

Assessing the relationship between challenges, self-esteem and intentions to quit of women in the petrochemical industry

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ABSTRACT

Women constantly quit their jobs, therefore, it is a challenge for organisations to understand the cause of the situation. Women, compared to men, still earn less than the average wage of men while most of the jobs occupied by women are administrative jobs. Aspects such as challenges at work and a poor self-esteem could be considered to understand why women quit their jobs. These factors also were investigated in petrochemical industries of South Africa in this study. The objective of this investigation was to assess the relationship between challenges, self-esteem and intentions to quit of women employed in the petrochemical industry. The study also wanted to determine the role of challenge and generalised negative self-esteem in intentions to quit. A quantitative approach was followed using a cross-sectional survey, employing a convenience sample (n = 300) was used. The results of the study indicated that statistically significant relationships exist between the variables. Also, the findings also revealed that organisational challenge, stereotyping and negative self-esteem served as predictors of intentions to quit.

Key terms: Female employee, organisational challenge, personal challenge, stereotyping, self-esteem, intentions to quit.

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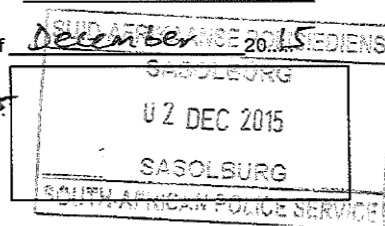
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ITQ:	Intentions to Quit
TPCQ:	Tilburg Psychological Contract Questionnaire
RSEQ:	Rosenberg Self-Esteem Questionnaire
EFA:	Exploratory factor analyses
SE:	Self-esteem
OC:	Organisational Challenge
PC:	Personal Challenge
NSE:	Negative self-esteem
STE:	Stereotyping

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CHAPTER 1: NATURE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research preface is presented. The background of the research area, literature review and problem statement is provided. Furthermore, the chapter consists of research objectives, research design, and the overview of other chapters to follow.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH AREA

Organisations are losing their talented workers. Could this be because of not having a process or programmes of retaining them? Some of these job losses pertain to star performers; leaving managers to thinking 'I should have seen it coming and do something about it'. Employees leave their organisation to seek employment in the same industry, in the same country, while others leave the country to become expats in other countries where they in the same industry. The consequences of Brain Drain state that some of the women leave the country and change their careers completely. Johnson (2009) referred to it as the migration of highly skilled and refined employees who are reckoned to advance their country.

Studies conducted by Thompson (2015) indicated that 70% of the women engineers left the sector after starting their careers because they felt isolated in their jobs. Thompson's studies import that most highly skilled women in technical fields in South African quit their jobs, suggesting that the South African petrochemical industry should be concerned about the emigration of women. Meyer, Brown and Kaplan (2000) indicated that there is a brain drain problem in South Africa for the past decade and that it is increasing. Remedies to solve this seem ineffective. How does this loss of skilled female employees affect the petrochemical industries in South Africa? Resultantly, challenges facing women in the petrochemical industry should be addressed. Are there challenges affecting the women's self-esteem and why it is a problem? Are these of external or internal challenges, and what can be done to turn these challenges into positive outcomes?

Huston (2007) points out that regardless of the change in the constitution in South Africa post-apartheid, there is still a high oppression towards women and that it is even

growing globally. It is shown that even though there was an increase in the average income for females, families that are headed by females are still earning 50% less than households that are headed by men. It further states that that headed families of a white man were six times higher than the African women because African females were more likely to be employed in lower-level jobs (Department of Women,2015). According to Carpenter et al.(2012) it is also indicated by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries that women spend about 2.4 hours more than men on unpaid work daily. Former president Nelson Mandela said: "freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression, unless we see invisible and practical terms that the condition of women of our country has radically changed for the better and that they have been empowered to intervene in all aspects of life as equals with any other member of society", henceforth Samuel and Sita's (2013) views that companies must create opportunities for woman to participate in the economy, to improve their earning potential, as well as contributing to the overall economy. A lot has been done in South Africa under the department of women by identifying some areas to enable women's full participation where there is a need to focus on in areas like education, labour market, land and property inequality and unpaid work(Department of Women,2015), however, it has to be understood what the reasons are why a lot more could be(Huston, 2007). The firm Ernst & Young facilitated a daily debate to identify practical and innovative interventions to allow the women of Africa to step into the African economy where they can provide benefit the community, their families and to themselves (Samuel & Sita, 2013).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Presently, there are limited studies on the relationship between challenges facing women, self-esteem and intentions to quit in petrochemical industries. Thus, this study aims to identify these relationships and postulate that it will be useful to the management of the petrochemical industries because it will establish the existing challenges. Eventually, management will have strategic responses on how to deal with the situation.

A study conducted by Yusof (2007) proved that in the South African economy, the petrochemical industry is of essential strategic importance. According to Samuel and Sita (2013), South Africa is one of the most developed countries with the most

advanced constitutions promoting the rights of women; however, there was a significant decrease of women leaders with 58 companies having more than 25% women in senior leadership in 2008. This number declined to 37 companies in 2011.

Karau and Eagly (2002) pointed out that the shortage of women has been attributed to a range of causes such as women family responsibilities and other tendencies for women to show less of the characteristics that can allow them to achieve the success in high-level positions. The challenges that women face in the petrochemical industry have to be investigated so that they could move with government trends (Langlois & Johnston, 2013). The stumbling blocks should be removed from all parties concerned and help females to attain the experience that will ensure they stay in this industry. Removing these stumbling blocks will ensure transformational leading in the petrochemical industry.

This study is aimed at discovering the inside on reaching out to women in petrochemical industry by identifying the challenges they are facing in this sector. Based on previous research gaps exist on identifying these challenges and even more questions relate to women in positions in the petrochemical industries in South Africa. It is also important to identify if these challenges are internal or external, as well as how to attract and retain female leaders in the petrochemical industry.

1.3.1 Motivation of topic actuality

Due to many employees, and specifically, women, quitting the petrochemical industry is worrying to the management because it results in a loss of productivity. Females currently in the organisation must be groomed in a way that they can be satisfied with their job for the organisation to grow as well. This study will benefit the women in this industry who pursue their careers in the petrochemical industry. It will further make them aware of some development structures that the company could employ to groom women to be able to deliver high-performance outputs. Also it will assist them on how to handle the most difficult challenges facing women employees. Women will be informed as to where they can get assistance and also the resources to improve their performance, serving the goal to attract and retain females in the organisation.

Attracting and retaining female employees can help the South African economy (Samuel and Sita, 2013). These authors believe that research to assist the industry to understand the internal and external challenges that women face and that such

research would benefit women in the industry better deal with the challenges and remain employed in the industry. Resultantly, it will also increase the number of female employees in this sector. It will show the significance of valuing employees which, in return, result in high performance for the organisation.

There are inadequate studies available on this topic. Therefore, this study will add to the pool of literature available on challenges, self-esteem and intentions to quit by women in the petrochemical industry in South Africa. The research will further gather more information on the know-how of females working in this industry and identify how they are challenged. Orsen (2000) also mentioned that for the organisation to ensure that marketing opportunities are not overlooked; women's presence on senior management is indeed needed. A typical example in this regard is Maureen Kempston who had acknowledged that the Canadian firm's female design team successfully introduced safety and female friendly features. These features included vision technology, satellite tracking during an emergency, makeup mirror, and others. Organisations must ensure that current and potential female perceives real opportunities for them to grow and advance in the organisation (Orsen, 2000).

1.3.2 Literature review of the topic/research area

According to Kabaji (2001), more than half of the world's population comprises of women; hence, their contribution to society is important. Despite their numerical force women experience discrimination in the workplace and they still occupy the positions that are dependent on the society. Nevertheless, women still bear the burden of taking care of children and household responsibilities in addition to their work responsibilities. Even modern women are expected to not only bring the bacon home but also to take the responsibility of cooking the bacon (Burke and McKeen, 2004). This signifies one major challenge that women are facing, namely to carry the family responsibility in addition to work. Hence, a strong challenge that is making them quit their jobs. Women have also to stay at home to take care of their children, partners, the elderly, caring for the sick, housework and general household planning (Mwangi, 2012).

The South African Petroleum Industry Association (SAPIA, 2007) points out those women are underrepresented in the petrochemical industry at almost all the levels. In the SAPIA (2007) article, it was further identified that there is a need to ensure that

women in this industry are provided with access to development opportunities. Recently a women leadership programme for oil and gas was approved SAPIA (2014).

