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The Relationship Between a Supervisor's Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement, and Turnover Intention

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Sloan Leane Rawhoof

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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

The Relationship Between a Supervisor's Emotional Intelligence, Employee
Engagement, and Turnover Intention

by

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MS, University of Florida, 2017

MPS, Pennsylvania State University, 2015

BBA, Kennesaw State University 2013

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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Abstract

Employee turnover costs employers billions of dollars annually, negatively impacting an organization's bottom line. Business leaders must align employee engagement and supervisor emotional intelligence to reduce turnover and improve profitability. Grounded in employee engagement theory, the purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the relationships between employee engagement, supervisor emotional intelligence, and turnover intention. Data were collected from 74 hourly employees and seven supervisors in a manufacturing company in Georgia using two paper surveys for hourly employees and one online survey for supervisors. Multiple regression analysis was performed on the data, assumptions were evaluated, and no violations were found. The multiple regression analysis results indicated the full model was statistically significant $F(2,70) = 5.42$ $p < .001$, $R^2 = .13$. The model predicted that about 13% of the variation in turnover intention was attributed to the predictor variables. In the final model, employee engagement was the only significant contributor ($\beta = -.37$, $p < .001$). A key recommendation for business leaders is to employees individual, team, and growth needs. The implications for positive social change include the potential for a better work environment for employees and improved business financial performance, reducing unemployment and benefiting stakeholders in the community.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Business leaders realize that employee engagement is a critical component of company performance and determines whether employees decide to stay with an organization (Rafiq, Wu et al., 2019). Turnover is expensive for organizations, and strategies to retain employees add value to the business (Abdullah Al Mamun & Nazmul Hasan, 2017). Previous research indicated that supervisors and their level of emotional intelligence also affect turnover intention (Li, Lee, et al., 2016). If business leaders implement strategies to improve supervisor emotional intelligence and increase employee engagement, they may reduce turnover intention, ultimately benefitting the organization.

Background of the Problem

There are many possible reasons that businesses fail to be successful, including poor financial results, legal, governmental, or economic barriers, and people-related issues. Employee issues such as excessive turnover and disengaged workers damage a business's bottom line, estimated worldwide to be in the billions of dollars annually (Huang et al., 2017). Employee engagement is greatly affected by leadership and organizational culture (Hejjas et al., 2018), and disengaged employees are more likely to leave the organization (Allam, 2017). However, one of the issues facing business leaders is how to retain employees. Thus, strategies that aid leaders in managing and retaining human capital can positively affect an organization's bottom line (Gupta & Sharma, 2016). Turnover is costly to organizations when considering the expense of hiring and training a new employee and the loss of productivity and knowledge when a trained employee leaves the company (Vaamonde et al., 2018).

Another issue business leaders face is a disengaged workforce. According to Gallup (2017), only 15% of employees are highly engaged at work. Disengaged employees cost companies money in reduced productivity, while engaged employees feel committed to the organization and are more likely to stay (Costen & Salazar, 2011). Reducing turnover, improving employee engagement, and adequate training and development of their workforce, whether front-line employees or leaders, are key issues facing business leaders. These variables influence business performance and success (Extremera et al., 2018).

Problem Statement

Low levels of employee engagement increase employee turnover intention and decrease company profits (Devi, 2017). Organizations with employees with low engagement levels often experience poor business results, as evidenced by costs estimated to be over \$300 billion in reduced productivity (Radda et al., 2015). The general business problem is that employee engagement is reduced, and turnover intention increases when supervisors lack emotional intelligence, resulting in higher costs to the organization. The specific business problem is that some supervisors in manufacturing environments did not understand the relationship between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to understand the relationship between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. The targeted population consisted of supervisors with responsibility

for hourly employees and the hourly employees in a manufacturing company in Georgia. The independent variables were supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The dependent variable was turnover intention. The implication for positive social change includes the potential to improve the workplace environment for employees. For example, greater emotional intelligence in supervisors may lead to higher employee engagement, which may be manifested through reductions in turnover. In addition, improved financial performance may generate more jobs and more opportunities for existing employees and economic growth within the community.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was a quantitative correlational design. Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods are different research methods available to study a problem (Saunders et al., 2016). Quantitative studies are appropriate to use when determining a relationship between variables (Taguchi, 2018). Qualitative studies are helpful when exploring a topic rather than testing a hypothesis (Saunders et al., 2016). Mixed methods allow researchers to have a more in-depth understanding of a subject by incorporating quantitative and qualitative information (Timans et al., 2019). Since the goal of this study was to determine if a relationship exists between variables, a quantitative method was the correct approach.

The research designs within a quantitative methodology are experimental, quasi-experimental, and correlational designs. Researchers use experimental designs to test a null hypothesis or a causal link between variables (Saunders et al., 2016). Quasi-experimental researchers use existing participant groups rather than randomly assigning

subjects to control and experimental groups (Maciejewski, 2018). Finally, correlational studies determine relationships between variables using various statistical methods (Woehr & Newman, 2020). I selected a correlational design using surveys to collect data. The correlational nonexperimental design was appropriate for the study because I collected information on two independent variables and determined if there was a relationship between them. Researchers use correlational studies when the variables are not manipulated; instead, the data are collected and analyzed (Kite & Whitley, 2018).

Research Question and Hypotheses

What is the relationship between (a) the supervisor's emotional intelligence, (b) employee engagement, and (c) turnover intention?

H_0 : There is no statistically significant relationship between (a) the supervisor's emotional intelligence, (b) employee engagement, and (c) turnover intention.

H_a : There is a statistically significant relationship between (a) the supervisor's emotional intelligence, (b) employee engagement, and (c) turnover intention.

Theoretical Framework

The topic of this study is the relationship between a supervisor's emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. The theoretical framework was thus based on Kahn's (1990) theory of employee engagement. Kahn stated that employees display certain behaviors based on whether they are engaged or disengaged. For example, they demonstrate engagement by embracing their work roles mentally, physically, and emotionally. According to Kahn, a person who is disengaged is withdrawn and uninvolved. By contrast, an engaged person is outgoing and involved.

Engagement and disengagement depend on the individual's psychological, social, behavior, and task orientation.

Emotional intelligence is related to employee turnover intention (Miao et al., 2018). Individuals with emotional intelligence demonstrate the ability to understand both theirs and others' emotions and are more effective as leaders (Stein, 2017). Since employee engagement is significantly related to organizational effectiveness, determining the effect of emotional intelligence in supervisors and the level of employee engagement and turnover intention could inform leaders on potential areas to focus training and development.

Operational Definitions

Employee engagement: Employee engagement refers to the emotional, physical, and psychological aspects of a person that cause feelings of commitment to their work and workplace (Kahn, 1990).

Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, perceive, understand, and manage your own emotions and the emotions of other people (Khan, 1990).

Turnover intention: Turnover intention is an employee's decision to stay or leave an organization (Aburumman et al., 2020).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are beliefs accepted as truths for a research study; these assumptions are accepted but are not proven (Almeida et al., 2017). My first assumption was that

participants would respond to questionnaires truthfully and candidly. I also assumed there would be enough respondents to perform multiple regression analysis. Another assumption was that the questionnaire responses accurately represented a linear relationship. The results were normally distributed when analyzing the chosen study variables of employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and turnover intention. An assumption was also made that the sample size was sufficient for statistically reliable and valid results. Lastly, there was an assumption that the population was the correct population to address the research question.

Limitations

Limitations are potential weaknesses that the researcher is unable to control (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). A limitation to this study was that choosing a quantitative methodology did not allow for clarification of participant responses or an opportunity to ask probing or follow-up questions as would be possible in a qualitative study. Another limitation was the potential for respondents to not be candid in their responses. Limitations may exist in my study if the sample size is insufficient to provide statistically reliable and valid results or if the sample is not the correct group to address the research question.

Delimitations

Researchers establish delimitations to narrow the scope of the study (Almeida et al., 2017). A delimitation for this study was that I measured participants in a single manufacturing plant in Georgia, potentially limiting the number of participants available on a given day. The study participants were full-time permanent employees with at least

6 months of tenure. The 6-month requirement was to ensure that employees had worked long enough to have opinions about their own engagement and whether they intended to stay with the organization. Temporary or part-time employees may have had different responses than full-time permanent employees. To ensure consistency in the participant pools, I selected only full-time permanent employees. There was no preference or requirement for any gender, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics. By limiting participants to a single manufacturing company, there may have been an inability to generalize results to other types of manufacturing businesses. Results could be different if the research occurred in different geographical areas, industries, or organizations with different numbers of employees and supervisors. However, I expected to reach data saturation by including a minimum of 70 employees and four supervisors.

Significance of the Study

Contribution to Business Practice

The study results may contribute to business practice by informing leaders of the significance of employee engagement and emotional intelligence and their relation to turnover intention. According to research, only about one-third of the workforce is engaged (Jesuthasan, 2017). An engaged workforce performs at a higher level than nonengaged employees (Allam, 2017). The results of this study may benefit business leaders by enabling them to develop strategies to improve the emotional intelligence of leaders and increase employee engagement, thus reducing turnover intention.

Implications for Social Change

Emotional intelligence is an ability demonstrated by successful leaders that positively affect business outcomes (Miao et al., 2018). If leaders can improve their emotional intelligence capabilities and increase employee engagement, employees and organizations will reap the benefits. Employees also gain when businesses are thriving. Workplaces with emotionally intelligent leaders improve the work environment for employees, which leads to improvements in employee job satisfaction and increased citizenship behaviors (Khalili, 2017). Increases in salaries and benefits may occur; there may be additional career opportunities, improving the standard of living for employees and their families. Successful companies often contribute to their local community and beyond; corporate social responsibility is often an important focus of organizations (Hejjas et al., 2018). Communities may benefit from the largesse of a successful organization, as do local governments through increased tax revenues.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to understand the relationship between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. The study was conducted in a manufacturing company in Georgia in the southeastern United States. The foundation of this study was based on Kahn's (1990) theory on emotional engagement and its effect on business. Emotional intelligence is a construct that can be difficult to quantify; however, instruments are available to measure this ability. In addition, employees' turnover intention is valuable information for business leaders to know as turnover is expensive, both the expense of hiring

replacements and the loss of knowledge and productivity that leaves with the exiting employee (Kiernan, 2018).

Researchers have proposed that engaged employees positively affect business performance, support the company and its goals, and are committed to the organization (Alzyoud et al., 2019; Jena et al., 2018; Jurek & Besta, 2019; Men & Yue, 2019). Engaged employees stay with the organization (Milhem et al., 2019). When employees are disengaged, they are more likely to leave the organization, resulting in turnover (Vermooten et al., 2019). Turnover is expensive for businesses, both in the actual cost of replacing employees and the loss of productivity (Kiernan, 2018; Wang, 2018). There are many reasons employees stay with organizations, including job satisfaction and leader support (Kavya & Padmavathy, 2017). Unhappiness with salary or inequitable salaries is a reason for employees to leave an organization (Gevrek et al., 2017; Mohamed et al., 2017). Additionally, higher pay elsewhere can motivate an employee to leave (Singh, 2019).

Leaders also play an essential part in employee retention, and those with greater emotional intelligence and leadership traits are more effective (Alzyoud et al., 2019). Emotional intelligence is a predictor and identifier of leaders and future managerial success (Krén & Séllei, 2020). Business leaders with emotional intelligence inspire and influence others (Baba et al., 2019; Miao et al., 2018). Another aspect of organizational success is the abilities of its leaders. Multiple styles are identified in academic and business literature, such as servant and autocratic leaders, transformational and

transactional, laissez-faire, and authentic leadership. All have both positive and negative aspects and can be successful in different environments.

I used various online sources such as Semantic Scholar, Microsoft Academic, Google Scholar, Mendeley, and the Walden University Library to search the literature. My focus was on locating peer-reviewed articles, books, and reports published in 2016 and later. However, I included some older sources as they are seminal works or pertinent to the study. My strategy for searching these databases was to perform an exhaustive search to develop my theoretical framework. I then searched keywords to narrow the search to ideas and theories to develop my research question. The terms searched were *employee engagement*, *emotional intelligence*, *turnover intention*, *intent to stay*, *leadership*, *employee development*, and *job burnout*. Lastly, I explored pertinent leadership styles and other research variables to develop a comprehensive literature review. Leadership theories searched were *transactional*, *transformational*, *servant*, and *authentic*. Related variables were *individual and organizational performance*, *human resource activities*, and *leader effectiveness*. These searches enabled me to further narrow the focus of my research to the three variables of employee engagement, emotional intelligence, and turnover intention. In the literature review, I first explore these study variables. Next, I discuss various leadership styles followed by other factors such as burnout that can affect employees and organizations.

