



NIGERIAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Volume 22, No.1, 2022 ISSN 0331-0574 (Print), 2635-3806 (Online)

Published by the Nigerian Psychological Association

NPA JOURNALS - www.npa-journals.org

A Consideration on the Relationship between Psychological Empowerment, Job insecurity on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour among the Eastern Cape Department of Health Employees

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ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

Article history:

Received: 28th April, 2022

Revised: 16th May, 2022

Accepted: 15th June, 2022

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Keywords:

**Job Insecurity,
Organization,
Psychological empowerment,
South Africa,
Workplace.**

The threat job insecurity to the continuity and stability of employment in the workplace, and its negative influence on the level of job satisfaction, employee commitment and trust in the organization. The purpose of the study was to investigate the role of psychological empowerment as moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and OCB among the Eastern Cape Department of Health Employees. The study was motivated because no previous study has combined psychological empowerment and job insecurity to determine its effect on OCB in a single study, and in a Provincial government department. Three instruments were used in this study for data collection namely; Psychological Empowerment Scale developed by Spreitzer (1995), Job Insecurity scale developed by De Witte (2000) and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Check-list (OCB-C) developed by Fox and Spector (2009). Non-probability convenience sampling method was employed to select a sample of 281 employees, which includes 111 male and 170 female. The findings revealed that the employees' job insecurity level negatively correlates with their organizational citizenship behaviour. It revealed that the employees' psychological empowerment significantly and positively correlates with their OCB. It added that the psychological empowerment and job insecurity combined corresponds to a significant increase on OCB among the Eastern Cape Department of Health employees. The study provided organizational leaders with the best empowerment approach to streamline their workers' attitude and commitment towards work. It encourages human resource practitioners and organizational managers to develop and implement training and other intervention programme aimed at promoting and sustaining the OCBs of their employees. The study contributed to the overall body of knowledge and adds valuable literature on psychological empowerment, job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviours within government departments' context.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa is not exempted from the rest of the world that is undergoing major changes in the social, political, economic, technological and organizational environments. The growth of South African economy has remained slow since 2012, due to the sustained weakness in the global economy and domestic structural constraints (African Economic Outlook, 2012; & McKinsey, 2015). The South African economy seems quite vulnerable nowadays following deterioration in socio-economic and political conditions (Smit, Grobler & Nel, 2014). The South African economy has slowed down dramatically, job creation has been disappointing, unemployment is high, while the experience enduring poverty (McKinsey, 2015). These factors, linked with energy challenges lead to organizational restructuring, mergers and downsizing which create uncertainty, increased job insecurity that pose a threat to the psychological wellbeing of employees (Khan & Ghufraan, 2018).

Jimenez, Milfelner, Sarotarzizek and Dunkl (2017) identified job insecurity as a serious problem and stressor in the work environment with negative work-related outcomes such as feelings of stress, absenteeism, lower job satisfaction amongst others. Probst, Gailey, Jiang and Bohle (2017) define job insecurity as a psychosocial risk that promotes an employee's feelings of uncertainty and inefficiency to maintain the continuity of a job in conditions where the actual work role is threatened. In response to the ever-increasing mergers, restructuring and downsizing, organizations including government departments such as the Eastern Cape Department of Health are continuously under pressure to re-position job function and roles to improve efficiency. In the midst of this, they are encouraging organizational members to commit themselves voluntarily and seeking an opportunity to integrate all capabilities.

Organizational citizenship behaviour is a concept that has recently been emphasized under such a flow. Organizational citizenship behaviour is not officially recognized by any compensation system, but an individual's voluntary act to enhance the effectiveness or efficiency of overall organizational function. Paille (2013) describes organizational citizenship behavior as those voluntary dispositions or unreserved behaviours exhibited by employees which are not fundamentally part of their job description, but add significant value to the performance of the organization. Koopman, Lanaj and Scott (2016) refer to OCBs as those unrestricted behaviors manifested by employees in the organization that are not part and parcel of their official work roles, but contribute maximally to the organization's performance. However, studies have been conducted to measure organizational effectiveness through OCB. Accordingly, such studies to understand the organizational citizenship behaviour of organizational members and reveal the preceding factors are considered significant. It was reported that psychological empowerment reinforces the trust in supervisor who helps increase power and enables organizational members to behave voluntarily and faithfully.

