. Years as an academic	5 or less years	31	27.9%
	6-10 years	31	27.9%
	11-20 years	26	23.4%
	21-30 years	15	13.5%
	31-40 years	8	7.2%
A9. Years employed at UKZN	5 or less years	42	37.8%
	6-10 years	40	36.0%
	11-20 years	17	15.3%
	21-30 years	6	5.4%
	31-40 years	6	5.4%
A10. Status of employment	Permanent	97	87.4%
	Contract	9	8.1%
	Part Time	1	0.9%
	Other	4	3.6%

4.2.2. Reliability Analysis

The quantitative research tool for this study (questionnaire) was made up of six (6) sections, with one section dedicated to the demographic variables, and the rest addressing each of the main constructs of the study. A reliability analysis was conducted on the Likert scaled questions that addressed the main objectives of the study. The reliability results are presented in Table 4.3 below.

The Chronbach's alpha statistic was used to assess the reliability of the Likert scaled items. The Cronbach's alpha statistic is a measure of internal consistency which measures the interrelationships of items in a construct or any group of items. The Chronbach's alpha statistic is a measure of scale reliability with values of at least 0.7 and at most 0.9 being

indicative of adequate internal consistency hence reliability. Higher values of the Chronbach's alpha statistic (higher than 0.9) indicate redundancy in some variables and lower values indicating lack of internal consistency (Tavakol and Dennick, 2011).

Table 4.3. Reliability statistics of the original constructs.

Section	N	Number of questionnaire items	Chronbach's Alpha	Comment
B: Perceptions on work-life balance support (all 14 questionnaire items)	105	14	0.688	Moderate internal consistency
B: Perceptions on work-life balance support (with questions B1, B3 and B5 left out)	105	11	0.748	High internal consistency (*Improved with dropping B1, B3, B5*)
C: Organisational commitment (all 15 questionnaire items)	106	15	0.881	High internal consistency
D: Intention to leave or stay (all 15 questionnaire items)	108	15	0.642	Moderate internal consistency (*Improved with Exploratory factor analysis*)
E: Work-life balance (all 12 questionnaire items)	107	12	0.828	High internal consistency
F: What can be done for academics in order to achieve work-life balance (all 15 questionnaire items)	74	15	0.814	High internal consistency
All 5 Likert scaled questions in questionnaire	62	71	0.671	Moderate internal consistency

The results presented in Table 4.3 above show that some of the constructs have low internal consistency hence may need to be split into sub-constructs of questionnaire items with higher internal consistency. The splitting of the main constructs into sub constructs will be carried out using exploratory factor analysis.

4.2.3. Objective 1: To identify academic staff's perceptions of the university support and encouragement of the use of WLB programmes

This section talks to the first study objective which is to outline the academic staff's perception of the University's WLB support. The 14 items for the construct of "Perceptions on work-life balance support" were presented in Section B of the research questionnaire. Those questions that were negatively worded were reverse coded and reworded as shown in Table 4.4 below, so that higher scores would indicate more positive sentiments and lower scores would indicate more negative sentiments for all questions.

4.2.3.1.   Summary of academic staff's perceptions on WLB support

The results presented in Table 4.4 show mixed perceptions on WLB support. In order to help explain the results in Table 4.4, Figure 4.1 below presents graphical comparisons of the items that make up the construct of perceptions on WLB support. The questionnaire item with the highest percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing, that is 79.3%, is question B10 "Individuals who take time off to attend to personal matters are also committed to their work". This, according to the respondents, means that the resolution of personal matters by employees does not stand in the way of discharging their work duties. In other words, commitment to duty is not in any way affected by employees taking care of their personal matters. Other matters which had high agreement ratings are that employees who are highly committed to their personal lives can be highly committed to their work (question B6, 71.8%), that it is not necessarily considered taboo to talk about life outside of work (question B4, 67.9%), that expressing involvement and interest in non-work matters is viewed as healthy (B5, 66.7%), that the ideal employee is not necessarily the one who is available 24 hours a day (question B14, 65.8%) and that attending to personal needs, such as taking time off for sick children is not necessarily frowned upon (question B7, 61.3%).

From Figure 4.1 below, it can be seen that the lowest level of agreement was with question B3 (It is not necessarily best to keep family matters separate from work). The original, reverse-coded question read as "It is best to keep family matters separate from work". The results from the re-worded question suggest that most respondents seem not to agree or strongly agree with the separation of work and family matters as only 19.1% agreed/strongly agreed to such a separation.

Most respondents believe that family matters are an integral part of work life which is supported by the responses to questions B10, B6, B4, B5, B14 and B7 discussed above. This point to the fact that, as much as employees would want to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, the demands of their family responsibilities will always get in the way. This then requires the organisation to take care of employee's personal issues as it is crucial. In other words, both domains affect each other and it is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that a balance is achieved.

Table 4.4. Summary statistics of perceptions on WLB support.

Perceptions on WLB support		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree & Strongly agree	Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		Frequency Distribution						
B1. Work should NOT NECESSARILY be the primary priority in a person's life	Freq	8	30	28	24	21	40.5%	0.021
	%	7.2%	27.0%	25.2%	21.6%	18.9%		
B2. Long hours inside the office are NOT NECESSARILY the way to achieving Advancement	Freq	7	30	24	33	17	45.0%	0.589
	%	6.3%	27.0%	21.6%	29.7%	15.3%		
B3. It is NOT NECESSARILY best to keep family matters separate from work	Freq	29	45	15	10	11	19.1%	-0.012
	%	26.4%	40.9%	13.6%	9.1%	10.0%		
B4. It is NOT NECESSARILY considered taboo to talk about life outside of work	Freq	3	7	25	40	34	67.9%	0.423
	%	2.8%	6.4%	22.9%	36.7%	31.2%		
B5. Expressing involvement and interest in non-work matters is viewed as healthy	Freq	9	9	19	52	22	66.7%	0.154
	%	8.1%	8.1%	17.1%	46.8%	19.8%		
B6. Employees who are highly committed to their personal lives CAN be highly committed to their work)	Freq	9	10	12	38	41	71.8%	0.516
	%	8.2%	9.1%	10.9%	34.5%	37.3%		
B7. Attending to personal needs, such as taking time off for sick children is NOT NECESSARILY frowned upon	Freq	5	10	28	42	26	61.3%	0.440
	%	4.5%	9.0%	25.2%	37.8%	23.4%		
B8. Employees should NOT keep their personal problems at home.	Freq	13	29	28	27	12	35.8%	0.475
	%	11.9%	26.6%	25.7%	24.8%	11.0%		
B9. The way to advance in this company is NOT NECESSARILY to keep non-work matters out of the workplace	Freq	12	23	34	34	8	37.8%	0.438
	%	10.8%	20.7%	30.6%	30.6%	7.2%		
B10. Individuals who take time off to attend to personal matters are ALSO committed to their work	Freq	6	5	12	43	45	79.3%	0.746
	%	5.4%	4.5%	10.8%	38.7%	40.5%		
B11. It is NOT assumed that the most productive employees are those who put their work before their family life	Freq	16	16	22	33	24	51.4%	0.774
	%	14.4%	14.4%	19.8%	29.7%	21.6%		
B12. Employees are given ample opportunity to perform both their job and their personal responsibilities well	Freq	15	26	34	27	9	32.4%	0.359
	%	13.5%	23.4%	30.6%	24.3%	8.1%		
B13. Offering employees flexibility in completing their work is viewed as a strategic way of doing business	Freq	5	15	25	39	27	59.5%	0.416
	%	4.5%	13.5%	22.5%	35.1%	24.3%		
B14. The ideal employee is NOT NECESSARILY the one who is available 24 hours a day	Freq	9	14	15	23	50	65.8%	0.614
	%	8.1%	12.6%	13.5%	20.7%	45.0%		
Chronbach's Alpha with all 14 items								0.688
Chronbach's Alpha without questions B1, B3 and B5								0.748

The overall measure of the perceptions on work-life balance support was calculated as a weighted mean based on a principal components analysis derived latent factor with weights (coefficients) given in the last column of Table 4.4 above. The latent factor coefficients show that questions B1 (coefficient=0.021), B3 (coefficient=-0.012) and B5 (coefficient=0.154) contribute very little to the overall measure of the perceptions on WLB support construct hence they were excluded from the computation of the weighted mean. It is also noted that

when these three items were excluded from the computation of the overall measure of the perceptions on WLB support construct, the internal consistency of the construct became adequate (Chronbach's alpha=0.748). A weighted average of the remaining 11 questionnaire items was used as the overall measure of the construct. The weights were adjusted in such a way that the overall measure of the construct lies in the range from 1 to 5 as with the original Likert scale.

Figure 4.1. Ranking of perceptions on WLB support items.
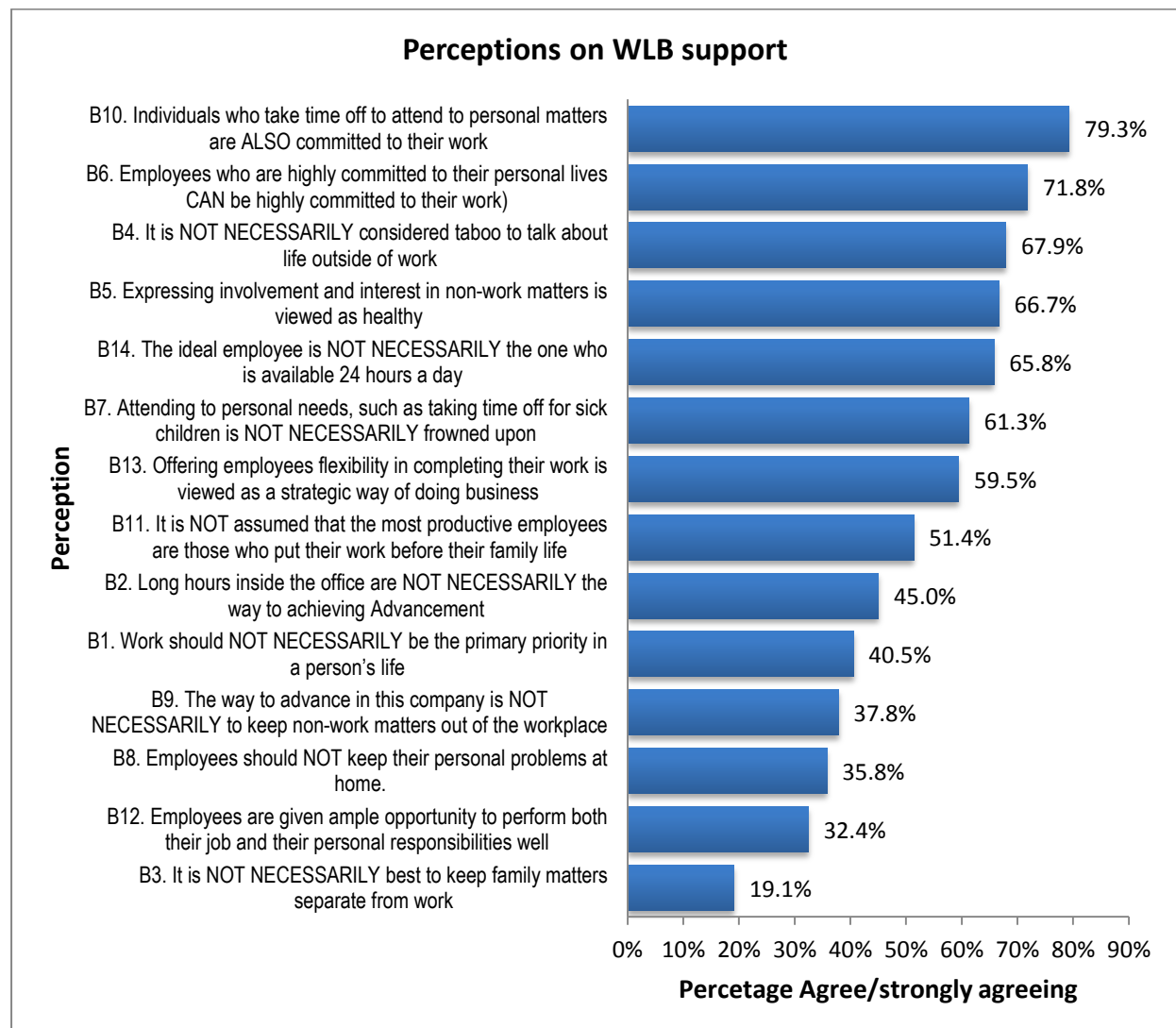
Figure 4.1 shows that the leading sentiment or perception among the research participants was that individuals who take time off to attend to personal matters are also committed to their work with 79.3% agreeing or strongly agreeing. The figure also shows that very few (19.1%) indicated that it was not necessarily best to keep family matters separate from work. This indicates that most academics' work lives are intertwined with their family lives.

4.2.3.2. **Demographic factors affecting academic staff's perceptions on WLB support**

To investigate if any demographic factors might be having a bearing on perceptions on WLB support, ANOVA tests were conducted with the results presented in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5. ANOVAtests for effects of demographic variables on academic staff's perceptions on WLB support.

