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INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

- This is a closed book exam. No notes and/or books are permissible in this exam
- This paper consist of two pages with one question (QUESTION 1) and two sub questions (QUESTION 1.1 & QUESTION 1.2): Follow the instructions as specified in the respective question
- Proposal 1, proposal 2, and proposal 3 are provided in a separate exam booklet. ENSURE THAT YOU RECEIVE AN EXAM BOOKLET WITH THREE PROSALS THEREIN
- Read the questions carefully and answer only what is asked
- **Number your answers clearly**
- Write neat and legibly
- Structure your answers by using the rubric: Refer to the number within the rubric when providing critique for that specific section
- The general University of Johannesburg policies, procedures and rules pertaining to written assessments apply to this assessments
- When referring to text within the proposal, provide the page number, together with the line number (as indicated within each proposal):
  e.g. pg 3, line 20
- You are expected to write a critical reflection on the topic provided
- No marks are allocated for scoring the rubric

1

MODULE: HONOURS IN INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY

QUESTION 1:

In a global workplace report, South Africa was amongst the countries that had one of the lowest levels of work engagement (Gallup, 2013). As compared to the five major emerging economies group BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), South Africa had the highest percentage of actively disengaged employees (Gallup, 2013). One of the proven positive behavioural outcomes of an engaged employee, is that they are productive (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). Therefore, understanding predictors that promote work engagement, could contribute towards diminishing active disengagement, thereby improving productivity. A possible predictor that was identified, is psychological availability.

Three research proposals are provided that address the topic of psychological availability. Critically review EACH proposal by addressing the following:

1.1 Utilise the rubric provided, and provide a critical reflection for proposal 1, proposal 2, and proposal 3.

The rubric is to be used as a guideline when critically reviewing each proposal. **No marks** will be given for scoring the rubric

1.1.1 Proposal 1
    Section: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8   (25)
    Section: 5, 10, 11, 12   (5)

1.1.2 Proposal 2
    Section: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8   (25)
    Section: 5, 10, 11, 12   (5)

1.1.3 Proposal 3
    Section: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8   (25)
    Section: 5, 10, 11, 12   (5)

1.2 Identify and justify which ONE of the proposals has addressed the topic of psychological availability the best.   (10)

[100]

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RUBRIC

#	Low	1	2	3	4	5	6	High	
1.	Does not clearly state the thesis	1	2	3	4	5	6	Clearly states the thesis	
2.	Explains difficult terms, concepts, facts and/or ideas poorly	1	2	3	4	5	6	Explains difficult terms, concepts, facts or/and ideas clearly	
3.	Doesn't break down the issue into parts for detailed analysis	1	2	3	4	5	6	Properly breaks down the issue into parts for detailed analysis	
4.	Does not support arguments	1	2	3	4	5	6	Supports arguments well	
5.	Does not use reliable literature	1	2	3	4	5	6	Uses only reliable literature	
6.	Has not organised ideas and/or information coherently	1	2	3	4	5	6	Has organised ideas and/or information coherently	
7.	Integrates other people's ideas poorly	1	2	3	4	5	6	Integrates other people's ideas accurately	
8.	Does not demonstrate a clear stand on the issue	1	2	3	4	5	6	Demonstrates a clear stand on the issue	
10.	Has not used the appropriate academic writing style	1	2	3	4	5	6	Has used the appropriate academic writing style	
11.	Does not cite the literature accurately	1	2	3	4	5	6	Cites the literature accurately	
12.	Makes many grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Writing is free from grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors	

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2

<div align="center">**PROPOSAL 1**</div>

3

Psychological Availability on Work Engagement:

4

Exploring the gender differences.

5

6 **Key Words:**

7 • Psychological Availability

8 • Work Engagement

9 • Gender Differences

10 • Organisational Psychology

11 • South African Organisations

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48   workplace to be hostile and therefor they engage less by resigning from their jobs (Stokes,

49   Riger & Sullivan, 1995). . Based on these findings, it is assumed that men are more engaged

50   than women at work.

51   Psychological Availability, Work Engagement and Gender are different but highly

52   related constructs. However after defining and analysing each construct, it is found that

53   Psychological Availability has an influence on work engagement. Furthermore, work

54   engagement is found to be different between genders. Thus a gap in research is found as to

55   what influence gender has on PA. Hence, the study will focus on the levels of PA in both men

56   and women at work.

57   1.1 **Psychological Availability**

58   Multiple definitions of Psychological Availability exist. Each definition is based on

59   Khan's (1990) definition, which proposes that in order for the individual to be engaged at work,

60   they require certain physical, psychological and emotional resources. In essence, it assesses

61   how willing employees believe they are to engage in the organization. An example of such a

62   definition is that of May, Gilson and Harter (2004). They believe that PA "assesses the

63   readiness, or confidence of a person, to engage in his or her work role given that individuals

64   are engaged in many other life activities." (p. 17-18). Furthermore, Crawford et.al (2014), as

65   cited in Rothman and Bauman (2014), believe that PA individuals have no difficulty in putting

66   their resources into their specific jobs. However, those who are not psychologically available,

67   find it difficult to invest their efforts in their roles and functions at work.

