

TRUST AS A FACTOR IN DETERMINING HOW TO ATTRACT, MOTIVATE AND RETAIN TALENT

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to validate a questionnaire that can be used to determine how employees select the best company to work for. The second focus was to determine the role of trust in a relationship where employers must attract, motivate and retain employees. The confirmatory factor analysis resulted in 10 dimensions that supported most of the theoretically constructed dimensions. A second-order factor analysis was done and it became clear that there are two second-order factors underlying factor 1, namely leadership and trust. A strong correlation was found between trust and the dimensions of job satisfaction, relationships and leadership.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van die studie was om 'n vraelys te valideer wat gebruik kon word om te bepaal hoe werknemers die beste organisasie om voor te werk kies. Die tweede fokus was om die rol van vertroue te bepaal in 'n vertrouensverhouding waar werkgewers werknemers moet lok, motiveer en behou. 'n Bevestigende faktorontleding het tien faktore tot gevolg gehad wat die meeste van die teoreties opgestelde dimensies ondersteun. 'n Tweede-orde-faktorontleding van faktor een het aangetoon dat die faktor uit twee tweede-orde-faktore, leierskap en vertroue bestaan. 'n Sterk korrelasie het voorgekom tussen vertroue en die dimensies van postevredenheid, verhoudinge en leierskap.

This study examined the factors that are considered by employees when choosing the best company to work for. The second focus of the study was to explore the role of trust in such a relationship. According to Lau and May (1998) management recognises that a productive workforce will provide a global, sustainable competitive advantage for business organisations. As the composition of the workforce continues to change over coming years, companies that offer better benefits and supportive working environments are expected to gain leverage in hiring and retaining valuable people. According to De Beer and Radley (2000) individual potential cannot be optimised unless cultural differences are understood and managed. Kandola and Fullerton (1998) suggest that there is evidence of the benefits for organisations which ensure that they retain all their staff by providing an environment in which their potential is realised.

The inability to value and manage diversity will contribute substantially to declining productivity and profitability in the years ahead. Tom (1971) postulated that Super's theory of occupational choice can also be extended to organisational choice of an individual and may also be a means of implementing an individual's self-concept. The relationship between the individual's self-concept (perception of self) and the organisational image (individual's perception of the organisation) could be a determinant of organisational choice.

Schreuder and Theron (2001) summarise earlier researchers' findings on what influences organisational choice per se as the nature of work, progress, starting salary, opportunity for promotion, intellectual aspects and recognition.

According to Brety, Ash and Dreher (1989) homogeneity also plays a role in organisational choice. Fortune and Hay Consulting's 1988 list of the most admired global companies points to a single best predictor of overall excellence: the ability to attract, motivate and retain talented people (Charlton, 2000, p. 9).

According to Charlton (2000, pp. 9-10) the themes or important aspects that need to be taken into account are:

- attracting, developing, motivating and retaining leadership and inculcating team leadership
- the continuing capacity to change
- encouraging diversity while acting globally
- accountability for sustained performance based on relevant performance competencies
- a comprehensive strategic human resource perspective – owned by people

Shaw (1997, p. 7) argues that trust is a key competitive issue for organisations and plays a critical role in the following organisational responses:

- empowering individuals and teams
- horizontal business processes
- business-unit autonomy and power
- cross-group collaboration
- alliances and joint ventures
- real-time organisational learning

The changing nature of work and the response of organisations to globalisation have emphasised the importance of trust. Current trends in the changing workforce composition and the implementation of the Employment Equity Act in South Africa suggest that the importance of trust is likely to increase over the next few years (Martins, 2000).

According to Peterson and Smith (2000, p. 109) trust affects all relationships, but it plays a larger part in lateral than in hierarchical relationships. In any relationship, events occur that can make a party vulnerable. Researchers such as Charlton (2000), Katzenbach and Smith (1993), Martins (2000), and Shaw (1997) have argued theoretically and empirically about the impact of trust on the various relationships in organisations. The impact of trust appears to be most relevant in organisational elements such as leadership, relationships, conflict, change, communication and diversity management. Researchers have attached various characteristics or components to trust (Charlton, 2000; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; McKnight & Webster, 2001; Peterson & Smith, 2000):

- calculative trust – salience of trustworthy exchanges for individual benefit
- relational trust – an organisation's history and mythology of trustworthy behaviour
- institutional trust – an established system of rewards and sanctions corresponding to trustworthy behaviour
- a key characteristic of high performance teams
- trust in leadership as well as the leader's trusting other people to do what needs to be done
- influence of trust in institutions at the societal level on the organisational trust climate, (Trust climate is seen as one of the dimensions of organisational trust)
- a multi-dimensional typology at individual, interpersonal and institutional levels

The present study examines trust as one dimension of the factors that employees consider when choosing a company to work for. In this context aspects such as the trust relationship between the immediate manager and subordinates, trust between employees, respect, care and motivation were included. The relationship between trust and other dimensions was also determined.