Overall Perceptions on work-life balance support		Descriptive Statistics			ANOVA Tests			
		Mean	N	Std. Dev.	F	df1, df2	p-value	Comment
Gender	Male	3.476	71	0.559	0.094	1, 104	0.760	Not Significant
	Female	3.436	35	0.756				
Marital Status	Married	3.5072	76	0.607	1.047	2, 03	0.355	Not Significant
	Single	3.3247	28	0.681				
	Divorced	3.7273	2	0.643				
Do you have children	Yes	3.518	76	0.644	2.070	1, 104	0.153	Not Significant
	No	3.324	30	0.571				
Race	White	3.395	29	0.638	0.273	3, 102	0.845	Not Significant
	Black	3.485	63	0.657				
	Indian	3.455	11	0.359				
	Coloured	3.697	3	0.883				
Age group	25 years or younger	3.333	3	0.229	0.695	5, 100	0.628	Not Significant
	26-35 years	3.364	24	0.706				
	36-45 years	3.477	36	0.566				
	66-55 years	3.533	22	0.731				
	56-65 years	3.450	20	0.559				
	66+ years	4.455	1	-				
Highest qualification	Honours	3.182	5	0.518	0.884	3, 102	0.452	Not Significant
	Masters	3.424	30	0.675				
	Doctorate	3.514	69	0.614				
	Other	3.000	2	0.643				
Designation	Tutor	3.455	6	0.251	0.184	5, 100	0.968	Not Significant
	Senior Tutor	3.455	1	-				
	Lecturer	3.466	56	0.666				
	Senior Lecturer	3.429	18	0.636				
	Associate Professor	3.371	13	0.532				
	Full Professor	3.606	12	0.736				
Years as an academic	5 or less years	3.555	30	0.602	0.288	4, 101	0.885	Not Significant
	6-10 years	3.409	28	0.727				
	11-20 years	3.473	25	0.541				
	21-30 years	3.370	15	0.610				
	31-40 years	3.455	8	0.742				
Years employed at UKZN	5 or less years	3.443	39	0.720	0.158	4, 101	0.959	Not Significant
	6-10 years	3.441	39	0.621				
	11-20 years	3.534	16	0.250				
	21-30 years	3.606	6	0.665				
	31-40 years	3.409	6	0.848				
Status of employment	Permanent	3.450	92	0.616	0.574	3, 102	0.633	Not Significant
	Contract	3.414	9	0.782				
	Part Time	3.545	1	-				
	Other	3.864	4	0.641				

The overall measure of WLB described in section 4.2.3.1 above was tested against the demographic variables presented in Section 4.2.1 which includes race, gender, age, marital

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status, years of experience, number of children and designation of participants. The results in Table 4.5 above show that the demographic variables do not have a significant effect on the academic staff's perceptions on WLB support (all p-values are greater than 0.05). This means that the perceptions that the academic staff have on the university's WLB support are not particularly biased towards a certain demographic group but rather universal across all groupings.

The fact that all demographic groups express similar sentiments may assist management in organisations, and universities in particular, to formulate WLB policies that are similar across the board as it will not make any difference targeting a specific demographic group of academics.

4.2.4. Objective 2: To ascertain the effect of WLB programmes on the decision to stay by academics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal

Objective two was aimed at assessing the impact of WLB programmes on academics' decision to stay or leave. To achieve this, a 15-item scale to measure Intention to Leave or Stay was used. Exploratory factor analysis was also used to split the construct into sub constructs as this was necessary due to a low scale reliability level (Table 4.3: Chronbach's alpha=0.642).

4.2.4.1. Summary of intention to leave or stay

According to the reliability results in Table 4.3, the construct of intention to leave or stay, was shown to have low internal consistency (Chronbach's alpha=0.642). Therefore, there was a need to split the construct into sub-constructs with the hope of getting higher internal consistencies or measurement reliabilities. This splitting was done using exploratory factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is used to explore possible underlying latent factors or variables underlying a set of observed variables, without imposing a preconceived set of constructs, that is, the observed data must bring forth the underlying factors inherent in them (Child, 1990). It is expected that the sub-constructs resulting from exploratory factor analysis will have better reliability statistics. Such sub-constructs are still integral parts of the main construct which is part of the theoretical framework of the study.

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4.2.4.2. Exploratory factor analysis of intention to leave of stay

The 15 questionnaire items of the construct of Intention to Leave or Stay are presented in Section D of the questionnaire with those items that were initially reverse-coded rephrased and recoded to have the same orientation with the other questionnaire items. The exploratory factor analysis results are presented in Table 4.6 below. The EFA results indicate that there are three latent factors which divide the 15 questionnaire items as shown, with the first latent factor comprising of questions D3, D4, D5, D7, D8, D12 and D13. These 7 questionnaire items seem to probe intention to leave based on work related frustration or dissatisfaction hence the suggested name for this sub-construct is "Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction". The seven items have high internal constancy (Chronbach's alpha statistic=0.834).

Table 4.6. Sub-constructs of Intention to Leave or Stay.

Intention to Leave or Stay	Sub-Latent Factor (Sub-construct)		
	1	2	3
D3. To what extent is your current job NOT satisfying your personal needs?	0.537		
D4. How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?	0.609		
D5. How often are your personal values at work compromised?	0.729		
D7. How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?	0.546		
D8. How often do you look forward to another day at work?	0.670		
D12. How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?	0.780		
D13. To what extent does your current job have a negative effect on your personal well-being?	0.819		
D1. How often have you considered leaving your job?		0.608	
D2. How frequently do you scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?		0.853	
D6. How often do dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?		0.743	
D15. How frequently do you scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities?		0.913	
D9. How often do you think about starting your own business?			0.510
D10. To what extent do responsibilities NOT prevent you from quitting your job?			0.432
D11. To what extent do the benefits associated with your current job NOT prevent you from quitting your job?			0.830
D14. To what extent does the "fear of the unknown", NOT prevent you from quitting?			0.657
Chronbach's Alpha	**0.834**	**0.861**	**0.724**
Suggested sub-construct name	**Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction**	**Job Searching Drive**	**Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave**

The second sub-construct comprises of the questions D1, D2, D6 and D15 which point to intention to leave by searching for jobs in various media hence the suggested sub-construct name is "Job Searching Drive". The four items of the Job Searching Drive sub-construct have high internal constancy (Chronbach's alpha statistic=0.861). The third and final sub-construct

of Intention to Leave or Stay has four items, viz., D9, D10, D11 and D14, which are mainly concerned with the possibility of taking the risk to leave no matter what might happen as far as job security is concerned. The suggested name for this sub-construct is "Possibility of Risk Taking and Leaving". The four items of the Possibility of Risk Taking and Leaving sub-construct have adequate internal constancy (Chronbach's alpha statistic=0.724).

4.2.4.3.   Summary of the "Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction" sub-construct

The results presented in Table 4.7 below show that most of the research participants are quite happy with their work. Only 16.4% indicated that their current jobs do not satisfy their personal needs to a large extent (question D3) with the majority being neutral (40.0% in category 3 of the scale) or more positive (43.6% in categories 1 and 2 of the scale). An encouraging 56.4% indicated that they often look forward to another day at work (question D8). In general, this sub-construct has very low levels of negative sentiments hence it can be concluded that work frustration and dissatisfaction is not a major concern at the university.

Table 4.7. Summary of the Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction sub-constructs.

Intention to Leave or Stay: Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction		Frequency Distribution of Likelihood scale					Codes 4+5	Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		1. Never or Highly unlikely	2	3	4	5. Always or Highly likely		
D3. To what extent is your current job NOT satisfying your personal needs?	Freq	10	38	44	14	4	16.4%	0.845
	%	9.1%	34.5%	40.0%	12.7%	3.6%		
D4. How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?	Freq	9	14	44	30	13	39.1%	0.791
	%	8.2%	12.7%	40.0%	27.3%	11.8%		
D5. How often are your personal values at work compromised?	Freq	16	37	27	26	4	27.3%	0.732
	%	14.5%	33.6%	24.5%	23.6%	3.6%		
D7. How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?	Freq	30	23	30	12	14	23.9%	0.677
	%	27.5%	21.1%	27.5%	11.0%	12.8%		
D8. How often do you look forward to another day at work?	Freq	4	12	32	48	14	56.4%	0.652
	%	3.6%	10.9%	29.1%	43.6%	12.7%		
D12. How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?	Freq	25	28	29	22	6	25.5%	0.635
	%	22.7%	25.5%	26.4%	20.0%	5.5%		
D13. To what extent does your current job have a negative effect on your personal well-being?	Freq	17	31	28	19	15	30.9%	0.620
	%	15.5%	28.2%	25.5%	17.3%	13.6%		
Chronbach's Alpha								0.834

4.2.4.4. Summary of the "Job Searching Drive" sub-construct

Results in Table 4.8 show that the job search drive by academic is low at the institution. The percentage of academic staff who indicated that they have often considered leaving their jobs is low (D1: 29.4%), so is the percentage of those who indicated that they frequently scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities (D2: 29.1%). Only 37.3% indicated that they often dream about getting another job that will better suit their personal needs (D6) and only 23.6% indicated that they frequently scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities (D15). While these figures indicate that considerable proportion of academics are looking elsewhere for jobs, they are by far not the majority and might even conform to normal trends.

Table 4.8. Summary of the Job Searching Drive sub-constructs.

Intention to Leave or Stay: Job Searching Drive		Frequency Distribution of Likelihood scale						Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		1. Never or Highly unlikely	2	3	4	5. Always or Highly likely	Codes 4+5	
D1. How often have you considered leaving your job?	Freq	19	31	27	28	4	29.4%	0.904
	%	17.4%	28.4%	24.8%	25.7%	3.7%		
D2. How frequently do you scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?	Freq	30	31	17	19	13	29.1%	0.894
	%	27.3%	28.2%	15.5%	17.3%	11.8%		
D6. How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?	Freq	11	20	38	24	17	37.3%	0.795
	%	10.0%	18.2%	34.5%	21.8%	15.5%		
D15. How frequently do you scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities?	Freq	21	31	32	14	12	23.6%	0.758
	%	19.1%	28.2%	29.1%	12.7%	10.9%		
Chronbach's Alpha								0.861

In short, the job searching drive is very low, but it must be pointed out that most of the respondents preferred to be neutral by selecting option 3 of the questionnaire items.

4.2.4.5. Summary of the "Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave" sub-construct

The results for the sub-construct of Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave as presented in Table 4.9 show that some academics might take the risk of starting their own businesses (D9:

44.5%) and 42.7% indicated that it is not fear of the unknown that prevent them from quitting (D14: 42.7%).

Table 4.9. Summary of the "Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave" sub-constructs.

Intention to Leave or Stay: Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave		Frequency Distribution of Likelihood scale						Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		1. Never or Highly unlikely	2	3	4	5. Always or Highly likely	Codes 4+5	
D9. How often do you think about starting your own business?	Freq	26	17	18	27	22	44.5%	0.795
	%	23.6%	15.5%	16.4%	24.5%	20.0%		
D10. To what extent do responsibilities NOT prevent you from quitting your job?	Freq	30	23	29	14	14	25.5%	0.730
	%	27.3%	20.9%	26.4%	12.7%	12.7%		
D11. To what extent do the benefits associated with your current job NOT prevent you from quitting your job?	Freq	8	18	41	22	21	39.1%	0.639
	%	7.3%	16.4%	37.3%	20.0%	19.1%		
D14. To what extent does the "fear of the unknown", NOT prevent you from quitting?	Freq	11	21	31	24	23	42.7%	0.397
	%	10.0%	19.1%	28.2%	21.8%	20.9%		
Chronbach's Alpha								0.724

There is a balanced perspective as far as risk taking and leaving is concerned. There is no absence of risk taking on the part of academic staff but at the same time there are no indication that academics are notorious risk takers as far as leaving their jobs is concerned.

4.2.5. Objective 3: To ascertain the impact of perceived WLB support and academics commitment to the organisation

Objective 3's goal was to learn more about the effect of perceived WLB support and how it affects academics' commitment to the organisation. In order to achieve this, organisational commitment and WLB scales were used and some correlations were computed to investigate the connection between intention to leave and organisational commitment.

4.2.5.1. Summary of organisational commitment

The construct of organisational commitment had 15 questionnaire items which were presented in Section C of the questionnaire. Some of the items were negatively worded with a

response of "Strongly Agree" indicating a negative sentiment in the respondent. Such questions had to be reverse-coded so that a high score would be indicative of a positive sentiment. The questions had to be re-worded in the results presentation to tally with the reverse-coding. The re-worded questions are C3, C7, C9, C11, C12 and C15 which are now expressed as shown in Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10. Summary statistics of organisational commitment.

Organisational Commitment		Frequency Distribution					Agree & Strongly agree	Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
C1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.	Freq	4	10	14	54	29	74.8%	0.484
	%	3.6%	9.0%	12.6%	48.6%	26.1%		
C2. I talk up this organisation to my friends as a great organisation to work for.	Freq	10	19	40	33	8	37.3%	0.758
	%	9.1%	17.3%	36.4%	30.0%	7.3%		
C3. I feel A LOT OF loyalty to this organisation.	Freq	4	9	24	41	32	66.4%	0.499
	%	3.6%	8.2%	21.8%	37.3%	29.1%		
C4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.	Freq	42	45	16	8	0	7.2%	0.446
	%	37.8%	40.5%	14.4%	7.2%	0.0%		
C5. I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar.	Freq	13	28	36	26	8	30.6%	0.745
	%	11.7%	25.2%	32.4%	23.4%	7.2%		
C6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.	Freq	11	12	21	46	21	60.4%	0.773
	%	9.9%	10.8%	18.9%	41.4%	18.9%		
C7. I could NOT be working for a different organisation with similar type of work.	Freq	18	31	33	20	9	26.1%	0.617
	%	16.2%	27.9%	29.7%	18.0%	8.1%		
C8. This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	Freq	13	30	31	31	6	33.3%	0.788
	%	11.7%	27.0%	27.9%	27.9%	5.4%		
C9. It would TAKE A GREAT DEAL of change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation.	Freq	10	15	39	35	12	42.3%	0.326
	%	9.0%	13.5%	35.1%	31.5%	10.8%		
C10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined	Freq	4	19	42	38	7	40.9%	0.632
	%	3.6%	17.3%	38.2%	34.5%	6.4%		
C11. There's a LOT to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.	Freq	12	17	38	29	14	39.1%	0.646
	%	10.9%	15.5%	34.5%	26.4%	12.7%		
C12. Often, I find EASY to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	Freq	22	45	21	20	3	20.7%	0.684
	%	19.8%	40.5%	18.9%	18.0%	2.7%		
C13. I really care about the fate of this organisation.	Freq	2	9	20	62	18	72.1%	0.354
	%	1.8%	8.1%	18.0%	55.9%	16.2%		
C14. For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.	Freq	15	31	44	16	4	18.2%	0.768
	%	13.6%	28.2%	40.0%	14.5%	3.6%		
C15. Deciding to work for this organisation was NOT a mistake on my part.	Freq	2	5	29	31	44	67.6%	0.590
	%	1.8%	4.5%	26.1%	27.9%	39.6%		
Chronbach's Alpha								0.881

The items in the construct of organisational commitment had very high internal consistency hence they concur in their measurement of the intended overall variable to represent organisational commitment. There was no need to split this construct into sub-constructs as all item that constitute the construct are internally consistent. The principal components analysis based latent factor coefficients show that all of the 15 items contribute significantly to the overall measure of organisational commitment (coefficients range from 0.326 to 0.788). The computation of the overall measure of organisational commitment involved all of the 15 items in a weighting scheme determined by the latent factor coefficients.