Employee Engagement

People occupy various roles in their personal and professional lives, moving in and out of those roles depending on how much of their true selves are involved (Kahn,

1990). Rather than viewing employee engagement as static or fixed, an employee's level of engagement can vary (Kahn, 1990). Engagement might be a more consistent state of mind rather than constantly being in flux (Martin, 2017). Thus, measuring engagement is specific and can vary depending on a particular job or daily task, team or work unit, or organizational satisfaction (Saks, 2017). Kahn's (1990) definition of employee engagement focused on three aspects of a person and the degree to which they commit any or all of their "physical, cognitive, and emotional selves" (p. 692), which determines how present or how absent an employee feels at work, or how engaged or disengaged. Engaged employees demonstrate emotional and psychological and physical commitment to their jobs (Milhem et al., 2019).

Since Kahn's (1990) work on employee engagement, there has been extensive research on what constitutes an engaged workforce, its effect on organizations, and how to increase it. Many articles have been written and researched to determine the factors that influence employee engagement. For example, researchers listed several identifiers of employee engagement, such as job satisfaction, trust in management, and a commitment to the organization (Jena et al., 2018). Employee engagement is like a toolbox that an employee draws upon; engaged employees have resources that help them work through difficult times due to their overall positive feelings about management and the organization (Bakker, 2017). Engaged employees are enthusiastic about their jobs and the direction of the organization; not only do they support company goals and objectives, but they consistently work toward achieving them (Men & Yue, 2019). Engaged employees perform better, expend more discretionary effort, are committed and focused,

and have positive attitudes (Ali, 2019). Engaged employees are critical for organizations with leaders who wish to improve business performance (Ali, 2019). Engaged employees are committed to the success of their work team and confront challenges in a positive way.

In contrast, disengaged employees often are unhappy in their jobs and are prone to leaving the organization, resulting in lower productivity and increased turnover (Vermooten et al., 2019). According to Gallup (2017), 85% of U.S. employees are disengaged. Turnover leads to higher costs for the company in recruiting and training replacements. The cost of recruiting, replacing, and training a new employee can be as much as the employee's annual salary (Kiernan, 2018). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021), the average annual income in the United States in the first quarter of 2020 was \$51,960.00. Some estimates range higher when considering the cost of lost productivity (Wang, 2018).

Human resource professionals can play an important part in improving retention by implementing policies and strategies that reduce turnover (Aburumman et al., 2020). Human resource practitioners can aid organizations in reducing turnover, ultimately saving money. Additionally, human resource managers can positively influence organizations through everyday activities. Recruiting candidates who have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform a job is important, as is choosing applicants who fit the ideals and culture found in the organization. Those who feel a sense of belonging are more likely to stay than leave a company (Eberly et al., 2017). Employee

engagement positively correlates to increases in shareholder value, productivity, employee wellness, and income (Kavya & Padmavathy, 2017)

Identifying successful strategies to improve retention is also a valuable activity for leaders. Job satisfaction, organizational support, and supervisor support affect employee engagement (Aktar & Pangil, 2017). Task variety, equitable treatment, and social support contribute to job satisfaction and employee engagement (Saks, 2019). Employees who are more satisfied in their jobs display more significant levels of engagement (Lee et al., 2018). The feeling of being emotionally engaged also helps create a social identity for employees, increases organizational commitment, and binds them to their team and the company (Jurek & Besta, 2019). The relational aspect of engagement is about the peer relationships formed at work, and the foundational aspect involves employee perceptions about the meaning of their work (Kahn & Fellows, 2013). Leaders who embody the organization's vision and model the culture positively contribute to company culture and employee engagement (Kavya & Padmavathy, 2017). Though research in 1975 did not indicate that leader behavior was a factor in determining employees' job involvement (Jones et al., 1975), employers who successfully create healthy work environments improve relationships with coworkers, resulting in greater levels of engagement (Nasidi et al., 2019). Further, leaders who frequently display higher levels of emotional intelligence and are more effective in their roles (Alzyoud et al., 2019).

Kahn's (1990) theory on employee engagement was relevant to this study. Engagement is a reason for employees to stay within an organization; committed and

engaged employees intend to stay instead of leaving the organization. In addition, engaged employees positively affect organizational performance (Arslan, 2017), supporting the organization's goals (Froiland, 2019). As a result, organizations can gain a competitive advantage and improve organizational performance (Aktar & Pangil, 2018). This study explored the variables of employee engagement and supervisor emotional intelligence and the potential effect on turnover intention.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, perceive, understand, and manage your own emotions and the emotions of other people (Krén & Séllei, 2020). Emotional intelligence is an essential people skill. Individuals with emotional intelligence exhibit relationship-building skills and concern for others (Miao et al., 2018). Individuals with emotional intelligence better understand emotions, both their own and others, whether they are leaders or followers (Mironova, 2017). Additionally, leaders who possess emotional intelligence control their own emotions and inspire others (Miao et al., 2018). Emotionally intelligent leaders realize that their actions and emotional responses influence others (Khalili, 2017). People view leaders and peers with innate emotional skills as someone others want to be around or seek out for help because they are skilled at handling the feelings of real people (Edelman & Van Knippenberg, 2018). Those with higher emotional intelligence are viewed as more ethical or moral than those with lower emotional intelligence (Qian et al., 2017). Thus, leaders with emotional intelligence draw others to them, and employees want to follow a person with those skills.

Increasing the emotional intelligence of those who deal directly with most of an

organization's employees improves employee engagement (Eldor, 2016). Identifying talent and providing training opportunities to future managerial candidates is an integral part of this strategy. There are two interpersonal skills, emotional and political, that are predictors for managerial success and identifiers for future leaders: (a) negotiating and (b) developing partnerships with others (Mencl et al., 2016).

Turnover Intention

Employee turnover can be expensive for organizations. In 2018 approximately 40.3 million people quit their jobs, and in 2019 that number rose to 42.1 million, with turnover costs to businesses estimated as high as \$300 billion to replace those workers (Montgomery & Akinyooye, 2020). Organizational leaders who stay ahead of employee turnover intention can reap the benefits of higher retention (Alatawi, 2017). For example, longer-tenured employees are more likely to be performing at a higher level than newly hired employees (Boğan & Dedeoğlu, 2017). Engaged employees benefit organizations through improved work performance (Pandita & Singhal, 2017).

Perceived salary inequities are one reason employees choose to leave companies (Mohamed et al., 2017). Intent to leave is higher in employees who perceive salary increases are unjust, regardless of whether they were initially happy with the salary increase, making the perception of fairness more important than the actual monetary value (Gevrek et al., 2017). Communications about pay and the process for increases are necessary and can be problematic if employees perceive unfairness (Scott, 2018). External factors such as competition from rivals for talent and the ability to move to a higher-paying area can also entice employees to leave (Singh, 2019).

Other factors contributing to an employee leaving an organization include work-life balance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and job satisfaction. Employees who view their work-life balance favorably are more likely to enjoy work and be more engaged (Wang, 2018). Conversely, those who experience more work-life difficulties tend to blame work for the conflicts and be less involved or engaged in work, leading to higher turnover. Support from the organization and its leaders is a correlating factor in the engagement level of employees (Loan, 2020). Employees who are dissatisfied with their leadership, dislike their work environment, or feel emotionally disconnected may leave an organization. Employees often leave because of a perceived lack of support or appreciation; employees leave leaders rather than the organization (Reina et al., 2018).

Organizational leaders should invest time in determining which employees are prone to leaving the organization; this may inform human resources and other leaders how to determine whether the employee is worth investing resources, as employees who stay willingly are more productive (Eliyana et al., 2019). Organizational commitment is a way to describe the emotional bond that employees may feel toward their company and, by extension, company stakeholders. An aspect of organizational commitment is the employee's level of responsibility toward organizational outcomes (Mohanty et al., 2020). The depth of that emotional commitment is a factor in turnover intention; higher organizational commitment leads to lower turnover intention (Sarhan et al., 2020). Employees who feel negatively toward their organization can experience burnout, described as emotional exhaustion coupled with feelings of pessimism toward the

company, lack of loyalty, and decreased job satisfaction, which increases the intent to leave (Giao et al., 2020).

There are multiple reasons why employees choose to leave an organization. They can leave for pay inequity, whether perceived or actual. When organizational leaders and human resources can manage employee perspectives on pay and the company's direction, they can often create an environment where employees want to stay. Similarly, company leaders can increase the positive aspects of work, such as increased organizational commitment with timely rewards, bonuses, and salary increases (Williams & Owusu-Acheampong, 2016). These programs may reduce the cost of turnover and keeps skilled and valuable talent within the organization. As presented in the following section, many factors affect employees' organizational commitment and determine whether employees intend to leave or stay with the organization.

Intent to Stay

Just as there are multiple reasons for employees to leave an organization, there are many reasons why employees choose to stay with an organization. Employees choose to stay with a company when there is an opportunity for advancement and high job satisfaction (Bwowe, 2020). Employees also develop a commitment to stay with an organization for various positive reasons, such as work-life balance, recognition, and identification with the business (Polo-Vargas et al., 2017). By contrast, employees without the commitment to stay with an organization may still stay, albeit without feelings of engagement. The lack of commitment may negatively impact team and organizational performance (Polo-Vargas et al., 2017).

There are other reasons for employees to choose to stay with an organization. Personal growth is important to employees, but it is also crucial that the company's values reflect their values; employees want to feel connected to the organization (Gardner et al., 2018). When employers offer opportunities for employees to improve skills through training, there are improvements in organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Sarhan et al., 2020). Organizational leaders can positively influence organizational commitment by establishing paths for development and growth and supporting their employees' career goals (Polo-Vargas et al., 2017).

Organizational trust can also affect intent to stay. Whether employees feel a sense of trust in their organization is dependent on factors such as communication, leader behaviors, culture, and work environment (Shahid, 2018). Organizational trust links to positive employee attitudes and behaviors (Im & Chung, 2018). When organizational trust is eroded or missing, employees' health declines, as does organizational performance (Rabelo et al., 2019).

Additionally, intent to stay links with job satisfaction. Flexibility and openness to ideas are vital in problem-solving such as the difference in commitment to the job between established employees and those new to the field (Yarbrough et al., 2016). Mentoring and communication are important in resolving intergenerational conflicts. In addition, exploring different ways to compensate employees, particularly younger employees with different value systems, was an essential aspect of employee retention. Job satisfaction is also linked to employees' satisfaction with the actual work performed (Yalabik et al., 2017).

Additional factors affecting intent to stay involve the traits of leaders. Employees cited a conflict management style that made them feel like an essential part of the process as a component of their intention to stay (Al-Hamdan et al., 2015). For organizations that undergo substantial change, such as a merger or acquisition, such events can leave employees feeling disconnected from the company's goals (Babalola et al., 2014). Disconnected employees lack organizational commitment; however, some leaders improve the self-esteem of their employees during times of change, positively affecting their intent to stay (Babalola et al., 2014). Leaders who empowered their employees, a component of transformational leadership, noted increased job satisfaction and intent to stay (Choi et al., 2016). One reason that organizational leaders focus on reducing turnover is to save money. Internal factors such as pay, leadership attributes, and frequency of change play a role in influencing employees to stay. However, more important to employees are training and development opportunities and job satisfaction (Al-sharafi et al., 2018).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a crucial indicator of employee engagement and is one aspect of whether employees stay or leave an organization (Mira et al., 2019). Job satisfaction is how much an employee likes or dislikes their job (Bellani et al., 2017). Several areas contribute to job satisfaction, such as coworkers, compensation, management, environment, promotions, communication, and job tasks (Bellani et al., 2017). Job satisfaction is an essential construct affecting employee behavior and performance (Extremera et al., 2018).