68   However, PA does not exist independently; instead multiple influencing factors play an

69   important role in its existence. These include cognitive, emotional and physical resources as

70   well as work-role security and outside activities (May, Gilson & Harter, (2004). With regard to

71   physical resources, aspects such as strength and stamina physically enable the individual to

72   effectively complete the tasks without injury. Secondly, emotional resources enable the

73   individual to be psychologically resilient, allowing them sustainability in emotional times of

100   work being done is significant and something to be proud of (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003).
101   Lastly, absorption, as defined by Schaufeli and Bakker, (2003), is the act of getting lost in
102   ones work, at ease and happy when doing such work and thus struggles to stop working.

103   Therefore, work engaged employees are eager to take on more jobs, and possess a
104   mind-set that the job is not just about completing the tasks at hand, but rather about the
105   improvement of oneself and maintaining an internal locus of control (Macey & Schneider,
106   2008; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Schaufeli & Bakker, in press, as cited in Bakker, Schaufeli,
107   Leiter & Taris, 2008). Additionally, Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter and Taris (2008) found a reduced
108   likelihood of experiencing burnout due to the fact that when one is engaged, one feels more
109   willing to work out of their own rather than feeling forced to complete the job requirements.

110   Organizations seek individuals who are engaged in their work because they show
111   resourcefulness and act responsibly, a quality sought after. Additionally, these employees
112   strive to maintain and achieve the high quality standards set by the organization (Bakker &
113   Schaufeli, 2008), and tend to stay in the organisation much longer (Kahumaza and Schleter,
114   2008, as cited in Villers and Standers, 2011).

115   Furthermore organizations can identify these employees or individuals by looking at
116   their personal resources as well as providing them with job resources they may require
117   (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008). Personal resources include seeing oneself in a
118   positive light, possessing a sense of perseverance and lastly having the ability to influence
119   ones environment (Hobfoll, Johnson, Ennis, & Jackson, 2003 as cited in Bakker, Schaufeli,
120   Leiter & Taris, 2008). While job resources are the aspects of a job that encourage learning
121   and development, aids the attainment of organizational goals and objectives as well as
122   minimizing physiological and psychological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli &
123   Bakker, 2004 as cited in Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008).

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152   study done by Rothmann, Kirsten and Wissing (2003) shows that women are generally

153   expected to have the need or constant desire to nurture and emotionally express them. The

154   reason for such expectation is due to the fact that women display signs of weakness and 'play

155   dumb' (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007).

156   Adding to the differences between genders, women are more emotional beings than

157   men, and when they get into an argument, they unknowingly express a hatred and

158   unwillingness towards their job, which gets wrongly interpreted as a lack of commitment

159   (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007). This explains why women are thought to be less engaged at

160   work than men. These actions contribute to the above-mentioned statement that women are

161   less engaged at work than men. On the other hand, men tend to keep their emotions to

162   themselves (Rothmann, Kirsten & Wissing, 2003). They find pleasure in doing favours for

163   others, but with the expectation of getting something in return. Moreover men are more

164   optimistic when the social mood is negative (Chang, Tsai & Lee, 2010), indicating that they

165   will have a positive view of their work, and therefore have a strong will to work. Again

166   contributing to the statement that men are more engaged than women.

167   Because men are said to be more engaged at work than women, and to be PA one

168   needs to be engaged at work, and the effect gender has on PA is unknown, the current study

169   will assess the relationship between gender and PA at work. Based on this, the question of

170   are men more PA than women, or are women more PA than men will be answered though

171   this study.

172

173 2. Research Objective

174   The general objective of this research is to study the impact of gender on psychological

175   availability. This study will be conducted in order to determine which gender is more

176   productive, involved, possesses more flow, is more mindful and intrinsically motivated (Khan,

177   1990).

204   using standardized approaches (Meadows, 2003). Furthermore, it is recommended because
205   it allows the measurement of objectives, it requires self-completion saving time as opposed to
206   doing a face-to-face interview and it taps into sensitive data without offending the participant
207   (Meadows, 2003).

208   Lastly, a cross-sectional design will be utilized. Olsen and George (2004) explains that
209   cross-sectional designs assist in collecting information from various people, across various
210   companies, in various positions, of different ages, genders and races but keeping time
211   constant and specific.

212

213   **4. Research Design**
214   This section will discuss the details of the study to answer the research questions. Such
215   details include who will be include in the study, what kind of assessments will be used to
216   assess them and lastly the techniques that will be used to analyse their responses.

217

218   **4.1. Study Population**

219   The data for this study will be obtained from more or less 700 participants, and from
220   companies or working environments in the Gauteng region. The focus will mainly be on adults
221   between the ages of twenty-five (25) and fifty (50) years. This age group will be chosen
222   because the professional working population of South Africa falls within this bracket (Statistics
223   South Africa, 2015). More specifically, participants with a minimum of two (2) years working
224   experience will be chosen. Reasoning behind the two (2) years' experience is that such
225   employees will have the required experience in the working world, enabling them to relate
226   better to the survey questions. Finally, participants will be required to have at least completed
227   Grade twelve (12) and have a decent level of English comprehension as the questionnaire will
228   be in English.

