

Burnout in Special Needs Educators in Pietermaritzburg: Associations with Intentions  
to Leave

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## Declaration

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As the candidate's Supervisor I have approved this dissertation/thesis for submission:

Signed:



Name: Ms. Carol Mitchell

## Clarification of Terms Used

- Educators: refers to all those involved in the teaching and education of learners in a school environment
- The term learners is made use of in this text to refer to students
- Current position: current position refers to teachers leaving their current position in the special needs sector, either to the mainstream education sector or for a different career path
- Special needs: refers to any barrier to learning that prevents learners from attending a mainstream school
- Inclusive education: refers to the traditional mainstream school settings that also cater for learners with barriers to learning and development (special education needs)
- Mainstream: refers to schools that do not accommodate learners with special education needs
- Attrition / turnover: these terms are used synonymously throughout the text referring to the occurrence of educators leaving their position of employ for another within the schooling sector as well as those that leave the teaching profession altogether
- Turnover intention: refers to an individual's intention to quit or leave their job
- Personal / professional efficacy: previous versions of the Maslach Burnout Inventory used the term personal and professional interchangeably to refer to the third subscale of the measure. The latest version as well as previous versions use professional efficacy. Professional efficacy is used by most

studies nowadays to refer to that subscale / element of burnout as it is more uniform.

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## **Abstract**

The concept of burnout emerged from pragmatic, social concerns and the conceptualisation of this construct developed in parallel to the development of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI).

While research has focused on burnout in educators locally and internationally, there is a paucity of research on burnout in special needs educators in the South African context. Furthermore, attrition in the teaching profession is highlighted as a major problem locally and internationally.

Through the use of a quantitative descriptive research design, this study made use of the 16-item Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS) and the 15-item Turnover Intentions Scale (TIS) to examine the correlational relationship between burnout and turnover intention. Multiple regression analysis was used to examine factors influencing burnout and turnover intention.

Special needs educators experienced a moderate level of burnout and turnover intention. A strong correlation was found between the burnout dimension, cynicism, and turnover intention, with a moderate correlation present between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. The number of learners in a class as well as the number of years spent teaching and management responsibilities predicted emotional exhaustion and a low sense of personal efficacy involved in burnout.

Further research is recommended to explore this phenomenon in a South African inclusive education context.

Keywords: special needs; burnout, turnover, turnover intention; special needs educator



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## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction and background**

This study aimed to assess the burnout levels of educators in special needs schools and to establish whether a relationship exists between teachers' level of burnout and their intention to leave their current position. 'Special needs' refers to any barrier to learning that prevents learners from attending a mainstream school. There is evidence that a teacher's level of burnout can adversely affect students' educational output and discipline (Pas, Bradshaw, Hershfeldt, & Leaf, 2010).

Research has investigated burnout in mainstream educators in South Africa (Jackson, 2004; Mansoor Vazi et al., 2011; Montgomery, Mostert, & Jackson, 2005; Pas et al., 2010; Rothmann & Barkhuizen, 2008; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008; van Tonder & Williams, 2009), however little to no research has taken place investigating the prevalence of burnout in special needs educators in South Africa. A high number of teachers are leaving the profession in South Africa and consequently several studies have highlighted the problem of attrition, its causes and possible solutions to manage it (Mampane, 2012; Pitsoe, 2013; Xaba, 2003). Intention to leave the teaching profession has been linked to teacher burnout on an international scale (Goddard & Goddard, 2006; Weisberg & Sagie, 1999), however research of this kind has not taken place in a South African context. Keeping in mind the changes implemented as a result of the South African Education White Paper 6 on inclusive education (Department of Education, 2001) and the lack of research within the special needs context, it was therefore important to investigate burnout in special needs educators and the degree to which burnout relates to turnover intent.

## **1.2 Aims and objectives**

This study aimed to describe the level of burnout in special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal and to ascertain if there is an association between burnout and turnover intentions within the special needs educator population in this region.

The objectives of this study were:

- To describe the level of burnout in special needs educators in KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg
- To ascertain whether an association exists between burnout levels in special needs educators and their intentions to leave their current employment
- To examine factors potentially influencing burnout and turnover intent in special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal

Research questions:

- To what degree does burnout occur in special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal?
- Is there a significant relationship between burnout levels and intentions to leave current positions?
- What factors affect the level of burnout and turnover intent in special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal?