In the last few years South African organisations have experienced drastic changes, re-engineering, downsizing, ferocious global competition and the implementation of various new labour laws. These changes have led to a shift on both sides of the employment contract which is leading to a widening of the trust gap between employees and their employers (Martins, 2000). Employers can only speculate what the impact of the widening trust gap is on attracting and retaining talented workers. According to Pfeiffer (1991) trust is emphasized in the philosophies of renewed organisations.

Various criteria are used to determine the best or most admired companies to work for, for instance:

- pay and benefits, opportunities, job security, pride in work and company, openness and fairness, camaraderie and friendliness (Lau & May, 1998)
- completing a trust index, receiving supplementary material such as newsletters, employee handbooks and videos (Branch, 1999)
- quality of management, quality of products and services, innovativeness, long term investment value, financial soundness, ability to attract, develop and retain talent, community responsibility, use of corporate assets and global business acumen (Stein, 2000)
- macrocriteria: financially stable, enjoy success in its markets, enjoys status and reputation, salary/benefits/work environs, recruitment, career opportunities and development, job security/handling corporate change and the human face of the company (Donald, 2000)

The above suggest that various methods are used to determine what factors attract, motivate and help retain talented people. In an attempt to establish what these methods are, research was conducted to determine the factors that attract and retain employees. The changing workforce composition and changing work environment also encouraged the researchers to investigate the role of trust as a factor in attracting and retaining employees.

METHOD

Participants

In total, 1984 employees from 42 companies participated in the survey. Fifty-five percent of respondents had less than four years of service: the majority (75,9%) had been employed for less than 11 years. More than 60% (62,6%) of the population was over the age of 30 with the majority (36,5%) falling between the ages of 31 and 45 years. A quarter of the respondents (24,7%) were from the ranks of middle management, professionals/specialists (26,6%) and general staff (26,2%).

Developing the measuring instrument

Deloitte and Touche, Human Capital Corporation sponsored a project to determine the best companies to work for in South Africa. As this was the first project of this nature in South Africa it was decided to first develop a theoretical model. The theoretical model was used to develop dimensions and statements to compile a questionnaire. In order to differentiate the survey from other similar initiatives it was decided to include both employer and employee perceptions and also external market perceptions in the final analysis. This study focuses only on the validation of the employee questionnaire.

The following steps were used to compile the employee perception questionnaire:

- A project team selected aspects that might have an impact on attracting and retaining employees.
- A theoretical model (Dicks, Smith & Martins, 2001, p. 51) was developed based on work being done in the USA in particular (figure 1).
- Questions were compiled and grouped into dimensions.
- An independent panel of experts from labour and the private sector and academics checked the prepared questionnaire for face validity. Questions and dimensions that did not satisfy the panel were excluded from the questionnaire.

The final questionnaire consists of 101 questions that were grouped into 12 dimensions.

The following dimension were identified:

- diversity
- change
- trust
- management information
- leadership
- rewards and recognition
- policies and procedures
- development and training
- job satisfaction
- change which has occurred
- communication sources

The items (questions) are endorsed in a five point interval scale, the lowest anchor signifying not applicable, the next anchor signifying strongly disagree and the highest strongly agree. The scale ranges from 0 to 4.