Kumari (2014) stated that female employees are important when it comes to the development of the society, and therefore, it is necessary to empower female employees to assist in uplifting the economy. However, it is observed that women in the workplace face mental stress, sexual harassment, practice of discrimination, safety and security issues (Martin, 1989)

Studies by Aminah (2007) revealed that women experience that their work interferes with their family than the family interfering with their work. The author states that approximately two-thirds of female employees mentioned that they intend to leave their employ once they have children. This is a direct result of the high cost of child-care services (Aminah, 2007). Research by Gunavathy (2007) discovered that more than two-thirds of women experienced the work-life imbalance with work interfering with their personal life. Personal factors, in this case, were a lack of family support, marital conflicts and change in sleeping patterns that occur continuously. The organisational factors that interfere with personal life include interfering with work-related factors, time and relationship related factors. This resulted in the guilt of women not being able to spend enough time with their families and negative emotions result from family and colleagues (Gunavathy, 2007).

According to Kumari (2014), the efficiency of female employees is questioned by male colleagues and it has been shown that even if all qualifications are similar, employment preference is always in favour of the men, even in cases where women have proven themselves to be more efficient. It would seem that the authorities think twice when deciding on giving a promotion to a woman. In the study of Wentling (2003), it was revealed that the twin roles of women cause tension and conflict concerning the social structure that is still more dominant. Hughes, Ginnett and Curphy (2009) pointed out that when the job demands increase, many women are forced to choose between their family and their career. This was revealed by Welch (2006) that very few women CEOs have children due to the impact that it will have on affecting their career progress. Once female employees have kids (Woodard, 2007), they are reluctant to travel and work long hours which eventually lead them to leave their jobs. Davidson and Burke (2004) also mentioned that globally it is a trend that women's careers are less successful than

men's. It was additionally shown that mentoring women by other women assist in the success of their careers and it can boost their self-esteem (Keating, 2002).

According to Shrauger and Rosenberg (1970) individuals with high self-esteem persevere regardless of their failure, proposing that the resilience is eased by their self-esteem. Pepping *et al.* (2013) further support the statement by saying that individual with high self-esteem is like to take a less critical and more non-judgmental stance to self as well as less likely to experience self-critical thoughts. Major, Kaiser and McCoy (2003) stated that women who tend to blame others because of prejudice are mostly regarded as the ones with high self-esteem. This is because mostly they are trying to protect their self-esteem from their colleagues' negative feedback (Carvallo and Pelham, 2006). Akel, Boozer, Bigdeli, Huyck, Fernandez, Steier, Frazier and Dykes (2012) mentioned that the gender occupational culture leads to low aspirations for women and their expectations eventually leads to their lower self-esteem. Such cultural stereotype can dissuade women entering the so-called men's world sector and those in those sectors already are not been taken seriously by their male colleagues (Commission on Gender Equality, 2005). Soufi, Gilaninia and Mousavian (2011) stated that women are being interrupted in meetings, their presentation style is also being misinterpreted as a lack of self-confidence and create a question of whether women can be capable of handling difficult situations. This situation causes women to quit the current company to go to a company that they can be recognised (Soufi, Gilaninia and Mousavian, 2011). As mentioned by Tsai (2012) higher self-esteem individuals are described to have a positive attitude in contributing to the organisation.

Research done by Oser (2000) revealed that there are limited opportunities for women to move across the organisation and. Therefore, women could feel left out of the mainstream – a situation that may cause them to eventually to decide that leaving the organisation is the most plausible action to take. Research indicates that there is a significant relationship between the intention to leave the work and the actual turnover behaviour of employees revealed (Oser, 2000). High employee turnover is extremely costly to organisations (Sager 1991) while previous studies by Cascio (1982) indicated that an intention to quit is the immediate predictor of eventual employee turnover behaviour. In this regard, Walters (2008) states that retaining talented workers in South Africa is becoming a problem because increased mobility of employees resulted in the active seeking of better employment opportunities. Bateman (2009) points out that the

special concern exists because women turnover rates are higher than that of men and that employee replacement for the organisation is not only costly but also time-consuming.

Wood and Newton (2006) indicated that the long work hour culture in many organisations which includes working over weekends does not support parenting. According to Gordon and Whelan-Berry (2005), women employees become either super-woman to be able to handle the competing demands, or that they feel so overburdened that they run the risk of burnout, eventually ending up leaving the organisation

Murphy, Steele and Gross (2007), in their investigation on effects of women's low representation and masculine stereotyping, suggested that environmental features might be an important concern that decreases women's interests in technical fields of employment. A stereotype threat is referred to as the social psychological predicament that comes from negative stereotyping, which in turn, affects the performance of a human being. According to Maloney *et al.* (2013) when the stereotype that women are bad at mathematics is made significant than when it is not that makes women be bad performers in mathematics.

1.3.3 Research questions

Based on the problem statement above, the following research questions were formulated:

- Is there a relationship between internal and external challenges faced by women and their intentions to quit the job?
- Is there a relationship between internal and external challenges faced by women and self-esteem?
- Is there a relationship between stereotyping and challenges faced by women?
- Is there a relationship between stereotyping and intentions to quit of female employees?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives are divided into the main objective and the secondary objectives.

1.4.1 Main Objective

The research aims to understand women challenges about self-esteem which plays an influence on the eventual quitting of jobs by women in the petrochemical industry. The main objective of this research is to explore the relationship between organisational challenges, personal challenge, stereotyping, self-esteem and intentions to quit of women in the petrochemical industry.

1.4.2 Secondary objectives

The secondary objectives of this research are to determine:

- The relationship between internal and external challenges faced by women and the intention to quit the job?
- The relationship between internal and external challenges faced by women and self-esteem?
- The relationship between stereotyping and challenges faced by women?
- The relationship between stereotyping and intentions to quit of female employees?

1.5 RESEARCH METHOD

1.5.1 Research Approach

The research consists of two sections which include the following: a literature review and an empirical study. The quantitative approaches were used employing a cross-sectional survey design which comprises the questionnaires that were selected. This quantitative data collection technique was ideal for this study to meet the research objectives. Different departments in different petrochemical companies were approached because that the research required a group of female and male employees working throughout the petrochemical industry in South Africa, and was not limited to a specific company as such.

1.5.2 Literature review:

A comprehensive literature review will be conducted whereby different sources will be used to gain more information on the study. The objectives of literature review include the following:

- To provide a general idea of previous research on the topic for female challenges as well as background for those challenges; and
- The review must contain references of previous studies that are related to the research for interested readers to be able to search the authors themselves.

The focus of the research was obtained by information searches including the following keywords: Female employees, self-esteem, organisational challenges, personal challenges, stereotyping and intentions to quit. The sources to be accessed during the review will include both primary and secondary sources namely:

- Journal articles;
- Textbooks;
- Academic internet articles using Google Scholar;
- SAepublications;
- Harvard References; and
- Scientific and accredited articles.

1.5.3 Empirical research

Details as to the empirical research, including research participants and procedure, ethical considerations, measuring instrument(s), and statistical analysis.

1.5.4 Research Participants and procedure

The targeted population was 300 consisting of both female and male employees working in the petrochemical industry across South Africa. To allow sufficient representation of the population, non-probability convenient sample was used. It was therefore required that the respondents must be workers at a petrochemical industry and full-time employees (Welman *et al.*, 2012).

The procedure that was followed included approaching male and female workers of different petrochemical industries by email and by visiting their different departments

explaining the purpose and objectives of the study. It was then later followed by the questionnaires to various departments requesting them to participate in the study. The letter stated that the participation is voluntary and the confidentiality of participants is retained. The questionnaires were distributed in the form of hard copies and electronic copy for those who preferred the questionnaires to be sent to them by email and with the letter of consent included.

Different respondents from the various employees were given a secured box that was placed at the entrance of the researcher's office where the participants returned their completed questionnaires. The questionnaires did not require any identification such as name or work control number of employee, resulting in a strictly anonymous completed questionnaire. These questionnaires were sent to participants three weeks in advance and the second last week on a Monday and by the Wednesday of that week, a reminder was sent by email to remind them to complete the questionnaires. Approximately 20 minutes were required to complete the questionnaire. After three weeks, the collection boxes were gathered to start with the data analysis.

1.5.5 Ethical considerations

The researcher's studies of people need to be sensitive about the issues of ethical behaviour. Dealing with participants must be in an ethical manner, participants must be active in the research from their own free will not by force. It was further stated that the principle of ethical research was to cause no harm but to produce some gain for the participants in the project (Walliman 2011).