Therefore, the aim of this study was to expand on the current literature on burnout within a South African special needs education context in relation to the problem of turnover intention.

### **1.3 Methods used**

This study made use of a descriptive, quantitative research design with the use of correlational data analysis. Because this study endeavoured to identify burnout and turnover intention levels in special needs educators, as well as any association that may exist between these two variables, a quantitative approach was selected.

Furthermore, descriptive research of this nature aimed to initiate research in an under researched field with the hope of providing quantitative evidence for the importance of future research efforts in this population. Therefore a descriptive, quantitative research design was selected. Finally, a descriptive design was deemed beneficial due to the presence of minimal to no statistics in the field of burnout and turnover intention in a South African special needs educator population.

### **1.4 Outline of the following chapters**

Chapter 1 has outlined the basis for this study as well as its aims and objectives.

Chapter 2, the literature review, will discuss relevant literature pertaining to burnout and turnover intentions on a local and international scale. Furthermore, the development of these concepts is highlighted as well as a discussion on the South African education landscape. Chapter 3 includes information on the research design and methodological basis for this study. Chapter 4 highlights the results of this study



including sample information and the results of analyses run. Chapter 5 includes the discussion of the results followed by Chapter 6 which includes the implications and recommendations of this study according to the relevant findings.

## **Chapter 2 Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter contains a review of past and current literature surrounding this research topic. The chapter begins with a review of research regarding burnout, its history, theoretical underpinnings as well as the mediating and moderating factors that influence it. Attrition and turnover intention is then discussed followed by a review of the South African education landscape, specifically with regards to the Education White Paper 6, burnout in mainstream and special needs educators. This is followed by a discussion of educator turnover in South Africa as it relates to burnout. The chapter concludes with a statement of the aim and rationale of this study

### **2.2 Burnout**

#### **2.2.1 History and development**

The concept of burnout originated in the 1970's as a response to a social problem identified by practitioners and social commentators in relation to the realities of people's experiences in the work environment (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). It was only later that it became the focus of systematic research and study (Maslach et al., 2001). As such, the initial development of burnout "was influenced by pragmatic rather than scholarly concerns" (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996, p. 312). The necessity for burnout research was initiated through this 'bottom-up' grassroots approach and the first phase of the development of the concept of burnout began: the pioneering phase.

In the pioneering phase, research was exploratory in nature with the “goal of articulating the phenomenon of burnout” (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 399). Originating in the 1970’s in the USA, this research aimed to define the concept of burnout and to highlight that it was a common occurrence in individuals working within the human services sector. Freudenberger and Maslach were the first researchers to publish articles on burnout in 1975 and 1976 respectively. Freudenberger (1975) developed an approach that conceptualised burnout according to individuals’ direct experiences such as emotional depletion and loss of motivation. Maslach (1976, in Maslach et al., 2001) conceptualised burnout through interviewing individuals working in human service professions, regarding the emotional stress of their jobs and the coping mechanisms used. Burnout was thus researched according to an individual’s “relational transactions in the workplace” (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 400) predominantly within care-giving or service oriented professions. Both clinical and social psychological perspectives influenced the pioneering phase of burnout research, with clinical perspectives focusing on research on the symptoms of burnout and its mental health implications. The research from a social psychological perspective emphasised the relationship between the service provider, for example a nurse, and the recipient in their care, as well as the context in which this relationship was placed. This research was mainly descriptive and qualitative in nature. Themes that arose from this research included, specifically, the notion of depersonalisation and emotional exhaustion, as specific elements that were involved in the occurrence of burnout.

The second phase of research, which took place in the 1980's, had a more positivist, quantitative approach. What developed from this, was the conceptualisation of burnout as a psychological syndrome that developed as a result of interpersonal stressors in the work environment (Maslach et al., 2001). Assessing and measuring burnout was emphasised and as a result numerous measures were developed. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was the scale developed that displayed the strongest psychometric properties at the time and continues to be the most widely used measure of burnout globally (Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996).

Burnout research began to expand to include professions other than human services and this research became more complex, examining organisational factors and the three main factors / themes of burnout (Schaufeli & Maslach, 1993). This led to the development of a three-factor structural model of burnout and the assessment of the "links between the work environment at one time and the individual's thoughts and feelings at a later time" (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 401).