Another component often determined to affect job satisfaction is the stress level of employees, whether identified as role or organizational stress (Sarangi et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence was identified as an effective way employees have a locus of control to manage stress (Udod et al., 2020). Researchers found that individuals reporting higher levels of job satisfaction also had higher levels of emotional intelligence (Extremera et al., 2018). Emotional intelligence also affects interactions between the employee and coworkers and the employee and managers; higher levels of emotional intelligence mean more positive relationships (Haleem & Ur Rahman, 2018). Emotional intelligence enables employees to better cope with stressors at work and home (Udod et al., 2020).

In addition to improved relationships, job satisfaction links to improved job performance (Latif et al., 2017). Unhappy employees are unlikely to treat customers well and may have difficulty with coworker relationships. Employees who reported high levels of job satisfaction were consistently the highest performers and the most motivated (Tampubolon, 2016). Job satisfaction and emotional intelligence link to employee engagement; employees who use emotional intelligence reported increased engagement and job satisfaction (Mohanty et al., 2020).

Job satisfaction also consists of an employee's enjoyment of the tasks they are performing. Job characteristics such as autonomy, variety of work activities, and supervisor feedback contribute to job satisfaction (Rai et al., 2017). Leader behavior influences job satisfaction; supervisors who use consistent and positive feedback increase job satisfaction (Zhang & Zhu, 2019). Along with feedback, leaders who set realistic and

consistent expectations contribute to increased job satisfaction in their employees (Salahuddin et al., 2015). Those types of leaders tend to demonstrate transformational leadership. Since job satisfaction and leader behaviors are antecedents of engagement, leadership style may predict leader behavior and, ultimately, a component of employee engagement.

Leadership

Leadership style influences the level of engagement in employees (Popli & Rizvi, 2017). There are various styles of leadership with varying impacts on employee engagement. Servant leaders focus on their relationships with followers and display altruistic behavior toward employees (Yang et al., 2017). Servant leaders seek to build up their followers; they challenge, offer feedback, and mentor their employees (Chiniara & Bentein, 2016). The humility and morality of a servant leader result in employees feeling empowered and autonomous, which results in increased levels of employee engagement (Lo et al., 2018).

By contrast, autocratic leaders are more structured and less interested in satisfying follower needs; instead, these leaders make all critical decisions and expect followers to carry out those decisions (Wang et al., 2019). Military leaders such as Napoleon, Patton, and Hitler used an autocratic style of leadership. Autocratic leaders are often successful as coaches or managers on sports teams; there are defined procedures with known repercussions (Fiaz et al., 2017). However, an autocratic leadership style negatively impacts employee engagement (Chen et al., 2018).

Leadership is the ability to interact with others of varying skills, abilities, and motivations and induce them to meet the leader and the follower (Burns, 1978). Burns identified two types of leadership: transformational and transactional. Both types are effective; however, transformational leadership is a key to positive outcomes such as increased employee engagement and organizational commitment (Eliyana et al., 2019). Transformational leaders identify common goals and use their ability to form relationships to enable followers to meet objectives.

Transformational Leaders

Transformational leaders inspire their followers; leaders who cannot control their emotions, particularly negative emotions, are less likely to be influential leaders (Mencil et al., 2016). For example, famous transformational leaders from history include Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Nelson Mandela. All three figures inspired countless individuals to achieve political and civil reforms in their respective nations. Moreover, those leaders motivated their followers to take actions that changed history.

Many people form opinions based on interpersonal interactions. For example, if a person continually receives poor service from a waiter at a restaurant, the customer is likely to have a negative opinion of the establishment. Similarly, if employees have negative interactions with leaders, their opinion may also be negative. Disengagement occurs when the employee is unmotivated, disconnected emotionally, and apathetic toward achieving organizational goals (Popli & Rizvi, 2017).

By contrast, employees who feel connected emotionally to their peers and leaders are motivated to achieve the organization's goals. Transformational leaders utilize their

emotional intelligence skills to connect with employees, creating a sense of belonging and feelings of working toward a greater good. Transformational leaders unite followers; their focus on development and achievement enhances employee engagement (Caniëls et al., 2018). This engagement may lead to better business performance (Truninger et al., 2018).

Transformational leaders make connections and aid employees in identifying with their coworkers and the organization. While much of the literature surrounding leadership styles and employee engagement focuses on organizations with permanent employees, there is evidence that leadership style can affect engagement in organizations that employ only temporary workers. Leading a workforce of temporary employees presents different challenges for a leader. Temporary workers may not be interested in or care about the long-term goals of an organization; they are disengaged (Ding et al., 2017).

A transformational leader of temporary workers can achieve similar levels of engagement as with permanent workers by using their skills in making emotional connections. Transformational leaders increased engagement among temporary workers and create identification with the project or team that the temporary employees worked on together (Ding et al., 2017). Also significant were the findings that transformational leaders were more effective, leading to improved work outcomes (Ding et al., 2017).

Servant Leaders

Servant leadership is defined as primarily altruistic; servant leaders are concerned with social justice, equality, empathy, and ethical behavior (Northouse, 2016). They give up power to their followers instead of holding power. They are empathetic and display

humility (Wang et al., 2018). The humility they demonstrate is based on their moral and ethical beliefs and focuses on building trust with their followers (Caldwell et al., 2017). In a 2017 study by Engelbrecht et al., the authors found that leader traits such as ethical behavior contributed to increased employee engagement.

Some examples of well-known servant leaders are Mother Teresa, Desmond Tutu, and Albert Schweitzer. All displayed humility in their interactions and were known for altruism and genuine concern for others. The followers of servant leaders display more ethical and prosocial behaviors and moral efficacy (Owens et al., 2019). Servant leaders seek to understand the opinions and needs of their followers.

Servant leaders are collaborative and work toward gaining the support of their followers, which increases followership, support, and loyalty (Aziz, 2019). Rather than having all the answers, they seek consensus and listen to other perspectives. Their humility builds trust and self-confidence in followers (Bharanitharan et al., 2018). These behaviors positively impact the performance of their teams, increasing organizational effectiveness (Lo et al., 2018).

Transactional Leaders

Transactional leaders treat leadership as an exchange between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2016). Transactional leaders focus on follower behaviors and reinforce desired behaviors with rewards and punish unwanted behaviors (Antonakis & House, 2014). Such rewards are typically contingent upon following established rules or processes.

Transactional leaders like structure and like to get things done. For example, military leaders are often transactional leaders; there is a chain of command and detailed rules on accomplishing tasks (Martinez-Corcoles & Stephanou, 2017). Missteps are punished, and both leaders and followers are clear on expectations. Likewise, the nature of work is transactional; an individual works for an organization and, in return, receives compensation, a transaction (Northouse, 2016). Transactional leaders are not inspirational, instead, they engage followers in performing certain behaviors in exchange for something else (Sharma & Nair, 2018).

Transactional leaders focus on externally motivating employees rather than creating the engaged and empowered employees of the transformational leader (Northouse, 2016). Transactional leaders use positive and negative reinforcement to manage employees (Jiang et al., 2018). Transactional leaders are task-focused and work within the organizational culture, while transformational leaders are people-focused and try to change the culture (Farahnak et al., 2019). While transactional leadership styles can be effective, transformational leaders impact employee commitment (Sharma & Nair, 2018).

Transactional leaders are not interested in inspiring their followers; instead, they are interested in getting the job done. Creativity may be lacking as the focus is on results (Antonakis & House, 2014). Transactional leaders motivate followers by communicating goals clearly and specifying rewards for completing those goals (Deichmann & Stam, 2015). Both transformational and transactional leaders can be influential, however, the methods are different.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire style is the absence of leadership and negatively impacts organizational outcomes (Bass, 1999). *Laissez-faire* translates from French as *let it be* and is a passive style of leadership (Haile, 2017). Leaders who employ this style have a hands-off approach, instead believing that their employees are the best judges of completing work in the most efficient manner (Barling & Frone, 2016). Laissez-faire leaders do not make the decisions for the group; they allow the group members to determine the direction and scope of work, along with allowing members to determine roles within the group (Begum et al., 2018).

Famous laissez-faire style leaders were Ronald Reagan and Warren Buffett. Both successfully utilized this leadership style; however, researchers frequently cite this style as detrimental to the organization and stressful to employees due to the absence of decision-making authority at the top (Barling & Frone, 2016). Coworker dissatisfaction increases under laissez-faire leadership by allowing interpersonal conflict to arise due to the absence of leadership (Ågotnes et al., 2018),

By contrast, some followers view the laissez-faire leader as democratic and empowering (Fiaz et al., 2017). It is difficult to argue with the financial success of Warren Buffett, a known laissez-faire leader. However, this style can be successful with the right mix of individuals, as shown by Mr. Buffett's financial and business success. Motivation is a key component of leader effectiveness, and some highly self-directed individuals are so internally motivated that it makes leadership directives unnecessary (Fiaz et al., 2017).

For most organizations, laissez-faire does not work when considering meeting organizational objectives. Research shows that laissez-faire is more likely to produce employee dissonance and passivity due to the absence of decision-making and a reluctance to intervene by the leader (Amin et al., 2018). Instead of creating motivation and inspiring performance, laissez-faire leaders' abdication of responsibility toward their followers tends to do the opposite by reducing motivation and performance. The effectiveness of a leadership style in helping employees meet organizational objectives makes laissez-faire leadership a nonpreferred style.

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is a leadership style based on the personal beliefs and values of the leader, who is constantly modeling ethical beliefs, integrity, and values to their followers (Wei et al., 2016). The authentic leader does not coerce or convince people to follow; this individual is genuine or authentic. This style of leadership is dependent on integrity. The authentic leader is self-aware and strives to show his true, authentic self to followers (Wei et al., 2016).

As transformational leaders, authentic leaders focus on people and try to raise the performance of followers by raising self-esteem and providing growth and development opportunities to employees (Wei et al., 2016). However, not all transformational leaders are authentic. Some transformational leaders lack the ethics or moral compass necessary to be authentic. Psychologists describe this as Machiavellianism (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012). Machiavellian leaders may be transformational leaders yet behave unethically, such as Jeffrey Skilling, former CEO of Enron (Johnsen, 2018). Authentic

leaders are self-aware and this awareness, combined with morality, guides leading people and organizations (Sendjaya et al., 2016). By contrast, the inauthentic leader lacks an internal moral compass; instead, they are self-serving instead of self-aware (Fathei, 2018). The Machiavellian leader uses transformational leadership to manipulate followers for personal gain (Rego et al., 2017).

Authentic leaders perpetuate the cycle of moral leadership and behavior by providing opportunities to employees, which raises self-esteem and boosts employee performance (Sidani & Rowe, 2018). Authentic leaders are unwavering in their belief system, and both inspire and motivate followers. They foster an environment based on trust, commitment, performance, and organizational identity (Pinelli et al., 2018).

Authentic leaders may improve employee wellbeing through positivity, knowledge sharing, and creating a supportive work environment (Otaghsara & Hamzehzadeh, 2017). Authenticity from a leader links to increases in intrinsic motivation in employees (Sarfraz et al., 2019). Unlike the laissez-faire leader, the authentic leader makes decisions. Authentic leaders make decisions using their strong moral compass and ethical beliefs and are focused on fairness (Duncan et al., 2017). The authentic leader is consistent, open, and honest with followers, creating a feeling of trust (Duncan et al., 2017).

Authentic leadership is different from other leadership theories because of its moral or ethical component (Landesz, 2016). Authentic leaders are successful because they know themselves and show their authentic selves to followers (Wei et al., 2016). The authentic leader is a relationship builder; by sharing themselves and their guiding

principles, they create positivity within the organization (Sidani & Rowe, 2018).

Research indicated that leaders who display the traits of an authentic leader are more effective than those who lack honor, ethics, and integrity (Copeland, 2016).

Leader Effectiveness

There are varying views on whether emotional intelligence has a role in leader effectiveness. Some research has shown that emotional intelligence is a crucial indicator of effective leadership (Mayur, 2016). Other studies revealed that emotional intelligence could be a strong indicator of change management ability in leaders. Leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence were better at managing organizational change and were able to influence the views of others during times of change (Dhingra & Punia, 2016). Furthermore, self-awareness and self-management skills were strongly correlated with high levels of emotional intelligence (Dhingra & Punia, 2016). Researchers determined that leaders with higher levels of emotional intelligence demonstrated greater abilities to manage organizational change, calm fear and uneasiness felt by employees, and positively frame organizational change to gain greater acceptance within the organization (Dhingra & Punia, 2016). All are valuable skill sets for leaders in organizations that experience change, whether through mergers and acquisitions, economic conditions, or a myriad of other reasons for organizational change.