Ebrahimi, Hosseinzadeh, Zaghari, Hosseinzadeh and Asghari (2013) posit that psychological empowerment transforms the work attitude of employees, and the preconception regarding several individual and organizational issues which leads to positive organizational outcomes. While past researchers have conducted studies on psychological empowerment, job insecurity and OCB separately, no previous study has combined these three variables in a single study. Therefore, it is important to identify the best approach through which job insecurity can be reduced and its negative effects on organizational outcomes ameliorated; hence, the study's objective in investigating the possible relationship psychological empowerment, job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

Objectives

The objectives of this paper are to investigate the relationship between psychological empowerment and OCB; to determine the relationship between job insecurity and OCB and to determine the extent to which job insecurity and psychological empowerment combined account for a significant higher proportion of variance in OCB than any of the two separately among the Eastern Cape Department of Health Employees.

Theoretical Perspective

Homans (1958) described social exchange as the exchange of activities, tangible or intangible, between two people or parties. Social exchange is also defined as individuals' voluntary actions that are motivated by the gains they expect to reap from others. This theory is similar to economic exchange, but unlike economic exchange, the specific nature of that return or gain is unidentified.

In the context of this research, when employees begin to perceive or experience job security in their workplace, they are much likely to reciprocate with OCB, and if they perceive job insecurity, they are likely not to engage in OCB. Similarly, when employees are empowered psychologically they are likely to reciprocate with OCB, and if they are denied psychological empowerment, they are unlikely to engage in OCB.

Psychological Empowerment

The psychological empowerment concept began some decades ago with the evolution of several schools of thought concerning psychological empowerment. Khan, Tariq, Hamayoun and Bhutta (2014) define psychological empowerment as an organizational practice widely employed to increase the threshold of motivation among employees, allowing them to take appropriate decisions when needed and to utilize their skills and knowledge to react to changing market situations. Ambad and Bahron (2012) define psychological empowerment as set of psychological states that are essential for

individuals to feel a sense of control over their work as a result of being empowered by a supervisor. Giacalone, Jurkiewicz and Dunn (2005) opine that psychological empowerment focuses ultimately on intrinsic motivation rather than on the managerial practices used to enhance employees' levels of authority.

In addition, substantial research evidence suggests that psychological empowerment of employees results in the experience of positive work-related cognitions, which could bring about increased employee satisfaction, loyalty, performance and organizational citizenship behaviour (Bartram, Karimi & Stanton, 2014; Raub & Robert, 2010; Van Dijke, De Cremer, Mayer & Van Quaquebeke, 2012).

Job Insecurity

According to De Witte (2005), different definitions have been given to job insecurity by different scholars and researchers. In all these definitions, the common denominator is that job insecurity is considered a subjective phenomenon based on individuals' perception of the situation across different organizations. Pienaar et al. (2013) define job insecurity as work-related stressor that produces certain organizational outcomes such as decreased job satisfaction and organizational performance, decreased organizational commitment and increased ill-health as well as employee turnover intentions. Ajani and Adisa (2013) define job insecurity as the absence of confidence that an employee possesses about the continuity of gainful employment for his or her work life, as a result employment contract terms, layoffs or the general economic conditions. Nevertheless, many studies have consistently linked job insecurity to a variety of adverse negative work-related attitudes, behaviours and employee health (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Sverke et al., 2002). While some studies have indicated a negative relationship between job insecurity and OCB, others showed positive or no relationship between job insecurity and OCB (Gilboa et al., 2008).