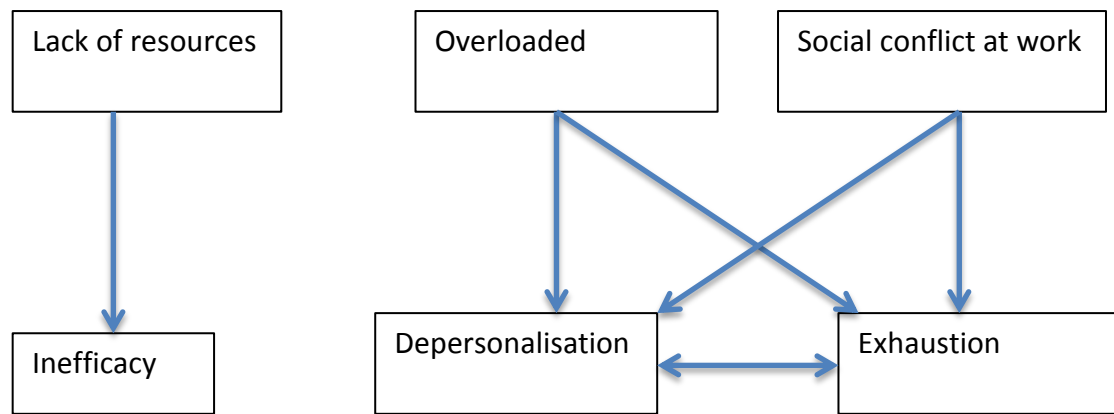
### **2.1.2 Structure of burnout model (three-factor)**

Burnout is defined as a syndrome incorporating cynicism, emotional exhaustion and decreased effectiveness or professional and personal efficacy (Maslach & Jackson, 1981b; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). These three elements used in defining the burnout syndrome make up the three-factor structural model of burnout.

Emotional exhaustion appears to be the most prominent and commonly reported element of burnout however the occurrence of exhaustion is not sufficient in describing the concept of burnout. This is because it does not incorporate the relationship an individual has with work and it merely focuses on the element of stress typically involved in the experience of burnout and does not incorporate other factors (Maslach et al., 2001). Emotional exhaustion may cause an individual to distance themselves emotionally from their work or the recipients in their care, which is the second component of burnout, namely, depersonalisation.

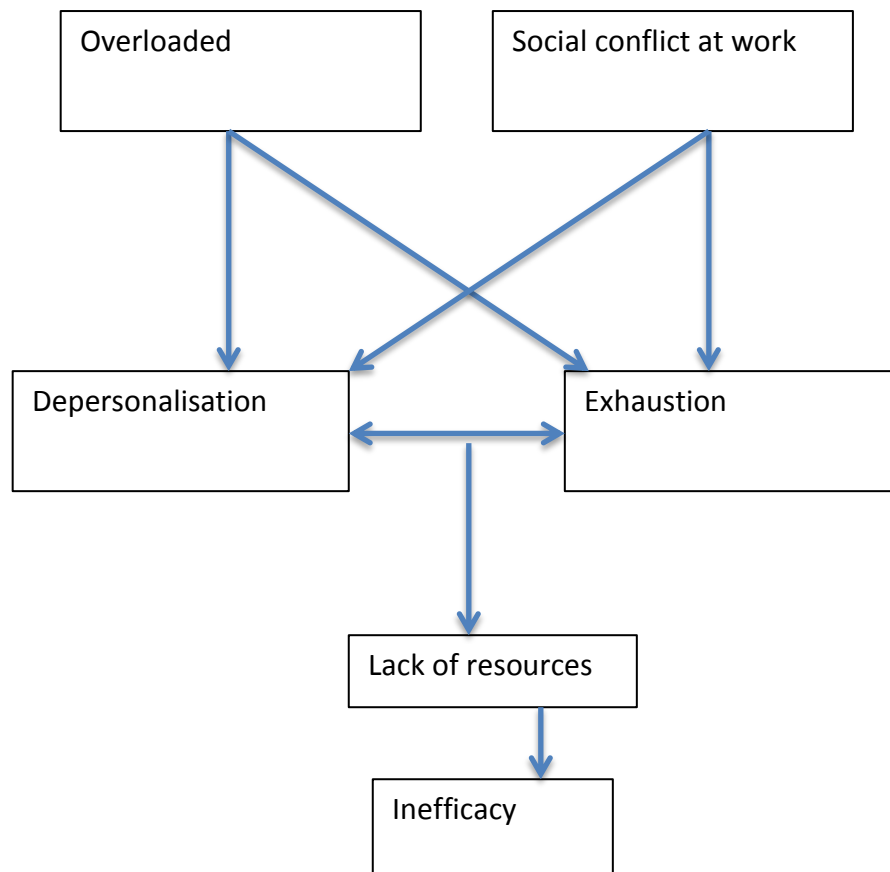
Depersonalisation (cynicism) is described as the emotional distance a service provider puts between themselves and the recipient in their relational transaction. There is said to be a strong correlation between exhaustion and depersonalisation in burnout research across different professions (Maslach et al., 2001).