The North-West University's ethical committee reviewed the research proposal once it was submitted. There were some ethical considerations which were taken into account to ensure fairness of the research project which includes the following:

- The study posed no harmful behaviour towards the participants in any way and participation was voluntary.
- The study did not impose on any privacy during this research.
- A letter of consent was given to participants to inform them what the study was all about.
- The researcher was honest, fair and respectful towards the participants during the study.

Participants were given a fair chance to respond on whether they would want to be part of the research or not (Walliman 2011). All participants were given surety that their names will not be mentioned in the study.

1.5.6 Measuring instrument(s)

Measuring instruments were used for the purpose of this study to measure the biographical characteristics, organisational challenge, personal challenge, stereotyping and intentions to quit. The following were the measurements thereof:

- *Biographical characteristics*
To gather information on the participants' information such as gender, age, language, race, qualification, and years of experience were gathered through a biographical questionnaire that was provided.
- *Self-esteem*
The ten-item scale that measures the level of self-esteem of respondents adopted from Rosenberg (1979). This measure the level of degree to which respondents feels that he/she is a worthwhile individual "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself" is a sample item of this scale.
- *Challenges facing women*
This measure was developed for the study. The challenges which were measured included: organisational challenge, personal challenge and stereotyping. These challenges were rated based on Likert's five grading points scale as follows: strongly disagree, disagree somewhat, neither agrees nor disagrees, agree and strongly agree and the following values will be given 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. A sample item includes "Prejudice in the male-dominated sectors about women's capabilities".
- *Intentions to quit*
This measure was developed for the study. A five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) was adopted. It focused on the aspects such as the desire to leave the organisation and employees not being satisfied with the organisation. A sample item includes "Despite obligations I have made to this organisation; I want to quit my job as soon as possible".
- *Stereotyping*
A five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) was adopted. It focused on the aspects such as female employees cannot do

certain things that male employees can do, A sample item included “Women have an inferiority complex”.

1.5.7 Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis was carried out with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 2015). Exploratory factor analysis was carried out to investigate the construct validity of the measuring instruments. The descriptive statistics were used to determine the distribution pattern of the data. The mean was the central tendency measure. To identify the significance and positive/negative tendencies of the relationships as well as the strength thereof, the use the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated. To further know how much confidence should be placed on the results, reliability was measured using the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient.

1.6 OVERVIEW

The mini-dissertation will be structured in this format:

CHAPTER 1: NATURE OF THE STUDY. This chapter introducing the study to the reader and gives the reader a clear problem statement, motivation of the topic at hand and the literature relevant to the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW. This chapter provides a general idea of previous research on challenges faced by women, self-esteem and their intentions to quit.

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL STUDY. This chapter reported on the facts discovered in the research with tables and graphs. The main topics are measuring instruments and statistical analysis discussed in this chapter

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS. This is the results chapter interpreting the discoveries from chapter 3 tables.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS. This is the results discussion chapter interpreting the discoveries from chapter 3 tables.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature on internal and external challenges faced by women in the workplace, self-esteem and their intentions to quit the organisation. The objective of this study is to assess the relationship between challenges, self-esteem and intentions to quit of women in the petrochemical industry. In this chapter the literature review will be presented as per the following topics: female employees, internal and external challenges facing female employees, talented workers and their expectations, intentions to quit (ITQ), intentions to quit theories, relationship between challenges faced by female workers and intentions to quit, self-esteem, the relationship between challenges faced by women and self-esteem, and a summary drawn from the literature review will be discussed as the conclusion for this chapter.

2.2 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

2.2.1 Female employees

Msimanga (2013) describes females as people who were seen as household keepers until the time when industrialisation began. The view of women in the workplace has changed drastically during the course of time and women started spreading their work as domestic workers and clerical work outside the home (Domenico & Jones, 2006). Female employees are women working at institutions at any level regardless of which or where they are working. These are women who work for different institutions globally and in return earn a salary to make a living support their family (Domenico & Jones, 2006). The Employment Act (No. 11 of 2002) define an employee as “a person excluding an independent contractor, who works for another person or the State and who receive, or is entitled to receive any remuneration”. According to Muhl (2002), the legal definition of employee is regarded as “a person in the service of another under contract of hire, express or implied, oral or written, where the employer has the power or right to control and direct the employee in the material details of how the work is to be performed”.

Msimanga (2013) indicates that women who were married were forced to stay home and take care of their children and did not even have the opportunity to seek employment. The rate amongst women were 27,5% – 3,7% higher than men and the

labour force participation rate was 13,0% points lower amongst women than men. Women occupy a high percentage as a domestic worker, followed by being a clerk, a technician, sales and service workers. It is identified that wherever women are in professional occupations, it is probably in teaching, social work and administrative work (Department of Labour Force Survey, 2014).

2.2.2 Internal and external challenges facing female employees

Regardless of work commitments, females still bear the domestic responsibility. There is an increase in women participation and progression in the labour market though there are still some barriers including the ingrained organisational culture which maintains the place of work imbalances (Fegan & Burchell, 2002). In South Africa, the minister of labour has amended the Employment Act equity to ensure that the employer eliminates unfair discrimination by taking steps to eliminate differences among the employees who perform the same work of equal value((Government Gazette, 38837,1 Jun.).

External challenges

External challenges are those that are outside the business environment but affect the employee's work control (Mwangi, 2012). Economically, women, in particular, are structurally in a different position than men due to the unpaid and unrecognised work they do. Women's paid work is outside of the formal economy and their work is natural and does not require any particular skills. Therefore, it is valued less (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2014).

According to Kenney, McGee and Bhatnagar (2012) the view of a woman is still identical to what it was decades ago based on the fact that it was known that the mother's role was to be with her family which means she must stay at home. Though, from an economic point of view technology, is worthy of women concerning advancement opportunities. Women feel very lonely more often because regardless of them wishing to socialise they still have a family responsibility of taking care of the children and the workload. Women are workaholics and they can multi-task but this makes them ending up exhausted. Societies as well expect that a woman's chosen career should not affect their ability to parent (Kenney *et al.*, 2012).

Elmuti, Jia and Davis (2009) indicated that despite the role women have at work they still have to remain the primary caretakers at home. Women still must go home to do the

house chores irrespective of the work related issues. Women voluntarily, leave their jobs due to family verdicts (Elmuti *et al.*, 2009). Working in a man dominated place to give women stress which affects the family at hand. This stress is because women are identified as super mums whereby balancing work and family comes with stress (Kumari, 2014). Jacobs and Schain (2001) studies' discovered that men and women have different leadership styles and therefore the leadership style associated with women make them be people orientated rather than task orientated.

McLean (2003) mentioned that workplaces that frequently require unplanned overtime are a challenge even though it will affect both men and women; it will impact differently on women due to additional family responsibilities and concerns on safety. Women find it challenging to juggle demand, and therefore, women would want to change their working hours into flexible hours or work fewer hours. Caring for children impacts more on women's career decisions than on men but they still come back to the workforce to wages below that of men of the same level. Over a third of women mentioned that their commitment to care for others has always been an obstacle for their work progress. It is further mentioned that women additionally raised some concerns on opportunities to be allowed time for skills training during working hours because their commitments outside work do not allow them time to develop their skills (Akel, Boozer, Bigdeli, Huyck, Fernandez, Steier, Frazier and Dykes, 2012).

According to Buzzanell, Meisenbach, Remke, Liu, Bowers and Conn (2005) women experience work-family conflict because they are mostly affected by tension arising from both family and work responsibilities; therefore, they will prefer to work at home to opt out of the workforce leading their career slowing down in an attempt to be perfect mothers. Studies by Sargeant (2014) revealed that most women do not want to return to work because they are concerned about their kids' health/development and not wanting to miss important milestones and moments of their children's life progress. Others found their experience of returning to work after maternity leave difficult (Lucas, 2012). Family-work conflict and work-family conflict (Halawi, 2014) are outcomes of family structure that is a separate influence significant to the workers' intentions to leave the organisation. According to Valerio (2011), work-family conflict affects working women, the work extended hours which results in the child's well-being suffering due to lack of time with parents. This also endorses attachment lack of self-confidence in children. It is

stated that women are more likely to change jobs or leave their jobs when family responsibilities expand because they cannot afford to lose the salary of the father.