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Organ (1988) defines organizational citizenship behaviour as an individual behaviour that is voluntary, and not directly or explicitly recognized by the organizational reward system. Asha and Jyothi (2013) define OCB as those behaviours exhibited by individuals or employees which are neither coerced nor rewarded by the organization. Ozcelik and Findikli (2014) define organizational citizenship behaviour as those extra-role behaviours that exert influence on the intrinsic motivation of individuals in the organization.

Organ (1988) categorized Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) under five dimensions, and these include altruism; which is referred to as the behaviour in which individual dispositions provide benefits to another without expecting any form of reward from external sources; conscientiousness refers to those discretionary behaviours that help employees or workers to obey their rules and regulations; courtesy refers to those behaviours that help to prevent problems in advance other than helping someone who already has a problem; sportsmanship refers to the willingness to tolerate situations that are difficult, ambiguous, stressful or frustrating without registering any complaint or negative behaviours when things go wrong; and civic virtue which refers to those discretionary behaviours that involve supporting organizational functions through participation in social events and mainly accommodating the best interest of the organization.

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

Research Approach

The study adopted correlational research design. Correlational research designs involve the collection of quantitative data through the administration of a structured questionnaire to determine whether or not two variables are correlated (Water 2017).

Participants

A non-probability convenience sample of (N= 281) employees participated in this research. The participants were drawn from all levels of the Eastern Cape Department of Health, Bisho Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, ranging from semi-skilled to professional levels. The participants were predominantly black South Africans 80 percent, 60 percent were females and 43 percent of the participants had Diplomas as their highest educational qualification. It also showed that age group between 25-35 years had the highest number psychological empowerment role (39.5%) to moderate the relationship between job insecurity and organization citizenship behaviour among employees.

Measuring Instruments

The questionnaire for this research comprised four distinct sections. The first section of this research questionnaire focused on the general information of this research respondents; this includes the age of the respondents, gender, marital status, the race the respondents belong to, the highest level of education of the respondents and the occupation position of the respondents as well as years of service of the respondents.

Psychological Empowerment

The second section of this research questionnaire comprises the Psychological Empowerment Scale developed by Spreitzer (1995). This instrument contains three items for each of the psychological empowerment dimensions of meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. It is comprised of seven point Likert-type of scale which are 1=Very Strongly Disagree, 2=Strongly Disagree, 3=Disagree, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree, 6=Strongly Agree and 7= Very Strongly Agree. The instrument has a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.92. This section of the questionnaire is very crucial because it is related to the primary objective of this research which seeks to investigate the role of psychological empowerment in moderating the relationship between job insecurity and OCB among employees in the selected Provincial government departments.

Job Insecurity

The third section of this research questionnaire consists of Job Insecurity scale developed by De Witte (2000). This instrument combines both cognitive and affective dimensions of job insecurity, with six items measuring cognitive job insecurity, and another five items measuring affective job insecurity. It is rated on seven point Likert-type of scale which is: **1=Very Strongly Disagree**, **2=Strongly Disagree**, **3=Disagree**, **4=Neutral**, **5=Agree**, **6=Strongly Agree** and **7= Very Strongly Agree**, with Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.92.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

The fourth section of this research comprised the Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Check-list (OCB-C) developed by Fox and Spector (2009). This 20 –item scale specifically designed to assess the frequency of organizational citizenship behaviours performed by the research participants. The instrument is rated on five point likert –type scale of **1= Never**, **2=Once or Twice**, **3= Once or Twice per month**, **4= Once or Twice per week** and **5= every day**, with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.94.

Data Collection Procedure

The participants for this research were conveniently selected from all the employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health offices located in Bisho and KingWilliams Town, both in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The researcher obtained permission to commence data collection for this research from the University of Fort Hare Research Ethics Review Committee, and the required research ethical clearance certificate was issued. The researcher also obtained the necessary permission from Eastern Cape Department of Health Human resource management department to conduct the research within their Provincial offices, and the permission was granted. The participants were invited to voluntarily participate in the study. Each questionnaire comprised a cover letter inviting respondents to participate voluntarily in the research and reassuring them that all responses would be treated as anonymous and confidential. The cover letter, further indicate that by completing the questionnaires and returning them, they as participants agree to use the results for research purposes only.