Procedure

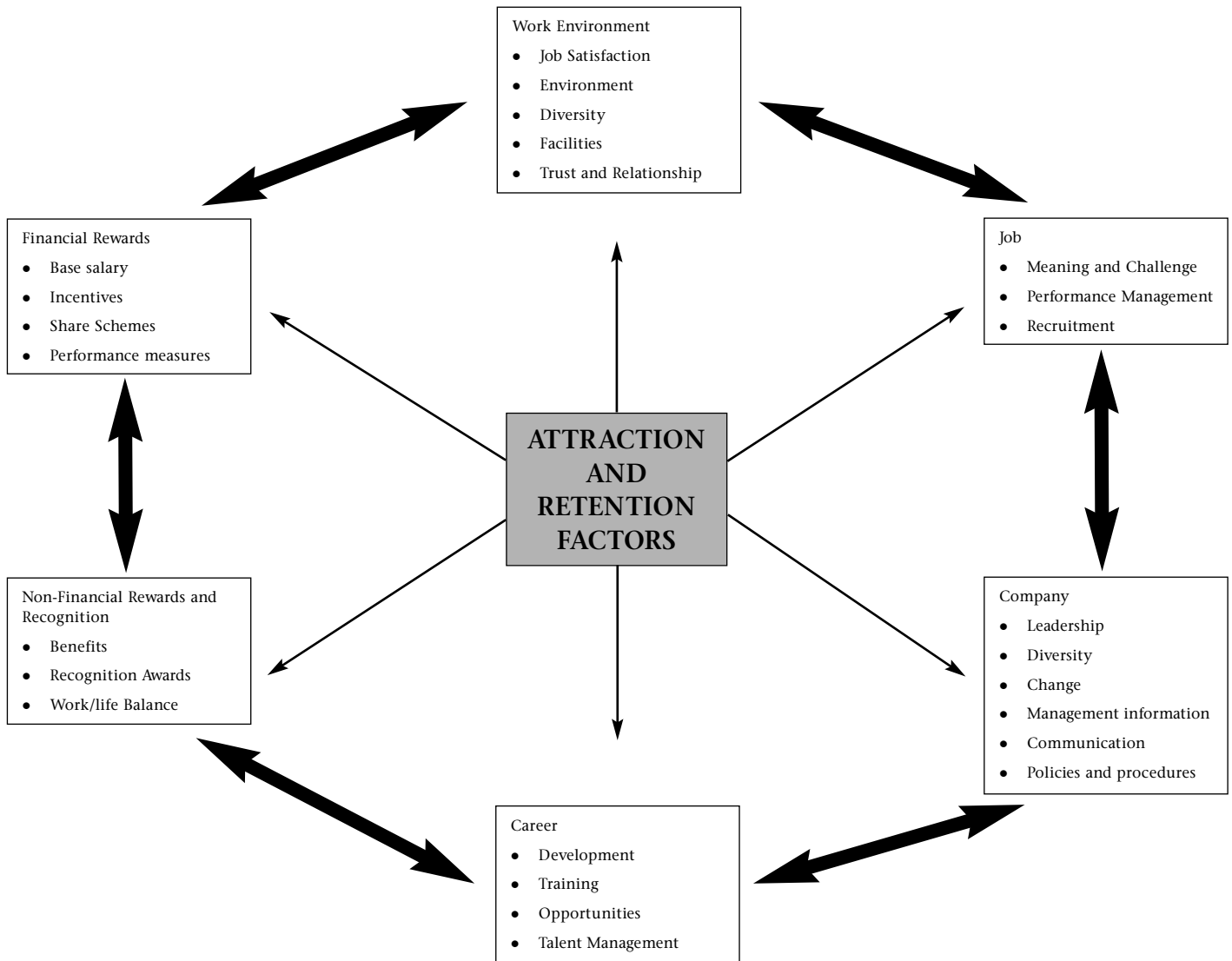
The questionnaire was distributed to interested companies for completion. A covering letter explaining the purpose of the survey was included with the questionnaire. A contact person in each company assisted with the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. The guideline for completion was 50 to 200 randomly selected employees. The respondents were assured that the data would be kept confidential and anonymous.

The overall purpose of this phase was to validate the original theoretical model of attracting and retaining employees (figure 1). The second phase was to determine if there are any correlations between trust and the dimensions of attracting and retaining employees. The business focus was to determine the top companies to work for.

RESULTS

In the organisational literature and commonly in role-based research, factor analysis is frequently used to assess whether instruments measure substantive constructs (Cortina, 1993; Drasgow & Miller, 1982). Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1995) argue that the analyst has perceived thoughts about the actual structure of the data, based on theoretical support or

FIGURE 1: FRAMEWORK FOR BEST COMPANIES TO WORK FOR



prior research. The analyst may test hypothesis involving issues such as which variables should be grouped together in a factor or the precise number of factors.