Results in Table 4.10 above and Figure 4.2 below show the various items that constitute organisational commitment and how well embraced the commitment items are by the academic staff at the university. The results show that the least supported dimension of organisational commitment is willingness to work outside one's job descriptions (C4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation) with only 7.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing. The most supported dimension of organisational commitment is hard work (C1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected to help this organisation to be successful) with 74.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing. The ranking of the support levels of each of the dimension of organisational commitment are presented in Figure 4.2.

There is a general agreement that the respondents cared about the fate of their organisation (C13: 72.1%), that they feel making the decision to work for the organisation was not a mistake (C15: 67.6%), that most respondents had loyalty to the organisation (C3: 66.4%) and the feeling of pride in telling others that they are part of this organisation (C6: 60.4%). However, very few of the respondents believe that the university is the best of all possible organisations for which to work (C14: 18.2%). This gives the university an opportunity to change the mind set of those who are not convinced by offering them WLB policies that help them to develop an attachment towards to the university. The fact that only 18.2% felt that the university was the best of all possible organisations for which to work means that the given the chance, the majority of the academic employees would leave. An investigation into whether a better WLB policy would change this mind-set would be worthwhile. This study might offer some insight into the impact a better WLB would improve or change this mind-set.

Figure 4.2. Ranked organisational commitment items.

Organisational Commitment

Commitment item	Percetage Agree/strongly agree
C1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be…	74.8%
C13. I really care about the fate of this organisation.	72.1%
C15. Deciding to work for this organisation was NOT a mistake on my part.	67.6%
C3. I feel A LOT OF loyalty to this organisation.	66.4%
C6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.	60.4%
C9. It would TAKE A GREAT DEAL of change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation.	42.3%
C10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined	40.9%
C11. There's a LOT to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.	39.1%
C2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organisation to work for.	37.3%
C8. This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	33.3%
C5. I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar.	30.6%
C7. I could NOT be working for a different organisation with similat type of work.	26.1%
C12. Often, I find EASY to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.	20.7%
C14. For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.	18.2%
C4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.	7.2%

4.2.5.2. Summary of Work-life balance

The Work-Life Balance construct consists of 12 questionnaire items with high internal consistency hence high reliability (Table 4.3: Chronbach's alpha statistic=0.828). There was no real need to split this construct hence the 12 items were summarised together. The

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construct probes the existence of work-life balance programmes and how well they are communicated to academic staff.

As shown in Table 4.11, only 7.3% of the respondents indicated on the positive that work-life balance programmes are communicated to them adequately (E1) while only 6.3% indicated that the university encourages them to use the work life balance programmes in the university (E2). The low approval rates of these two items show that the university has not done much in terms of putting in place work-life balance programmes in place, and if they do exist, they are not well communicated to the academic staff hence there is low utilisation of such programmes.

Table 4.11. Summary of the work-life balance.

Work-Life Balance		Frequency Distribution of Likelihood scale						Latent Factor (Principal component) Coefficient
		1. Never or Highly unlikely	2	3	4	5. Always or Highly likely	Codes 4+5	
E1. Work life balance programmes are communicated to me adequately	Freq	48	29	25	7	1	7.3%	0.787
	%	43.6%	26.4%	22.7%	6.4%	0.9%		
E2. The university encourages me to use the work life balance programmes	Freq	45	27	32	6	1	6.3%	0.768
	%	40.5%	24.3%	28.8%	5.4%	0.9%		
E3. When I go on leave, I am able to enjoy myself and not think about my work	Freq	23	36	22	22	8	27.0%	0.727
	%	20.7%	32.4%	19.8%	19.8%	7.2%		
E4. The demands of my job DO NOT interfere with my life outside work	Freq	20	36	17	27	11	34.2%	0.703
	%	18.0%	32.4%	15.3%	24.3%	9.9%		
E5. The demands of my job DO NOT result in me getting irritable at home	Freq	9	20	27	34	21	49.5%	0.654
	%	8.1%	18.0%	24.3%	30.6%	18.9%		
E6. Work demands DO NOT result in me withdrawing from my family	Freq	10	17	26	29	27	51.4%	0.643
	%	9.2%	15.6%	23.9%	26.6%	24.8%		
E7. The demands of my spouse/family DO NOT interfere with my job	Freq	5	11	21	37	36	66.4%	0.637
	%	4.5%	10.0%	19.1%	33.6%	32.7%		
E8. I DO NOT fail to accomplish things at work due to my family spouse/partner's demands	Freq	3	3	18	43	44	78.4%	0.574
	%	2.7%	2.7%	16.2%	38.7%	39.6%		
E9. I DO NOT have to put some of my work on hold due to my family demands	Freq	3	14	21	42	31	65.8%	0.573
	%	2.7%	12.6%	18.9%	37.8%	27.9%		
E10. My family needs DO NOT interfere with my work	Freq	2	8	21	40	40	72.1%	0.325
	%	1.8%	7.2%	18.9%	36.0%	36.0%		
E11. My job DOES NOT encroach into my family time more than I would like it to	Freq	15	27	26	24	19	38.7%	0.288
	%	13.5%	24.3%	23.4%	21.6%	17.1%		
E12. I DO NOT find it difficult to balance my work and non-work duties	Freq	9	19	33	33	17	45.0%	0.205
	%	8.1%	17.1%	29.7%	29.7%	15.3%		
Chronbach's Alpha								0.828

As shown in Figure 4.3 below, most of the respondents indicated that they do not fail to accomplish their work due to family demands (E8: 78.4%) and that their families do not interfere with their work (E10: 72.1%). In general, the rank order of the WLB items show that, while the academic staff do not compromise on the quality of work they do, their work affect the quality of their family life.

Figure 4.3. Ranked work-life balance items.
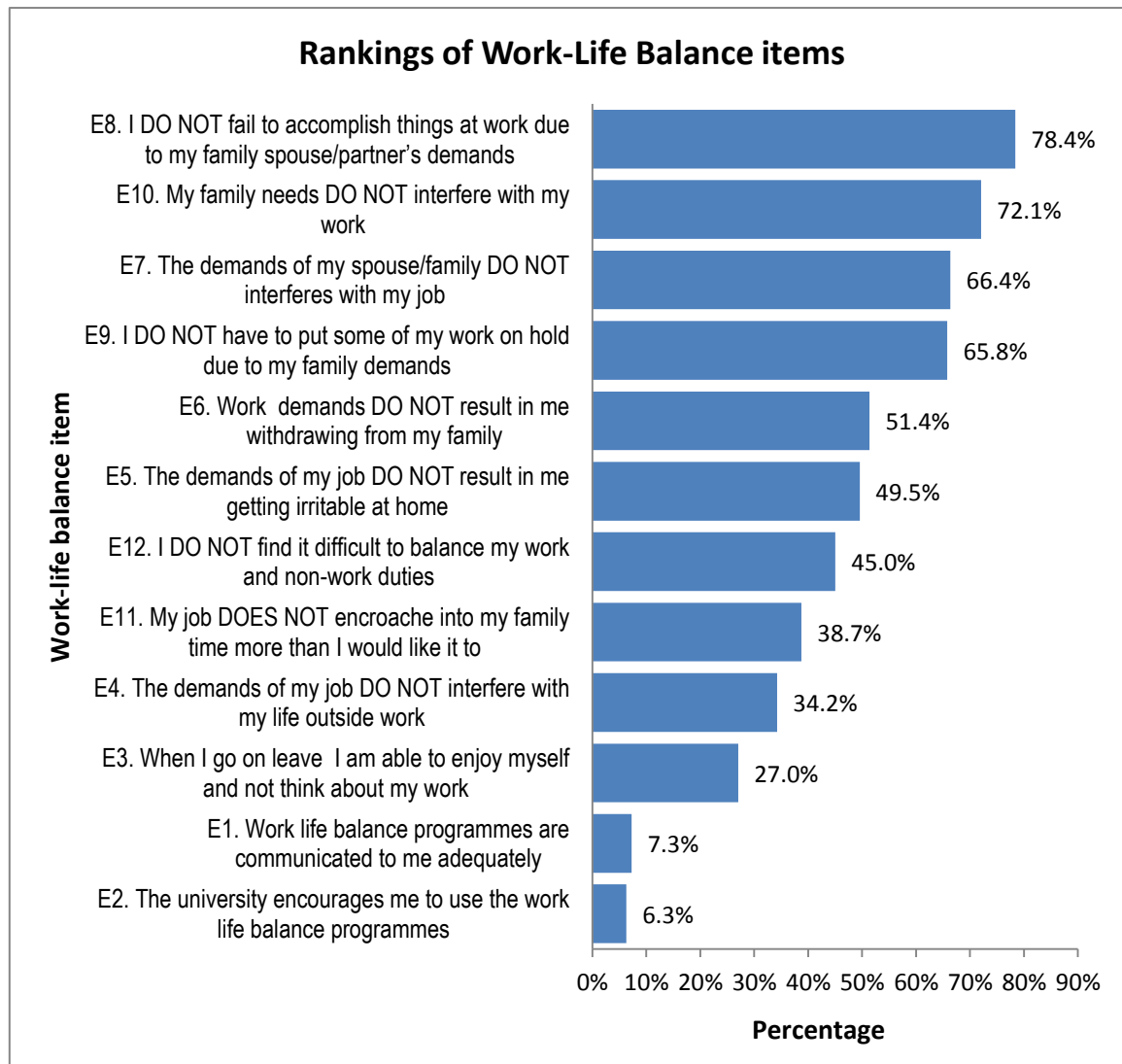
This is because performance related items top the ranks while family happiness items are generally at the bottom of the ranking, for example, question E3 (When I go on leave I am able to enjoy myself and not think about my work) had only 27.0% positive rating. This would seem to suggest that the academic staff believe that, while they do their best to perform at work, there is no reciprocal effort from the university to alleviate work related problems at home.

4.2.5.3. Effect of WLB programmes on the Intention to leave or stay by academic staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

Three sub-constructs of intention to leave or stay were developed using exploratory factor analysis in Section 4.2.4.1 and work-life balance programmes were summarised in Section 4.2.5.2 above. In this section, statistical tests were carried out to probe for the possible causal effect of work-life balance programmes on intention to leave or stay.

Results in Table 4.12 show that there are negative correlations between the existence of work-life balance programmes at the university and awareness thereof by academic staff, and the two intention to leave sub-constructs, namely, work frustration and dissatisfaction (correlation=-0.454, p-value<0.001) and job searching drive (correlation=-0.269, p-value=0.005).

Table 4.12. Correlations between intention to leave or stay and work-life balance programmes.

Pearson's Correlations		Intention to leave or stay		
		Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction	Job Searching Drive	Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave
Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction	Correlation	-		
	p-value			
	N			
Job Searching Drive	Correlation	0.523**		
	p-value	0.000		
	N	108		
Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave	Correlation	-0.328**	-0.124	
	p-value	0.001	0.197	
	N	109	109	
Work-Life Balance	Correlation	-0.454**	-0.269**	0.241*
	p-value	<0.001	0.005	0.013
	N	105	105	106
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

These two negative correlations mean that the proper constitution and communication of work-life balance programmes at the university will reverse the intention to leave by

academic staff at the institution by reducing work frustration and dissatisfaction and a job searching drive.

However, there is a positive and significant correlation between work-life balance programmes and the possibility of taking the risk to leave (correlation=0.241, p-value=0.013). The correlation is of a small effect size and it means that the risk takers cannot be stopped by any properly constituted work-life balance programmes. In fact, the possibility of taking the risk to leave is also negatively and significantly correlated with work frustration and dissatisfaction (correlation=-0.328, p-value=0.001). This means that the risk takers are not necessarily frustrated and dissatisfied at work. This seems to point to the fact that the risk takers are not necessarily those who are frustrated at work, but rather those who have bigger dreams or generally love risk taking.

4.2.5.4. The impact of perceived WLB support on academics commitment to the organisation

The causal relationship between WLB and organisational commitment is presented in Table 4.13 below. The regression model for Organisational Commitment as a dependent variable and WLB as an independent variable indicate that a unit increase in WLB will positively increase Organisational Commitment by 0.349 (coefficient=0.349, p-value<0.001) as measured on the 5-point Likert scale. This means that there is need to focus on WLB as it positively improves organisational commitment and possibly employee retention. It is also possible to fit a regression analysis of Organisational Commitment as a response or dependent variable and all the items of WLB as independent variable.

Table 4.13. Regression of organisational commitment on WLB

Dependent Variable: Organisational Commitment	Coefficients		T-tests of parameters		
	B	Std. Error	t	p-value	Comment
(Constant)	2.058	0.289	7.111	<0.001	
Work-Life Balance	0.349	0.089	3.918	<0.001	Significant

4.2.6. Objective 4: To explore ways in which academics can be assisted in achieving a balance between work and their personal lives

In order to achieve Objective 4, participants were asked to identify the WLB interventions that were available and have been used and also interventions that were not available but which were needed. The questionnaire items under this section were not on the Likert scale hence they cannot be summarised into one latent factor. Such variables are best described by means of frequency distributions. The summary statistics presented in Table 4.14 and Figures 4.4 and 4.5 describe some of the WLB intervention strategies that were identified by the respondents and whether they are fully utilised.

4.2.6.1. Interventions not available but needed

Results in Table 4.14 and Figure 4.4 show that the most needed intervention is that the organisation should provide financial assistance for staff children off-site (F10: 54.6%). At the moment, children and spouses of academic staff who qualify to study at the university are entitled to a 100% fee remission, but those who cannot qualify to study at the university do not have the same privilege if their chosen study programmes at other universities are also offered at the institution.

Time and stress management training (F8) is another intervention strategy that, to some considerable extent, was indicated to be required or needed to be communicated better. Other intervention strategies that were indicated to be not available but needed include breast-feeding time (F11: 41.8%) and better child facilities on-site (F9: 41.6%). The university has pre-school facilities for both staff and students on the Pietermaritzburg campus but other child facilities such as sports could also be included.

4.2.6.2. Interventions available and used

The university does have some work-life balance interventions strategies in place that are used by academic staff. These intervention strategies are presented in Figure 4.5 below where they are ranked in order of most used. The most used intervention strategy is that of paid maternity or paternity leave (F13) with 64.6% of the respondents indicating that they have used this facility or they are aware of other academic staff who have used it.