Internal Challenges

It is stated in Mwangi (2012)'s studies that women are valued more due to their physical appearance than their intellect; this has been experienced in the media industry where women received a warning letter for gaining weight. The internal challenges are defined as those that arise from the organisation's processes and structures (Mwangi, 2012).

Block, Koch, Liberman, Merriweather and Roberson (2011) pointed out that women who are exposed to stereotype threat were described as being emotional. If a person is exposed to stereotype threat according to Block *et al.* (2011), it leads to rejection of one's aspect's identity that they are seen as not acceptable. According to Downess, Hemmasi and Eshghi (2014) women at the managerial positions have a challenge of dealing with unstable economies, and response plans for the organisation. King (2011) indicated that the effect of negative cultural stereotype emerges from individuals or groups that need to represent oneself in a positive manner. It was further added that the challenge to the glass ceiling is attributed to inadequate mentoring and networking opportunities. Stereotyping is also a killer for women who wants to succeed as most women turn down seeking promotion and opportunities because they are internalised by negative evaluations and stereotypes by the majority to the point where they fear they will not succeed should they take those prospects (Downess *et al.*, 2014).

Halawi (2014) pointed out that the moment employees share their turnover intentions with their peers, it makes other workers want to leave as well. Lucas (2012) mentions that there is a misconception that women find it easy to take care of their children because they can take maternity leave. Should women choose to go back to work to handle work and family, they are being labelled super mums or second shifters. There are factors like job flexibility, permission to work from home that aid in the decision of women returning to work. Even though some organisations have made work to be family friendly many are still left behind (Lucas, 2012). This makes women choose new careers that are deemed to be open to the idea of women professionals due to the stereotyping that the technical fields are not cut out for women (Kenney *et al.*, 2012).

According to Valerio (2011) women face more challenges in meeting the basic requirements of the selection factors to an executive position which includes women face a challenge of not having breadth experience for strategic skills as they are often found working in staff roles and most executive positions are found in customer facing positions, and lack of working across organisational boundaries/lateral management can prevent women's understanding of how part of the organisation can influence other departments of the organisation and eventually this results in network limiting and limiting their capabilities to demonstrate cross-organisational influence which is a key expansion benchmark for executives (Valerio,2011). According to Mwangi (2012), these challenges are working as an obstacle to most women because women are expected to do most of it alone if not all while the partner has a highly paid job that women can still do but cannot be given the opportunity to do it

2.2.3 Talented workers and their expectations

Green, Moore, Easton and Heggie (2004) stated that most employers are finding it hard to retain good employees despite the economic fluctuations and an increase in globalisation of jobs, workers are not afraid to move on if their needs are not met as they are expecting more from their employers. Based on this information Walters (2008) believes if South African companies want to compete internationally they must retain their talented workers especially those who have the capability to explore and go work internationally. This necessitates that the appointment, training, promotion and retention of designated groups such as women, blacks, Coloureds, Asians and people with disabilities must be address in all occupational categories and levels in the place of work (The Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998) (SA, 1998). According to Walters (2008), the talented females could be targeted by the organisations as these groups seek better opportunities regarding promotion and compensation. Bert *et al.* (2004) mentioned that the study of human behaviour at work ultimately brings progress to both the employee and the organisation.

2.2.4 Intention to quit (ITQ)

According to Medina (2012), an employee's determination to find a new job within the next year with a new company is called turnover intention. Mxenge, Dywill and Bazana (2013) stated that turnover or intention to quit is the consciousness of the employee and his/her willingness to deliberately leave the firm. Medina (2012) further mentioned that

job satisfaction, as well as employee turnover intention, are inversely related to each other. Bothman and Roodt (2012) explain intention to quit as a type of withdrawal behaviour related to work under-identification whereas Morell, Loan-Clarke and Wilkinson (2001) define it as the worker's willingness to leave his/her company. Furthermore, Ongori (2007) mentioned it as the rotation of employees between companies and the state of occupation and being without a job. Employees' intentions to leaving the company are the consequence of work-related attitudes. Even though this is the objectionable results of the organisation, it is of vital importance to understand its predictors to minimise the impact that it can have negatively in the long run of the organisation's success. Organisations ended up having instability of skills, damage of customer services as employees need to be trained until they reach a satisfactory performance level on the job; this is because of organisational friction due to high turnover rate (Mukondiwa, 2012).

2.2.4.1 Intention to Quit (ITQ) theories

According to Mxenge *et al.* (2013), the Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover gives some understanding of the reasons leading to turnover intentions. Mensele and Coetzee (2014) defined voluntary turnover as the situation whereby a competent employee terminates her or his employment with his or her company to go and work for another company. According to Holton and O'Neill (2004), the traditional models of voluntary turnover suggest that employees compare the current and the searched jobs which lead to leaving the current job should it reveal that the searched job is better. Mxenge *et al.* (2013) stated that there are two factors that make the employee decide to quit the job which is; a shock to the system and decision frames. The shock to the system is whereby an event happened that lead to the employee to start thinking about their job security. On the other hand, the decision frames are whereby an employee believes in things that have happened in the past and know how to respond to them based on the experience (Greenberg, 2011).

The results of these two factors are four decisions possible paths as depicted from the Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover; during the first decision shock, the employee's current job loses the account that is enormous and due to the employee's experience it means jobs will be lost then the employee quits the job before even been retrenched by the company. This means the shock to the system occurred that matches a current decision frame. The employee has a difficult decision to make of whether to stay or

leave. Secondly, the shock to the system occurs but fails to match a decision frame and there is no alternative job to turn to. In this case, an employee's decision to quit the job is challenging since the employee might be forced to leave the current company due to fear even if they do not have an alternative job to fall to. The decision path number three is whereby the shock to the system occurs and it fails to match the decision frame but in this instance there is a job alternative. Quitting might be easier for the employee this time since there is an alternative job even if the company is being taken over by another company. The last and fourth decision shock is when there is no shock in the system and no decision time frame is considered. In this illustration, the employee quits his or her current job if the situation advises that the approach to handling the circumstances at hand is to leave the organisation (Greenberg, 2011).

2.2.4.2 Relationship between challenges faced by female workers and intention to quit

Mxenge *et al.* (2013) indicated that employees consider leaving the organisation before their normal retirement age as they experience stress due to the inability to perform at the normal age. Stress is the most identified reasons that lead to employees intending to quit thus far in organisations. Mxenge *et al.* (2013) further state that the factors that lead to job-related stress force the employees to quit. Werbel and Bedeian (1989) indicated that factors that are found leading to quitting other than stress are: educational qualifications and marital status.

Family responsibility is one major challenge for women quitting their jobs. Women have also to stay at home to take care of their children, partners, elderly, caring for the sick, house work and general household planning (Mwangi (2012). According to Oser (2000), women quit their jobs because they cannot be promoted to a leadership role since they have been occupying staff roles (for example; human resources, administration, marketing, and clerical). Oser (2000) also revealed that due to the narrowing of opportunities to move across the organisation women feel left out because they lack access to the organisation at large and they eventually decide leaving the organisation is the best thing to do.

2.2.5 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is the experience that people are appropriate to life and the requirements of it. It is further elaborated that self-esteem is having confidence in people's capability to think and coping with life challenges as well as confidence in the people's right to be happy, the sensation of being worthy, allowed to declare our needs and want, and to enjoy reaping the fruits of our hard work (Branden, 1994). Rosenberg (1979) refers to self-esteem as an individual's overall self-evaluations of her/his abilities. According to Pierce *et al.* (2004) self-esteem is the individual's degree of reflections to which the individual sees herself/himself based on her/his competency and need-satisfying the individual. Branden (1994) mentioned that what the individual does will determine his/her self-esteem.

Elliott (2013) indicated that women's economic security is increased when they have a high paid employment which improves their self-esteem; however if wages are low and working conditions are poor, this may lead to a depressed self-esteem. Gentile, Grabe, Dolan, Twenge, Wells and Maitino (2009) pointed out that females' self-esteem suffers when males outperform them in academics but the self-esteem does not increase when female performs at a higher level.

2.2.5.1 The relationship between challenges faced by women and self-esteem

People with high self-esteem feel good about themselves and they are mostly able to cope with challenges that face them effectively. The studies revealed that these people live in a social world where they believe people value and respect them. As compared to people with low self-esteem people, the low self-esteem people see the world in a more negative way. A lot of evidence was discovered that there is a link between self-esteem, shyness, loneliness, depression and alienation self-esteem (Pish-ghadam, Bakhshipour and Ebrahimi1, 2013)

Some literature search directed by Soufi, Gilaninia and Mousavian (2011) discovered that women's self-esteem result in the following: employed women have higher self-esteem than unemployed women, the high self-esteem women group tend to want to continue studying and accomplish their aims, one of the barriers to women employment is lack of self-esteem, barriers to accepting women in middle management level positions which include organisational barriers, family barriers, cultural and social

barriers. There are changes proposed from research conducted by Soufi *et al.* (2011) to improve female careers which include the following; change in their attitude towards men, the behaviour of men, and change in knowledge of men.