In these instances, the analyst requires factor analysis to take a confirmatory approach – that is, to assess the degree to which data meets the expected structure of the analyst. With the original factor structure in mind, 10 factors were used as the criteria for the factor analysis. A priori criterion is based on the reasonable criterion of the process applied to construct the theoretically constructed factors. A varimax rotation was used and the 10 extracted factors accounted for 49% of the variance (table 1). The factor loadings of the items within each sub-scale are given in table 2. The items with their factor loadings are reported and are sorted by dimension and strength of factor loading within dimension. Factor loadings greater than 0,30 were considered to meet the researchers minimum level to be included in a factor. In the assessment of how items load on the 10 factors identified with the varimax rotation, factor 1 has one item that does not meet the 0,3 criterion. All the items of factor 2 meet the 0,3 criterion, while two items of factor 3 do not meet the criterion. One item of both factor 4 and 5 do not meet the criterion. Two items from factors 6 and 7 do not meet the 0,3 criterion. All the items of factors 8 and 9 meet the criterion. The results of the factor analysis indicate that 10 items can be excluded from the measuring instrument.

TABLE 1
TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cummulative %	Total	% of variance	Cummulative %
1	29,995	30,607	30,607	8,575	8,750	8,750
2	3,597	3,670	4,277	5,562	5,676	14,426
3	2,599	2,652	36,929	4,114	4,198	18,624
4	2,145	2,189	39,118	4,056	4,139	22,763
5	1,951	1,990	41,108	3,961	4,042	26,804
6	1,865	1,903	43,011	3,960	4,040	30,845
7	1,708	1,743	44,754	3,404	3,473	34,318
8	1,651	1,685	46,439	3,156	3,221	37,538
9	1,464	1,494	47,933	3,122	3,186	40,724
10	1,421	1,450	49,383	2,933	2,993	43,717
11	1,318	1,345	50,728			
12	1,310	1,336	52,064			
13	1,266	1,292	53,356			
14	1,170	1,194	54,550			

Everyday I have the opportunity to do what I am best at.	0,396
I feel negative about my future in the organisation.	0,332
My organisation would appoint someone who is HIV positive.	0,230
I don't have any friends amongst those people with whom I work.	0,136
My organisation recognises and manages the impact of change on employees.	0,680
Change in my organisation is a well-planned process.	0,610
My manager recognises the impact of change on me.	0,494
In my organisation managers do their job to ensure the success of change.	0,454
My organisation assesses managers on managing diversity as part of their performance appraisal.	0,366
Managers in my organisation are trained to act as mentors.	0,315
Timeous and accurate information systems enable employees to act before the time rather than too late.	0,304
White male employees feel threatened by the Employment Equity process in my organisation.	0,202
Recruitment policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,751
Selection policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,739
Job grading policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,498
Promotion policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,427
Terms and conditions of service policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,420
Disciplinary procedures policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,418
Grievance procedures policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,409
My organisation has criteria for selection that are open to all.	0,355
Performance and evaluation systems policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,349
Succession policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,340
HIV/Aids policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,242
Representative Councils	0,734
Forums	0,687
Human Resources Department	0,569
Supervisors	0,476
Managers	0,456
Notice boards	0,344
Memos (internal letters)	0,341
Pamphlets	0,316
Employee meetings	0,285
Internal E-mail	0,229
In my organisation staff feel free to communicate with management.	5,567
In my organisation management asks for and responds to ideas and suggestions.	0,478
A visible trust relationship exists between management and employees.	0,444
I trust top management in my organisation.	0,386
I believe that management will lead the organisation successfully beyond the year 2005.	0,347
In my organisation honest mistakes are seen as a learning experience.	0,333

Employees are informed about what other departments are doing.	0,332
People in this organisation are willing to go the extra mile when needed.	0,331
The people I work with are committed to quality work.	0,322
There is good co-operation between my department and other departments in my organisation.	0,240
The internal system is overloaded with unnecessary paperwork, e-mails, reports, forms and memos.	0,232
My salary package matches the responsibilities I have.	0,809
My salary package is market related.	0,791
The level of my pay package is influenced by my performance.	0,569
My salary and benefits package is structured tax efficiently.	0,395
I am offered training/development to further my skills and abilities.	0,605
Training and development policies and procedures are fair to all in their application.	0,490
In my organisation employees are allowed to decide about their own training and development needs.	4,454
I have the training and skills to do my work well.	0,433
My manager has provided diversity training to me.	0,328
Supervisors in this organisation are well trained.	0,328
People in my organisation are treated fairly regardless of gender.	0,717
People in my organisation are treated fairly regardless of race.	0,624
People in my organisation are treated fairly regardless of age.	0,619
From what I have seen, all employees at the same levels in the organisation receive fair benefits.	0,381
Women are regarded as an asset in my organisation.	0,381
In this organisation promotions go to those who best deserve them.	0,299

A second-order factor analysis was conducted for factor 1. The results and eigenvalues show two factors above the 1,0 eigenvalue (table 3). The scree plot also indicated only two factors. A correlation analysis to determine the correlation between the dimensions of trust and the other dimensions is displayed in table 4. Trust correlates the highest with the dimensions of job satisfaction and leadership.