Other intervention strategies that are known by academic staff to be available and used are
sabbatical leave (F14: 61.5%), bereavement leave (F12: 48.5%), and wellness programmes
(F15: 45.1%).

Table 4.14. Summary of Interventions in order to achieve WLB.

Interventions in order to achieve work-life balance		Frequency Distribution			
		Not available but needed	Not available but NOT needed	Available and used	Available but not used
F1. Job sharing eg. Two or more people share one job.	Freq	31	42	31	1
	%	29.5%	40.0%	29.5%	1.0%
F2. Part time eg. Where an individual works less than a full time equivalent.	Freq	26	47	20	13
	%	24.5%	44.3%	18.9%	12.3%
F3. Compressed week.	Freq	30	61	9	4
	%	28.8%	58.7%	8.7%	3.8%
F4. Flexi-time.	Freq	32	24	47	0
	%	31.1%	23.3%	45.6%	0.0%
F5. Tele- working.	Freq	21	50	23	8
	%	20.6%	49.0%	22.5%	7.8%
F6. Counselling of employees.	Freq	31	15	25	34
	%	29.5%	14.3%	23.8%	32.4%
F7. Employment Assistance Programmes (EAP).	Freq	37	18	24	20
	%	37.4%	18.2%	24.2%	20.2%
F8. Time and stress management training.	Freq	44	17	19	22
	%	43.1%	16.7%	18.6%	21.6%
F9. Child facilities on-site.	Freq	42	25	13	21
	%	41.6%	24.8%	12.9%	20.8%
F10. Financial assistance for children off-site.	Freq	53	31	6	7
	%	54.6%	32.0%	6.2%	7.2%
F11. Breast-feeding time.	Freq	38	29	11	13
	%	41.8%	31.9%	12.1%	14.3%
F12. Bereavement leave.	Freq	22	10	48	19
	%	22.2%	10.1%	48.5%	19.2%
F13. Paid maternity or paternity leave.	Freq	6	11	62	17
	%	6.3%	11.5%	64.6%	17.7%
F14. Sabbatical leave.	Freq	5	7	64	28
	%	4.8%	6.7%	61.5%	26.9%
F15. Wellness programmes.	Freq	20	7	46	29
	%	19.6%	6.9%	45.1%	28.4%
Chronbach's Alpha					0.814

Figure 4.4. Ranked interventions that are not available but needed.
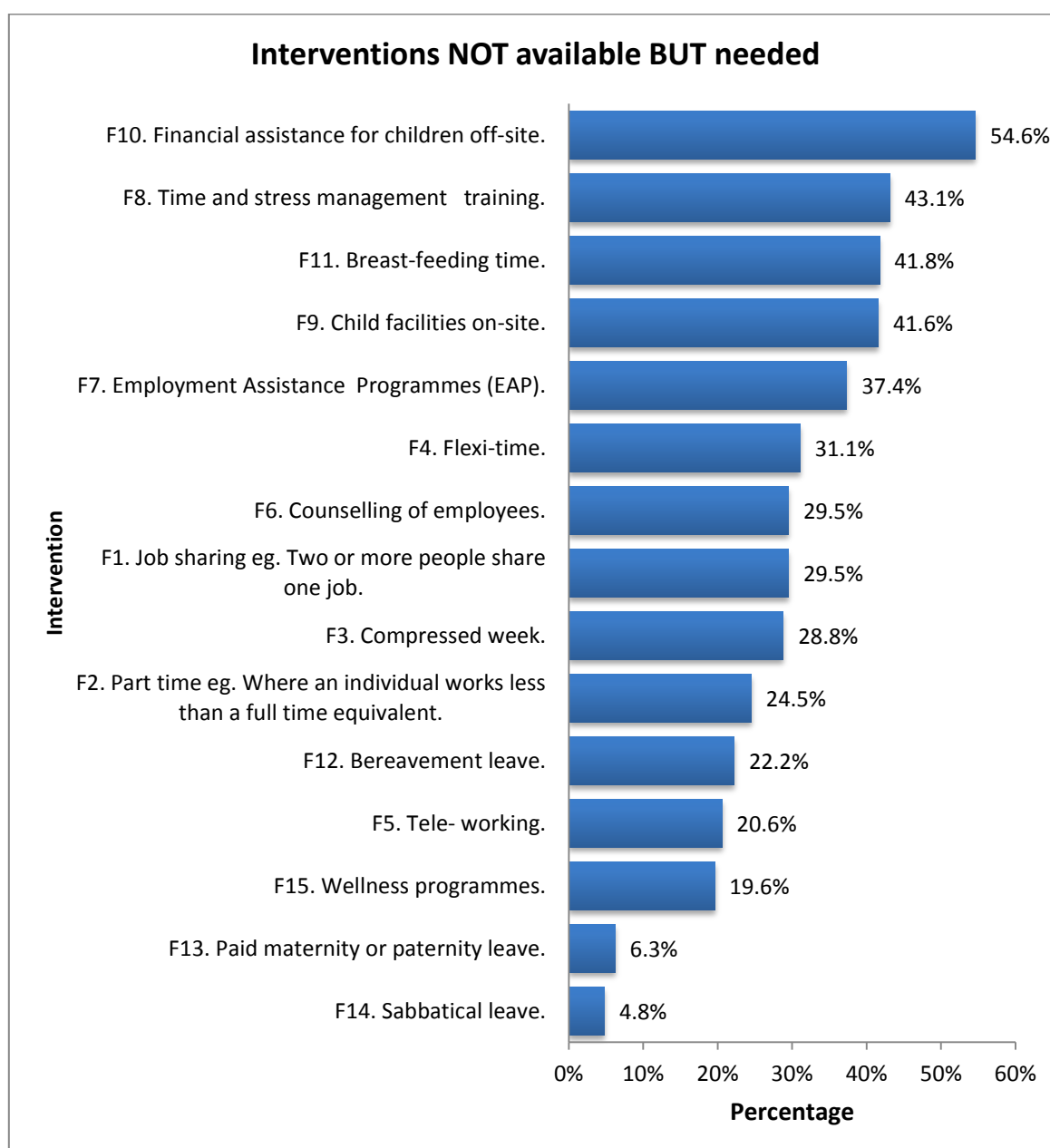
These results from Figure 4.4. above and figure 4.5 below are an indication, with no doubt, that employees' awareness with regards to WLB policies and practices at UKZN, at the Pietermaritzburg campus in particular, is low. Some academics seem not to be sure of which policies were available and which ones were not available at UKZN. For example, a small percentage of participants showed that sabbatical leave (4.8%) and paid maternity or paternity leave (6.3%) were not available yet they were at the top of the list of interventions available and used. Possible explanation could be lack of communication of these policies to

employees and the fact that those facilities that were actually available may be difficult to access.

Figure 4.5. Ranked interventions that are available and used.

Interventions available and Used

Intervention	Percentage
F13. Paid maternity or paternity leave.	64.6%
F14. Sabbatical leave.	61.5%
F12. Bereavement leave.	48.5%
F4. Flexi-time.	45.6%
F15. Wellness programmes.	45.1%
F1. Job sharing eg. Two or more people share one job.	29.5%
F7. Employment Assistance Programmes (EAP).	24.2%
F6. Counselling of employees.	23.8%
F5. Tele- working.	22.5%
F2. Part time eg. Where an individual works less than a full time equivalent.	18.9%
F8. Time and stress management training.	18.6%
F9. Child facilities on-site.	12.9%
F11. Breast-feeding time.	12.1%
F3. Compressed week.	8.7%
F10. Financial assistance for children off-site.	6.2%

These results seem to indicate the importance of policy communication to employees so that they are able to use such policies to attain balance in their work and personal experiences. Policy communication is critical to both parties as they will realise the mutual benefits.

4.2.7. Responses to open-ended questions of the quantitative questionnaire

The open-ended questionnaire consisted of two questions. These open-ended questions were for the purpose of probing participants' experiences of WLB and gave them a chance to say out their concerns with regards to WLB at University of KwaZulu-Natal. The questions read:

- "What do you think the university could do to improve your WLB?" and
- "Any other comments about WLB?"

A total of 17 themes emerged from the open-ended questions. The individual responses provided by each participant were analysed and it was clear which aspects of their work had an impact on their ability to achieve a work-life balance. After carefully analysing the responses several themes were developed as participants kept repeating certain aspects. Compiling participant's responses in a tabular format (Table 4.15) allowed the researcher to scrutinise the participants' perception of WLB at the University of KwaZulu-Natal Pietermaritzburg campus. Below are the themes that emerged from 82 participants who responded to the open-ended question:

Table 4.15 Themes emerging from open-ended questions

	Themes emerging	Frequency
1	Review pressure on research productivity and increased workload	34
2	Employer should consider employee welfare when setting performance management	18
3	Need for family and work supportive policies	18
4	Grant sabbatical leave when due	11
5	Promote social events that encourage inter-disciplinary interaction	6
6	Better pay and be considerate to employee	6
7	Address chronic understaffing in different disciplines	5
8	Consider providing facilities to work from home and reward publications	4
9	Employer should respond to staff queries in time	3
10	Better teaching facilities	3
11	Involve employee in decision making	3
12	Part-time employees/contract workers to be given workload and remuneration that is fair	3
13	Desist from initiating after hours/weekend programmes that interfere with personal life	3
14	Review academic administrative work	3
15	Improved wellness programmes and facilities	2
16	Enrol a calibre of students who do not need extreme academic support	2
17	Avoid rioting on campuses which results in lengthened semesters	1

Table 4.15 above lists the themes that came out of the responses to the open ended questions. It appears most participants were not happy with their current workload as well as pressure being put on them to publish (34 respondents indicated this). This led to the development of a theme 'Review pressure on research productivity and increased workload' which was mentioned 34 times. Here are some of the direct quotes that typify mutual opinions and views of some academics:

"The current demands are so onerous that either you give up or you become a workaholic with no private life and work 16 hours a day".

"Supervision hours need to be cut down including the number of students per lecturer".

"The expectations are unrealistic for staff who are working and studying at the same time".

"The work pressure and rating standard of the university is too much. Most employees feel very overwhelmed, are often stressed and just come to work not because they enjoy it but have to".

Another theme that seemed to feature frequently was, 'Employer should consider employee welfare when setting performance management' which was mentioned 18 times. Here participants expressed their dissatisfaction with how performance management was currently conducted and was a source of anxiety affecting their work as well as personal life. Below are some quotes that typify the mutual views:

"Having flexible performance management system that is not punitive in nature".

"Academics are often more committed to the well-being of the university (UKZN) than UKZN is to the well-being of academics".

"There is need for tailored performance management structures".

"The current 'one size fits all' performance management is insulting to many academics in my school being highly stressed and over-worked to the detriment of their physical and mental health and their relationships outside of work".

'The need for family and work supportive policies' was another theme that was developed and it was mentioned 18 times. It seemed that participants desired the university to put in place policies that helped them achieve a balance in both the family and work domains. This is indicated by the following quotations:

"The university need to develop policies and programmes that develop and nature the development of their employees currently the working environment is not conducive to

work productivity. HR should take on active role in looking after their employees. Currently it seems as though the university is more concerned about work productivity at the expense of their employees. The university does not care about the wellbeing of their employees".

"The university can reduce the teaching that will give the mums an opportunity to get more publications… because if a woman works after hours, it is at the expenses of neglecting her family/responsibilities".

"…the centralisation and re-organisation of UKZN in 2012 has not created an organisation which supports academic work".

"Have a family day at the University"

The granting of sabbatical leave when due was a major issue that was raised by many participants. This was developed into a theme 'Grant sabbatical leave when due' which had a frequency of 11. It is now a university requirement for academic staff to be in possession of a PhD at UKZN or be working towards attaining one. For this reason, academics yet to acquire a PhD qualification find themselves under pressure from both teaching and studying at the same time. It appears, as indicated from the responses listed below, that the non-granting of sabbatical leave is a major source of imbalance from work and personal life:

"Sabbatical leave is available in theory but there is no one to do my job should I take sabbatical leave. I have not been able to take sabbatical leave since being employed in the early 2000s"

"More staff to assist while on leave or away so you won't be forced to engage with work while away"

"I think the university should allow staff members that are currently studying to have a study period, so that they can focus on their thesis since it is a requirement by university for all staff members to study and work at the same time"

"I have applied for sabbatical leave to write my PhD thesis; I hope it can be granted"

Another theme that was mentioned frequently was that of the need for employees to mix with colleagues throughout the University on a social capacity for them to mingle, share ideas and distress. The theme developed was 'Promote social events that encourage inter-disciplinary interaction'. This was mentioned six times and summarised into the following direct quotes:

"More frequent events to promote interaction between interdisciplinary and inter-campus staff members"

"Increase the social interaction space. Currently, there are offices and tea-spaces, but this is insufficient. There is need for additional recreational spaces such as bar/cafeteria /games place".

"Facilities for distressing are available, written in documents but visibility is poor. University to organise day/time off work to play and distress".

The next theme with higher frequencies was the issue of chronic understaffing within certain disciplines in the University. The theme was developed as, 'Address chronic understaffing in different disciplines' and this was mentioned five times. This appeared to be a major concern raised which had the potential to disrupt participants' WLB. Understaffing implies extra workload to the current academic staff and it means they will not be able to be as flexible as they would want to be since they will be covering for the gaps not filled. The following are some of their comments representing common concerns:

"There is need for additional academic staff in my discipline to cope with the postgrad supervision load often posts are released based only on undergrad numbers"

"There is need to recruit more administration staff so time is not spend doing admin work, forcing one to complete academic activities"

"The main issue is that in my discipline we are systemically and chronically understaffed; Things like sabbatical leave while available are often not granted due to staff shortage".

Another theme that was frequently mentioned was the tendency of the university to introduce or schedule programmes or training during weekends or after hours. This caused employees to spend more time away from their families resulting in work-life conflict. One participant said,

"My major problem is the need to teach on Saturdays due to part-time education students. This has a huge impact on my WLB".

Late or non-response to employee complaints by the HR department was another issue that seemed to be an evident source of frustration by participants. It led to the development of a theme 'employer should respond to staff queries in time' and had a frequency of three. The HR department's failure or late response to queries may be interpreted as lack of care by the organisation which can impact worker's decision to leave as indicated by participants' comments who said,

"*There is some incompetence in the HR office, it is impossible to have queries answered*"

and

"*Staff leave because their requests are simply ignored*".