RESULTS

Biographical Information in percentage

The following descriptive statistics provide the demographic profile of the participants in terms of age groups gender and marital status. As presented in Table 1, 39.5 percent of the research participants were within the age group of 25-35, 30.6 percent of the participants fall within the age group of 36-46 years, while 21.0 percent of the participants were within the ages of 46-55 years. Furthermore, 6.4 percent of the participants were within the age 56-65 years, and 2.5 percent of the participants were within the age of 65 years and above. The table also illustrates that a greater proportion 60.5 percent of the participants in this research were females, and their male counterpart have 39.5 percent. In addition, the table indicates that 45.9 percent of the research participants were single; 41.6 percent were married; 4.3 percent of the participants were separated and divorced respectively and 3.9 percent were widowed.

Table 1: Age groups, gender and Marital Status of the Participants

<i>N</i>	<i>Percent</i>	
<i>Age groups</i>		
25-35 yrs	111	39.5
36-45 yrs	86	30.6
46-55 yrs	59	21.0
56-65 yrs	18	6.4
66 yrs and above	7	2.5
Total	281	100.0
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	111	39.5
Female	170	60.5
Total	281	100.0
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Single	129	45.9
Married	117	41.6
Separated	12	4.3
Divorced	11	3.9
Total	281	100.0

Demographic Profile of Race, Educational qualification and Years in service of the Participants

The results in **Table 2** show that 80.1 percent of the participants were of black race, 18.1 percent were of coloured race; 1.4 percent of them were white employees; 0.4 percent of the participants were Indian employees. The table also indicates that 10.0 percent of the participants have secondary education as their highest qualification; 16.4 percent have Grade 12 certificate; 43.4 percent have Diploma as their highest qualification; 23.1 percent have Bachelor degree and 7.1 percent of the participants have post graduate degree qualification. Furthermore, the table indicates that 38.1 percent of the participants have spent 0-5 years in service; 35.6 percent have spent 6-10 years in service; 15.7 percent have spent 11-15 years in service; 6.4 percent have spent 16-20 years in service and 4.3 percent of the participants have spent 21 years and above in service.

Table 2: Race, Educational Qualification and Years in Service of the Participants

<i>N</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	
Race		
Black	225	80.1
Coloured	51	18.1
White	4	1.4
Indian	1	4
Total	281	100.0
Education		
Secondary	28	10.0
Grade 12	46	16.4
Diploma	122	43.4
Degree	65	23.1
Postgraduate Degree	20	7.1
Total	281	100.0
Years of Service		
0-5 yrs	107	38.1
6-10yrs	100	35.6
11-15yrs	44	15.7
16-20yrs	18	6.4
21 yrs and above	12	4.3
Total	281	100.0

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 3 depicts the Cronbach alpha coefficient of this research questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the 42 items is 0.846, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency among each of the items. Essentially, this means that the responses from each of the respondents were reliably consistent. Thus, knowing the score for one item would enable one to predict with some accuracy the possible scores for the other two scale items.

Table 3: Reliability test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Overall Questions	145.56	19.325	.846	42
Psychological Empowerment	50.99	12.355	.903	12
Job Insecurity	34.13	6.926	.815	10
OCB	60.55	11.505	.845	20

Results from the Tested Hypotheses

Hypothesis One Tested Results

The results in Table 4 and 5 show the findings of the first hypothesis for this research, which states that there is no significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and OCB. The regression model results in Table 4 indicate that, a unit increase in employee organizational citizenship behaviour $\beta = .142$ will lead to a decrease in employee psychological empowerment. This implies that there is a significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. In the same vein, the ANOVA results in Table 5, indicates a regression value of 5.995 with 1 degree of freedom and P-value of .000 which is less than alpha value. Since the P-value probability of .000 is less than .05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and concludes that there is a significant positive correlation between psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behaviour.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Psychological Empowerment and OCB