229

258. used. (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004). Based on Khan's discussion in his 1990 article, the
259. Cronbach's alpha was tested and successfully passed, proving this scale to be valid (May,
260. Gilson & Harter, 2004).

261.

262. **4.3. Procedure**

263. The purpose of the survey will be clearly communicated to each participant. Before any
264. surveys will be issued, permission from the relevant organizations will be requested.
265. Thereafter, the surveys will be taken to two companies where participants will be asked to
266. complete them.

267. Participants will in addition be asked to complete a consent form. The environment in
268. which participants will be completing these questionnaires will be kept as distraction free as
269. possible.

270. The surveys will require completion via pen and paper.

271.

272. **4.4. Statistical Analysis**

273. When trying to answer the research question, the SPSS program will be used. It will
274. help determine the descriptive statistics, Pearson's Movement Correlation, to analysis the
275. Regression and to conduct T-tests as well as an ANOVA.

276. Furthermore, in this study two statistical analyses will be conducted: descriptive statistics and
277. Inferential Statistics. Descriptive statistics are those that summarise the data and provide a
278. description of it using the sample or the population (Frank & Althoen, 2003). Inferential
279. statistics, on the other hand, uses the sample and tries to make inferences about the
280. population (Frank and Althoen, 2003). With regards to the current study, Pearson's
281. correlation, the regression analysis, the t-test as well as the analysis of variance will all be
282. used as inferential statistics.

311 of the purpose of the study. Thereafter, the consequences of not participating in the study
312 should be clearly explained.

313 The results of the survey will be stored with restricted access at a safe location to
314 protect the participants' personal information. Additionally, no identifying information of the
315 participant will be shared with the public.

316 The questionnaires and surveys will be transported in sealed envelopes and stored in a
317 safe with restricted access to the key. Once the questionnaires are summaries, this data will
318 be stored on a personal computer where, once again, only authorised persons will be able to
319 access it.

320 This survey, the results and the analysis hereof will not be manipulated in any way,
321 which includes deception, unfairness and biasness. To emphasise this point, no participant
322 will be discriminated against in any way, shape or form. Lastly, participants will be given the
323 option to withdraw from the process at any given time if they disagree with any aspect related
324 to the survey.

325 **6. Practical Contribution**

326 The results from this research can benefit the field of Industrial Psychology by providing
327 theories relating to psychological availability. Furthermore, it can also benefit the field by
328 knowing which gender is more psychologically available thus more productive, motivated and
329 involved. Having knowledge of this allows an organization to exert more efforts on the gender
330 that is less psychologically available, allowing both genders to be equally motivated,
331 productive, involved as well as committed. Lastly, by using designs such as surveys,
332 feedback on the surveys can contribute to the development of new ways of asking questions
333 and completing it.

334

357   May, D. R., Gilson, R. L., & Harter, L. M. (2004). The psychological conditions of
358   meaningfulness, safety and availability and the engagement of the human spirit at
359   work. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 77*(1), 11-37.

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363   current conceptualizations, and implications. *Sex Roles, 64*(11), 791-803.

364   Olsen, C., & St. George, D. M. M. (2004). *Cross-Sectional Study Design and Data Analysis.*
365   Retrieved from the Collegeboard website:
366   http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/yes/4297_MODULE_05.pdf

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368   *for Windows (12th ed.).* Sydney, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

369   Roothman, B., Kirsten, D. K., & Wissing, M. P. (2003). Gender differences in aspects of
370   psychological well-being. *South African Journal of Psychology, 33*(4), 212-218.

371   Rothmann, S., & Baumann, C. (2014). Employee engagement: The effects of work-
372   home/home-work interaction and psychological conditions. *South African Journal of*
373   *Economic and Management Sciences / Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif Vir Ekonomiese En*
374   *Bestuurswetenskappe, 17*(4), 515-530.

375   Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2003). *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale. Preliminary*
376   *Manual.* Netherlands: Utrecht University.

377   Schaufeli, W. B., Bakker, A. B., & Salanova, M. (2006). The measurement of work
378   engagement with a short questionnaire. *Journal of Educational and Psychological*
379   *Measurement, 66*(4), 701-716.

409 In order to have a productive organization, considering an engaged workplace has
410 recently been seen to be a struggle for South African organisations. In relation to the
411 Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, issued in terms of section 25(1) so many individuals
412 have found comfort in that there is an Act that addresses their work fulfillment needs and
413 this may positively or negatively affect organisation. South African organisations find it
414 hard to adhere to government regulations of multi-racial structured organisations while
415 maintaining their competiveness (Patel, 2014). The survival of every organisation
416 depends on how employees connect with their jobs, their effort put into client
417 satisfaction, how well they work towards the production of quality goods and services,
418 their creative abilities and organizational accountability through their engagement in the
419 workplace (Fay & Luhrmann 2004; Newell 2002).