Other themes that featured prominently were 'Consider providing facilities to work from home and reward publications' this featured four times; 'better teaching facilities' was mentioned three times; 'involve employee in decision making' was also mentioned three times; 'review academic administrative work' was mentioned three times. 'improved wellness programmes and facilities' was another theme that emerged and was mentioned two times; enrol a calibre of students who do not need extreme academic support' had a frequency of two; and avoid rioting on campuses which results in lengthened semesters.

4.3.   Qualitative analysis

In this section, findings from the in-depth interviews conducted on five randomly selected senior academic staff at the UKZN, Pietermaritzburg Campus are presented. These findings are presented from the responses to the interview guide which is attached as Appendix B.

4.3.1. Demographics

A total of five lecturers participated in the in-depth interviews and these were four females and one male. All participants were married and had children implying that they had family responsibilities. Of the five participants, two were White and the other three were Black. Among the five participants one was a Full Professor and another one was an Associate Professor and both were academic leaders. Regarding qualifications, four of the participants had PhDs and one held a Master's degree. Below is a table showing details of all five interviewees.

Table 4.16. Participants' description

Participant number	Race	Gender	Number of years employed at UKZN	Marital status	Qualifications	Designation
(1)	White	Female	13	Married	PhD	Associate professor
(2)	African	Female	11	Married	PhD	Lecturer
(3)	African	Male	6	Married	PhD	Full professor
(4)	African	Female	3	Married	Masters	Lecturer
(5)	White	Female	3	Married	PhD	Lecturer

4.3.2. Objective 1: identifying academic staff's perception of the university support and encouragement of the use of WLB programmes

In order to understand the academic staff's perceptions towards the support they get from the university, participants were asked to describe what they perceived and understood to be the meaning of WLB. All five participants interviewed described their idea of WLB as engaging in their daily paid work as well as having enough time to attend to other activities outside work. Participants number one and two's responses were,

> *"How to mind work and other experiences out of work"* and *"to be able to have life outside work" respectively.*

Theme One: University support

This theme provided some insights into WLB practices offered by the University to support its employees by way of organisational culture, manager and supervisor support in order to achieve a balance. The results from the interviews reveals that in terms of organisational culture, there was a general consensus that the management was not supportive enough to its employees, for instance, the issue of responding late or failing to respond at all to employee's queries. This, as mentioned earlier on in the open-ended question in section 4.2.10 above, causes employees to be frustrated and may decrease their loyalty to the organisation. Participant number one commended that,

> *"If you want something and ask them invariably they don't give you an answer and they do not respond to your emails and it's very frustrating".*

Participant number four was of the same opinion as she said,

> *"People at the top are not accessible and they are the decision makers for your life, there must be a sense that this university values their staff".*

However, participant number two and five differed as they believed that managerial support depended on line managers. For example, participant number two was happy with the support she gets from her line manager while participant number five indicated that her line manager;

> *"...was not the strict type he allows me to be flexible like I can pop out and go to the doctor with my sick child which is nice".*

One participant expressed dissatisfaction at lack of support for women academics. She said there was a tendency by the organisation to assume that man and women work at the same level.

> "*The organisation should have some support for women academics for example bringing someone to look after the children while you are doing your research".*

In terms of providing for social life, the analysis reveals that the university was not doing enough to provide social support for academics to interact with colleagues. Similarly, upon being asked whether participants had worked for another university before coming to UKZN, participant number three said he had worked in two different universities and mentioned that UKZN compared poorly with the previous ones in terms of work environment and social support to the employees. Participant number two also complained that,

> "*We used to have tea time everyone knew its 10:30 – time for tea and you meet with other colleagues".*

Common places for academics are necessary as they give them a chance to support each other on matters of work, particularly research matters, and personal life.

Sub theme: work demands/work overload

The research findings indicated that academics are faced with massive work overload especially at the end of the semester when they mark examination scripts and get the semester marks ready. Most of them indicated that working after hours and weekends during these peak periods was inevitable.

> "*That can be challenging during those times of high pressure during the year, you cannot juggle it"* (participant number five).

> "*We mark manuscripts at home and on weekends which create conflicts with the family* (participant number three).

Participant number one and three were both academic leaders which meant that they had extra workload than ordinary lecturers. As academic leaders, they are expected to publish at least two articles per year. Besides that, they also supervise PhD and Masters students, they teach, do administrative work as well as normal teaching. This is what they had to say regarding their workload,

"My day is all about sorting out problems and as a result I get to do very little work, so I go home and start work at home, I can't really get anything done at work", (participant number one)

"It's not possible for an academic leader to work an eight-hour day, there is no time" (participant three).

It appeared from the results, that understaffing contributed to work overload in some academics. The criteria that is used to select academic staff was seen as restrictive and as a result the university is unable to get the right people in time to fill the vacancies in some departments causing current academics to carry extra load because of staff shortages.

"Institutionally we found it difficult to appoint someone to the post because of various HR requirements" (participant number five).

"Our criteria is too high like for lecturers' level you have to be an African South African and you must have three years' experience" (participant number one).

The majority of the participants expressed concern with the amount of administrative work that they have to do. This increased their work pressure at the same time taking time away from their families, even time they are supposed to be doing academic work. This is evident in the following comments:

"Recently introduced paper work that is, the filling in of forms online seems to be taking too much time, and I find it a bit annoying to fill".

(participant number two with participant's number one and four sharing the same sentiments).

4.3.3. Objective 2: To ascertain the effect of WLB programmes on the decision to stay by academics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal

In order to determine academics intention to leave the university, academics were asked two questions, that is, if they have considered leaving UKZN for another university, and if they had ever considered leaving academia for another profession at all.

Theme two: Work satisfaction

This theme looks at what drives academic staff to stay with the organisation in relation to WLB programmes. Responses on whether participants had considered leaving UKZN for

another university showed that three out of the five participants were always thinking of joining other universities.

> "*Yes, given the opportunity it is always nice to see what is offered elsewhere*" (participant number two).

It appears that, what seems to be keeping academics from leaving was their love to teach, for example, participant number four said,

> "*It is the students, I feel much needed by students not by the institution, the institution can go a long way to treat us better*".

Of particular interest was the responses given when participants were asked if they had considered leaving academia for another profession. Most participants except one did not wish for a profession change, which seem to suggest that academics were committed to their work regardless of frustrations and work pressure. Participants' number one, four and five indicated that they enjoy teaching, especially seeing struggling students improving and excelling.

> "*...I am so proud of them when they send acknowledgements, I think that is what I love about the job*". (participant number one).

While the push for publications had an impact on academics WLB, participants commented that there were positive aspects about it, such as

> "*bringing the best in staff resulting in quality*" (participant number four) and "*this university is about publication and more publication but you can bring it back to teaching*". (participant number one).

> "*Academia gives you the opportunities to be among a group of thinkers were ideas are brewed*". (participant number four).

The above results can be taken to imply that if academics find some positive aspects offered by the organisation, then they are prepared to offer their services regardless of the workload and other work frustrations.

4.3.4. Objective 3: To ascertain the impact of perceived WLB support and academics commitment to the organisation

Theme three: WLB satisfaction

In order to determine participants' perceptions on WLB support, and their commitment to the organisation, the participants were asked about what they value about UKZN. Their responses revealed that the participants were happy with some WLB policies, for instance, participant number five said,

> "*We have one of the best maternity leave. UKZN gives you 90 working days at full pay which can translate to over four working months*".

Similarly participant number two expressed satisfaction with support she gets from management. Participant number three was happy with the level of control he posses with regards to the execution of his duties and participant number four said that:

> "*Their training is fantastic*".

Sub-theme: flexibility

The ability to be flexible was one of the positive aspect that was appreciated by academics about their job. Another theme that came out was that despite other issues that entail academia, there is greater flexibility allows them to attend to other nonwork issues

> "*…attend to other things as long as it is outside your lecture time, I am able to come out of office and do those things*". (participant number two).

There is also flexibility in terms of how academics structure their work. For example,

> "*…what you do is influenced by yourself for instance you determine the number of postgraduate students you want to supervise*" (participant number three).

All five participants were happy with their ability to be flexible as it allowed them to achieve some sort of work-life balance as indicated by participant number one who said;

> "*Academia is nice because I do not stay here until 5pm. I usually go home around 2pm, from 2pm I relax a bit then start my work, so flexibility helps me because there are other things that I can do*".

4.3.5. Objective 4: To explore ways in which academics can be assisted in achieving a balance between work and their personal lives

Theme four: WLB programmes

This theme is concerned with ideas and suggestions that were put across by participants that will enable them to achieve a better work-life balance. There was a general consensus among participants that academics have to decide on how they can best achieve their own balance as participant number five commented;

"*WLB is something which each person has to figure out what works out for them*".

However, other participants felt that there was a lot that the university could do to ensure that academic staff could attain a work-life balance. There was need for the university to exercise equity across the board.

"*We are all lecturers but we don't get the same conditions*" (participant number four).

In addition, participants one and five were of the view that some individuals can get away with doing so little work than others all because

"*…there is nobody watching you so you have actually nobody breathing on your neck asking you where are you*" (participant number one).

Participants were also of the opinion that the university should be more consultative when implementing new policies which will enable employees to have a say on what they want.

"*There are many structural issues which as a result are causing lecturers to do things they are not supposed to be doing which results in lecturers taking away the quality of time as well as quality of research that you are trying to come up with. Where do you get the time?*" (Participant number four).

Therefore, what is stemming from the analysis above is the fact that employees need to be treated equally and at the same time they also want to be valued, for example, by being consulted with regards to issues pertaining to their work and personal life. Employees also value support from management, that is, to be praised if doing a good job and even told that they are doing badly so as to take corrective measures.

4.3.6. Integration of quantitative and qualitative results

The following is a list of the main findings of the study:

- It was determined that demographic variables do not have a significant effect on the academic staff's perceptions on WLB support, meaning that, the perceptions held by academics about the university's WLB policies are similar to all demographic groups;

- With regards to organisational commitment, results from both the quantitative and qualitative studies indicate a general consensus about caring for the organisation. Most academics had positive attitudes towards the university although a small percentage did not feel attached to the organisation. In general, what is stemming from these results is that academics are dedicated to their jobs and they have collective views pointing to the fact that the organisation or university is not doing enough, to ease their work and personal life conflicts;

- The key findings from the quantitative data include that fact that there is a negative relationship between the existence and awareness of WLB programmes and the intention to leave, that is, the higher the level of WLB, the lower the intention to leave. Organisational commitment was found to be positively related to WLB, that is, the higer the level of WLB the better the organisational commitment. Findings from qualitative data seem to indicate that those academics perceiving no support from management and not satisfied with the WLB programmes appear not to be committed to the organisation and were likely to leave. These results from the two research instruments thus complement each other;

- In addition, the analysis revealed that the intention to leave was comprised of three sub-constructs, namely, Work Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction, Job Searching Drive, and Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave. Results reveal that academics are generally satisfied with their work with the exception of a few who had negative sentiments about their jobs. This implies that work frustration is not a major issue to academics that might lead them to having leaving intentions. Concerning the Job Search Drive as a measure of intention to leave, academics' search for jobs at UKZN, Pietermaritzburg Campus was low. While results show that there is a small group of risk takers among academics, most do not embark on unnecessary risk when it comes to leaving their jobs;

- The study identified employee perceptions of WLB support as a factor that contribute to the intention to leave or stay by academics. This implies that management should

improve WLB practices and communicate them effectively to the employees in order to enhance employee retention in their organisations.

4.4. Conclusion

The empirical findings of the study were presented in this chapter. The quantitative and qualitative data was analysed by use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and content analysis respectively. The next chapter discussed the research findings and relates them to common beliefs outlined in literature and other sources.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion and interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative analyses results presented in Chapter four with the main aim of addressing the research objectives. Comparisons are made, of the results presented in the statistical analysis of Chapter four to specific WLB theories put forward by many other authors, as discussed in Chapter 2, in order to identify conformities or contradictions between the research findings and established theories. The results discussions and comparisons to literature are arranged in the order of the research objectives

5.2. Objective 1: To identify academic staff's perceptions of the university support and encouragement of the use of WLB programmes

Objective number one was designed to identify academic staff's perceptions about the support they get from the university regarding WLB programmes and how they feel about the promotion and communication of such programmes to the employees of the organisation. These perceptions are thought to be influenced by the support received by the academics from the organisation through managers, supervisors or through co-workers.

With regards to the perceptions of academic staff's perceptions on WLB, the statistical results revealed mixed views as indicated by some questions that had high scores indicative of positive sentiments, while other questions had low scores indicating negative sentiments on the status of work-life balance in the organisation. This means that, there are some WLB issues that the academics believed the organisation was addressing adequately while lacking in others. These findings offer an insight, to the organisation, on how academics view WLB practices in terms of organisational support given. Positive WLB support perceptions would aid in reducing intention to leave and increase staff loyalty to the organisation. According to McCathy *et al* (2013) a supportive organisation may contribute to the employees' use of WLB programmes through the support of gatekeepers of work-life programmes, like HR managers and immediate supervisors, which in the process guarantees positive outcomes such as staff retention and the avoidance of role conflict.

Generally, the academic staff were of the opinion that, being given adequate time to attend to personal matters, leads to work commitment since the questionnaire item with the highest percentage of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing (79.3%) was question B10 (Individuals who take time off to attend to personal matters are also committed to their work). Similarly, two participants from the in-depth interviews expressed satisfaction with support from their line managers concerning taking care of their personal issues. One participant of the in-depth interviews said that manager support depends on how understanding your manager or line manager is, which gives a personal dimension to the matter. This is in conformity to a study by Wong and Ko (2009), who found that employee's positive perceptions are affected by factors such as flexibility and collegial support of WLB in the organisation, allegiance to the organisation one works for and having sufficient time off. These factors are generally components of retention strategies. Furthermore, some researchers have revealed that, if employees perceive the employer to be supportive of WLB practices, they tend to be committed and satisfied with their jobs (Baral and Bhargava, 2010; Aryee et al, 2005; Allen, 2001). Besides being committed and satisfied with their jobs, a study by Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) also found that perception by employees that the organisation was supporting WLB practices decreased work pressures and in turn reduced their intention to leave. These studies also produced evidence that organisational practices, which staff interprets to mean WLB support, can affect the organisation, where a probable reduction in staff turnover is likely due to decreased intention to leave.