According to Tsai and Chang (2012) women who occupy leadership positions have been linked to increasing risk of the outcome that is negative. Investigations showed that women's competencies are being questioned more than men based on a gender stereotype. Further discoveries that the glass ceiling is the barrier of prejudice and discrimination in the way it is described it excludes women from positions at a higher level. These studies show that women are being interrupted in meetings, their presentation style is also being misinterpreted as a lack of self-confidence and create a question of whether women can be capable of handling difficult situations. This situation causes women to quit the current company to go to a company that they can be recognised (Soufi *et al.*, 2011).

According to Akel *et al.* (2012), women assume that men have a position with authority and there is little questioning of their capability to be in those roles. This gender occupational culture lead to low aspirations for women and their expectations eventually lead to their lower self-esteem. Such cultural stereotype can dissuade women entering the so-called men's world sector and those in those sectors already are being taken seriously by their male colleagues. Some findings indicate that women are too emotional to handle high positions (Commission on Gender Equality, 2005).

2.3 SUMMARY

The review of the literature on challenges at work indicates that there is a vital relationship between challenges faced by women at work, self-esteem and intentions to quit. The literature suggests that challenges have a negative impact on employee's self-esteem and it also leads to the thought of quitting the organisations. Results from various researchers' show that the severity of the challenges women face at work, the lower the self-esteem and the higher the intentions will be to quit their institutions. Effects further show that negative self-esteem, low self-esteem and challenges faced by women are variable predictors of intentions to quit which needs to be investigated to see how their relationships affect each other.

The next chapter will be describing the research methods regarding the empirical research, the target population and sample, the measuring instruments used and the data analysis procedures. Detailed questionnaire description and biographical characteristics of the sample is provided

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focusses on determining if the measuring instruments that were used in this study measured the theories in question and whether the instruments used certainly have measured accurately. Description of the research study regarding the empirical research, the study population, the instrumentation and the data analysis procedures were done in this chapter. The data collection method was discussed, targeted population briefly introduced, and sampling and ethical concerns that go along with it were performed in this chapter. Discussion on questionnaire design was argued in detail together with the biographical characteristics of the sample. The chapter focused on explaining the data analysis methods applied and the development of the hypothesis. As a final point, the statistical analysis of the results obtained was presented and the correlation found in it indicating relationships between the aspects of the investigation.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The nature of this study was quantitative research. This study made use of a sample of female and male employees working in a petrochemical industry in South Africa. Ethical clearance was obtained from the research unit first and the approval of management was secured as well. Web-based cross-sectional questionnaires accompanied by a covering letter, explaining the aim of the project, the anonymity and voluntary nature of the research, contact details of the researcher, were distributed amongst female and male employees of different petrochemical industries in South Africa. The methodology does not deal directly with the daily life but with the concept of reality. Regarding the quantitative research approach, the researcher gathers facts of the study from the viewpoint of an outsider. Consequently, it is essential for quantitative research to keep a detachable approach to keep the process of the research theoretically unbiased. This approach emphasises fundamental feature of performance and the facts collected will not change easily (Welman *et al.*, 2012).

The quantitative research methods emphasise the measurements and the fundamental relationship analysis between variables within a value-free perspective through the methodology and does not involve the investigation of the processes. The quantitative research uses methods that are structured to assess the objective of the data. The

advantage of quantitative research is that the research findings can be generalised from the sample study to the larger population targeted. The reason for selecting the quantitative approach is that the participant of the study and the researcher is independent of one another and cannot influence one another. The characteristic of this research methodology is a single reality that a researcher can measure and generalise. It is also easy to test the cause and effect relationships because the causes can be differentiated from the effects. There are four major types of quantitative designs which include: descriptive design, correlational design, quasi-experimental design and experimental design. I will be using a cross-sectional survey design to collect the data. This will provide me with a picture of the relationship between challenges faced by a female, self-esteem and their intentions to quit (Welman *et al.*, 2012).

3.3 RESEARCH METHODS

Mouton, (2001) proposes that the research design should emphasise on whether the research will make use of primary or secondary data. Kruger and Mitchell (2010) stated that the research should take care of informed consent for ethical considerations, the privacy of participants; the researcher should be protected from harm and involvement of the researcher. As a result, the secrecy and the voluntary consent will be emphasised to the participants during the study.

The quantitative data collection technique in the form of questionnaires will be ideal for this study for the research objective to be met. The approach selected was influenced by the nature of the data. It is less costly to use questionnaires as you can reach a lot of people without spending much money. It is also easy to reach a good number of people even those who stay in areas that are of a remote source and the participants can be able to complete the questionnaires on their own time. This is a quicker method for a large and widely spread sample.

3.4 RESEARCH PROCEDURE

For the purpose of this study a sample of females and males working across petrochemical industries in South Africa was selected (n = 300). The samples differ with regards to age, race and qualification. It is required that the participants must be full-time employees and must experience a family life as well. The procedure followed was to disseminate a covering letter together with the questionnaires to various

organisational departments requesting the participation of workers in the study. The letter explained the objectives and importance of the study. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the confidentiality and anonymity of participants were emphasised. Ethical aspects, informed consent and motivation regarding the research were also included. A hard copy paper-based questionnaire and cover letter were used. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed amongst respondents. It took approximately 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire and participants were given three weeks to complete the questionnaire. A reminder was sent a week before submission of the questionnaire via e-mail to remind participants to complete the questionnaire. Questionnaires were placed in a secure box provided at the entrances of the researcher's office and some were emailed back to the researcher. After the specified time frame the data collection process was ended and data analysis commenced. Some 300 questionnaires were collected of which 183 (61%) were female and 117 (39%) were male. Data collection encompassed three weeks.

3.5 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A population is a full set of cases from which a sample is taken. It is further referred to a population as a study object and it involves individuals, groups, organisation and conditions to which they are exposed to. It is also known in research that the word population means the total number of people or organisation whom can be included in the study (Welman et al. (2012). A random sample population of 300 employees working in a petrochemical industry was targeted for this study. The study involved all races, ages and the working experience with qualifications ranging from semi-skilled employees to managerial level. 100% response rate was achieved; both males and females were involved in this study. The employees were handed over the questionnaires with proper explanations.

A sample is used as an approach to gather information that is necessary for the research. Farrokhi and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad (2012) referred to convenience sampling as opportunity sampling where the only criterion is the convenience of the researcher. As mentioned by Dornyei (2007) convenience sampling is a kind of non-probability sampling whereby the targeted population are selected based on the purpose of the study and a basis that they do meet the certain practical criteria, such as geographic vicinity, they are available at a certain time, they are easy to access or are willing to

participate as volunteers. The study population includes 300 participants of which 183 were female and 117 were males.

A convenience sampling method which is sometimes called haphazard sampling according to Welman *et al.* (2012) was used for this study. The respondents each completed a questionnaire divided into three parts: the first part was demographic information, the second part was employment history, and the last part was individual factors, challenges faced by women and women's attitude at work. The questionnaire was completed by the first week of September 2015.

Table 3.1: Participants characteristics

Item Description	Category	Frequency	Percentage%
Gender	Female	183	61
	Male	117	39
Age	<31	32	10.6
	31-40	53	51
	41-50	109	36.3
	51+	6	2
Race	Black	95	31.7
	White	99	33
	Coloured	69	23
	Indian	37	12.3
Highest qualification	Matric	26	8.7
	Technical Certificate	90	30
	Diploma/Degree	148	49.3
	Masters/PHD	36	12
Number of years' service	<5	26	8.7
	5-10	90	30
	10-15	148	49.3
	15+	36	12
Job level	Technologist/Technical Officer	105	35
	Scientist/Engineer	125	41.7
	Supervisor/Manager	65	21.7
	Senior Manager	5	1.7
Number of years in level	<5	48	16
	5-10	219	73
	10-20	33	11
	<5	48	16

Table 3.1 above represents the demographic characteristics of participants (n = 300). The sample (n = 300) mainly consists of females employees (61%), and males represented 39% of the entire population. The ages of the participants mainly were between the ages of 31 and 50 years, with (51%) respondent age group between 31 and 40 years being the major participants followed by respondents of age between 41 and 50 at 36.3%. Mainly (73%) of employees have been in the same position for 5 to 10 years, 16% for less than 5 years, and 11% for 10 to 20 years in a position. Black respondents accounted for 31.7%, coloured respondents at 23%, Indian respondents at 12.3% with whites being the major participants at 33%. The qualification profile of the respondents is spread as (Postgraduate 12%, with Diploma/Degree being the major qualification at 49.3% followed by Technical certificate 30% and Matric 8.7%). 49.3% of employees have been with the organisation for 10 to 15 years, 30% have been with the organisation for 5 to 10 years, 12% for 15 years and above, and the 8.7% less than 5 years of service.