420 In the topic of work engagement it is important to consider racial identification, which is
421 the level to which an individual's self-concept is defined by their membership in a certain
422 racial or ethnic group (McKay et.al,. 2007.) Strong racial identification causes
423 individuals to protect their identity by embracing scenarios that affirm their identity
424 (Singh, Winkel & Selvarajan, 2013). It is important to note that racial (and ethnic)
425 identity do matter, and are important factors for people in the workplace (Plaut, Thomas
426 & Hebl, 2014).

427

428 In order to keep up with the development of employees in terms of their engagement
429 levels in an organisation, it is important that the study of psychology in the workplace
430 moves from the investigation of mental illness and treatment of psychopathology to more
431 positive investigations of mental wellness and fulfillment (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi,
432 2000; Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris 2008). The time has come for a change in
433 perspective and to put more focus in the exploration of the positive sides in order to
434 achieve maximum understanding of the meaningful effects of work (Turner, Barling and
435 Zacharatos, 2002).

17

461 <u>Work engagement</u>

462 Work engagement has been defined by Schaufeli, et.al.,(2002) as a state of mind that is

463 not only positive, but fulfilling as well, which is factored around three components:

464 vigor, absorption, and dedication. Schaufeli, et.al.,(2002) defines the three concepts in

465 Korunka et.al.,(2009) in the following manner: Vigor, as heightened levels of energy,

466 showed by an individual's willingness to invest not just effort, but also time into their

467 work, also showing persistence in difficulties. Absorption is an employee's total

468 immersion in their work, oftentimes losing track of time, and being unable to detach

469 oneself from the work. Dedication would be characterized by a strong involvement in

470 one's work. A high level of energy and an identification of a person with their work is

471 said to be characteristic of work engagement (Bakker, et. al., 2008). The definition stated

472 by Yalabik, Popaitoon, Chowne and Rayton (2013) breaks down the above mentioned

473 work engagement definition into factors that are a part of a worker's everyday life, they

474 defined work engagement as an independent, persistent, positive and fulfilling work-

475 related concept which is cognitive-affective and a motivational-psychological state. In a

476 general sense, employees who are happy and comfortable in their line of work tend to be

477 loyal to the organisation. It is thus a clear fact that employee retention is linked to job

478 satisfaction which is a part of the definition of work engagement and arousal of employee

479 engagement. Perrin (2003) believes that no level of engagement in the workplace

480 guarantees that an employer will stay with the firm, but it does increase the probability of

481 retaining loyal individual employees that may be willing to stay with the organisation

482 (Patel, 2014).

483 Previous studies have tackled the construct of work engagement in comparison with

484 burnout (*cf.* Bakker, Demerouti, Karina, 2010; Bakker, Doornen, Langelaan, Schaufeli,

485 2006; Bakker, Leiter, Schaufeli & Taris, 2008). Work engagement has also been

486 investigated with regards to workaholism (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter & Taris, 2008).

487 Bakker et.al (2008) emphasized that it is important to note that workaholism and work

514 ....career growth. An organisation that makes an effort to institute an environment that is calculated to

515 produce career development can be able to increase levels of work engagement (Schreuder, 2010)

516 ## The measurement of work engagement

517 Bakker et.al., (2008) states that there have been several instruments that were developed to

518 measure work engagement, these instruments include the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI), the

519 Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which measures the three aspects of burnout against the three

520 aspects of work engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). However, the most widely validated scale, is

521 the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) which includes the assessment of the three components

522 of work engagement: vigor, dedication, absorption as stipulated by Schaufeli et.al., (2001). Having

523 been validated in a number of countries (, the UWES is the scale that is more appropriate to use when

524 measuring work engagement as it is used in cross-cultural studies. (Rathbone, 2006).

525 ## Race groups

526 The definition of race according to the United States has significantly evolved over the past century

527 (Lowe, 2009). In the 1800, race was generally understood to define an individual's ancestry/ethnic

528 background, in the recent decades, it has been widely used to refer to any one of the four to five

529 categories of mankind. Under the biological race theory, categories of race were based solely on skin

530 colour, facial features, and other externally visible traits. (Lowe, 2009). In the Apartheid South

531 Africa, all South Africans had to be classified into one of three racial categories in accordance to the

532 1950 Population Registration Act. The categories were White, Black and Coloured. (Seekings, 2008).

533 Later on, in the 1970s, a new racial category was introduced, which was the Indian category. (Seekings,

534 2008) Post-Apartheid South Africa still sees people of different racial groups using the Apartheid

535 categorization to define themselves in terms of race. (Seekings, 2008). To date, the number of dominant

536 racial categories has increased to five categories: Black, White, Coloured, Indian, and Asian (Census,

537 2011).