Inefficacy or reduced personal accomplishment is the third factor involved in defining the burnout concept. Efficacy is defined as an individual's general ability to complete the tasks required of them in the work place, inefficacy is therefore the inability to do this. Inefficacy also includes a reduction in an individual's level of personal accomplishment in the work place. Different authors have alternative explanations for the interaction between the three factors. One school of thought proposes that inefficacy develops alongside or in conjunction with the first two factors (exhaustion and depersonalisation) depicted in Figure 1 (below).



*Figure 1* The simultaneous development of the three burnout dimensions

An alternative perspective is that inefficacy is a function of the first two factors, exhaustion and depersonalisation, displayed in Figure 2 (Maslach et al., 2001). The interplay of these three factors has been described as follows: Inefficacy (the third factor) is most often brought about by a lack of resources to complete the job at hand, while exhaustion and depersonalisation (the first and second factors) arise from being overloaded and the experience of social conflict at work (Maslach et al., 2001).



*Figure 2* The development of inefficacy as a function of depersonalisation and exhaustion

Kokkinos (2007) describes a transactional model that is explanatory in nature, and provides a theoretical framework for understanding how burnout manifests.

According to this model burnout manifests due to an interplay between an individual's own characteristics and environmental stressors for example in the work place (Kokkinos, 2007). Furthermore, Larrivee (2012) expands on the transactional view of stress in educators, stating that stress results from an imbalance between demands in the work place and the perceived resources to cope with these demands. Stress is a subjective experience and something that was found stressful yesterday may not be perceived as stressful today if the individual has access to

resources that assist in dealing with the stressor. Prolonged stress and incapacity in managing these demands or stressors lead to the experience of burnout. Larrivee (2012) explains that educators perceive an imbalance between the demands they face and the resources that have available for coping with these demands. “Burnout is the end product of cumulative unsuccessful attempts to deal with classroom demands” (Larrivee, 2012, p. 4).

### **2.1.3 Maslach Burnout Inventory**

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was developed from the three-factor model of burnout which resulted in the development of three subscales including, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Burnout was first studied in human service samples and this has remained the main focus of research on burnout. The development and measurement of burnout has taken place predominantly on this population because burnout was first believed to occur solely within those working in the caring profession (Schaufeli & Maslach, 1993). The MBI-Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS; Maslach & Jackson, 1981a) was developed to measure burnout in individuals working within the human services and health-care profession. The MBI was then adjusted to form the MBI-Educator Survey (MBI-ES; Maslach, Jackson, & Schwab, 1986) which assesses individuals working within education settings. The labels for the three dimensions or factors of burnout were the same – emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced personal accomplishment. The labels used in the MBI-HSS and MBI-ES were selected due to the focus of these occupations on the transactional relationship between the



recipient and service provider (i.e. client, student or patient). The MBI-General Survey (MBI-GS; Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, & Jackson, 1996) was the third version of the MBI developed for individuals working within professions that are not overtly people-oriented. With this version, burnout was conceptualised in broader terms with the labels of the three dimensions differing slightly – namely exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy.

Studies which have examined the MBI-GS in the South African context report good alpha coefficient scores. Rothmann and Malan (2002, in Rothmann, 2003) presented alpha coefficients of 0.89 (emotional exhaustion), 0.76 (cynicism) and 0.85 (personal efficacy). Rothmann and Jansen van Vuuren (2002) examined the MBI-GS on a sample of senior managers in the manufacturing industry discovering an alpha coefficient of 0.79 (emotional exhaustion), 0.84 (cynicism) and 0.84 (professional efficacy). Kruger, Veldman, Rothmann, and Jackson (2002) indicated alpha coefficients of 0.72 (cynicism) and 0.69 (professional efficacy).