3.6 MEASURING INSTRUMENTS

The measuring instrument used consisted of six sections, namely *Organisational Challenge*, *Personal Challenge*, *Stereotyping*, *Self-esteem (SE)*, *the Intention to quit (ITQ)* and *demographics*. All scales except for demographics followed a five-point Likert format ranging from strongly disagree (1) to agree strongly (5).

The Cronbach alpha coefficients (used to determine the internal consistency and reliability) that were obtained in this research for the instruments used are reported in Table 4.1. Instruments that were used include:

- ***Organisational Challenge:*** This instrument, developed for the project was a twenty-item measure of the extent to which respondents see challenges facing women within the organisation, organisational culture favouring males and discrimination against women. A typical item was "Prejudice in the male-dominated sectors about women's capabilities."
- ***Personal Challenge:*** This twelve-item instrument was developed for the study and measure the personal experience of respondents. It focused on issues such as whether female employees find it difficult to control certain employees, women

feeling undervalued at work, unmarried women with family being regarded as workaholics, and males think they are much better than women in the working environment. One of the items in the scale was “It is difficult to control certain employees”.

- **Stereotyping:** This instrument, developed for the project was an eight-item measure of the extent to which employees are being categorised with current working experience within the organisation, females should act like men for them to be successful in their careers, female employees cannot do certain things that male employees can do, women must not get higher positions or leadership positions as they belong in the kitchen and taking care of the family, it is known that women are not confident enough to take the lead and women will not make it in certain positions they will fall in no time. A sample item included “Women have an inferiority complex”.
- **Self-esteem:** A ten-item scale was adapted from Rosenberg (1979) and measures the level of self-esteem of respondents. This measure the level of degree to which respondents feels that he/she is a worthwhile individual, are they satisfied with who they are, are they confident and do they respect themselves or they feel they are failures in life. “On the whole, I am satisfied with myself” is a sample item of this scale.
- **Intention to quit (ITQ):** Intention to quit was measured using the modified Tilburg Psychological Contract questionnaire (TPCQ) ten-item scale constructed by Frees and Schalk (1996). This measure assesses the aspects such as the desire to leave the organisation; respondents are not satisfied with the organisation and they could leave as soon as they find an opportunity or another job. A typical item was “If I could, I will quit today”.

3.7 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The statistical analysis was carried out with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 22.0 (SPSS, 2015). Exploratory factor analyses were carried out to investigate the construct validity of the measuring instruments. Firstly, a simple principal component analysis was conducted on the constructs that form part of the measurement model, namely *organisational challenge*, *personal challenge*,

stereotyping, *self-esteem* (SE), *the intentions to quit* (ITQ) and the eigenvalues and the scree plot was studied to determine the number of factors to extract. Kaiser (1960) recommends extracting factors with eigenvalues larger than 1.00. Additionally, the scree plot can also be used to determine the number of factors. Cattell (1996) advises that the point of inflexion of the scree plot be considered. Second, a principal component analysis with a Direct Oblimin rotation was conducted if factors were related, and a principal component analysis with a Varimax rotation was used if the obtained factors were not related (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The following criteria were considered in deciding which factors to retain: (1) as a rule of thumb, item loadings had to be more than 0.32; (2) an item was not allowed to load on more than one factor as this was considered to indicate that the item either tapped more than one factor (poor item) or that there was an overlap of factors or components; (3) a factor needed to have at least three substantive item loadings and (4) the retained factor needed to make theoretical sense (Field, 2009; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

Descriptive statistics (for example means, standard deviations, skewness and kurtosis) were used to determine the distribution pattern of the data. To ensure that the data were normally distributed, a cut-off point of 2.00 was set for skewness (Finch & West, 1997) and 4.00 for kurtosis (Field, 2009). Skewed variable is a variable whose mean is not in the centre, while a kurtosis variable indicates the presence of clustering of scores (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001). Tabachnik and Fidell, 2001 (2001) state that it is necessary to examine the skewness and kurtosis of scores before analysis as 'solutions from the analysis are usually degraded if the variables are not normally distributed'. Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated to assess the reliability of the constructs measured in this study. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) recommend a guideline of 0.70 as an acceptable cut-off point.

Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were used to specify the relationship between the variables. Regarding statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95% confidence interval level ($p < 0, 05$). Effect sizes (Steyn, 1999) were used to decide on the practical significance of the findings. The parameters 0.10 (small effect), 0.30 (medium effect) and 0.50 (large effect) were set for practical significance of the correlations (Steyn, 1999). A cut-off point of 0.3 (medium effect) was set for the practical significance of correlation coefficients (Cohen, 1988). A step-wise multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the proportion of variance in the dependent

variable of the subjective experience of negative self-esteem and intentions to quit that is predicted by the independent variables (challenges faced by women). The effect size in the case of multiple regressions is given by the formula (Steyn, 1999): $f^2 = R^2 / (1-R^2)$. The following parameters 0.01 (small effect), 0.10 (medium effect) and 0.35 (large effect) were set for practical significance of f^2 (Steyn, 1999).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The results of the study are represented in 4 sections. Firstly, the exploratory factor analyses. Secondly the descriptive statistics including the correlational analyses of all measures used in the study; thirdly the regression analysis was conducted to determine (1) the impact of dimensions of challenges on personal resources such as negative self-esteem as well as (2) the impact of dimensions of challenges (in the first step) and personal resources (in the second step) on the employee attitudes such as intention to quit, and lastly assessing group differences in the experiences of dimensions of challenges, personal resources and employee attitudes such as intention to quit.

4.2 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSES (EFA)

The results obtained from the separate exploratory factor analyses (EFA) and inspections of the scree plots and eigenvalues of the factors indicated that all scales used to assess key situational work-related variables and employee attitude were one-dimensional. The choice of one factor was based on problems in interpreting multi-factorial solutions and on the strong decrease of the eigenvalue after the first factor. The uni-factorial solutions extracted explained 24.97% of the variance *in the organisational challenge*, 31.91% of the variance *in the personal challenge*, and 37.88% of the variance *in stereotyping*, 48.16% of the variance *in negative self-esteem (NSE)* and 39.51% of the variance *in intentions to quit (ITQ)*.

Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis

This section focuses on the descriptive statistics and the correlation coefficients of the variables. The descriptive statistics and the correlation results for the variables in the study are presented in Table 4.1 below. Internal consistency calculated for the research data using Cronbach's alpha, skewness and kurtosis are also presented in Table 4.1 below. Table 4.2 summarises the correlation coefficients between the constructs.

Table 4.1: Descriptive statistic and correlation analyses

Variables	α	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. Organisational Challenge (OC)	0.92	3.09	0.78	0.22	-0.61
2. Personal Challenge (PC)	0.73	2.76	0.67	-0.32	0.11
3. Stereotyping (STE)	0.77	3.11	0.84	0.08	-0.29
4. Negative Self-esteem (NSE)	0.84	1.59	0.81	0.56	2.48
5. Intentions To Quit (ITQ)	0.77	2.80	0.84	0.31	-0.11

Inspection of Table 4.1 indicates that our scales were reliable because the Cronbach alpha of all scales falls within the acceptable range of 0.70 and above the criteria of (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) required for data to be usable in research of a similar nature. This means that the instruments are reliable.

Organisational challenge is above the mid-point which means that the majority of the sample agrees that female employees do experience organisational challenges at work. Personal challenge is slightly below the mid-point; they do experience personal challenges at work but to a lesser extent. However, they do experience stereotypes with the mean scale of 3.11. They strongly do not agree with negative self-esteem which means they are much more positive about their self-esteem. With the mean scale of 2.80, it shows they do not frequently think about quitting the institution. The measuring instrument scale was a five-point Likert scale, some of the instruments are experienced to a much lesser extent whereas others to a much greater extent by looking at the mid-point of the scale.