By contrast, other researchers stated that emotional intelligence is not a predictor of leadership, initiative, goal orientation, change orientation, or employee development (Baczynska & Thornton, 2017). These researchers defined three types of intelligence: emotional, practical, and analytical. Emotional intelligence is the ability to solve

problems by understanding emotions. Analytical intelligence is the ability to analyze and solve problems using logic and critical thinking skills. Practical intelligence can use everyday knowledge in various situations. More common terms to consider are book smarts to refer to analytical intelligence and common sense for practical intelligence.

In the same study, the researchers found that analytical intelligence correlated to all five management behaviors, while practical intelligence aligned with three behaviors: leadership, goal orientation, and employee development (Baczynska & Thornton, 2017). There was no correlation found between emotional intelligence and any of the five management behaviors in this study. However, other researchers drew different conclusions, that emotional intelligence was a significant predictor of leader effectiveness (Nabih et al., 2016). Emotionally intelligent leaders are better at conflict resolution, better at working in teams, and have better relationships with people (Sahidur Rahman et al., 2016).

Individual and Organizational Performance

Stakeholders measure organizational performance in multiple ways; if a public company, stock prices are essential. Owners and leaders of private companies may focus on net profit. Still, others may focus on sales or profit growth or the value provided to all stakeholders (Abu Khalaf et al., 2019). Regardless of the metric used, organizational leaders typically want to be successful.

Emotional intelligence is a significant component of individual performance and, ultimately, organizational performance (Kuswati, 2020). Leaders who demonstrated higher levels of emotional intelligence reported more cohesive teams, greater ability to

manage organizational changes, and better team performance (Neil et al., 2016).

Researchers found positive relationships between emotional intelligence and several high-performance indicators, such as speed and quality of work, attendance, initiative, and overall work performance (Muchhal & Solkhe, 2017).

Studies indicate that employees and leaders who are emotionally intelligent perform better, whether in the executive suite, in mid-level positions, and in low-level jobs (Sastre Castillo & Danvila Del Valle, 2017). Leaders who exhibit positive attributes such as coaching, collaboration, and communication are more successful than those who do not have such abilities (Stein, 2017). While organizational leaders want higher performance from employees, the business must reap the benefits of this performance. Organizational leaders use multiple indicators of business performance to determine whether improvement occurs. Those include the easily understood metrics of sales and profitability. However, there are other indicators, such as the level of innovation. According to Calantone et al. (2002), innovation successfully implements new concepts and ideas in an organization. There is also product innovation, which is the introduction of new products into the marketplace. There are also new processes, including learning processes, which help make the organization a learning organization. Organizations whose leaders identified the company as a learning organization experienced greater product development and performance growth, demonstrating more innovative capabilities and higher levels of teamwork through product innovation (Hannachi, 2016).

Higher levels of teamwork correspond with higher performance (Daneshgari & Moore, 2016). The researchers reported on a process of reorganization that engaged

employees and allowed them to be more involved in the work; they found that empowering employees to make decisions was a key component of improving job satisfaction and engagement (Daneshgari & Moore, 2016). In this case study, company leaders involved employees at all levels in determining new structures and new knowledge, skills, and abilities lacking in the organization. These improvements were realized through a focus on learning in the organization that ultimately led to increases in profits, market share, and employee engagement. By utilizing employees who already knew the company and its customers, the organization could improve in multiple areas. Organizational leaders who focus on employees as the essential aspect of their business see improved performance and commitment to the organization (Harandi & Abdolvand, 2018).

Business performance affects stakeholders in multiple ways. If a company is public, then shareholders are of great importance. Stock performance is the standard metric to evaluate leaders in public companies. Customers are essential, for, without the customer, there are no sales or profit to measure. However, employees are key stakeholders, and their commitment, or lack of commitment, to the organization can significantly affect business performance. A lack of commitment to the organization can be seen in lower performance and reduced organizational commitment, leading to job burnout.

Job Burnout

Job burnout occurs when stress-related health problems affect employees because of chronically high job demands combined with a lack of resources (Demerouti et al.,

2001). Job burnout negatively impacts the general well-being of employees and their work performance (Steffens et al., 2018). Burnout can also develop when an employee becomes emotionally exhausted (Xin et al., 2017). Employees who have high stress and high-pressure work environments often exhibit signs of job burnout (Wu et al., 2018).

Burnout is often stress-related and can lead to increased turnover when leaders contribute to stress in their employees, even if inadvertent. When leaders increase job demands without providing resources or social support, they frequently increase job-related stress in employees (Van Steenbergen et al., 2017). Researchers found that a lack of organizational commitment existed when burnout was present (Xin et al., 2017). Employees who believe they have support from their organizations are more likely to feel less burned out (Wu et al., 2018).

Conversely, leaders who reduce stress in the work lives of their employees usually do so by exhibiting components of transformational leadership such as creating a shared or group identity (Steffens et al., 2018). Previously engaged employees who experience burnout can become disengaged (Sonnetag, 2017). When employees are engaged, they are more satisfied in their jobs and exhibit higher energy than those employees who experience burnout (Jeung et al., 2018). When developmental opportunities are present, employees feel supported and are more likely to remain engaged.

Employee Development

Developing employees is a crucial indicator in improving (a) performance, (b) retention, and (c) commitment while reducing turnover (Urbancová & Vnoučková, 2018).

Training employees is vital to improving the workforce's skill level, increasing commitment, and enhancing the organization's performance (Mwiandi & Juma, 2018). Employees who sought professional development opportunities were more promotable and demonstrated a more substantial commitment to organizational goals (Garanina et al., 2017).

Employee growth is a strategic imperative for organizations; employee development is how organizations gain a competitive advantage (Lejeune et al., 2016). While evidence of employee development is a positive focus for organizational leaders, there are pitfalls. Some employers view training and development opportunities negatively, believing that increasing the skill level of employees makes them more likely to seek work elsewhere and more attractive to other organizations (Nelissen et al., 2016). However, researchers discovered that turnover reduced if internal opportunities for advancement existed within the organization (Nelissen et al., 2016). Employees with a growth mindset also positively stimulate levels of employee engagement (Keating & Heslin, 2015).

There are additional factors that impact employee development. There is a significant positive relationship between involving employees in strategy deployment and organizational effectiveness and skills growth for managerial and nonmanagerial workers (Abbasnejad et al., 2017). Communicating with employees is a key component of retaining talent (Cloutier et al., 2015). In addition, leaders who created a learning environment, or view employee learning as a necessary part of organizational culture, noted gains in the abilities of employees to detect and implement improvements (Wallace

et al., 2013). The physical comfort of employees' workspace also has an impact on employee productivity and organizational effectiveness. Budie et al. (2019) found that employees satisfied with the work environment reported better communication and higher productivity.

Employee development plays a significant role in gauging organizational effectiveness. For those employees who want to stay with an organization and improve their skills, operating in a comfortable environment within a culture of self-improvement was vital for organizations to retain talent. Employees interested in learning and growing within an organization are more effective when they believe there is an opportunity for advancement. By contrast, employees who gain skills but do not see internal opportunities are more likely to leave an organization. When employees view their leaders as supportive of individual development, their performance is better, and they are more committed to staying with the company (Alshammari et al., 2016).

Career growth is a factor for employees who consider leaving an organization; those employees who expect growth and opportunity to progress will remain longer than those who expect no career progression (Nawaz & Pangil, 2016). When training and development activities occur, employees feel valued and respond by performing better with increased engagement (Memon et al., 2016). Employers who provide training on job-related skills and offer development opportunities have a more engaged workforce with employees who feel obligated to the organization (Fletcher et al., 2016). Employees who learn, grow, and develop are more likely to stay and contribute to the organization.

Human Resources Activities

Human resource practitioners perform multiple activities that affect employee engagement (Aktar & Pangil, 2017). Typically, human resource personnel are responsible for (a) communications to employees; (b) recruiting and onboarding; (c) employee engagement surveys, rewards, or incentive programs; and (d) employee development (Alzyoud, 2018). These activities occur in conjunction with other functional areas such as recruiting and onboarding, a training department for employee development, and an outside vendor for employee engagement surveys (Qaisar et al., 2018). Regardless of any internal or external partnerships, human resources is the inner face of the organization.

Many, if not all, of these activities impact employee engagement. If communication is incorrect or challenging to understand, confusion can occur (Oliván, 2017). Conversely, engagement improves when internal communications allow for feedback and sharing of information that employees view as important (Tkalac Verčič & Pološki Vokić, 2017). Informative, timely, and accurate communication is better received by employees, especially if the communication is two-way (Duthler & Dhanesh, 2018). Effective communication between teams and between employees and managers helps employees feel more connected and collaborative (Van Bogaert et al., 2017).

Human resources has an impact on many other areas. For example, designing, implementing, and communicating employee incentive and reward programs often fall to human resources (Bolaji et al., 2018). Rewards and employee incentive programs can positively affect work outcomes and increase desirable behaviors (Alzyoud, 2018). Human resources can advance such programs through effective communications. Other

leaders can also advance such programs, particularly transformational leaders (Zakaria et al., 2018).

Onboarding and recruitment can also influence employee engagement, beginning with the recruiting or talent acquisition process. Candidates are learning about an organization during the recruitment process, just as recruiters learn about the candidates. Positive candidate experiences can translate into an employee that starts out excited about joining an organization (Burrell, 2018). By contrast, candidates who have negative experiences are more likely to not join the organization and are less likely to become a future customer, potentially impacting revenue and reputation (Allden & Harris, 2013). Similarly, onboarding also affects employee engagement. New employees want to be successful in their new roles and look toward their onboarding experience to introduce them to the organization, how they fit, and set them up for success (Keisling & Laning, 2016).

Human resource departments have a significant influence on employee engagement, often before an individual becomes an employee. While often recruiting functions are outsourced, human resources must remain involved throughout the process. Their involvement can create a positive candidate experience and transition into an employee. Once employed, onboarding is the next step in introducing new hires to company culture, job expectations and putting new employees on a path to success within the organization. Human resources is a primary source of information flowing to employees within an organization. It is important to employees that communication is two-way to foster engagement. Therefore, designing communications that allow for

feedback while still sharing information is essential for human resources. Also of importance to employees is a bonus, reward, or incentive program. Leaders can avoid pitfalls that cause demotivation by rolling such programs out correctly, as they are powerful tools to improve employee engagement within an organization.

Transition

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between the two independent variables of emotional intelligence and employee engagement and the dependent variable of turnover intention. The study occurred in a manufacturing company in Georgia, located in the southeastern United States. It measured the emotional intelligence of supervisors, employees' level of engagement, and turnover intention of those employees. In Section 1, I presented the applied business problem, including the problem and purpose statement, the nature of the study. Next, I stated the research question and hypotheses and discussed the corresponding theoretical framework. Then, I explained operational definitions and assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study, the significance of the study, and a review of the professional and academic literature.

In Section 2, I restate the purpose of the study and define the role of the researcher. I explain and justify the decisions made regarding research methodology, participant choices, data collection, ethical considerations, and a review of the reliability and validity of the chosen data collection instruments.

In Section 3, I will introduce the presentation of findings and their application to professional practice. Next, implications for social change will be discussed, along with

recommendations for action and future research. My reflection on the study and findings and the conclusion will round out Section 3. Finally, a detailed appendix and extensive reference list will complete this doctoral study.

Section 2: The Project

In this study, I examined the relationship between the independent variables of supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement and the dependent variable of turnover intention. Data were collected using three survey instruments to measure the variables. Participants were hourly employees and supervisors of a manufacturing company located in Georgia. In Section 2, the focus is on the actual project.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative, correlational study was to understand the relationship between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. The targeted population consisted of supervisors with responsibility for hourly employees and the hourly employees in a manufacturing company in Georgia. The independent variables were supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The dependent variable was turnover intention. The implication for positive social change includes the potential to improve the workplace environment for employees. For example, greater emotional intelligence in supervisors may lead to higher employee engagement, which may be manifested through reductions in turnover. In addition, improved financial performance may generate more jobs and more opportunities for existing employees and economic growth within the community.