564   that an individual's perception of symbolic interactionism will be influenced by that individual's racial

565   identification (Singh & Winkel, 2012). In their study on racial differences and workplace behavior,

566   Singh and Winkel concluded that race moderates the relationship between a positive relational climate

567   and workplace behavior.

568   Many academic papers on the construct of work engagement have been written, and a fair number of

569   papers on race, are also available, however, articles on the relationship of work engagement and race

570   are not as prevalent as one would expect them to be. This literature review has discussed the definitions

571   of the two constructs, work engagement and race. Furthermore constructs that are related to work

572   engagement, such as employee engagement, are also clearly defined and differentiated from the

573   construct of work engagement.

574

575   **2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

576

577   The research objectives of this study consist of a general objective and specific objective.

578

579   **2.1. General Objectives**

580   The general purpose of this research project is to evaluate the prevalence of work engagement, based on

581   an individual's race and to investigate the extent to which work engagement is influenced by race, a

582   factor other than job satisfaction.

583

584   **2.2. Specific Objectives**

585

586   The specific Objectives of this study are 1) to investigate the relationship between race and work

587   engagement as well as 2) to determine whether race has an impact on work engagement.

588

589

590

618 **3.3 Measuring Battery**

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620 The following measuring instruments will be used in this study:

621

622 In measuring the two constructs, the following test battery will be used: To measure Work

623 Engagement: the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) will be used. To determine the racial group

624 a participant belongs to, a Biographical questionnaire will be issued to the participants.

625 The UWES, which was developed by Schaufeli et.al, is a measuring tool that consists of a number of

626 questions, used to measure the level of work engagement of an individual. The UWES-9 measure will

627 be used in this study. This measure will consist of 9 items, in which three will measure *vigor* ("I am

628 filled with energy when I am at work"), another 3 will measure *dedication* ("I am inspired by my job"),

629 and the remnant will measure *absorption* ("I always lose track of time when I am doing my work")

630 (Rothmann, 2010) The UWES-9 will be used because it measures one of the constructs in the study,

631 Work Engagement. The biographical questionnaire will be used to gather information regarding the

632 race of the participants.

633

634 **3.4 Procedure**

635

636 The different organisations whose employees will be taking part in the study will be approached via e-

637 mail informing them of the research study and what it will entail. The participants will, thereafter, be

638 approached via e-mail, informing them of the study and the purpose of the study. They will be informed

639 of the questionnaires that they will be expected to complete. The collection of the data will take place

640 over one week. Considering the busy schedules that some of the participants may be subjected to, they

641 will be requested for an appointment, in which the questionnaires will be administered to them.

642 The questionnaires conducted will be pen and paper questionnaires, no online questionnaires will be

643 administered.

671   **4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

672

673   There are ethical considerations for this research study:

674

675   The participants will need to be given sufficient information and therefore be able to give *informed*

676   *consent* to participate in the research study.

677   Voluntary participation: The participants will need to participate in the study *voluntarily*, and therefore

678   giving the participant autonomy, this means that they may withdraw from the study anytime they may

679   wish to do so. (Wilson, S., & MacLean, 2011, p. 603).

680   Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality: Participants will be assured that their privacy will be protected,

681   their data will be kept confidential and only made available to the relevant parties (Wilson, S., &

682   MacLean, 2011, p. 600; Balnaves, M., & Caputi, P. 2001, p. 242)

683   It is important to ensure that the questions are in no way discriminative, prejudiced, or assume a certain

684   stereotype.

685   If notes or any other form of recording will be made, participants will be made aware before the

686   sessions begin. (Balnaves, M., &Caputi, P. 2001, p. 241)

687

688   **5. VALUE-ADD OF THE STUDY**

689

690   Theoretical contributions: This research study will give an insightful view on the impact that racial

691   identity has on an individual. Considering the history of South Africa, there a significant amount of

692   knowledge to be gained from such this study, which will contribute to the literature about Work

693   engagement and race that is already available

694   Practical contributions: The contributions that this study could make in the workplace are rather

695   invaluable, in that the study will assist Organisational Development specialist with guidelines, and

696   possible solutions to work engagement issues.

697   Contribution to research methodology: This study will contribute to the improving of research methods

698   used.

735
736

PROPOSAL 3

737 **TITLE: THE IMPACT OF SEX ROLES ON PSYCHOLOGICAL AVAILABILITY**

738

739 **1. INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

740   Psychological availability can contribute to how people engage at work. Sex roles separately
741 focuses on ways of socialisation that culminate in individuals displaying more masculine, feminine
742 and/or androgynous characteristics. Following a thorough search for literature surrounding
743 psychological availability (Kahn, 1990; May, Gilson and Harter, 2004; Olivier and Rothman, 2007) and
744 sex roles (Bem, 1974; Bem & Lenney, 1976), no research could be found to directly link these
745 constructs in the workplace. The rationale for such a link is that the feminine sex role is described as
746 nurturing and caring (Cheng, 1999; Erikson, 1964; Tong, 1989) whereas masculinity represents
747 independence, forcefulness and dominance (Hoffman & Borders, 2001). In addition, Hoffman and
748 Borders (2001) indicate that traditionally feminine sex roles are associated with women, whereas
749 masculine sex roles are associated with men.