Other issues, under the WLB perception construct, which had high positive ratings were; that employees who are highly committed to their personal lives can also be highly committed to their work (question B6 which had 71.8% positive responses); that it was not necessarily considered taboo to talk about life outside of work (question B4 which had 67.9% positive responses); that expressing involvement and interest in non-work matters is viewed as healthy (question B5 which had 66.7% positive responses); that the ideal employee is not necessarily one who is available 24 hours a day (question B14 which had 65.8% positive responses) and that attending to personal needs, such as taking time off for sick children, is not necessarily frowned upon (question B7 which had 61.3% positive responses). These high percentages of positive responses were an indication that, in overall, more academics viewed positively the support they got from the university. This was an indication that academics at the UKZN Pietermaritzburg Campus were, to some extent, satisfied with WLB practices provided by the university. These findings contradict those of Sharafizad et al (2011) who revealed that

academics were not satisfied with their WLB although their study was a comparative study between academics and their non-academic counterparts. Sharafizad *et al* (2011) indicated that academics generally fail to utilise available WLB facilities or policies due to work overload.

However, results from the in-depth interviews with regards to perceived WLB support were slightly different. Three out of five interviewees did not see the university as supportive. These results may mean that, of those who were interviewed in the in-depth study, the majority view was negative as far as perceived WLB support is concerned but their small number may not represent a general consensus. Since the in-depth interviews involved more senior academics, it might be that senior academics were just not satisfied with the way the university handles WLB issues and that things have room to improve. Another possible explanation is the fact that participants from the quantitative analysis simply answered structured questions, the majority of which had positive agreement, whereas in in-depth interviews participants could add more information after being probed by the interviewer. It should also be pointed out that on the open-ended question another theme that came out strongly was the "*need for family and work supportive policies*".

On the other hand, on whether it was necessarily best to keep family matters separate from work (question B3) the majority of respondents seemed not to agree in the separation of work and family duties, thus only 19.1% agreed to such separation. The majority of respondents seemed to believe that non-work activities are an integral part of an employee's work life and this is supported by the responses to questions B10, B6, B4, B5, B14 and B7 shown in Table 4.4 above. These findings are supported by literature which affirms the relationship between work and family as bidirectional. The strain that an employee experiences at work can be transferred or 'spills-over' onto other roles, resulting in the reduction of their usefulness in that particular role (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). In addition, the results also concur with a study by Adams *et al* (1996) which indicates the view that the relationship between work and family are related to job and family satisfaction.

To assess the academics' WLB levels, a 12-item construct was used to probe the awareness and existence of WLB facilities at the institution studied. The findings, as portrayed by Table 4.11, reveal that very few individuals (7.3%) felt that WLB programmes were communicated to them adequately while only 6.7% felt that the university encouraged them to use WLB

programmes. These low ratings are an indication that the university as an employer had not done enough in terms of communicating and encouraging the use of WLB programmes to the academic staff. These findings concur with Lewis (2016) who indicated that WLB perceptions are shaped by mental cues which are influenced by the work environment. Lewis further argued that academics' flexibility has created a contextual situation where work is ubiquitous, resulting in them failing to "switch off" which in turn causes the employer to be unaware of the causes of a lack of WLB for the academics. In the in-depth interviews, flexibility was one thing that was seen to be enjoyed by academics. This, according to literature as mentioned by Lewis (2016), could have contributed to the university's lack of communication of WLB as it is possible that management failed to notice the imbalance in work and non-work duties in academic staff. In general, the employer needs to have a regular WLB awareness programme that might also include wellness programmes.

Of interest about these results, was the fact that academic staff do not compromise on the quality of their work even though their work influence the quality of their family life. This was revealed by higher positive ratings of performance items whereas family happiness items generally had lower positive ratings, for instance, question E3 (When I go on leave I am able to enjoy myself and not think about my work) received only 27.0% positive rating. These results tie in with the study's qualitative findings where responses to an open-ended question shared similar sentiments as participants indicated that academics were often more committed to the well-being of the university (UKZN) than the university is to the well-being of the academics and that;

> "…*generally, all employees are willing to put in more hours for the benefit of the employer, but such efforts are not appreciated (often)*…"

The study's results correspond with existing facts in literature, for example, Pu, Hou, Ma and Sang (2016) who found work-to-family conflict to be greater than family-to-work conflict in university lecturers, that is to say, lecturers' boundaries between work and family have asymmetric permeability, where work duties more likely affect family life than the other way around. As a solution to this asymmetry, Lobel and Kossek (1996) commented that the provision of family-friendly benefits can only be effective if there is an organisation-wide change of culture which embraces and addresses work-life matters.

These results appear to portray academics as showing a sense of doing so much for the organisation while in turn the organisation was failing to reciprocate by providing ways that

seek to mitigate their work-related issues at home. These results are in line with the social exchange theory which explains the nature of the relationship between the employer and the employee. An employer and employee's relationship is based on the idea of reciprocity implying that if one party perceive more benefits as opposed to costs, the results will be lasting mutual trust and attraction or vice-versa (Jawahar and Hemmasi 2006; Blau, 1964). These findings' imply that employees may shift their loyalty from the organisation and look elsewhere where their efforts will be appreciated and rewarded accordingly if they perceive that the employer is not doing so.

ANOVA tests were carried out to ascertain if demographic factors had a bearing on academic perceptions on university WLB support. The ANOVA tests results revealed that demographic variables hold no significant effect on the academic staff's perceptions on WLB support. This means that the perceptions of academic staff about university's WLB support are not particularly based on any demographic groupings. These results imply that the perceptions of the research subjects on WLB support did not depend on any personal or professional background. The results concur with findings by Aryee *et al* (2005) and Duxbury and Higgins (2001) who found that men and women have similar experiences of WLB and therefore perceive WLB support in the same manner. Similarly, Hughes and Bozionelos (2007) found that, despite respondents' age and tenure, they still mention matters concerning WLB as the source of dissatisfaction at work. Conversely, these results are contrary to the findings by Kotecha *et al* (2014) who discovered that women academics are exposed to more work-life conflicts as compared to their male colleagues, regardless of how much they engage in technology-assisted supplemental work (TASW).

5.3. Objective 2: To ascertain the effect of WLB programmes on the decision to stay by academics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal

The goal of Objective 2 was to establish the extent to which WLB programmes impact academic staff's decision to stay or leave the University of KwaZulu-Natal. In order to measure the intention to leave a 15-item Likert scale was utilised and as discussed in Section 4.2.5, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to come up with possible underlying latent factors in these 15 items. The EFA results revealed the existence of three sub-constructs or latent factors that represented the intention to leave, namely, Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction, Job Searching Drive and Possibility of Risk Taking and Leaving. Possible causal effects of WLB programmes on intention to leave or stay, as measured by the three

sub-constructs determined by EFA, were tested. Results from these findings are discussed in the sections that follow.

5.3.1. Work frustration/ dissatisfaction

The results as presented in Table 4.7 reveal that the majority of research participants were generally happy with their work. This was shown by the fact that only 16.4% felt that their current jobs were not satisfying their personal needs to a large extent (question D3) with the majority being neutral (40.0%) or more positive (43.6%). An encouraging 56.4% indicated that they often look forward to another day at work. Generally, this sub-construct had very low levels of negative sentiments which led to the conclusion that work frustration and dissatisfaction was not a major concern for academics at the university. The results were also complemented by those from in-depth interview where the majority of the participants expressed satisfaction with their jobs. Apart from frustrations encountered, the respondents indicated that their jobs are fulfilling especially seeing struggling. One participant said;

> "*As much as you are frustrated, almost disillusioned, as soon as you go past that, there is a lot which makes the environment rich in terms of expertise*".

These results seem to suggest that academics were satisfied and committed to their jobs despite work pressure and frustrations. Winefield *et al* (2002), in their study, mentioned that, on average, academics appear to be committed to their organisations although suffering stressors and strains. On the other hand, Richman *et al* (2008) affirmed that organisations dedicated in helping their employees, have supportive work-life policies in place, which significantly raise the probability of expected retention. However, Cannizzo and Osbaldiston (2015) report prevalent low levels of organisational commitment among academics due to management practices which lead to work role overload. They further argued that work dissatisfaction is not only increased by establishing a culture of 'long hours', but also through failing to reduce work-life conflicts in preference of work roles (Cannizzo and Osbaldiston, 2015).

5.3.2. Job searching drive

The results as presented in Table 4.8 show that the job search drive by academic is low at the university. The proportion of academic staff who indicated that they have often considered leaving their jobs is low (D1: 29.4%), so is the percentage of those who specified that they frequently scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities (D2: 29.1%). Only

37.3% indicated that they often dream about getting another job that will better suit their personal needs (D6) and only 23.6% indicated that they frequently scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities (D15). These results are also similar with those from the in-depth interviews. Of interest with participants of the in-depth interviews was their response to the question on whether they had considered a career change. Those who had worked in the corporate world before joining academia did not wish for a career change but one participant who only started as an academia showed some interest in a career change.

In overall, the results show that the job searching drive is very low for academics at UKZN Pietermaritzburg campus, but it must be pointed out that most of the respondents chose to be neutral by selecting option 3 of the questionnaire items. According to research, turnover intention/intention to leave is usually related to job search behaviour (Takawira *et al* (2014). Bothma and Roodt (2012) made an assertion that intention to leave behaviour is a reliable catalyst for actual behaviour, implying that turnover intentions can be used reliably in place of actual turnover. What this study is contributing is the fact that management at the university should take note of academics behaviour in order to put in place policies that help in retaining them. For instance, Rosser (2004) discovered that a combination of faculty members' professional and organisational issues and their satisfaction initiates individuals' behavioural intentions and the need to leave for another organisation\or alternatively a career change (Rosser, 2004).

5.3.3. Possibility of risk taking and leaving

The results for the sub-construct of Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave as presented in Table 4.10 reveal that some academics might take the risk of starting their own businesses (D9: 44.5%) and 42.7% indicated that it is not fear of the unknown that prevent them from quitting (D14). As far as risk taking and leaving intention is concerned, there is a balanced perspective. These results are also complimented by responses from in-depth interviews which revealed a mixture of perspectives. Three out of five respondents showed some intention to move to another university or organisation if the conditions are just right. These results suggest that there is no absence of risk taking on the part of academic staff but at the same time there are no indication that academics are notorious risk takers as far as leaving their jobs is concerned. Takawira *et al* (2014) argued that many employees remain in organisations due to their connections with work colleagues and network groups or projects they are working.

However, since among academics there is a presence of risk takers with regards to leaving intentions, such group of people are classified under those who leave the organisation voluntarily (voluntary turnover). Daly and Dee (2006) describes voluntary turnover as having negative consequences which includes replacement costs, decreased integration in academic department, disturbance of course offerings, and low morale amongst the remaining staff. Oosthuizen, Coetzee and Munro (2016) claim that strategies to reduce voluntary turnover can be developed through detecting the key factors that may lead to turnover intention thereby enabling organisations and researchers to proactively detect the key determinants of turnover. Thus, the retaining of academic staff through the supporting and encouraging and utilisation of WLB policies becomes crucial in persuading this group of individuals to remain within the organisation.

5.3.4. Causal effect of WLB programmes on intention to leave or stay

Tests for the relationship between WLB programmes and the intention to leave or stay were conducted using correlation analysis. The results as presented in Table 4.12, show a negative correlation between the existence and awareness of WLB programmes among academics and two of the three sub-constructs of the intention to leave or stay, namely, Work Frustration and Dissatisfaction (correlation=-0.454, p-value<0.001) and Job Searching Drive (correlation=-0.269, p-value=0.005). These results mean that the higher the levels of WLB at the institution the lower the levels of Work Frustration and Dissatisfaction and that of a Job Searching Drive. The university can thus reduce these two areas of staff intention to leave by just making WLB programmes more visible and more effective and this can be done by restructuring and properly communicating WLB programmes.

In general, these results are supported by past empirical research which proved a link between job satisfaction and organisational commitment on one hand and intention to stay or leave on the other, for example, Cegarra-Leiva *et al* (2012), Mohd Noor (2011) and Doherty and Manfredi (2006). The greater the job satisfaction or organisational commitment, the lower the possibility that the employee will leave the organisation, plus, the higher the employee level of commitment, the lesser the predicted turnover intentions (Martin and Roodt, 2013). The study's findings also correspond with a study by Rosser (2004) which shows a direct and powerful relationship between faculty members' perceptions of their work-life satisfaction and intention to leave. Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) claim that perceived WLB support from employers is related to improved loyalty to the organisation.

The study's findings also tally with an assertion by Martin and Roodt (2013) who said that satisfaction and organisational commitment are critical turnover component models as their empirical link with voluntary turnover has been recognised over numerous meta-analyses, where negative link with turnover intentions has been proved over and over. Downes and Koekemoer (2011) stated that those organisations dedicating their resources in WLB report low employee turnover and Muteswa and Ortlepp (2011) also opines that organisations should create work environments suitable to achieve WLB to retain employees. Most retention researches have shown the maintenance of WLB, improving job satisfaction and organisational commitment as strategies documented as important to the retention of talented staff (Deery and Jago 2015). In general, one could conclude that university management should consider ways in which WLB and organisational commitment relate to intention to leave by academics as part of their retention strategies.

However, the results also show that there is a positive and significant correlation between WLB programmes and the Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave (correlation=0.241, p-value=0.013). Although the correlation is of a small effect size, it means that the risk takers cannot be stopped by any properly structured WLB programmes. This means that the risk takers are not necessarily frustrated and dissatisfied at work. The study's findings are supported by a statement by Theron *et al* (2014) who mentioned that sometimes there is nothing that the organisation can do to prevent specific individuals from quitting. Nevertheless, finding out the reasons why the risk takers leave would help in detecting unnecessary turnover and avert it by implementing interventions that could avert such voluntary turnover in future.

5.4. Objective 3: To ascertain the impact of perceived WLB support and academics commitment to the organisation

The third objective was designed to establish the effects of academics' perceptions of WLB support on organisational commitment. The research findings reveal that the dimension of organisational commitment with the least positive sentiments among the academics was the willingness to work outside one's job descriptions (C4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation) with only 7.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Employee's willingness to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected, in order to achieve organisational success, was the highest supported dimension with 74.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing. These results show that the majority of

academics are willing to sacrifice their time and effort in service to the organisation as long as such service is within the bounds of their job description. This implies that academics view success of the organisation as their own success provided they are treated fairly.