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher in a quantitative, correlational study, my role was collecting and analyzing and analyzing data and presenting credible findings through empirical research. This preference in research is referred to as positivism; positivists often prefer

quantitative research over other methods (Rahi, 2017). To achieve this, I set aside any personal biases during the research process. Researchers using quantitative methods do not allow their own or participants' emotions or feelings to influence data collection (Rahi, 2017). Since my research involved human participation, I followed the three principles outlined in *The Belmont Report* (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). As a researcher who used human participants, I had an ethical obligation to demonstrate respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I accomplished this by gaining informed consent from every participant, giving them enough information to determine whether to participate (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects and Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). Participants were able to opt out of the study at any time, regardless of the reason. Beneficence in research means that any adverse circumstances are minimized for participants while maximizing potential benefits. I did not anticipate any negative consequences for research participants; however, they were free to address their concerns with me or simply leave the study if anyone perceived that possibility. Justice in a research setting means that any benefits derived from the research are distributed fairly and equitably.

I am familiar with manufacturing because I have worked in that industry for over 30 years. However, the company I surveyed was not the company I worked for, and I did not know the employees at this business other than the plant manager. Not having any personal or professional relationships with potential participants eliminated any potential for feelings of coercion or obligation to answer a question in a certain way.

Participants

The targeted population consisted of supervisors with responsibility for hourly employees and the hourly employees in a manufacturing company in Georgia. I measured the engagement of employees, the emotional intelligence of supervisors, and turnover intention of those employees. Supervisors answered questions designed to determine their level of emotional intelligence. The study participants were full-time permanent employees with at least 6 months of tenure to ensure that hourly employees worked long enough to have opinions about their own engagement and whether they intended to stay with the organization. Temporary or part-time employees may have had different responses than full-time permanent employees. To ensure consistency in the participant pools, I selected only full-time permanent employees. For supervisors, the survey measured their emotional intelligence, so tenure was not likely to make a difference. There was no preference or requirement for any gender, ethnicity, or other personal characteristics other than being at least 18 years of age. Since the research question was to determine if there was a relationship between employee engagement, supervisor emotional intelligence, and turnover intention, personal characteristics were not relevant to this study.

While I have worked in the manufacturing sector for over 30 years and have a good understanding of the industry, I selected participants with no prior relationship. By selecting participants whom I did not know and did not know me, I expected to reduce the potential for participants to provide answers that they perceived as being expected. I gained access to participants by requesting access from the plant manager. The plant

manager was aware of and supportive of this educational pursuit. I made a formal request via email and detailed the expected disruption to the business unit and employees. I shared the reason, design, and surveys with the plant manager and leadership team at the target location. I asked the plant manager to publicize the research project with flyers on the employee communication boards to be aware of the project and contact me in advance if they wished. I addressed any ethical or other concerns to reassure company leaders. I provided approval from the institutional review board (IRB) for this study.

While I was not employed by or affiliated with the target organization, I have a personal relationship with the plant manager; however, I did not know any of the employees working at the company. I established a relationship with participants based on trust by answering questions and reassuring them that their responses would not be traceable. While I had consent forms from participants, the surveys were coded only as hourly employees or supervisors. No names or other identifying information were used. I treated participants with respect and assured anonymity to all participants (Ross et al., 2018). I answered any questions or concerns about the research, its purpose, how I aggregated and analyzed results, and any other questions. Again, all participants were anonymous. In keeping with standard research practices, if a participant chose not to continue at any time during the research process, they were allowed to leave the study, and any responses collected were removed from the study data (Nyika, 2018).

Research Method and Design

Research Method

There are three options for research methods: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Ma & Zhang, 2019). Quantitative methods are appropriate for researchers who are examining relationships between variables (Saunders et al., 2016). Quantitative researchers use numerical data to explore potential relationships between dependent and independent variables (Ma & Zhang, 2019). A quantitative approach is the most widely used method (Brown et al., 2017). Quantitative researchers often analyze numerical data gathered through surveys (Zyphur & Pierides, 2019). I focused my research on testing hypotheses about whether relationships exist between variables, which is achieved by collecting numerical data, making a quantitative method the correct choice for this study.

Qualitative research is valuable when examining patterns and behaviors, as the methodology allows for insight into participants' rationales, thoughts, and opinions (Busetto et al., 2020). Researchers who perform qualitative research use open-ended questions, interviews, and documentation to explore a problem (Yin, 2017). I was not looking for why employees may feel engaged or disengaged or why they intended to leave or stay with the organization. For this study, I determined if a relationship existed between three variables and accomplished it using survey instruments to collect and analyze numerical data.

Mixed methods researchers incorporate both quantitative and qualitative methods to study a problem (Taguchi, 2018). Since I examined relationships between variables and collected numerical data, a quantitative method was the correct choice for this study.

Since the research question was to determine if a relationship existed among three variables, a correlational design was appropriate for this study.

Research Design

There are different types of designs within quantitative methodology: experimental, quasi-experimental, and correlational. Researchers use experimental designs to test a null hypothesis or determine a relationship between variables (Saunders et al., 2016). In an experimental design, researchers randomly assign subjects to control and experimental groups; in a quasi-experimental design, by contrast, researchers use existing groups with no random assignment (Maciejewski, 2018). Finally, correlational studies determine relationships between variables using various statistical methods (Woehr & Newman, 2020).

Surveys are appropriate to gather numerical data such as employee engagement, supervisor emotional intelligence, and employee turnover intention. The analysis of correlational data is an effective method to answer research questions such as determining relationships between multiple variables (Martin et al., 2018). An experimental design would be appropriate if I were seeking to determine causal relationships or cause and effect. Because I explored whether relationships existed between three variables, a nonexperimental correlational design was the most appropriate choice for this study. In this study, I collected data using three validated survey instruments and used statistical analysis to determine if relationships existed between the three variables.

Population and Sampling

The population consisted of approximately 100 employees, including hourly and supervisors, from a single manufacturing company in Georgia. The number of available employees may vary due to absenteeism, vacation, and other reasons. The goal was to reach the entire population using a census rather than a sample. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2018), 11.1 million American workers worked in manufacturing industries in 2016. This population aligned with the research question because the research question focused on the relationship between employee engagement, supervisor emotional intelligence, and turnover intention in a manufacturing environment.

Because I did not know which employees would volunteer to participate in the study, I used a nonprobabilistic sampling method. This method is proper when all population members do not have an equal chance of being selected, such as voluntary participation (Sharif, 2019). One potential drawback to nonprobabilistic methods is that the sample may not be generalizable to the population. Because I focused on the relationship between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention, nonprobabilistic sampling was appropriate to ensure enough participants in both the supervisor and employee groups (Sharif, 2019). The participants were chosen based on their availability or convenience, which is convenience sampling.

I surveyed two groups for this study. The first sample consisted of full-time, permanent, nonsupervisory hourly employees with at least 6 months tenure. This group completed two surveys to measure the level of employee engagement and turnover intention. The second sample consisted of full-time, permanent, supervisor-level

employees. This group completed a survey designed to measure the level of emotional intelligence.

I used G*Power 3.1.9.4 software to determine the appropriate sample size to conduct a power analysis and a priori sample size calculation. According to the G*Power software, the number of participants needed was between 68 and 107 (Kang, 2021). I performed a fixed model linear multiple regression to determine the correct number of participants. The first analysis was based on an effect size (f^2) of 0.15, 80% power ($\beta = 0.20$), and a 95% confidence level (alpha level of 0.05). The second analysis was the same with a change to a 95% power ($\beta = 0.05$).

Ethical Research

The plant manager at the organization provided access to participants. Potential participants reviewed the consent form, asked questions, and continued with the surveys if they decided to participate in the study. Informed consent is necessary to ensure that the study participants agree to participate in research (Sil & Das, 2017). Participants should ask the researcher questions, understand the expectations for participation, and fully understand any potential risks or benefits to the participants (King, 2019). Additionally, the employees should understand that there are no repercussions for either participating or not participating (Hope, 2019). Participants were able to end their participation without recourse. Participants' confidentiality was protected by not using any identifying information on survey results. I anticipated no possibility of harm to any participants, and they could withdraw at any time with no penalty. I was honest with all participants. All participants and potential participants were protected by following these

practices, and my research did not have any ethical concerns. Additionally, there were no incentives other than my gratitude to prevent any potential to influence participants' answers.

Per Walden University guidelines, all data related to this doctoral study will be securely stored for 5 years in a password-protected DVD and stored in a safe located in my home (Walden University, n.d.-b). The data will be destroyed after 5 years. Additionally, I did not retain any identifiable information. I anonymized the organization's name by referring to it as a manufacturing company located in Georgia. To demonstrate that this doctoral study meets the ethical standards of Walden University, Institutional Review Board (IRB) signified approval by designating an IRB number (approval # 04-23-20-0761183).

Data Collection Instruments

The independent variables are the supervisor's level of emotional intelligence and the level of employee engagement. The dependent variable is turnover intention. I used three data collection instruments to collect data from study participants. Supervisor participants completed only one instrument. Hourly employees completed the remaining two instruments.

Meyer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test

The Meyer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is the instrument I used to measure the emotional intelligence of supervisors in this study. The MSCEIT uses 141 items to measure four branches or areas: "perceiving emotion, using

emotion to facilitate thought, understanding emotion, and managing emotion” (“Measuring Emotional Intelligence as a Set of Abilities,” 2003, p. 252).

The MSCEIT is owned and published by Multi-Health Systems (MHS) of Toronto, Canada. Initially developed in 2002, the test was copyrighted by MHS in 2004 and purchased through their website. There are requirements to fulfill to be allowed to purchase the test, including an application process for certification to administer the test that requires my doctoral chairperson to sign (MHS, 2019). There is an online option and a paper option. The paper option consists of a reusable test booklet and one-time use answer sheets returned to MHS for scoring and creating a raw data file (MHS, 2019). The time needed to complete the survey is between 30-45 minutes.

The MSCEIT is reliable, as demonstrated by a test-retest score of 0.86 (Brackett et al., 2004). The test is scored objectively with two methods, an expert score and a consensus score. Research showed the scores were highly correlated at 0.97, demonstrating the reliability between the two scoring methods (Palmer et al., 2005). Additional studies contributed to the conclusion that the MSCEIT demonstrates consistent reliability and validity (Sanchez-Garcia et al., 2016).

Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

I used the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) to measure employees’ engagement in the selected organization. There are three options, the UWES-9 with nine questions, UWES-15 with 15 questions, and UWES-17 with 17 questions. For this study, I used the 9-question version, which, like the other versions, measures three factors of engagement (Kulikowski, 2017; Milhem et al., 2019). Since I surveyed individuals at

work, the shorter instrument was less disruptive to the business as it took less time for employees to complete, approximately 2–3 minutes.

The purpose of the UWES is to measure work engagement on a seven-point ordinal scale from 0 to 6 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2002). The questions measure the three concepts of employee engagement: vigor, absorption, and dedication (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2002). Questions about employee enthusiasm determine dedication and a sense of pride in the work performed and whether the work is challenging. Questions on how quickly time passes at work measures absorption. The portion of the UWES on vigor measures the energy and feelings of investment and persistence toward their work.

The UWES results are scored by adding the numbers for each concept and dividing by the number of questions. Thus, there are scores for each concept and an overall score ranging between 0-6 (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2002). This instrument is widely used and accepted as a valid measure of employee engagement; it has been used in education, business, sports, hobbies, volunteering, and many other areas and used in multiple countries (Schaufeli, 2017). Using the shorter version of the UWES did not impact the data collected from the study, as all instrument versions are both reliable and valid (Lathabhavan et al., 2017). Multiple statistical methods measure internal consistency and reliability, such as test-retest, factor analysis, and Cronbach's alpha (Kilic, 2016). Research showed a high degree of test-retest reliability in a Pearson correlation test ($r = 0.89$) (Torabinia et al., 2017). Factor analysis confirmed coefficients above 0.70, demonstrating high levels of internal consistency (Çapri et al., 2016). Martin

(2017) reported a high Cronbach's alpha = 0.90 of the UWES-9, demonstrating construct validity and reliability of the instrument.