750   Individuals that are more nurturing are more inclined to have a greater number of care
751 responsibilities both inside and outside of the formal organisation. May et al., (2004) report that
752 psychological availability is negatively related to participation in activities outside the organisation.
753 Therefore, those individuals that enact the feminine sex role, may be less psychologically available at
754 work. Conversely those that enact a masculine sex role maybe more psychologically available as their
755 care activities outside the organisation are more limited than those of women.

756   In order to be psychologically available at work, individuals have to make use of physical,
757 emotional, and psychological resources to express themselves at work (Binyamin & Carmeli, 2010;
758 Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004; Olivier & Rothman, 2007; Vinarski-Peretz, Binyamin, & Carmeli, 2011).
759 Psychological availability refers to the capability that individuals might have to personally engage in
760 their work at a certain moment by making use of physical, emotional, and psychological resources

789 Every culture emphasises roles and behaviours that are linked to expectations about men and women

790 respectively. Such cultures may be influenced by socioeconomic status and/or education. If gender role

791 identity is culturally and socially constructed, then the sex of a person is determined biologically

792 (Woodhill & Samuels, 2003). Gender is defined as something that has to do with socialized patterns of

793 behaving, whereas sex is defined as the biological differences that exist between men and women

794 (Weiten, 1997; Holt & Ellis, 1998; Woodhill & Samuels, 2003).

795 Both men and women respectively could have features of both masculinity and femininity. In an

796 organisational setting, masculinity has been associated with a cognitive focus on 'getting the job done',

797 an instrumental orientation; and femininity has been associated with an affective concern for the

798 welfare of others, an expressive orientation (Bem, 1974, Bem, 1975). Research stated that individuals

799 might be androgynous; that is, they might have both elements of assertiveness and yielding, both

800 masculine and feminine, be both instrumental and expressive, depending on the context in which they

801 operate (Anderson, 1986; Bem, 1974; Bem 1975; Hogan; 1977; Marsh & Myers, 1986; Woodhill &

802 Samuels, 2003; Ward, 2000). Additionally, Pearson and Cooks (1995) stated that in most cases,

803 individuals are masculine or feminine, however, some individuals are masculine as well as feminine.

804 Against this background, the aim of this research is to identify if masculine, feminine, and

805 androgynous roles that men and women respectively display has an impact on the level of

806 psychological availability they have at work. Further, this study will aim to determine how sex (man

807 and woman) affects the relationship between sex roles and psychological availability. The research

808 proposal begins with a discussion of the different types of sex roles (masculinity, femininity and

809 androgyny) that individuals display in organisations. Sex Role Theory will be used to provide some

810 clarity with regards to sex role differences. A brief discussion of the difference between sex and gender

811 will be provided. Thereafter, psychological conditions will be discussed specifically the dimension of

812 psychological availability.

813 This study therefore provides the possibility that it may be that being more feminine in your

814 behaviour may distract people from being psychologically available in their work roles. Hoffman and

815 Borders (2001) provides a framework where traditionally women are more feminine, which then leads

816 to them taking up more of a caregiving roles outside of work thus being less available at work. In

845   important because it enables researchers to conceptually separate the social aspects of gender from the

846   biology of sex (Crawford, 2006). Furthermore, it is important to distinguish sex from gender in order to

847   realise that the displayed differences between men and women might be societally imposed rather than

848   natural or inheritable (Muehlehard & Peterson, 2011).

849   According to Bem and Lenney (1976), people favouring the androgynous trait or style are the

850   ideal sex role types for contemporary society as they are able to incorporate both masculinity and

851   femininity into their personality. Additionally, Woodhill and Samuels (2003) stated that androgyny is a

852   balanced identity that combines the virtues of both genders. Furthermore, Bem and Lenney (1976)

853   stated that such individuals would have the psychological freedom to engage in any behavior as they

854   deem appropriate at a particular moment because such individuals will have no need to limit themselves

855   based on those traditional societal definitions of what is 'sex appropriate'.

856   Sex-typed individuals fail in being androgynous because they do not have sufficient skills to act

857   out both masculine and feminine roles or it simply does not occur to them. Perhaps they would engage

858   in such behaviors if they were given the opportunities that encourage such behaviours (Bem, 1974).

859   Bem and Lenney (1976) stated that individuals with sex-typed features find it motivationally

860   problematic to engage in androgynous behaviour and as a result, they will avoid it. Individuals avoiding

861   androgynous behaviours might be a result of wanting to adhere to the stereotypes of being masculine or

862   feminine. Sex type plays an essential role in these stereotypes. Some non-adaptive behaviour in men

863   and women have manifested due to these traditional stereotypes - such as typical notions of women not

864   being capable of being assertive and resourceful, and men not being capable of compassion or being

865   vulnerable (Woodhill & Samuels, 2003).