These results are supported by Mowday *et al* (1982), who state that, committed individuals are keen to contribute to the welfare of the organisation. The findings are consistent with what Mowday *et al* refer to as an individual's strong belief in and acceptance of organisational goals and values, their willingness to invest substantial amount of efforts and a deep desire to remain with the organisation.

The findings of this study show a general agreement among respondents of a sense of caring about their organisation's welfare (72.1%), that they feel the decision to choose to work for the organisation was not a mistake (67.6%), that they were loyal to the organisation (66.4%) and the feeling of pride in telling others that they belong to this organisation (60.4%). The findings also seem to suggest that the majority of the respondents are generally happy to be identified with the university as seen by the pride in mentioning their association with the university to others. Robbins and Butler (1998) affirms organisational commitment to be concerned with an individual's positioning within the organisation regarding loyalty, involvement and identification. Employees become attached to an organisation that has values similar to theirs thus they work toward the success of that organisation because in doing so their behaviours will be consistent with their own values (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Darly and Dee (2006) pointed out that organisational commitment emphasises the similarities between employees and their organisational goals. However, only a very small percentage of the respondents believed that the university was the best of all possible organisations for which to work (18.2%). This therefore requires the university management to take the initiative to use sound WLB practices to convince and persuade academics at UKZN to change their minds to be positive about the organisation on all matters without exception.

To establish the relationship between organisational commitment and WLB, regression analysis was carried and the results indicated that a unit increase in WLB will positively increase Organisational Commitment by 0.349 (coefficient=0.349, p-value<0.001) as measured on the 5-point Likert scale. This suggests that there is need for organisations to focus on WLB as it positively improves organisational commitment and the retention of employees and there is also plenty of evidence from studies conducted in the past. Many researchers have come to the realisation of how important employee's commitment to the

organisational is to employers. It is therefore crucial for organisations to improve the work environment (in the form of WLB provisions) in order to encourage the commitment of employees to the organisation so as to motivate them to stay (Cascio, 2006).

The findings are also in agreement with a study by Azeem and Altalhi (2015), which reveals a significant relationship between organisational commitment and how work interferes with family life or family interfering with work life. Similarly, findings from a study by Ahmad and Omar (2010) discovered that employees with positive perceptions about the presence of a family-supportive culture in an organisation, characterised by swift responses to work-family issues, are most likely to remain with the organisation and possess improved sense of affective commitment to the organisation. This implies that employees' experience of WLB enhances their commitment to the organisation they work for (Azeem and Altalhi, 2015). According to Meyer and Allen (1991), those employees who possess a strong affective commitment remain with the organisation because they want to, which is an indication to the organisation that it would have succeeded in forming adequate reasons or conditions making employees to be emotionally attached to its goals and in so doing deciding to remain (Bushe, 2012).

5.5. Objective 4: To explore ways in which academics can be assisted in achieving a balance

The goal of the fourth objective of this study was mainly to come up with possible solutions that could aid academic staff to attain WLB. In this section, the respondents were given a list of WLB interventions and asked to select those that they have used before, those that are provided by the university and those that they feel they need to use but are not provided by the university.

5.5.1. Interventions not available but needed

For the interventions needed but not available, the results, as presented in Table 4.14 and Figure 4.4 revealed that 54.6% of the respondents wished the organisation provided financial assistance for staff children off-site. Currently, academics' children and spouses who qualify to study at the university are entitled to a 100% fee remission but those who cannot qualify to study at the university do not have the same privilege if their chosen study programmes at other universities are also offered at the institution.

Time and stress management training is another intervention strategy that, to some considerable extent, was indicated to be required or needed to be communicated better (43.1%). Other intervention strategies that were indicated to be not available but needed include breast-feeding time (41.8%) and better child facilities on-site (41.6%). Several studies were able to establish that employees benefiting from childcare centres, referral services as well as other family-supportive practices experienced greater levels of organisational commitment (Beauregard and Henry, 2009; Grover and Crooker, 1995; Orthner and Pittman, 1986; Youngblood and Chambers-Cook, 1984).

5.5.2. Interventions available and used

For those interventions that are available and used, it appears the most used intervention strategy is that of paid maternity or paternity leave with 64.6% of the respondents indicating that they have used this facility or they are aware of work colleagues who have used it. To confirm these results, a participant from the in-depth interviews said she was recently on maternity leave and happy with this benefit. Sabbatical leave is another intervention that appeared to be available (61.5%) but, according to the open-ended question responses, not easily accessible. Matier (1990) and Rosser (2004) indicated that support for faculty members, in terms of sabbatical leave and release time, have been seen to be some of the important factors to be considered in retaining faculty members in their organisation. Other intervention strategies that are known, to some extent, by academic staff to be available and used are bereavement leave (48.5%), and wellness programmes (45.1%) but these statistics could be improved.

This study also shows that some academics were not aware as to which WLB interventions were provided by the university and which ones were not, which clearly indicates a lack of communication on the part of the university to its employees. Adisa (2015) noted that managers are responsible for formulating WLB policies and are encumbered with the duty to create and spread its awareness. Although the university provides some of the WLB interventions, there is however, need to communicate such interventions properly to the employees and make it possible for available interventions to be accessible to employees. On the other hand, as Bell *et al* (2012) pointed out, there is also need for academic staff to proactively exploit these initiatives.

5.6. Conclusion

The chapter presented a discussion of findings concluded from responses given by the participants. The findings were compared and contrasted with other researches, of a similar nature, conducted in the past. It is clear that the study's research objectives have been achieved and were in some cases supported by literature but in some instances contradicted with other past outcomes, giving the basis for future research to explore contradictions were they exist. In the following chapter recommendations and conclusions about the relationship between perceived WLB support and the retention of employees based on the study's results will be presented.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

The study sought to establish the relationship between WLB and the retention of academic staff at University of KwaZulu-Natal. Four research questions were utilised to address the level to which WLB can impact employee retention. A summary of the study's findings, conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for future research are presented in this chapter.

6.2. Overview of the study

Management is entrusted with the responsibility of catering for the needs of employees in order that their work and life demands are met. According to Adisa (2015), managers are responsible for formulating WLB policies and promoting their usage through proper communication as the success of such programmes hinges upon their support. This study was anchored on the reasoning that academics make up the backbone of universities which in turn have a vital role in producing skills that are needed for the development of a country, hence the necessity of retaining them at all costs.

This study was generally focusing on the relationship between perceptions of WLB support and its impact on organisational commitment and the retention of academics. The specific objectives of the study were to identify academic staff's perception of the university support and encouragement of the use of WLB programmes; investigate the effect of WLB programmes on the decision to stay, by academics, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal; investigate the impact of perceived WLB support and academics' commitment to the organisation; and to explore ways in which academics can be assisted in achieving a balance between work and their personal lives.

A survey design detailing the phenomenon linked to the target population was used so as to obtain information regarding the phenomenon and general conclusions were drawn from the discussed facts. The subject population was composed of 116 academics (111 for the quantitative and 5 for the qualitative studies) from University of KwaZulu-Natal and a convenient sampling was utilised. Data was collected in two forms, that is, through a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Quantitative techniques such as ANOVA

and correlation analysis were used to analyse the data collected and the SPSS computing package was used for the analysis. To make the results presentation more concise, Excel was used to compile consolidated results tables and generate customised graphs. Responses from both the open-ended questions and the in-depth interviews were analysed by content analysis were themes were developed and the results merged with quantitative results. The following section contains the findings according to the research objectives.

6.3.   Objective 1: To identify academic staff's perceptions of the university support and encouragement of the use of WLB programmes

The review of literature indicated that an employee's perceived WLB support influences their commitment to the organisation as well as their decision to stay. This emphasise the importance of organisations in general and universities in particular, to support WLB practices as a retention strategy for their valuable employees.

The study also sought to identify academics perceptions with regards to university support of WLB practices. It was found that academics hold contrasting views on WLB support they get from the university. Nevertheless, the majority of the respondents were positive of the support they received and this was revealed as having a positive effect on their commitment to the organisation and the decision to stay with the organisation. The results show that 79.3% of respondents agreed that when academics take care of their personal duties it does not necessarily mean they are not committed to their work. On the other hand 71.8% agreed that employees who are highly committed to their personal lives can be highly committed to their work. Another 67.9% also agreed that it was not necessarily considered taboo to talk about life outside of work. The majority of the respondents were in agreement with the fact that one's personal duties were an integral part of his or her work-life. This was confirmed by low positive responses by those agreeing to the separation (only 19.1%). Qualitative findings also revealed that manager support is greatly depended on the understanding of each individual manager.

In light of awareness and existence of WLB practices a paltry percentage indicated that WLB programmes were communicated to them adequately (7.3%) and only 6.7% agreed that the university encouraged them to use WLB programmes. This was an indication that the university had to do more in terms of communicating and providing WLB policies that aid academics in achieving a balance. The findings also revealed that academics seem not to compromise on the quality of their work even though their work seemed to encroach into

their family and personal time as indicated by 27.0% of the respondents. The results corresponded with the qualitative findings where there was a general consensus among respondents that they were doing much for the organisation than the organisation was committed to their welfare. These findings seem to conform to the social exchange theory which describes the idea of reciprocity between an employer and employee. If one party is not satisfied with the exchanges in the relationship, they will be forced to end the relationship, that is, academics may end up quitting their jobs.

ANOVA tests revealed that demographic factors did not have any effect on academic perceptions on university WLB support, implying that WLB perceptions are not biased towards any demographic factor but are instead universal. Therefore, the study's findings which were aimed at identifying academics perceptions on WLB support and encouragement of use of WLB programmes indicate that generally academics perceive the university as supportive at the same time they felt communication was lacking with regards to availability and encouragement of the up-take of the WLB programmes.

6.4. Objective 2: To ascertain the effect of WLB programmes on the decision to stay by academics from the University of KwaZulu-Natal

There is empirical evidence showing the relationship between WLB, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and decision to stay. Under this objective the study sought to establish the extent to which WLB practices affect academics' decision to leave or stay. The findings reveal that, under the Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction construct, academics were generally satisfied with their jobs for since as low as16.4% showed dissatisfaction with their work with a worrisome 40.0% who chose to be neutral. About 56.4% revealed that they often look forward to another day at work which is a show of work enthusiasm. Overall, this sub-construct had very low negative sentiments leading to the conclusion that, despite job frustrations, academics at UKZN are satisfied with, and are enthusiastic about their work.

The extent to which employees are actively and frequently looking for alternative employment may indicate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their jobs and commitment to the organisation. Pienaar, Sieberhagen and Mostert (2007) stated job satisfaction as the most important predictor of turnover intentions. The findings revealed that the job searching drive was very low among academics at UKZN. This was indicated by those agreeing or strongly agreeing to having considered leaving UKZN which was as low as 29.1% while only

37.3 % often dream about getting another job that will better suit their personal needs and only 23.6% agreed to frequently scanning the internet in search of other job opportunities.

With regards to the Possibility of Risk Taking and Leaving, the results indicated mixed viewpoints, 44.5% expressed a desire to start their own business and 42.7% revealed that it was not fear of the unknown that stops them from leaving their jobs. Venturing into business and not fearing for the future are indeed risk-taking traits. In addition, three of the five participants from the in-depth interviews admitted to having considered leaving UKZN for other universities. Therefore, results confirm no absence of risk takers among academics at UKZN but at the same time the statistics show that academics are not notorious risk takers. This then calls for universities to consider WLB initiatives intended to improve academics' work and non-work activities interaction thereby decreasing their chances of wanting venture into other activities.

The results showed a negative correlation between the existence of WLB programmes at the university and the awareness of such programmes among academics, and the intention to leave as measured by the two sub-constructs, Work Frustration and Dissatisfaction and a Job Searching Drive. The implication is that academics intention to leave can be reversed by reducing their Job Searching Drive and Work Dissatisfaction through the proper structuring and communication of WLB programmes at the university by management and HR personnel.

A positive and significant correlation between WLB programmes and the Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave was also found which means that risk takers will always be risk takers regardless of how much you do about their WLB. The Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave was also seen to be negatively and significantly correlated with Work Frustration and Dissatisfaction (correlation=-0.328, p-value=0.001). This means that the risk takers are not necessarily those facing work frustration. On the contrary, they are actually experiencing less work frustration. This paints a picture of risk takers who will always leave and there is little that the organisation can do to dissuade them from doing so. These are individuals who are not easy to retain and a study might be necessary to understand the psyche of such individuals.

6.5. Objective 3: To ascertain the impact of perceived WLB support and academics commitment to the organisation

Literature, as already discussed, abounds with propositions to the effect that employees become loyal to an organisation that has values comparable to theirs. In other words, the organisation's success means the success of individuals. It has been revealed in literature that perceived WLB support from an employer increases employee's loyalty and commitment to the organisation. In this study, this objective was set out to establish the effect of perceived WLB support and academics commitment to the organisation, particularly personal attachment to the organisation. The findings reveal that most academics at UKZN were positive about the organisation and are willing to sacrifice their time and effort for the betterment of the organisation. This was shown by the fact that 74.8% of the respondents expressed willingness to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to achieve the university success; 72.1% of the respondents expressed some sense of caring about their organisation's welfare; 67.6% felt that the decision to choose to work for UKZN was not a mistake; 66.4% felt they are loyal to the organisation; and 60.4% admitted they find pride in telling others that they belong to UKZN.

The least supported dimension of organisational commitment was the willingness to work outside one's job descriptions as epitomised by the responses to the statement; 'I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation' which had a positive response rate of 7.2%. In addition, only 18.2% of the respondents believe that the university is the best of all possible organisations for which to work. This implies that academics at UKZN are happy to work within their job description and if the university supports them within their job descriptions, then they are prepared to work towards their success as well as that of the university, otherwise they could be snatched by other institutions. They don't believe that working for the university is a dead-end job.

The study was able to establish a relationship between organisational commitment and WLB. The results reveal that a unit increase in WLB will positively increase Organisational Commitment by 0.349 on a 5-point Likert scale. This should implore managers and HR personnel to focus on WLB initiatives as they positively improve organisational commitment and, inevitably, the retention of valuable employees.