Turnover Intention Scale

I used the TIS-6 instrument to measure turnover intention of the employees who participated in the study. The TIS-6, a six-question scale, is a reliable and valid instrument in multiple studies (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Dr. Gerhard Roodt developed the TIS at the University of Johannesburg in 2004. I gained approval via email from Dr. Roodt to use the survey. There are two versions of the instrument; one consists of 15 questions to measure the intention to leave or stay with an organization. I used a shortened, six-question version (TIS-6) for this study to reduce the amount of time needed for employees to complete the survey took less than 5 minutes. Test takers choose from a five-point Likert scale for their answers based on their feelings during the last 9 months. One of the questions is reverse coded when scored (Roodt, 2004). Both versions of the instrument are reliable and valid, as demonstrated through statistical analysis. The Cronbach's alpha for the TIS-6 was 0.80, and factor analysis results were between 0.73 and 0.81, demonstrating reliability and factorial validity (Bothma & Roodt, 2013).

Data Collection Technique

Data for this study were collected using survey instruments administered via a text link sent to hourly employees. Supervisors received an email link. I gained permission and support from the appropriate leaders within the target organization to conduct the research. Participation was voluntary, and local human resources publicized the research.

The three survey instruments chosen for this study were appropriate for several reasons. I chose the UWES-9 because it is reliable and valid (see Çapri et al., 2016; Lathabhavan et al., 2017; Martin, 2017; Schaufeli, 2017; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2002; Torabinia et al., 2017). I chose the TIS-6 because it also is a reliable and valid measure of turnover intention (see Bothma & Roodt, 2013; Roodt, 2004). Another consideration was that both survey instruments are convenient to administer and available at no cost. Conversely, I purchased access to the MSCEIT as it was the only option to use this test. However, I chose that survey instrument as a reliable and valid tool to measure emotional intelligence (see Brackett et al., 2004; Palmer et al., 2005; Sanchez-Garcia et al., 2016). The MSCEIT was also easy to administer via a link that participants could complete at their convenience.

I scored UWES-9 and the TIS-6 manually following the instructions of the developers. MHS scored the MSCEIT as the surveys were complete; they also supplied a raw data file after the scoring that I used for statistical analysis (MHS, 2019). A disadvantage to research using these types of survey instruments is that by ensuring the anonymity of respondents, there is no opportunity to gain clarification or to ask follow-up questions, possibly missing any deeper meanings (Rahman, 2016). Since this study is quantitative, there was no reason to follow up if participants fully completed the appropriate surveys. Instead, I used statistical analysis to determine if any correlation existed based on the data collected.

Pilot studies are practical to explore untested survey methods or methods used in new ways (Leon et al., 2011). For example, all three survey instruments, the TIS, UWES,

and MSCEIT, have been used numerous times by other researchers and have proven validity and reliability. Another application for pilot studies is to determine feasibility, such as recruiting participants who can follow the instructions and complete the surveys (National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, 2019). For this study, I anticipated many willing participants because I had leadership and human resource support. The participants could take an additional brief break from work to participate in the research. For those reasons, I did not perform a pilot study.

Data Analysis

I addressed one research question in the proposed study: What is the relationship between (a) the supervisor's emotional intelligence, (b) employee engagement, and (c) turnover intention?

Null (H01): There is no statistically significant relationship between (a) the supervisor's emotional intelligence, (b) employee engagement, and (c) turnover intention.

Alternate (Ha1): There is a statistically significant relationship between (a) the supervisor's emotional intelligence, (b) employee engagement, and (c) turnover intention.

I collected data using two instruments completed via paper forms. The hourly employees completed two surveys on one page to determine engagement and turnover intention. Supervisors completed an online survey instrument to determine the level of emotional intelligence. I used IBM's Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 27 (SPSS) software to perform statistical analysis on the collected data. Occasionally there are problems with the collected data that require data cleaning. Problems occur when there are errors such as missing data or duplicates (Rezig et al., 2019). I requested that all

questions be answered before participants submitted their responses to prevent missing data and avoid as much data cleaning as possible. Data cleaning options are available within SPSS that aid researchers in cleaning and restoring missing data (Razak et al., 2012). One valuable option within SPSS is data mining, where raw data are input and then cleaned by being converted to standardized and useable numbers in SPSS (see Razak et al., 2012). I identified outliers and performed a visual scan for missing data. A visual search of the data enabled me to find any missing or incorrect characters or labels (see Plantin, 2018). I also identified and removed any duplicate entries (see Bose, 2005).

I used multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses for this study. Multiple regression analysis is appropriate when there is more than one independent, or predictor, variable (Leech et al., 2003). It is possible to determine if the predictor variables affect the criterion or dependent variable using multiple regression analysis (Leech et al., 2003). In addition, multiple linear regression is suitable for simultaneously determining the effect of multiple independent variables on a dependent variable (Pandis, 2016). Therefore, multiple regression analysis was an appropriate choice in this study as the research question was to determine if a relationship existed between two independent and one dependent variable.

Multiple regression requires the researcher to meet four key assumptions. The first assumption is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Ranganathan & Aggarwal, 2017). This relationship may be linear or curvilinear, determined by using scatterplots (Osborne, 2014). The second assumption is of multivariate normality that the variables are measured without error and are reliable.

Underestimated measurements mean a Type II error; if overestimated, it is a Type I error (Osborne, 2014).

The third assumption is that there is little to no multicollinearity. When multicollinearity is present, increased standard errors skew the significance of predictors, potentially leading to misleading or incorrect interpretations of results (Vatcheva et al., 2016). Finally, the fourth assumption is that there is homoscedasticity; the variance of errors is consistent or normally distributed when viewed in a graph (Osborne, 2014).

Any of the four assumptions may not be met and require additional testing in SPSS. Checking the assumptions decreases the chance for Type I and II errors (Osborne, 2014). However, if assumptions are unmet, it is often impractical to sample a population a second time. Instead, researchers can use bootstrapping to resample the data. Bootstrap is a nonparametric test available through SPSS that resamples the data to a confidence level determined by the researcher (Harding & Cousineau, 2016). For example, if the data are not normally distributed, they can be resampled through bootstrapping, so the data becomes normally distributed. Another option for data that does not meet the assumptions for multiple regression analysis is to perform a nonparametric test. Nonparametric tests do not require any assumptions on the data (Opara et al., 2016). One such test is Theil's Regression; this test has demonstrated robustness in nonnormal data (Opara et al., 2016).

There are diagnostic tests within SPSS that determine if the assumptions listed above are accurate. First, linear relationships are checked by creating scatterplots to visually ensure that errors are normally distributed (Ernst & Albers, 2017). Second,

creating a histogram verifies multivariate normality. Third, partial least squares regression tests determine multicollinearity of the data, as does Pearson's bivariate correlation (Tamura et al., 2017). Finally, scatterplots of residual and predicted values (Zeileis et al., 2015). I drew conclusions based on statistical analysis results once the data were clean. At the same time, I determined if the assumptions were met for multiple regression or if more analysis was necessary.

Study Validity

A concern for researchers is study validity. Reliability is a component of research that supports a researcher's claim that the study's outcome is accurate and repeatable (Mohajan, 2017). Cronbach's alpha is a statistical test used to determine reliability that I performed when analyzing data. On a scale between 0 and 1, scores between 0.80 and 0.90 indicate reliability (Mohajan, 2017). SPSS also offers options when missing data, such as listwise or pairs deletion and mean substitution (Weaver & Maxwell, 2014). While I expected minimal missing data, the possibility existed, and methods were available to avoid reliability errors within SPSS.

Internal Validity

Threats to internal validity such as statistical regression and experimental mortality do not exist in a correlational study, only in an experimental design (Flannelly et al., 2018). Since my study was a correlational design, these threats to internal validity were not relevant. Despite the absence of some threats to internal validity, there were concerns about threats to statistical conclusion validity or Type I and Type II errors to address. Type I errors occur when incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true

or a false positive (Urbano et al., 2019). A Type II error occurs when the researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis when it is untrue or a false negative (Urbano et al., 2019). A way to avoid Type I and II errors is to utilize survey instruments designed to measure the chosen variables (Garcia-Perez, 2012). The selected instruments measured the three variables of supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. Small sample sizes may lead to Type I errors by the researcher incorrectly determining the effect of variables (Jaki et al., 2019). However, this problem is avoidable by using G*Power analysis to determine the required sample sizes. G*Power analysis performed for this study indicated an ideal sample size between 68 and 107 hourly employees, making the headcount of 125 at the target company appropriate for this study.

External Validity

There are numerous threats to external validity in experimental designs, including testing reactivity and specificity of variables (Walden University, n.d.-b). Since my study design is correlational and not experimental, there are no concerns regarding these threats to external validity. However, there are additional threats to statistical conclusion validity that may occur due to data assumptions. Data assumptions vary depending on the type of statistical method employed by the researcher. I employed multiple regression analysis using SPSS to analyze data from this study.

This study's findings may be generalizable to different populations. Conducting rigorous research aids generalizability (Carminati, 2018). Data collection and analysis combined with sound methodology are necessary for research to be considered rigorous (Matthes & Marquart, 2017). When applied to research, rigorous research and reporting

are necessary components of generalizability (Köhler et al., 2017). In this study, the research took place at a manufacturing company in Georgia. If generalizable, I may infer that the findings may be valid in manufacturing companies in other locations or perhaps throughout the United States and not just for Georgia or the southeastern United States. One way to improve generalizability is to ensure that the data did not violate any of the assumptions of multiple regression, as that is the analysis I performed.

Assumptions

One assumption of multiple regression analysis is little or no multicollinearity in the data or skewed significance of the independent variables (Tamura et al., 2017). Multicollinearity occurs when the variables are highly correlated with each other and dilute the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable (Ranganathan & Aggarwal, 2017). If the data exhibits multicollinearity, misinterpretation of the test results may occur (Morrissey & Ruxton, 2018). If multicollinearity exists, further analysis is required. One option is to perform principal component regression in SPSS, removing outlier data that creates multicollinearity (Herawati et al., 2018). Another option to evaluate multicollinearity is variance inflation factor and tolerance. The researcher should look for values less than 0.1 for tolerance and above 10 for inflation factor (Schreiber-Gregory, 2018). I created a boxplot and visually searched for the presence of outliers.

Another assumption that exists when performing multiple regression analysis is homoscedasticity, meaning that the data have the same standard deviation for multiple variables (McDonald, 2009). Performing a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test

or Levene's test checks homoscedasticity (Cleff, 2013). ANOVAs are parametric tests, meaning that the standard deviations and the means are the same shape or normally distributed (McDonald, 2009). Normally distributed data are verified by plotting the data using a frequency histogram; it should approximate the shape of a bell curve (McDonald, 2009). Additionally, I created a scatterplot to provide an additional visual method to determine if the data are randomly distributed (Statistics Solutions, 2019).

Statistical Analysis

I used SPSS statistical software for this study. SPSS is a data analysis tool that provides visual representations using graphical features such as histograms, scatterplots, and various other charts (Field, 2013). To ensure validity in research means taking steps to confirm that the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure and that participants represent the targeted population (Mohajan, 2017). Another potential threat to external validity in this study is the nonprobabilistic sampling method. A reduction in participants occurred due to factors outside my control, such as absenteeism. To mitigate these factors and increase participation to meet minimum sampling numbers, the target organization made all employees working when the research was performed available to complete the survey instruments. Thus, while not random, all hourly employees and supervisors working during the onsite research had an equal opportunity to participate. The current census at the target location during data collection was approximately 100 hourly employees and eight supervisors. Per previous G*Power analysis, I required a sample size between 68 and 107 participants. The goal was to reach the entire population using a census rather than a sample.

Transition and Summary

In Section 1, I presented the applied business problem, including the problem and purpose statement, the nature of the study. Next, I stated the research question, hypotheses, and the theoretical framework of the study. Then, I explained operational definitions and the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of this study, the significance of the study, and a review of the professional and academic literature.

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine if there was any effect on turnover intention by the variables of employee engagement and supervisor emotional intelligence. In Section 2, I discussed the role of the researcher and explained the chosen research methodology, participants, and data collection sources. I addressed possible ethical considerations and reviewed both the validity and reliability of the chosen data collection instruments.

In Section 3, I will present the findings and discuss their application to professional practice and implications for social change. Finally, I will present the recommendations for action and future research, my conclusions based on the findings, and my reflections. This doctoral study ends with a detailed appendix and an extensive reference list.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to understand if a relationship existed between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. I intended to add to the body of knowledge on potential relationships between these variables and detail any social change. I collected data from 74 hourly employees and seven supervisors from a manufacturing company in Georgia in the southeastern United States. I compared the results from the data analysis to determine if any significant relationships existed between the variables. I rejected the null hypothesis based on the multiple regression analysis because a relationship existed between the variables. I accepted the alternate hypothesis that a relationship existed between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention.