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Correlation	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	2.425	.141		17.176	.000	2.147	2.703
PE	.142	.032	.255	4.401	.000	.079	.206

Sample = 281, *significant level at 0.05, *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA for Psychological Empowerment and OCB

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	5.995	1	5.995	19.367	.000 ^b
Residual	86.366	279	.310		
Total	92.361	280			

a. Dependent Variable: OCB

b. Predictors: (Constant), PE

Hypothesis Two Tested Results

The results in Tables 6 and 7 indicate the findings of the tested hypothesis one which states that there is no significant negative correlation between job insecurity and OCB. The regression model results in Table 6 indicates that, $\beta = -.108$ a unit increase in employee organizational citizenship behaviour will lead to a decrease in employee job insecurity. This implies that there is a significant negative correlation between job insecurity and OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. In the same vein, the results in the ANOVA table 7, shows a regression value of 1.559 with 1 degree of freedom and P-value of .029 which is less than alpha value. Since the P-value (probability) of .029 is less than .05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and concludes that there is a negative correlation between organizational citizenship behaviour and job insecurity.

Table 6: Regression Analysis of Job Insecurity and OCB

	B	Mean	SD	95% C.I for B	Correlation	t	Sig.
Job insecurity	-.108	3.4118	.69148	3.059±3.735	-.130*	19.793	.000
OCB		3.0289	.57433	-.205±-.011	-.249*	-2.188	.029
Intercept	3.397						

Sample = 281, *significant level at 0.05, *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 7: One-way Analysis of variance for Job insecurity and OCB

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1.559	1	1.559	4.789	.029 ^b
Residual	90.802	279	.325		
Total	92.361	280			

a. Dependent Variable: OCB

b. Predictors: (Constant), Job

Hypothesis Three Tested Results

The results from the regression and correlation analyses conducted to establish a significant higher proportion of variance in OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health than any of the two separately are summarized in Table 8. The results of the coefficients from the regression model indicate that a unit increase in Job insecurity and psychological empowerment combined corresponds to 0.136 significant increases in OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that Job insecurity and psychological empowerment combined account for a significantly higher proportion of variance in OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health than any of the two separately.

Table 8: Regression Model of Combined Job insecurity and Psy EP influence on OCB

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	2.506	.219		11.444	.000	2.075	2.937
1 Combine PE and Job	.136	.056	.143	2.416	.016	.025	.248

a. Dependent Variable: OCB

DISCUSSION

The outcome of the different statistical test conducted on the first hypothesis revealed that a significant positive correlation exist between psychological empowerment and OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. This implies that the second research objective is achieved. This research finding is buttressed by substantial research evidence which suggests that psychological empowerment of employees will result in the experience of positive work-related cognitions, that could bring about increased employee satisfaction, loyalty, performance and organizational citizenship behaviour (Bartram et al. 2014; Raub & Robert, 2010; VanDijke et al., 2012). The results are further supported by Tastan and Srinkan's (2013) study which confirmed that experiencing psychological empowerment and feeling of psychological power result in employees being more engaged in voluntary behaviours at work. In addition, the result is associated with Karavardar's (2014) study on the relationship between perceived organizational support, psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behaviour and job performance among workers in the fast food industry, in Istanbul. The results revealed that organizational citizenship behaviour played mediator role between perceived organizational support and psychological empowerment with job performance.