6.6. Objective 4: To explore ways in which academics can be assisted in achieving a balance

It has been documented in literature that those employees benefiting from greater levels of family friendly practices experience organisational commitment. Objective 4 sought to come up with possible solutions that could help academic staff to attain WLB. Among the top selected interventions that were not available but needed or that, to some considerable extent, required better communication, was that of financial assistance for children off-site (54.6%); time and stress management training 43.1%); breast-feeding time (41.8%) and better child facilities on-site (41.6%).

With regards to interventions available and used, the results indicate that paid maternity or paternity leave (64.6%); sabbatical leave (61.5%); bereavement leave (48.5%; and wellness programmes (45.1%) were among the most selected intervention known to be available and used among academic staff at UKZN. Under this objective the study concluded that, availability of WLB initiatives and encouragement of their usage was not properly communicated to employees. This conclusion was based on issues such as the granting of sabbatical leave not being prioritised as most academics indicated that it was available but not used, mainly due to the non-granting of such. Some academics even indicated that it was not available but needed. Another explanation could be that, accessibility of these interventions is difficult hence the confusion on which interventions were available and which ones were not.

6.7. Recommendations and future research

The main novel discovery of this research is that the intention to leave or stay can be subdivided into three themes, namely, Work Frustration/ Dissatisfaction, Job Searching Drive and Possibility of Taking the Risk to Leave. Each of these items might require in-depth studies in the future to better understand them as constructs of the intention to leave or stay. The research makes recommendations grounded on the findings, limitations and conclusions drawn. Recommendations are therefore outlined to the management of organisations in general and universities in particular, to come up with suitable measures to foster a committed workforce and increase their retention through WLB considerations. The following points were particularly noted:

- WLB initiatives have the ability to impact organisational commitment and retention of academic staff, thus being acquainted with variables that affect these factors is of

great importance to the organisation's success, effectiveness and sustainability as indicated by literature which shows that highly committed employees can perform their duties in a manner that is consistent with organisational goals (Dockel, 2003). Therefore, recommendations are being made to take the study to other high institutions of learning in order to ascertain differences or similarities among academics in different South African universities set up.

- It has been established that there is a limited amount of research on the retention of academic staff in the South African context. The current study emphasise the role of WLB in the retention of academics. With regards to academics' retention, several studies have focussed on job satisfaction and organisational commitment. This study's findings therefore, serve as the groundwork research for the future in terms of the impact of WLB and the retention of academic staff in South African institutions. Findings are contributing to literature by establishing that WLB policies and organisational commitment impact the retention of this group of individuals in South Africa.

6.8. Limitations of the study

The following is a list of limitations to this study:

- The study had an expected response rate of 170 and only 111 were returned. This response rate was due to the fact that the questionnaires were distributed during the busiest time of the year when most academics were busy with finalising end of semester duties that included marking and examinations processing.

- The study was conducted on one campus of one organisation, that is, the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Pietermaritzburg Campus. This means that the respondents' opinions are those of academics from this particular centre of the University of KwaZulu-Natal and such opinions might have been influenced by the organisational cultural beliefs and practices of this particular institution. Therefore, findings cannot be generalised to the rest of the South African higher institutions of learning. This opens the grounds for further South Africa-wide research in order to generalise the proposed concepts or otherwise.

- The study looked at three variables only in connection with retention hence it will be interesting, in future, to look at other factors that are useful in designing retention strategies.

Despite the shortcomings of the study, findings can be considered significant in adding to the knowledge that focuses on improving the retention strategies in South African universities.

6.9. Concluding remarks

In short, this study was able to add information on how to understand the interconnectedness of work and non-work activities among academics. For the university, the information was aimed at aiding in formulating policies that improve academics' conditions of work. As a result, a conducive work environment and good conditions of service will provide the institution with an opportunity to gain employee's commitment which also affects their decision to stay.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM AND QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY **O**F **K**WA**Z**ULU-**N**ATAL
School of Management, IT and Governance

Dear Respondent,

Research Project

Researcher: Ruth Bodhlyera (Telephone number: 0786123612) Email: ruthbodhlyera@yahoo.com
Supervisor: Dr BK. Majola (Telephone number: 0332605220) Email: majolabk@ukzn.zc.za
Research Office: Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan Mbeki Building,
Westville Campus, Tel: + 27 (0)31 260 8350, Email: hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za

I, Ruth Bodhlyera am a Master of Commerce student in the School of Management, IT and
Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project
entitled **(Relationship between work-life balance practices and retention of academics at a South
African University***).*

The aim of this study is to examine academic staff's perceptions of organizational support of work life
balance practices and their decision to stay or leave the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The
results may be useful in recommending support of the work life balance policies that are designed to
increase employees' retention.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the
project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating
in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained by the researcher
and School of Management, IT and Governance, UKZN. All collected data will be used solely for
research purposes and will be destroyed after 5 years.
This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences
Research Ethics Committee (approval number : HSS/1655/016M).

The questionnaire or interview should take about 20 minutes/s to complete. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Researcher's signature_____ Date_____

[Ruth Bodhlyera]

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
School of Management, IT and Governance

Research Project

Researcher: Ruth Bodhlyera (Telephone number: 0786123612) (Email: ruthbodhlyera@yahoo.com)

Supervisor: Dr. BK. Majola (Telephone number: 0332605220) (Email: majolabk@ukzn.ac.za)

Research Office: **Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan Mbeki Building,**

Westville Campus, Tel: 27 31 2604557, Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I_____ (full   names   of

participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of

the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I

am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Completing a questionnaire   YES / NO

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

Title: Relationship between work-life balance practices and retention of academics at a South African University

Purpose: This questionnaire is designed to study work life balance (WLB). The information collected through this questionnaire will be used as part of a research of academic staff's perceptions of organizational support of work life balance practices and their decision to stay or leave the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The results may be useful in recommending support of the work life balance policies that are designed to increase employees' retention.

Work life balance is a term used to refer to organisational initiatives/practices aimed at improving employee experience of work and non-work activities. Organisations provide work life balance policies aimed at reconciling employee's work and personal lives. These initiatives or practices include:

> ➢ temporal work arrangements that permit individuals to cut the number of hours they work;

> ➢ flexible work provisions like flexi-time that allows workers to pick their own starting\finishing time they prefer, work from home thus ability to choose a place to work from;

> ➢ WLB supports like counselling of employees, employee assistance programmes, and training on how to handle time and stress; or facilities located on site to cater for employee children).

Confidentiality: Please note that your responses to the following questions are completely anonymous and confidential. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw your participation at any time, should you so wish.

Instructions: Please answer all questions and tick your answers in the applicable boxes.

[Part A]: Demographic Section

A1.   Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

A2.   Marital Status: Married ☐   Single ☐   Widowed ☐   Divorced ☐

A3.   Do you have children: Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes to the above, in what age group do they belong to?

0-5 years	6- 13 years	14-18 years	
19-25 years	26 years or older		

A4.   Race: White ☐   Black ☐   Indian ☐   Coloured   Other ☐

A5.   What is your age-group in years?

25 or younger	26-35	36-45	
46-55	55-65	66 or older	

A6.   What is your highest qualification?

1. Honours' ☐   2. Masters' ☐   3. Doctorate ☐   4. Other ☐

A7.   What is your designation?

1. Tutor ☐   2. Senior Tutor ☐   3. Lecturer ☐

4. Senior Lecturer ☐   5. Associate Professor ☐   6. Full Professor ☐

A8.   Number of years working as an academic:

5 or less		6-10		11-20	
21-30		31-40		41 or more	

A9.   Number of years employed at UKZN:

5 or less		6-10		11-20	
21-30		31-40		41 or more	

A10.   Status of employment: Permanent ☐   Contract ☐ Part time ☐ Other ☐

Part B: Perceptions on work life balance support

This section addresses the views that you hold concerning the support that you get from your organisation. The following scale will be used: **1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree;**
3 - Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 – Agree; and 5 - Strongly Agree.

		1	2	3	4	5
B1	Work should be the primary priority in a person's life (R)					
B2	Long hours inside the office are the way to achieving Advancement (R)					
B3	It is best to keep family matters separate from work (R)					
B4	It is considered taboo to talk about life outside of work (R)					
B5	Expressing involvement and interest in non-work matters is viewed as healthy					
B6	Employees who are highly committed to their personal lives cannot be highly committed to their work (R)					
B7	Attending to personal needs, such as taking time off for sick children is frowned upon (R)					
B8	Employees should keep their personal problems at home. (R)					
B9	The way to advance in this company is to keep non-work matters out of the workplace (R)					
B10	Individuals who take time off to attend to personal matters are not committed to their work (R)					
B11	It is assumed that the most productive employees are those who put their work before their family life (R)					
B12	Employees are given ample opportunity to perform both their job and their personal responsibilities well					
B13	Offering employees flexibility in completing their work is viewed as a strategic way of doing business					
B14	The ideal employee is the one who is available 24 hours a day (R)					

Part C: Organisational Commitment

This section contains statements that represent possible feelings that you might have about your organisation (UKZN). With respect to your own feelings about UKZN please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by checking one of the five alternatives below: **1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 – Agree; and 5 - Strongly Agree.**

		1.	2.	3.	4.	5
C1	I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.					
C2	I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organisation to work for.					
C3	I feel very little loyalty to this organisation.					
C4	I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation.					
C5	I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar.					
C6	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation.					
C7	I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work were similar.					
C8	This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance					
C9	It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organisation.					
C10	I am extremely glad that I chose this organisation to work for, over others I was considering at the time I joined					
C11	There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organisation indefinitely.					
C12	Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organisation's policies on important matters relating to its employees.					
C13	I really care about the fate of this organisation.					
C14	For me this is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.					
C15	Deciding to work for this organisation was a definite mistake on my part.					

Part D: Intention to leave or stay

The following section aims to ascertain the extent to which you intend to stay at the organisation.
Please read each question and indicate your response using the scale provided for each question by
circling one of the numbers from 1 to 5:

DURING THE PAST 9 MONTHS…

D1	How often have you considered leaving your job?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
D2	How frequently do you scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	All the time
D3	To what extent is your current job satisfying your personal needs? ®	To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	To a larger extent
D4	How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
D5	How often are your personal values at work compromised?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
D6	How often do dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
D7	How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?	Highly unlikely	1	2	3	4	5	Highly likely
D8	How often do you look forward to another day at work?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
D9	How often do you think about starting your own business?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	Always
D10	To what extent do responsibilities prevent you from quitting your job? ®	To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	To a larger extent
D11	To what extent do the benefits associated with your current job prevent you from quitting your job? ®	To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	To a larger extent
D12	How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	All of the time
D13	To what extent does your current job have a negative effect on your personal well-being?	To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	To a very large extent
D14	To what extent does the "fear of the unknown", prevent you from quitting? ®	To no extent	1	2	3	4	5	To a very large extent
D15	How frequently do you scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities?	Never	1	2	3	4	5	All of the time

Part E: Work life Balance:

Use the following scale to answer the questions that follow.

1 – Strongly Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 - Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4 – Agree; and 5 - Strongly Agree.

		1	2	3	4	5
E1	Work life balance programmes are communicated to me adequately					
E2	The university encourages me to use the work life balance programmes					
E3	When I go on leave I am able to enjoy myself and not think about my work					
E4	The demands of my job interfere with my life outside work					
E5	The demands of my job results in me getting irritable at home					
E6	Work demands result in me withdrawing from my family					
E7	The demands of my spouse/family interferes with my job					
E8	I fail to accomplish things at work due to my family spouse/partner's demands					
E9	I have to put some of my work on hold due to my family demands					
E10	My family needs interferes with my work					
E11	My job encroaches into my family time more than I would like it to					
E12	I find it difficult to balance my work and non-work duties					

Part G: What can be done for academics in order to achieve work life balance?

To answer the above question, please tick an alternative that applies to you:

		1. Not Available but Needed	2. Not Available and not needed	3. Available and Used	4. Available and not used
F1	Job sharing eg. Two or more people share one job.				
F2	Part time eg. Where an individual works less than a full time equivalent.				
F3	Compressed week.				
F4	Flexi-time.				
F5	Tele- working.				
F6	Counselling of employees.				
F7	Employment Assistance Programmes (EAP).				
F8	Time and stress management training.				
F9	Child facilities on-site.				
F10	Financial assistance for children off-site.				
F11	Breast-feeding time.				
F12	Bereavement leave.				
F13	Paid maternity or paternity leave.				
F14	Sabbatical leave.				
F15	Wellness programmes.				

What do you think the university could do to improve your work-life balance? Explain how.

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Do you have any other comments?

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……
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Thank you for participating

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide

1. What is your marital status? …………………………..

2. Do you have any children? …………………………….
   If yes to the above, in what age group do they belong to?

0-5 years		6- 13 years		14-18 years	
19-25 years		26 years or older			

3. What is your age-group in years?

25 or younger		26-35		36-45	
46-55		55-65		66 or older	

4. Race: White ☐   Black ☐   Indian ☐   Coloured   Other ☐

5. What is your highest qualification?
   Honours' ☐   Masters' ☐   Doctorate ☐   Other ☐

6. What is your designation?
   Tutor ☐   Senior Tutor ☐   Lecturer ☐   Senior Lecturer ☐
   Associate Professor ☐   Full Professor ☐

7. When did you start teaching at UKZN………………………………………………….

8. If you have worked at another university how does it compare to UKZN?

   ……………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………

9. What do you understand and perceive to be the meaning of the term work-life balance?

   ……………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………

10. What strategies do you use to try to balance work and personal life?

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

………

………

11. What aspects of being an academic interfere with work and life demands?

………

………

………

12. What would you suggest to be done differently so that you will be able to meet your work as well as life's demands?

………

………

………

13. With regards to work-life balance, how would you describe the culture of this university?

………

………

………

14. Are there aspects about UKZN that you value as an employee?

………

………

………

15. Have you ever considered leaving UKZN for another university/organisation?

………

………

16. Have you ever considered leaving academia for another profession?

………

………

17. What changes to the current conditions of service would make academia more attractive?

………

………

Thank you for participating

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

31 August 2017

Mrs Ruth Bodhlyera (209522073)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Bodhlyera,

Protocol reference number: HSS/1655/016M
New Project Title: Relationships between work-life balance practices and retention of academics at a South African University

Approval notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application for an amendment dated 11 August 2017 has now been granted Full Approval as follows:

* Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr BK Majola
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Debbie Vigar-Ellis
Cc School Administrator: Ms Debbie Cunynghame

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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