TABLE 3
SECOND-ORDER FACTOR ANALYSIS OF FACTOR 1

No	Eigenvalues percentage	Individual percentage	Cumulative
1	6,184157	34,36	34,36
2	3,295340	18,31	52,66
3	0,991875	5,51	58,17
4	0,961402	5,34	63,52

Conceptual naming of factors

Conceptual naming of the 10 factors produced the names as displayed in tables 4 and 5. Each factor will be discussed briefly.

Leadership/Trust

In the preliminary model trust and leadership were seen as two separate dimensions. The factor analysis revealed a close relationship between leadership and trust as determined by the results of the second-order factor analysis. This supports researchers such as Charlton (2000), Katzenbach and Smith

(1993) and Martins (2000), who argue that trust influences leadership. Furnham and Gunter (1993) identified trust as one of the eight dimensions of the universe of psychological perceptions.

TABLE 4
CORRELATION MATRIX

Dimensions	Trust
Change occurred	0,493927
Job satisfaction	0,622442
Management of change	0,509762
Policies and procedures	0,510950
Management communication	0,433401
Relationships	0,644282
Rewards and recognition	0,387598
Development and training	0,530231
Diversity	0,512811
Leadership	0,751110

Change occurred

The factor change, postulated in the empirical research, supports the preliminary factor to a large extent. Only one statement was not included in the final factor (table 5). According to Charlton

(2000) the continuing capacity for an organisation to change has an impact on employees' decisions to remain with an organisation.

Job satisfaction

This factor retained eight of the original nine statements. Sparrow (2001) sees job satisfaction as an important part of the psychological contract between the employee and the employer.

Management of change

Only one statement was excluded from the original factor. This factor focuses on the impact of change on individuals and the organisation. Various researchers have included the concept of change in organisational assessments, for instance Dastmalchin, Blyton and Adamson (1991) (in Furnham & Gunter, 1993 and Denison, 2001).

Policies and procedures

The factor analysis identified 10 policies and procedures which are mostly in line with the original factor. Only one statement loaded too low on the item analysis to be included. This factor is not typically included in organisational surveys that focus on climate/culture. However, the number of new Acts that have been implemented in South Africa have forced organisations to update, change and improve their policies and procedures and to align themselves with the latest legislation. These new policies and procedures have an effect on the organisational environment and on internal-external relationships. According to Sparrow et al. (2001), climate instruments tap into the practices and procedures.

Management communication

The original 10 statements were retained after the factor analysis. Communication is seen as one of the important components of most organisational assessments (Furnham & Gunter, 1993).

Relationships

Table 5 shows that this dimension differs from the original theoretical-conceptual factor. The newly formed factor focuses on the relationship between employees and their immediate managers and on the relationships between departments. Kays and De Cottis (1991) (in Furnham & Gunter, 1993, p. 152) summarised the various psychological climate dimensions and found that recognition is labelled by many researchers as the summary dimension for reward-punishment relationships.

Rewards and recognition

The original five statements were maintained after the factor analysis. Rewards and recognition are included in most climate or organisational surveys to determine employees satisfaction/dissatisfaction with rewards and recognition (Furnham & Gunter, 1993).

Development and training

This factor grouped all aspects relating to the development and training of employees together. Six statements were grouped together. The concepts of jobs/skills match, support and empowerment are all seen by researchers as dimensions that relate to the theme of development and training (Charlton, 2000; Kays & De Cottis (in Furnham & Gunter, 1993); Kraut, 1996).

Diversity

Only five of the original 11 statements were retained. One statement was excluded due to a low loading on the item analysis. The theme of diversity was not included in most original organisational assessments. But in view of the changing South African environment it is now included.

Earlier diagnostic surveys focused on dimensions such as fairness and diversity assessment (Furnham & Gunter, 1993; Kraut, 1996).

Item and reliability analysis

Table 6 shows the Cronbach's Alpha for the 10 dimensions. The alpha coefficients portray highly satisfactory results with coefficients ranging between 0,7961 and 0,9320. All factors except factor 1 are below 0,8 which can be regarded as good (very reliable).