According to Field (2005), the standard deviation is the average variability's estimates of the set of data which is measured in the same units of measurements. The standard deviation for this study is evenly distributed which shows that consistency was obtained from the respondents.

By looking at the histogram, one can get a skewness and kurtosis indication of whether the data is normally distributed. Data in Table 4.1 also indicates that all scales used were normally distributed given the guidelines of 2.00 for skewness (Finch & West, 1997) and 4.00 for Kurtosis (Field, 2009). All variables (except the personal challenge)

have a distribution that skews to the right; this means that the data is not skewed and nor kurtosis based on the cut-off point of 2.00 for skewness and 4.00 for kurtosis.

Table 4.2: *Correlation matrix of the variables*

Variables	OC	PC	STE	NSE
1. Organisational Challenge (OC)	-	-	-	-
2. Personal Challenge (PC)	0.48**	-	-	-
3. Stereotyping (STE)	0.39**	0.23**	-	-
4. Negative Self-esteem (NSE)	-0.53	0.18**	0.11	-
5. Intentions To Quit ITQ)	0.32**	0.25**	0.29**	0.21**

*.01 ≥ small effect / **.30 ≥ medium effect / ***.50 ≥ large effect

Also Table 4.2 above indicates that organisational challenge and personal challenge were statistically positively related to one another (medium effect). Organisational challenge is also statistically significantly related to stereotyping and intentions to quit (medium effect). The personal challenge, on the other hand, was practically significantly related (small effect) to stereotyping, negative self-esteem, and intentions to quit. Stereotyping was statistically significant related (small effect) to both negative self-esteem and intentions to quit. Negative self-esteem, on the other hand, was statistically significantly related to intentions to quit (small effect).

Regression analysis to determine the impact of organisational challenge, personal challenge and stereotyping as predictors of negative self-esteem and intentions to quit

Next, we focus on the regression analyses. We were also interested in the impact of organisational challenge, personal challenge and stereotyping as predictors of generalised negative self-esteem and intentions to quit. Regression analysis with challenges as predictors of generalised negative self-esteem and intentions to quit are presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: *Regression analysis with challenges as predictors of negative self-esteem and intentions to quit*

Predictors	Negative Self-esteem	Intentions to Quit	
	Step 1	Step 1	Step 2
	Stand.β	Stand.β	Stand.β
1.Organisational Challenge (OC)	-0.21 [*]	0.19 [*]	0.23 [*]
2.Personal Challenge (PC)	0.21 [*]	0.66	0.31
3. Stereotyping (STE)	0.12	0.22 [*]	0.19 [*]
4. Negative Self-esteem (NSE)			0.17 [*]
<i>R</i>	0.22	0.38	0.41
<i>R</i> ²	0.05	0.14	0.17
<i>F</i> ²	0.05	0.16	0.20

Note f² parameters set for practical significance: .01 ≥ small effect / .10 ≥ medium effect / .35 ≥ large effect /

Closer inspection of Table 4.3 revealed that the organisational challenge, personal challenge and stereotyping account for 5% (small practical significance) of the variance in negative self-esteem with organisational challenge ($\beta = -0.21$ / $t = -2.88$) and personal challenge ($\beta = 0.21$ / $t = 1.84$) proving to be the only statistical significant predictors of negative self-esteem. The organisational challenge, personal challenge and stereotyping account for 14 % (medium practical significance) of the variance in intentions to quit with an organisational challenge ($\beta = -0.19$ / $t = 2.88$) and stereotyping ($\beta = -0.22$ / $t = 3.52$) proving to be statistically significant predictors of intentions to quit. However, with the inclusion of negative self-esteem in the second model, the variance explained in intentions to quit increased from 14% to 17 % (medium practical significance) with organisational challenge ($\beta = 0.23$ / $t = 3.95$), stereotyping ($\beta = 0.19$ / $t = 3.21$), and negative self-esteem ($\beta = 0.17$ / $t = 3.02$) proving to be the only statistically significant predictors of intentions to quit. This means that organisational challenge, personal challenge and stereotyping are important for negative self-esteem and intentions to work for female employees of the institution.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATION, LIMITATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 DISCUSSION

The study focused on exploring the challenges facing women in petrochemical industries in South Africa as a means to determine whether these challenges have a negative impact on their self-esteem and do it also lead to thoughts of quitting the organisation.

Organisational challenges were also positively related to stereotyping and intentions to quit. These findings are in line with empirical results from Maseko (2013) who found that stereotypes about organisational leaders mostly resembles men stereotypes than women's which end up placing women at a disadvantage in most leadership roles in the organisation. This study agrees with results of the study of Block *et al.* (2011) who concluded that stereotypes are resistance to change due to cultural beliefs; therefore, employees that are in a demographic minority will continuously encounter stereotyping at work. Organisational challenges were also positively related to intentions to quit which links to previous findings of Pretorius (2012) who concluded if employees are satisfied with their work environment it is rare that they would quit the organisation but should their job satisfaction decrease they are more likely to quit their organisation. This study coincides with results of the study of Mxenge *et al.* (2014) showing employees experiencing an increase in organisational stress are likely to have the intention to quit the organisation.

Furthermore, personal challenge, on the other hand, was positively related to stereotyping, negative self-esteem and intentions to quit. Massuger's (2011) results of the study showed that the more people selectively stereotype the less the negative stereotype behaviour they experience. It further concluded that experienced positive stereotypes have a positive effect on organisational based self-esteem. Stereotyping was also positively related to negative self-esteem and intentions to quit (Massuger, 2011).

The second objective of the study was to determine the role of organisational challenge, personal challenge, and stereotyping on negative self-esteem and intentions to quit. Regression analysis indicated that organisational challenge and personal challenge

proved to be the only statistical predictors of negative self-esteem. These discoveries also agree with Judge and Kammeyer-Muller (2010) where they indicated that individuals who have higher levels of core self-evaluation are proactively managing their careers and can be able to demonstrate their self-image to themselves and externally, whereas those with low core self-evaluation may need additional assistance. Furthermore, regression analysis revealed that organisational challenge and stereotyping are the predictors of intentions to quit, which concur with the findings of Foley *et al.* (2005) indicating that perceived injustice and gender discrimination were related to low commitment of the organisation which then led to women intending to leave the organisation. This study agreed with the findings of Lee (2013) that indicated that psychological threats from discrimination and stereotyping experiences negatively influence the need for women to belong thus increases the intention to leave their jobs.

With the inclusion of negative self-esteem in the second step as predictor of intentions to quit, the variance explained in intentions to quit increased by 3%, suggesting that not only may employees who intend to leave the organisation have a low self-esteem, but a negative self-esteem can lead to employees intending to quit their job. In support of the finding is the study of Grandley and Cropanza (1999) noted that self-esteem relates to job distress and turnover intentions suggesting that gender was a significant predictor of intentions to quit. In support of the findings is the study of Lee (2013) who found that gender, personal or group discrimination experiences and lower self-esteem contributed to individuals to think of leaving their jobs.

Nonetheless, this study has identified that personal challenges do not necessarily add to intentions to quit. Furthermore stereotyping also does not necessarily develop negative self-esteem. Massuger (2013) showed that when employees experience colleagues seeing them as friendly and social that are associated with their organisation based self-esteem which perceived the positive stereotypes of their generation.

Women continue to be in lower numbers in this sector as organisations are not focused on leadership development efforts on women and organisations should start addressing female leaders as a unique segment that is important to the company (SAPI, 2007).

5.2 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to explore whether programmes put forward in organisations to develop women and their progress is effective and if it is, why women still quit their jobs. Research should also be conducted on other predictors of the intention to quit for women because the literature is concentrating on repeating same things especially family responsibility which seems to be the primary reason so far. Research could focus on what makes the organisational challenges to be the core challenge than most of them. Furthermore, it must be unpacked to whether be it external challenges or internal challenges that make women quit their jobs. More research on the relationship between personal challenge and negative self-esteem should be conducted.

Based on the findings it is recommended for the organisation to create a workplace culture that works for women, a workplace that can attract and retain them. This can be a stereotype-free culture and more women employment in the petrochemical industry. Furthermore, the organisation should look at the personal challenges that affect women by implementing policies that would make a difference in the social and personal lives of working women.