866   Although numerous studies state the positive outcomes of being androgynous (Bem 1975;

867   Cheng, 1999; Green and Kendrick, 1994; Rose and Montemayor, 1994; Sawrie, Watson, and Biderman,

868   1991; Wubbenhorst, 1994), there are also numerous studies that point to some negative outcomes of

869   being androgynous (Marsh & Myers, 1986; Ricciardelli & Williams, 1995; Russell & Antill, 1984;

870   Woodhill & Samuels 2003). Additionally, androgynous individuals can possess a balance of

871   negative/positive feminine and negative/positive masculine traits which in combination can create an

872   undesirable androgynous gender identity (Marsh & Myers, 1986).

2.2.1 Psychological availability

901

902 Kahn (1990) stated that psychological conditions, such as those discussed above, shape how

903 individuals perform their work roles. In addition, the psychological condition termed psychological

904 availability, refers to the capability that individuals might have to personally engage in their work at a

905 certain moment by making use of physical, emotional, and psychological resources provided (Binyamin

906 & Carmeli, 2010; Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004; Olivier & Rothman, 2007; Vinarski-Peretz et al.,

907 2011). There is a general link between personal engagement and psychological availability (Kahn,

908 1990; May et al., 2004; Rothman & Baumann, 2014; Rothman & Welsh, 2013).

909 All individuals have the resources (physical, emotional, and cognitive resources) to perform

910 their tasks at work (Olivier & Rothman, 2007). However, some jobs are more physically, emotionally

911 and cognitively challenging than others. An example is given by Hollenbeck, Ilgen and Crampton

912 (1992) that sitting at a desk might require more physical resources because it can put strain on the back.

913 Where individuals lack some of these resources, it might cause them to be disengaged in their roles at

914 work. Some jobs might require much more emotional labour than others (Sutton, 1991). Kahn (1990)

915 suggested three distractions that might influence psychological availability: Resources, Insecurity and

916 Outside lives (commitments outside of the organisation).

917 **Resources.** Physical, emotional, and cognitive resources are brought by individuals to

918 organisations to enable them to perform their work role tasks. Some jobs have demands of individuals'

919 physical energy. Olivier and Rothman (2007) emphasized that the levels of stamina, flexibility and

920 strength to meet these physical difficulties vary from individuals. Individuals might disengage from

921 their tasks if they lack these physical resources (Hollenbeck et al. (1992). The service sector, for

922 example, involves more emotional labour (Sutton, 1991) than an employee is required to invest in the

923 financial sector. Engaging with a role requires a certain level of emotional energy that is not required

924 when being disengaged in a role task (Kahn, 1990).

925 **Insecurity.** Being insecure will affect the level of engagement into the role task. Individuals

926 have to feel some security before they can bring their selves into the role. Insecurity causes anxiety that

927 occupies energies that could have been utilized in personal engagement (Kahn, 1990).

956   of psychological availability of the parents at home. Danner-Vlaardingerbroek et al. (2013) stated that
957   the psychological resources of the parents are diminished by exhaustion, negative mood, and
958   rumination and increased by positive mood and vigour. The absence of mental resources makes it more
959   difficult to focus diligently on the child during parent-child interactions (Danner-Vlaardingerbroek et
960   al., 2013; Rothbard, Philips, & Dumas, 2005). For example, unfavourable work outcomes or an
961   argument with a colleague at work could have a negative impact on duties after work. Tasks or
962   responsibilities at work may result in physical and/or mental exhaustion resulting in parents being less
963   psychologically available when performing their child care roles (Carlson & Frone, 2003; Danner-
964   Vlaardingerbroek et al., 2013; Rothbard et al., 2005).

965   The activities of childcare and family responsibilities have been closely associated with
966   women's natural or feminine tendencies and with assumptions based on socialised culture about love
967   and intimate family relations (DeVault, 1991; Erickson, 2005; Thompson & Walker, 1989). Women
968   often discount time and effort in caring work because the illusion of effortlessness is part of doing the
969   job well (DeVault, 1991; Erickson, 2005; Thompson & Walker, 1989). Therefore, women are expected
970   to be less psychologically available at work based on the family responsibilities and the caring roles
971   that they play outside their work.

972   Against this background, evidence has shown that women are more involved in the care roles than men.
973   In addition, the literature suggests that women have distractions that they take with them to work which
974   result in them not being available psychologically at work. The inverse also takes place in this dynamic
975   where women take experiences/challenges from work to their homes, thereby making them less
976   available to perform their care roles at home.

977

978

979   **3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

980   The primary aim of this study is to determine how sex roles impact psychological availability.
981   The secondary objectives of this study are the following:

982   a. To determine if masculinity influences levels of psychological availability.

983   b. To determine how femininity influences levels of psychological availability.

37

1011   The study will have both elements of explanatory and descriptive style. Explanatory because the
1012   study asks why things are the way they are and further identifies the reason something occurs (Neuman,
1013   2003). Descriptive because it will provide a detailed, picture of the literature available and possibly
1014   locate information that contradicts previous findings (Rindfleisch et al., 2007).