Having tested the second research hypothesis using regression and correlation analysis, the findings revealed that a significant negative correlation exist between job insecurity and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Therefore, the first objective of the research is achieved. This result is supported by Staufienbiel and Konig's (2010) study conducted among employees in a medium-sized German Electronics wholesale enterprise which revealed that hindrance stressors lead to decreased OCB whereas challenge stressors lead to the opposite outcome. Concerning this, they reiterated that it is inappropriate to conclude that the relationship between job insecurity and OCB is entirely negative or positive. The findings are also supported by Staufienbiel and Konig (2011) study which revealed that the cognitive dimension of job insecurity was negatively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour, whereas the affective dimension was positively related to these outcomes. In addition to the findings of tested hypothesis one, Huang et al. (2012) longitudinal study revealed that affective job insecurity is more strongly associated with psychological strain, while cognitive job insecurity correlates more strongly to work-related aspects such as job satisfaction and OCB adds to the findings of this research

The results from the regression, correlation analyses and linear structural equation model conducted on the

third hypothesis established that job insecurity and psychological empowerment combined corresponds to significant increase in OCB among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health than any of the two separately. This result is associated with the findings of Stander and Rothmann (2010), who found a significant positive relationship between psychological empowerment, job insecurity and employee engagement, with affective job insecurity moderating the effect of psychological empowerment on employee engagement. The result is further supported by Quinones et al. (2013) study in Chile among public workers to determine if employees with job resources would become engaged in their work because their job resources allowed them to become psychologically empowered. The results revealed that psychological empowerment mediated the relationship between three of their job resources (task autonomy, skill utilization, social support from supervisors) and employee engagement.

CONCLUSION

The paper investigated the role of psychological empowerment as moderator of the relationship between job insecurity and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among employees in the Eastern Cape Department of Health. Having tested the three hypotheses formulated in this paper, empirical findings were obtained as solutions to the problems identified in the paper. Drawing from Spreitzer's (1995) psychological empowerment and social exchange theories, the findings of the study offer new insights into how the management of Eastern Cape Department of Health and other government departments should make conscious efforts to demonstrate trust and confidence in their employees. This can be achieved by providing support and encouragement. The ultimate goal is to allow employees to have a sense that they are free to choose how to go about their job, rather than being micro-managers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper recommends that the Eastern Cape Department of Health should create an educational experience or innovative programme to build and increase the level of psychological empowerment experienced by employees. This programme should entail an in-depth personal evaluation and cognitive framing in order to allow individuals visualize themselves and their environment through different lens. This will help their employees to start thinking about how they can refocus themselves in relation to their work and see themselves as partners in the department's business rather than cog in the wheel. Through this process employees will develop a sense of meaning and ownership regarding their organization and begins to understand how their work roles and behaviour affect its success. This will contribute to synergy between the goals, ideals and beliefs of individuals and what the department wants to achieve.

The paper recommends that human resource management practitioners and managers should ensure that the capacity for continuous learning exists in their organization, in terms of providing skills and abilities in which their workers need to feel competent. Through this process, the organization emerges as a learning organization continuously striving to identify and learn new skills for improving processes. It is also recommended that mentoring and coaching programmes, on-the-job-training, special assignment and job rotation should be included in the process. This is crucial to ensure that employees are confident about their abilities to execute tasks given to them. Another takeaway for Provincial government departments and organizational managers could be that if job insecurity is a concern within the organization as a result of previous or upcoming layoffs or personnel reductions, it may be useful to examine the utility of developing employees' control-oriented coping skills. Interventions in the organization could be targeted at increasing the use of control-oriented coping techniques in order to buffer against the negative impact of job insecurity on OCB performance. In

addition, the management of provincial government departments and organizational managers should adopt social exchange approach and show concern about their employees' wellbeing and career development in order to secure a long-term relationship with their employees, and reciprocal employee commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour.

LIMITATIONS

The major limitation of this study was unavailability of funds for transportation and other logistics. Due to this problem of finance, the study was limited to the Eastern Cape Department of Health only. Convenience sampling technique was employed in this research as a result of the researcher's inability to gather all the respondents in one place at a given time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researchers want to use this medium to acknowledge all those who made this paper a reality, for their encouragement and unalloyed support throughout the period this paper was written. Ultimately all glory goes to the almighty God for the wisdom, strength, divine health he granted the researcher throughout this period.

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