5.3 LIMITATION

The main possible limitation was that the study was based on both female and male employees working in the petrochemical industry but female employees who left the petrochemical industry were not granted a chance to answer the questionnaires. The responses may be one sided with no desired results of the industry. It is suggested to conduct this study only on females as the results reflect males' perceptions on females and may end up addressing the opinions, not the facts.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The study shows that organisational challenges and stereotyping are the core for quitting intentions which need a human resource intervention to retain workers.

Companies are addressing the gender culture stereotype issues by teaming up with schools to encourage young girls and women in considering jobs that were previously reflected as being for men to break down the stereotype of employment categories to eventually see the women entering the well-paid occupations (Akel *et al.*, 2012). The

South African women in parliament managed to turn the culture into a friendly institution by creating facilities that will care for children, sexual harassment policies, changing meeting times to suit women and the proceedings in parliament (Commission on Gender Equality, 1999). The report that focussed on different areas in women and labour market was conducted. It touched on the environment that enables women to engage with the labour market effectively to address economic inequalities that exist between sexes. The research also focused on different stages of the life course and how it may differ between males and females. It was concluded in the report that a nation discussion around various gender stereotypes and practices is required as it is not about women only but also removal of the power of choice from men (Department of Women, 2015)

Some practical factors of interest of the study were not included in this current study due to practical limitations. It is also suggested to investigate further a study on why are challenges forcing women to quit. This can be gathered if a sample of women who left the industry be part of the study. Should self-esteem become part of the problem and why do women decide to quit their jobs?

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ANNEXURES:

ANNEXURES A: QUESTIONNAIRE



Potchefstroom Business School
North-West University Private Bag
X6001, Potchefstroom South Africa
2520

Lettie Maluleka / Prof LTB Jackson

13 August 2015

Dear Participant:

I am a final year MBA student at North West University (Potchefstroom Business School) and I am conducting a study for my mini-dissertation.

The survey you have received is interested in investigating the relationship between challenges faced by women, self-esteem and quitting intentions. By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes. Know that you are free to decide not to complete the survey, although your data cannot be replaced by anyone else's. The survey is, however, completed anonymously, and we as researcher(s) will have no way of connecting the information you provide to you personally. We foresee that you are unlikely to experience any negative consequences due to completing this questionnaire. Even so, the researcher(s) undertake to keep the individual information provided herein confidential, not to let it out of their possession, and to analyse results only at the

group level. It is hoped that the information we gain from this survey will help us in exploring the relationship between challenges faced by women, self-esteem and quitting intentions. If you do, however, have further questions or concerns; please contact the principal investigator Lettie Makhaokane Maluleka on 082 688 4448 /letty.maluleke@sasol.com / Prof. LTB Jackson at 018 299 1521 or e-mail Leon.Jackson@nwu.ac.za

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely

Lettie Maluleka / Prof. LTB Jackson

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Would you please tell me about yourself and your background?

1. Gender	Female		Male	
2. How old are you (Years)?	A. under 30	B. 31-40	C. 41 -50	D. 51 and older
3. What is your racial Group?	A. Black	B. White	C. Colored	D Indian
4. What is your level of education?	A. Matric	B. Technical certificate	C. Diploma/Degree	D. Masters/ PhD

SECTION B: EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

1. How long have you been working here?	A. Less than 5years	B. 5–10years	B. 10 –15years	D. Above 15 years
2. What is your title or position at work?	Technologist/ Technical Officer	Scientist/Engineer	Supervisor/Manager	Senior Manager
3 How long have you been in this position?	A. Less than 5 years	B. 5–10 years	B. 10–20 years	D. Above 20 years

SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL FACTORS, CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN AND WOMEN'S ATTITUDE AT WORK

Below are the statements about how women feel and experience the workplace. Please indicate to what extent you agree and/or disagree with the following statements below.

1	2	3	4	5				
Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree				
C1	I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.			1	2	3	4	5

C2	I feel that I have a number of good qualities	1	2	3	4	5
C3	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am failure.	1	2	3	4	5
C4	I am able to do things as well as most people.	1	2	3	4	5
C5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
C6	I take a positive attitude towards myself.	1	2	3	4	5
C7	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
C8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
C9	I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5
C10	At times I feel I am a no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5

D1	It is difficult to control certain employees	1	2	3	4	5
D2	There is poor level of women leadership's participants in drawing strategies	1	2	3	4	5
D3	Too many administrative constraints that can prevent women from being creative	1	2	3	4	5
D4	Women cannot speak well in front of groups	1	2	3	4	5
D5	Women's writing or analytical skills are not good enough	1	2	3	4	5
D6	The jobs women do considered to be 'support' jobs and are of less importance than men.	1	2	3	4	5
D7	There are divisions between women who work in manufacturing plants and women who work in offices	1	2	3	4	5
D8	Women find it difficult to create a balance between the professional responsibilities, and family needs are difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
D9	Women's working hours already takes you away from home.	1	2	3	4	5
D10	The community has a negative view of women in leadership positions.	1	2	3	4	5
D11	Working women lacks social involvement.	1	2	3	4	5
D12	There are still a few male counterparts who feel threatened.	1	2	3	4	5
D13	Women feel discriminated against because they feel that people think that they are not committed to the	1	2	3	4	5

	organization (can go on maternity leave)					
D14	Women are told that they make emotional decisions	1	2	3	4	5
D15	Women experienced sexual harassment at work.	1	2	3	4	5
D16	For women to show that they are in power, they need to act like a man.	1	2	3	4	5
D17	Females are faced with politics in and outside your work.	1	2	3	4	5
D18	Women don't always get taken seriously in the work environment.	1	2	3	4	5
D19	Females are not regarded as authority figures.	1	2	3	4	5
D20	Not all "working" ideas are accepted or implemented:	1	2	3	4	5
D21	Most females have children, and therefore, their priorities aren't just solely focused on work deadlines.	1	2	3	4	5
D22	Women also get paid less regarding having the same degree in certain jobs.	1	2	3	4	5
D23	There are also many single mothers trying to climb the corporate ladder, but because of 'work, life, balance" and lack of moral support at home these women get overlooked.	1	2	3	4	5
D24	Females experience negative stereotyping from male employees at work	1	2	3	4	5
D25	Females feel less respected or lack of respect at work	1	2	3	4	5
D26	Insubordination from males reporting to the female manager/supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
D27	Female employees have to prove their worth more than the male employees.	1	2	3	4	5
D28	Women feel the difficulty of balancing family and work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
D29	Prejudice in the male-dominated sectors about women's capabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
D30	Lack of support from other female employees.	1	2	3	4	5
D31	Females experience that work and personal responsibilities clash.	1	2	3	4	5
D32	The difference between men and woman are not fully valued.	1	2	3	4	5

D33	Woman might be thought less off regarding leadership	1	2	3	4	5
D34	Women experience that managing emotions are a problem.	1	2	3	4	5
D35	Women have an Inferiority Complex	1	2	3	4	5
D36	Women experience that managing males is difficult	1	2	3	4	5
D37	Climbing the career ladder is too slow for females as compared to males.	1	2	3	4	5
D38	There is not enough mentoring or coaching for females	1	2	3	4	5
D39	Gender Equality and Inequality is not prevalent in our organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
D40	Negative stereotype from a society that females can't do certain things.	1	2	3	4	5

E1	If I have a good opportunity, I would like to find another job	1	2	3	4	5
E2	At this moment, I would like to stay with this organisation as long as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
E3	Finding another job in the same industry will be difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
E4	Despite the obligations I have made to this organisation, I want to quit my job as soon as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
E5	I do not enjoy this job and have been searching for other positions.	1	2	3	4	5
E6	I often feel like quitting this job these days.	1	2	3	4	5
E7	I do not plan to continue to work here until I retire.	1	2	3	4	5
E8	If I can be offered the same job in another organisation I will take it with both hands.	1	2	3	4	5
E9	My job searching will continue until I get it right.	1	2	3	4	5
E10	If I could, I will quit today.	1	2	3	4	5



26 November 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Re: Letter of confirmation of language editing

The dissertation **Assessing the relationship between challenges, self-esteem and intentions to quit of women in the petrochemical industry** by **L.M Maluleka** (24779555) was language, technically and typographically edited. The citations, sources and referencing technique applied was also checked to comply with university guidelines. Final corrections as suggested remain the responsibility of the student.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Antoinette Bisschoff', is positioned above the printed name.

Antoinette Bisschoff

Officially approved language editor of the NWU since 1998
Member of SA Translators Institute (no. 100181)