Presentation of the Findings

One research question guided this study: Is there a relationship between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention? I used a correlational design and statistical analysis. In this section, I discuss the findings and the statistical method used and the testing of assumptions performed. Next, I present descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, discuss applications to professional practice and implications for social change. Finally, I recommend actions and future research options and share my reflections on the doctoral process.

In this study, a total of 74 participants responded to the surveys for employee engagement and turnover intention. I eliminated one record due to missing data, leaving 73 total records to include in the analysis. All participants answered the TIS-6 and the UWES. Seven participants responded to the MSCEIT. I collected data on Friday, June 11, 2021, at the partner organization, a manufacturing facility located in the state of Georgia in the United States.

The responses from the TIS-6 and UWES surveys were collected from hourly employees. The responses from the MSCEIT were collected from supervisors. To properly analyze the data, it was necessary for the supervisors' emotional intelligence scores to be matched to the responses of their direct reports, the hourly employees. Aligning the responses of the hourly employees to the emotional intelligence scores of the supervisors ensured that I could draw accurate conclusions from the collected data.

I used SPSS statistical software, version 27, to perform multiple regression analysis on the collected data. Multiple regression analysis is appropriate for determining the effects of two or more independent variables on a dependent variable (Pandis, 2016). The features used in SPSS were multiple regression analysis resulting in descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and a model summary using Durbin-Watson. I intended to determine if a relationship existed between two independent variables, supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement, and a dependent variable, turnover intention. While the significance of the findings of this research was slight, there was still enough data to support the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Tests of Assumptions

I evaluated the assumptions of multicollinearity, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Multiple regression requires the researcher to meet four key assumptions. The first assumption was that there was little to no multicollinearity. When multicollinearity is present, there are increased standard errors that skew the significance of predictors, potentially leading to misleading or incorrect interpretations of results (Vatcheva et al., 2016).

The second assumption is multivariate normality, meaning the variables are measured without error and are reliable (Plonsky & Oswald, 2016). The third assumption is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Ranganathan & Aggarwal, 2017). This relationship may be linear or curvilinear, determined by using scatterplots (Osborne, 2014). Underestimated measurements mean a Type II error, and if overestimated, a Type I error (Osborne, 2014). The fourth assumption is that there is homoscedasticity; the variance of errors is consistent or normally distributed when viewed in a graph (Osborne, 2014). No violations were found, so all assumptions were met. Bootstrapping was not used as there were no violations of assumptions.

Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity was evaluated by viewing the correlation coefficients among the predictor variables. All bivariate correlations were small to medium (see Table 1); therefore, the assumption of multicollinearity was not violated.

Table 1*Correlation Coefficients Among Study Variables*

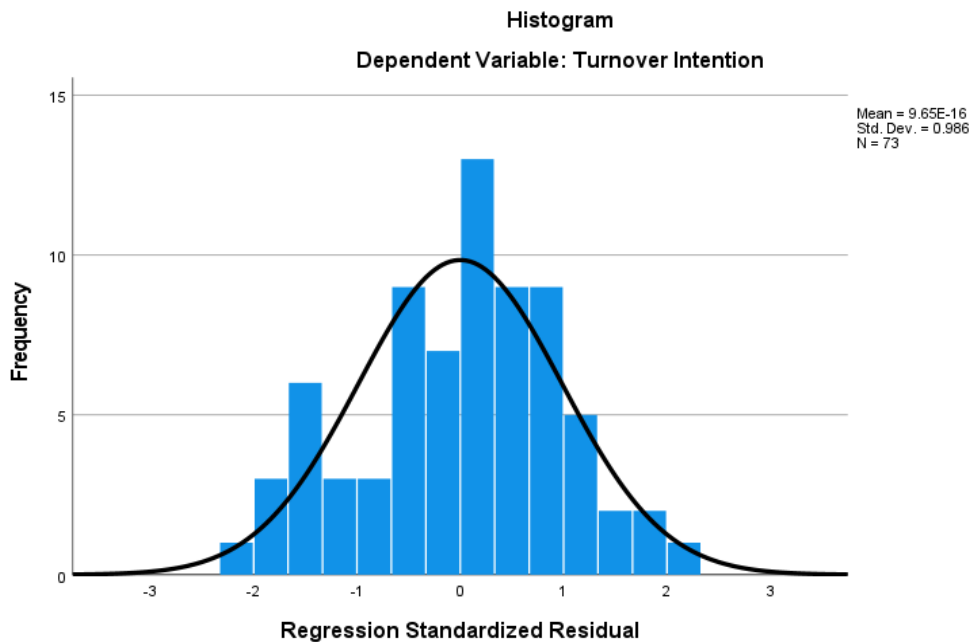
| | | Turnover Intention | Supervisor EI | Employee Engagement |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|
| <i>r</i> | Turnover intention | 1.00 | -.033 | -.36 |
| | Supervisor EI | -.03 | 1.00 | -.13 |
| | Employee engagement | -.36 | -.13 | 1.00 |
| <i>p</i> (1-tailed) | Turnover intention | . | .39 | .001 |
| | Supervisor EI | .39 | . | .13 |
| | Employee engagement | .001 | .13 | |

Normality, Linearity, Homoscedasticity

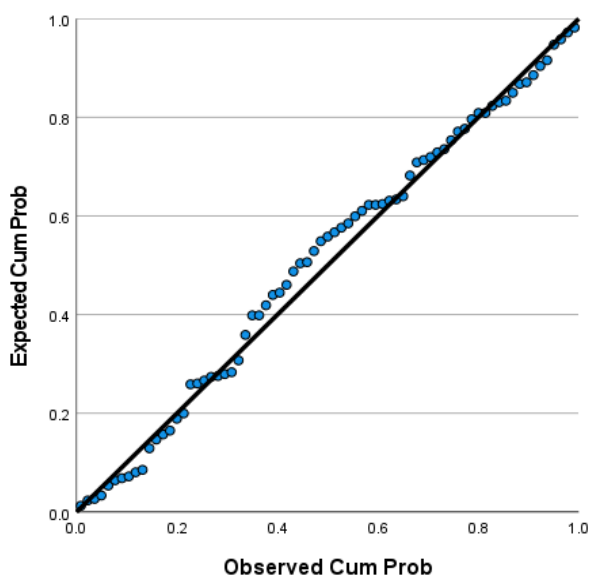
After determining there was no violation of the assumption of multicollinearity, I evaluated three charts created with SPSS. First, I examined the histogram of the regression standardized residual and found it showed a normal distribution, which meets the assumption of normality (see Figure 1). Next, I reviewed the normal probability plot of the regression standardized residual (see Figure 2). The points in the graph are equally distributed around the y axis, offering evidence that the assumption of linearity was not violated (Srinivasan & Lohith, 2017). Finally, I evaluated the scatterplot of the standardized residuals and noted that the points were scattered without a discernible pattern, providing further confirmation that there were no significant violations (see Figure 3).

Figure 1

Histogram of Regression Standardized Residual

**Figure 2**

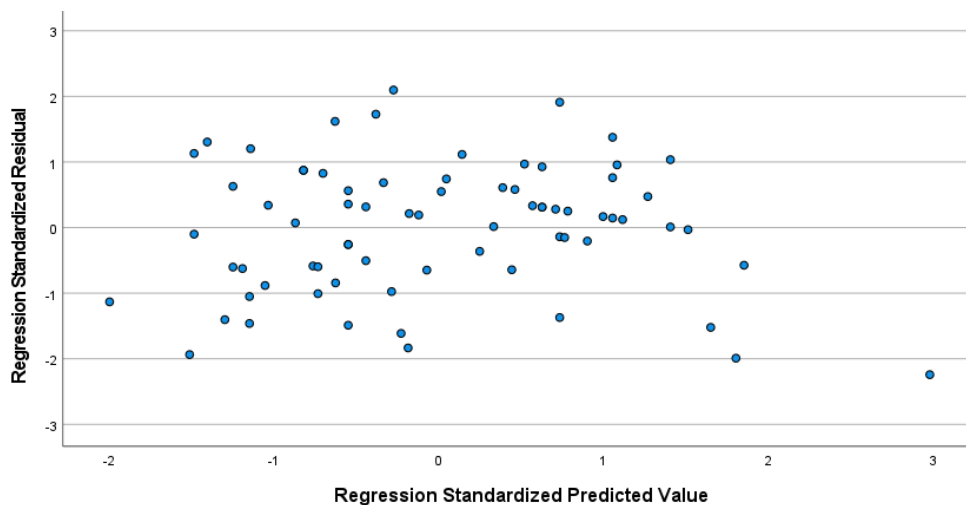
Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual



Note: Dependent variable: turnover intention

Figure 3

Scatterplot of the Standardized Residuals



Note: Dependent variable: turnover intention

Descriptive Statistics

I received 74 total surveys from hourly employees and removed one due to incomplete answers. Table 2 contains the descriptive statistics of the dependent and independent variables.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Study Variables

| Variable | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>N</i> |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Turnover intention | 2.55 | .86 | 73 |
| Supervisor emotional intelligence | 98.75 | 12.11 | 73 |
| Employee engagement | 4.20 | 1.04 | 73 |

Inferential Results

I used multiple regression analysis, $\alpha = .05$ (two-tailed), to analyze the collected data. The independent variables were supervisor emotional intelligence and employee

engagement, and the dependent variable was turnover intention. After first determining that there were no violations in the assumptions of multicollinearity, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity, I completed the analysis. The model predicted turnover intention, $F(2,70) = 5.42$ $p < .001$, $R^2 = .13$. The R^2 value of .13 means that 13% of the variation in turnover intention is due to the combination of the predictor variables, supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The predictive equation is as follows:

$$\text{Turnover intention} = 4.39 - .006(\text{supervisor emotional intelligence}) - .30(\text{employee engagement}).$$

In the final model, supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement were slightly significant with employee engagement ($\beta = -.37$, $p < .001$; $t(73) = -3.28$, $p < .01$) accounting for a higher contribution to the model than supervisor emotional intelligence ($\beta = -.08$, $p = .472$; $t(73) = -.72$, $p < .01$).

Supervisor Emotional Intelligence

The slope for supervisor emotional intelligence as a predictor of turnover intention was negative (-.08). This indicates that for each one-point increase in turnover intention, there is a corresponding .08 point decrease in supervisor emotional intelligence. By contrast, increases in supervisor emotional intelligence correspond to a decrease in turnover intention. The square semi-partial coefficient was $sr^2 = .01$. This signifies that 1% of the variance was attributable to supervisor emotional intelligence when the independent variable of employee engagement was controlled. Supervisor emotional intelligence did not make a significant contribution to turnover intention.

Employee Engagement

The slope for employee engagement as a predictor of turnover intention was negative (-.37). This indicates that there is a corresponding .37 point decrease in employee engagement for each one-point increase in turnover intention. By contrast, increases in employee engagement correspond to a decrease in turnover intention. The square semi-partial coefficient was $sr^2 = .13$. This signifies that 13% of the variance was attributable to employee engagement when the independent variable of supervisor emotional intelligence was controlled. Table 3 portrays the regression analysis summary table.

Table 3

Regression Analysis Summary for Predictor Variables

| Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β | <i>t</i> | <i>P</i> |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|----------|----------|
| Supervisor emotional intelligence | -.006 | .008 | -.081 | -.72 | .47 |
| Employee engagement | -.30 | .09 | -.37 | -3.28 | <.01 |

Note. $n = 73$

Analysis Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if a relationship existed between the independent variables of supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement and the independent variable and turnover intention. I used multiple regression analysis to analyze the data and determine if relationships existed between the variables as indicated by data collected at a manufacturing plant located in Georgia, in the southeastern United States. First, I determined that the assumptions of multicollinearity, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were met, meaning no violations were

discovered. The subsequent results of the analysis showed that turnover intention could be forecast, $F(2,70) = 5.42$ $p < .001$, $R^2 = .13$. In this study, employee engagement was a more significant predictor of turnover intention than supervisor emotional intelligence.