TABLE 5
QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF FACTORS

Items after factor and item analysis	Old dimension(s)	New dimension(s) after factor analysis and item analysis	Results of second order factor analysis
Factor 1 21,20,48,51,34,35,31,5,33,67,47,37,22,46,32,19,50,69,[45]	Trust (3), relationship (5), leadership (5), development and training (2), rewards and recognition (1), diversity (1) and change (1)	Leadership/trust (18)	Sub Factor 1: Leadership 67,33,31,34,35,5,48,69,37,32,7,19 Sub Factor 2: Trust 50,46,22,20,21,51
Factor 2 79,80,81,82,83,84,85,86,87,88,89,90,[91]	Change occurred (13)	Change occurred (12)	
Factor 3 70,71,72,73,74,75,76,77,78,[42]	Job satisfaction (9) and relationships (1)	Job satisfaction (8)	
Factor 4 17,16,18,15,6,68,30,[14]	Change (4), diversity (2), management information (1), development and training (1)	Management of change (7)	
Factor 5 52,53,54,55,56,57,59,60,61,[62],4	Policies and procedures (10), diversity (1)	Policies and procedures (10)	
Factor 6 92,93,94,95,96,97,98,99,100,101	Management communication (10)	Management communication (10)	
Factor 7 27,26,24,23,36,44,28,43,25,49,[29]	Trust (3), management information (4), leadership (1), relationships (3)	Relationships (10)	
Factor 8 38,39,40,41	Rewards and recognition (4)	Rewards and recognition (4)	
Factor 9 64,58,63,65,66,7	Development and training (4), policies and procedures (1) and diversity (1)	Development and training (6)	
Factor 10 12,11,10,9,[8],13	Diversity (11)	Diversity (5)	

Notes:

- [] refer to items that loaded low on the item analysis
- Brackets () refer to the number of items per dimension

TABLE 6
RESULTS OF THE ITEM ANALYSIS

Factors	All Items		Only items that correlate	
	No of Questions	Cronbach's alpha	No of Questions	Cronbach's alpha
1	19	0,9304	18	0,9320
2	13	0,9043	12	0,9095
3	10	0,8491	8	0,8637
4	8	0,8163	7	0,8319
5	11	0,9180	10	0,9185
6	10	0,8361	10	0,8361
7	11	0,8741	10	0,8851
8	4	0,8394	4	0,8394
9	6	0,7961	6	0,7961
10	6	0,8727	5	0,8743

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in the present study supported most of the theoretically constructed dimensions. The confirmatory factor analysis resulted in 10 dimensions that were, however, grouped somewhat differently. The main changes in the grouping of the items occurred for factors 1 and 7.

The grouping of the remaining eight dimensions generally corresponded with the original theoretically constructed dimensions. The factors yielded reliabilities ranging from 0,796 to 0,932. The 10 dimensions that emerged were identified as dimension 1: leadership/trust, dimension 2: change occurred, dimension 3: job satisfaction, dimension 4: management of change, dimension 5: policies and procedures, dimension 6: management communication, dimension 7: relationships, dimension 8: rewards and recognition, dimension 9: development and training and dimension 10: diversity.

It is clear from the second order factor analysis that was done on the first factor, that there are two second-order factors underlying factor 1, namely leadership and trust. Both these second-order factors loaded positively on the scree plot and the eigenvalues are above 1. The second-order factor of trust focuses mainly on aspects such as manager/subordinate trust relationships, departmental/sectional trust relationships, departmental motivation, respect and care. This supports some of the components of trust as identified by other researchers working on the concept and characteristics of trust (Charlton, 2000; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; McKnight & Webster, 2001).

A correlation analysis between trust and the other dimensions indicates high relationships between job satisfaction, relationships and leadership. The present study thus generally confirms research which indicates that trust is created by leadership which influences relationships and job satisfaction.

As far as the theoretical model is concerned, it was found that all the factors do not correlate equally and that there is a stronger focus on some dimensions (leadership, change occurred, policies and procedures, management communication and relationships) than on others (rewards and recognition, diversity and development and training). The

implication of this is that the original framework (figure 1) needs to be adapted to the present research. Structural equation modelling could be considered to confirm and/or create a new model.

In conclusion, the present study opens up new research possibilities, for instance understanding the criteria that influence an individual's attraction to an organisation and how to retain talent. The present study emphasises the importance of leadership in attracting and retaining talent. The concept of trust needs to be expanded to include more items that focus on aspects such as loyalty, integrity, congruence between individual and organisational values and the role of organisational culture in retaining and attracting talented people.

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