1015

1016   **4.4 Participants and sampling procedures**

1017   The research will be conducted on a sample of individuals ($N = \pm\ 500$) within and around the
1018   surrounding Gauteng area in South African organisations. Convenience sampling will be used in order
1019   to gather large amounts of information effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, convenience sampling
1020   allows for accessibility to the participants being used in a cost and time efficient way (Marshall, 1996).
1021   Trends and information may be generalized to the larger population through drawing such large
1022   amounts of data. Previous literature has not focused on the black African subset of the population. For
1023   this reason, black Africans should ideally be proportionally represented in the study's population.

1024   For the purpose of this research, questionnaires will be handed out to participants and returned
1025   via personal collection. Participants will be made aware that all information will be kept confidential
1026   and that the use of the data is for research purposes. Participants will be made aware that there is no
1027   financial benefit from completing the questionnaire.

1028   **4.4 Biographical and Demographical Information**

1029   The demographics of the population will vary, as convenience sampling will be used. The
1030   sample will consist of men and women who have at least one year of working experience and the
1031   collection of data will take place at various organisations between May 2015 and June 2015.

1032   **4.5 Measuring instrument**

1033   **4.5.1 Biographical Questionnaire**

1034   A biographical questionnaire will be used in this study to assess sample-specific demographic
1035   information pertaining to the age, race, gender, marital status, number of people under direct care and
1036   ethnicity.

1037   **4.5.2 Sex Role Questionnaire**

1066 **4.6 Statistical Analysis**

1067   Statistical analyses will be carried out using the SPSS 22 program (SPSS Inc., 2014). In the first

1068 step of statistical analysis, data will be screened for out of range responses, typing mistakes, incomplete

1069 questionnaires and statistical outliers. Descriptive statistics will be obtained for all items of the scales

1070 and data will be analysed in terms of mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. According to

1071 Kline (2010), skewness and kurtosis reflect the extent to which data is normally distributed with regard

1072 to the mean.

1073   Healey (2012) posits that descriptive statistics are relevant in the following situations. Firstly,

1074 when a researcher wants to summarise or describe the distribution of a single variable, or when the

1075 researcher wants to describe or summarise the distribution of two or more variables. Summarising or

1076 describing one variables distribution is referred to as univariate analysis, while summarising or

1077 describing the distribution of two or more variables is referred to as bivariate analysis.

1078   SPSS 22.00 (2014) will also be used to assess for correlation between sex-roles and

1079 psychological availability. Pallant (2011) maintains that correlation analysis is the most elemental

1080 manner to assess for the association between two variables. Kline (2010) states that a p-value, or level

1081 of significance reflects the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when there is an actual effect

1082 within the population. This implies the existence of the phenomenon being investigated. Kline (2010)

1083 maintains that in order for a study to be valid, practical significance is required as well. Practical

1084 significance allows one to see whether there is a large enough difference between means to be of

1085 practical value. Kline (2010) also maintains that the effect size must be evaluated between two

1086 variables. The effect size is an assessment of the strength of the relationship between the variables

1087 studied.

1088   In terms of effect sizes, Cohen (1992), provides the following guidelines: $r = .1$ is indicative of

1089 a small effect, $r = .3$ is indicative of a medium effect and $r = .5$ is indicative of a large effect. This will

1090 indicate the practical significance of the correlations between the variables.

1091   Furthermore, SPSS 22.00 (2014) will also be used for performing multiple regression analysis

1092 to determine whether the different sex-roles predict psychological availability for men and women.

1093 Pallant (2011) states that multiple regression analysis is an extension of the simple regression, but it

1122   **4.8 Value Add**

1123   As previously mentioned above, after a thorough search for literature surrounding the impact

1124   that sex roles (Bem, 1974) might have on psychological availability (Kahn, 1990), no research could be

1125   found to directly link these constructs. Much of research has focused on engagement and how it affects

1126   psychological availability (Olivier & Rothman, 2007; Rothman & Welsh, 2013). Another study by

1127   (Danner-Vlaardingerbroek et al. 2012) focused on how couples are psychologically available when they

1128   get home from work but the authors do not highlight whether that has anything to do with the type of

1129   sex role a person holds. The results of the Danner-Vlaardingerbroek et al. (2012) study did not provide

1130   evidence for gender differences. However, another study done by Schulz, Cowan, Cowan and Brennan

1131   (2004) found that wives that experience heavy workload were more prone to increased withdrawal and

1132   anger after the workday and this was not the same for husbands.

1133   The value of this study lies in identifying if people's sex role type will have any impact on how

1134   they engage and avail themselves psychologically at work within the South African context. Not only

1135   does this study aim to determine the impact, but this study also aims to identify how gender plays a role

1136   in this dynamic. The intended utility of the findings from this study will be to add to the body of

1137   knowledge on these two constructs. In addition, this study may potentially contribute to bringing about

1138   awareness of how the different types of sex roles that individuals hold might have an impact on

1139   engagement in an organisation.

1140

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