Theoretical Conversation on Findings

This research was intended to determine if a relationship existed between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. The independent variables were supervisor emotional intelligence and employee engagement. The dependent variable was turnover intention. In this study, employee engagement and, to a much lesser extent, supervisor emotional intelligence predicted turnover intention. The theoretical framework for this study was based on Kahn's (1990) theory of employee engagement. Kahn stated that employees demonstrate engagement by fully embracing their roles at work mentally, physically, and emotionally. This engagement leads employees to better performance, improved productivity, and more significant commitment to the organization. Engaged employees exhibit more discretionary effort while at work (Morton et al., 2019). The findings in my study confirm that greater employee engagement predicts a more significant commitment to the organization. Research completed after my proposal corroborates my findings. Employees who are engaged stay with their organizations (Ofei-Dodoo et al., 2020). Employees with low engagement were likely to leave the organization (Santhanam & Srinivas, 2019).

Emotional intelligence is a key component of leader effectiveness (Khoshhal & Guraya, 2016). While some people have a natural tendency to be emotionally intelligent, it is a skill that can be developed through training and practice in those without it (White

et al., 2019). Leaders of organizations that prioritize emotional intelligence have found their employees perform better on teams or as individuals are more committed and are happier at work (Drigas & Papoutsi, 2019). Leaders were more effective when they had higher levels of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2017). While I found that emotional intelligence was very slightly significant concerning turnover intention in my research, other researchers found that emotional intelligence was a strong predictor of high performance and effective leadership (Goleman, 2017; Zehir, 2017). More recently, researchers found that lack of emotional intelligence was a significant predictor of turnover intention (Giao et al., 2020). While my research did not show the same significance, recent research found a more significant correlation between emotional intelligence and turnover intention (Naeem & Khurram, 2020).

Applications to Professional Practice

This study has applications to professional practice, particularly for organizational leaders. Because the study was completed at a manufacturing facility, applications to professional practice discussed here are specific to manufacturing facilities. Turnover is costly to organizations in many ways, including a loss of job knowledge, repeated training, and the cost of hiring replacements (Joseph & Elias, 2017). Retaining employees is essential to leaders to avoid those costs, mainly when there are shortages of available labor, increases in competition, and changing business environments (Li & Sawhney, 2019).

Managers who identify and implement strategies to reduce turnover should focus on fostering employee engagement and increasing the emotional intelligence abilities of

supervisors. Higher retention may increase productivity and ultimately improve organizational performance (Burnett & Lisk, 2019). Business leaders should learn to incorporate these soft skills into their daily interactions with people. These are often the difference between whether an employee chooses to stay or leave the organization (Habecker, 2018). Employees who stay with a company may have higher skill levels and job knowledge which benefits the organization (Boğan & Dedeoğlu, 2017).

Implications for Social Change

Positive social change can benefit numerous stakeholders in a business through greater emotional intelligence on the part of supervisors. The workplace environment may improve for employees, which may lead to higher levels of engagement. Disengaged employees may leave an organization and have difficulty finding a new job, leading to financial and emotional strain for the employee and their family members. This strain can lead to mental health challenges and negatively impact employees and their families (Cygan-Rehm et al., 2017).

If turnover is reduced, the organization may realize improved financial performance for the business. Reducing the financial cost of turnover may allow companies to invest back into their employees and community through realized productivity improvements. These improvements can mean more jobs, more promotional opportunities for employees, and economic and tax base growth for communities. Organizations may innovate and engineer newer or better products and potentially reduce resources needed for production or make products more efficient.

High employee turnover can negatively affect economic and tax bases in

communities. Unemployment may increase, straining social services and potentially impacting mental health (Skelton et al., 2019). Human resource professionals may select employees who will be more successful, stay longer, and align with the company culture (Rafiq, Naz, et al., 2019). Choosing successful employees reduces unemployment and the demand for social programs that offer support due to job loss and the subsequent loss of income (Santhanam & Srinivas, 2019). Including training on emotional intelligence improves supervisor skills and contributes to greater managerial effectiveness (Stein, 2017). Expending the effort to improve supervisor emotional intelligence while improving employee engagement are two ways to improve the workplace for all employees. As supervisors develop their skills, they become better managers; better managers contribute to higher employee engagement and lower turnover.

Recommendations for Action

The study results may benefit organizations that have difficulty retaining employees. While this study was limited to a single company in the manufacturing industry, the recommended action items may apply to other industries. I have two recommendations for action based on the study results. First, targeting training and development of supervisors to improve emotional intelligence and creating a strategy to increase employee engagement could benefit those organizations.

The first recommendation is for organizational leaders to develop the emotional intelligence abilities of supervisors through training. Training and development help employees achieve organizational goals (Adewale & Ghavifekr, 2019). The second recommendation is for organizational leaders to create strategies to improve the

engagement of employees. Engaged employees have better performance than employees who are not engaged (Yin, 2018). In addition, more engaged employees are more committed to their employer than disengaged employees (Anindita & Emilia Seda, 2018). Human resource professionals should focus on improving supervisors' emotional intelligence (Naeem & Khurram, 2020).

This research will be disseminated via publication through ProQuest. Additionally, the findings will be shared with my peers in human resources. As a human resource professional, I may disseminate this information by speaking at industry conferences. Additionally, as a member of several online professional groups, I can write and share articles with those groups and on my LinkedIn page.

Recommendations for Further Research

I recommend that future studies into the relationship between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention be expanded to more manufacturing facilities and other industries beyond manufacturing. Future studies should have a larger participant pool and higher numbers of supervisors with varying abilities in emotional intelligence. This study had seven supervisors with emotional intelligence scores similar, making it difficult to discern any significant differences between their abilities. Conducting future research in locations outside of Georgia or the southeastern United States may provide more data to determine if the findings are transferable outside of the geographic area.

Some challenges encountered included absenteeism, less than expected headcount, and availability and willingness to participate on the day of data collection.

Despite the anonymity of paper surveys, some employees may have been unwilling to share their true feelings and opinions during data collection. Some employees completed the surveys quickly and may have felt pressure to start their shift even though there was no visible pressure exerted by managers and supervisors when I was present.

The method of data collection for hourly employees was paper surveys and an online survey for supervisors. In larger organizations, online surveys may engender more responses and are not subject to the limitation of dependence on participant availability when the researcher is present. An unanticipated problem with paper surveys was that they were only available in English. Before I visited the participant organization, I did not realize that several employees were non-English speakers, and I did not have surveys available in any other languages. This may have inadvertently limited the number of participants. Changing from the UWES-9 and using the UWES-15 or UWES-17 may also provide a broader range of results in future research.

Another method of research that may offer additional context to a possible relationship between variables is case studies. Case studies are helpful when studying current business environment problems (Villarreal Larrinaga, 2016). In addition, a qualitative study exploring employees' reactions to their supervisors' emotional intelligence may provide further insight into how the supervisors' emotional intelligence influences the employees' perspectives. Finally, a mixed-methods study would provide valuable insight into the relationship between the supervisors' emotional intelligence and the employees' attitudes while exploring the employees' recommendations on improving that relationship.

Reflections

The journey to completing a doctoral study was both frustrating and rewarding. Frustrating because of delays and circumstances outside my control, and at the same time, it is likely the most rewarding journey I have taken in my academic and professional life. I chose to incorporate emotional intelligence and employee engagement in my research because of my work history. As a human resource practitioner, I have experienced and worked with leaders who displayed emotional intelligence and those who did not and were interested in employees' effects. Employee engagement is a frequent topic of employee surveys and discussions with colleagues in human resources. I chose my study topics because I am interested in them professionally.

My personal bias led me to believe that both would significantly impact turnover intention. As someone with extensive experience in operations that made a midcareer move to human resources, I expected my findings to have greater significance. However, while writing the literature review, I learned that many other factors might affect turnover intention. This journey allowed me to learn a great deal, be better about receiving feedback, and accept things I cannot control. I also learned how difficult the journey to a doctoral degree is, and I am appreciative and humbled at reaching the end of this journey.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine if a relationship existed between supervisor emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention. Using SPSS version 27, I performed multiple regression analysis and concluded some correlations between the variables. Bootstrapping was not used as

there were no violations of assumptions. The theoretical framework was based on Kahn's (1990) theory on employee engagement.

Based on these findings, business leaders should focus on developing the emotional intelligence of leaders while improving employee engagement to reduce the turnover intention of employees. Additional research may expand the knowledge of these topics; however, a substantial body of work exists to support the importance of emotional intelligence and employee engagement in organizations. While other factors may influence turnover intention, retaining employees who are trained and contributing to the company is essential for business and human resource leaders.

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Appendix A: Permission to use the UWES

Notice for potential users of the UWES and the DUWAS

You are welcomed to use both tests provided that you agree to the following two conditions:

1. The use is for non-commercial educational or research purposes only. This means that no one is charging anyone a fee.
2. You agree to share some of your data, detailed below, with the authors. We will add these data to our international database and use them only for the purpose of further validating the UWES (e.g., updating norms, assessing cross-national equivalence).

Data to be shared:

For each sample, the raw test-scores, age, gender, and (if available) occupation. Please adhere to the original answering format and sequential order of the items.

For each sample a brief narrative description of its size, occupation(s) covered, language, and country.

Please send data to: w.schaufeli@uu.nl. Preferably the raw data file should be in SPSS or EXCEL format.

✓ Accept and continue to the test forms

Appendix B: UWES-9

Work & Well-being Survey (UWES) ©

The following 9 statements are about how you feel at work. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, cross the "0" (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way.

| | Almost never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Very often | Always |
|-------|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Never | A few times a year or less | Once a month or less | A few times a month | Once a week | A few times a week | Every day |

1. _____ At my work, I feel bursting with energy
2. _____ At my job, I feel strong and vigorous
3. _____ I am enthusiastic about my job
4. _____ My job inspires me
5. _____ When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work
6. _____ I feel happy when I am working intensely
7. _____ I am proud of the work that I do
8. _____ I am immersed in my work
9. _____ I get carried away when I'm working

Appendix C: Permission to use TIS

Mail - Sloan Rawhoof - Outlook - Google Chrome
outlook.office.com/mail/deeplink?version=2019102702.17&popoutv2=1

Reply all Delete Junk Block ...

Re: Request permission to use TIS-6

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2019 5:59 AM
To: Sloan Rawhoof [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Request permission to use TIS-6

Dear Sloan

You are welcome to use the TIS for your research. For this purpose please find the TIS-15 attached for your convenience. This TIS-6 consist (version 4) of the first six items high-lighted in yellow.

It is easy to score the TIS-6. Merely add the item scores to get a total score. The midpoint of the scale is 18 (3 x 6). If the total score is below 18 then it indicates a desire to stay. If the scores are above 18 it indicates a desire to leave the organisation. The minimum a person can get is 6 (6 x 1) and the maximum is 30 (5 x 6). No item scores need to be reflected (reverse scored).

It is recommended that you conduct a CFA on the item scores to assess the dimensionality of the scale. We found that respondents with a matric (grade 12) tertiary school qualification tend to understand the items better and consequently an uni-dimensional factor structure is obtained.

If you wish to translate the TIS in a local language, you are welcome to do so. It is recommended that a language expert is used in the translate – back translate method.

I wish you all the best with your research!

Best regards
Prof Gert Roodt

From: Sloan Rawhoof [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 16 October 2019 02:13
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Request permission to use TIS-6

Good evening Professor Roodt,

I am a human resources manager and an adult student working on my doctoral degree at Walden University in the United States. My research topic is "The relationship between supervisor's emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and turnover intention".

I am requesting your permission to use the TIS-6 as the instrument to measure turnover intention at a manufacturing plant in Northern Indiana (US).

You can find my LinkedIn profile at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sloan-rawhoof-sphr-542173a/>

I appreciate you considering my request and look forward to hearing your response. Should you wish to have verification of my request, my doctoral chair is Dr. Diane Dusick and she can be reached at [REDACTED]

Best,
Sloan Rawhoof

Appendix D: TIS-6

DURING THE PAST 9 MONTHS....

| | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | How often have you considered leaving your job? | Never | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | Always |
| 2 | How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs? | Very satisfying | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | Totally dissatisfying |
| 3 | 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 |
| 4 | How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs? | Never | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | Always |
| 5 | 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 |
| 6 | How often do you look forward to another day at work? | Always | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | Never |