Rothmann and Barkhuizen (2008) discovered alpha coefficients of 0.87 (emotional exhaustion), 0.69 (cynicism) and 0.81 (professional efficacy) for a sample of South African higher education staff. Pienaar and van Wyk (2006) found alphas of 0.81 (emotional exhaustion), 0.69 (cynicism) and 0.86 (professional efficacy) in a sample of teachers involved in mainstream inclusive education classes. Jackson (2004) found alpha coefficients of 0.79 (emotional exhaustion), 0.64 (cynicism) and 0.73 (professional efficacy) for teachers located in the North-West province, South Africa. Jackson, Rothmann, and van de Vijver (2006) examined burnout in South African

educators and found the alpha coefficients for MBI-GS subscales to be above the 0.70 suggested minimum (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Therefore for the purposes of this study, the MBI-GS was selected due to its widespread use in South African and internationally and its synonymous development alongside the historical development of the burnout construct (Maslach, 1976; Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996; Schaufeli & Maslach, 1993).

#### **2.1.4 Mediating and moderating factors**

Studies have highlighted mediating and moderating factors associated with burnout (Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996; Schaufeli & Maslach, 1993). Factors such as age, gender, race, hierarchical job level, workload, level of experience, marital status, level of education have been highlighted as influential in the occurrence of burnout. These are discussed in more detail below.

##### ***2.1.4.1 Demographic characteristics***

###### ***Gender***

In the early nineties Greenglass (1991, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) highlighted that gender is frequently confused with work roles and hierarchical positions in burnout research. This is because women were less likely to occupy management and supervisory roles in an organisation, which resulted in fewer job-related rewards.

Therefore, during the time of this study, gender was often misconstrued as a

mediating factor in the development of burnout. When this misconception was taken into account there was no significant difference found in burnout between the different genders; rather evidence was found for significant differences between work roles and burnout. There has however been a consistent finding that men most often score higher on the depersonalisation scale (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996).

### *Age*

In a study by Schaufeli and Buunk (1996) burnout arose most often in individuals in the age range of 30-40 years and this was attributed to their level of work experience. Individuals who participated in the study by Schaufeli and Buunk (1996) who were over this age however were seen as more experienced with better levels of functioning than their younger counterparts. Caution must be taken in drawing conclusions from this research, however, due to the possibility that the individuals over the age of 30 to 40 years who experienced burnout may have left their jobs and were therefore not part of the study. This left a group of older, more fully functioning employees as well a group of younger more inexperienced individuals that participated in the study (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996).

### *Level of education*

There are differing views regarding the relationship between burnout and levels of education. Maslach and Jackson (1981b) found that burnout is related to higher levels of education, whereas Fletcher (1988, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) found that stress-related issues are most often related to individuals working in more low status professions with lower levels of education.

#### ***2.1.4.2 Job characteristics***

Studies have indicated that burnout is related to objective indicators of workload as well as subjective indicators such as perceived stress (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). In addition, Schaufeli and Buunk (1996) found that work role issues such as role ambiguity and conflicts are related to burnout. A lack of autonomy and involvement in decision-making is also linked to the occurrence of burnout. Specific job characteristics such as a bureaucratic work environment and the experience of emotionally demanding relationships with recipients have been associated with burnout (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996).

#### ***2.1.4.3 Job-related attitudes***

Several job-related attitudes that are associated with burnout have been highlighted in previous research. Wolpin, Burke, and Greenglass (1991) in a study on educators, found that the experience of burnout leads to a lack of job satisfaction. Friesen and Sarros (1989, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) also reported that job satisfaction is the most highly associated factor with burnout. Himle and Jayaratne (1987) study of social workers, found a link between elevated burnout scores and an individual's intention to quit. Furthermore, several authors cited in Schaufeli and Buunk (1996) found that most often, burnout is related to individuals who have an emotionally involved relationship with recipients in their care. Burnout has been more strongly linked to individuals who are poorly committed to their organisation of employ (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). This can be explained by the moderating role that

commitment plays in the association between stressors at work and emotional exhaustion. Reilly (1994, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) in a study on nurses, explained that those nurses who had a high level of work commitment were more vulnerable to pressures at work than those nurses that had a low level of commitment. Stevens and O'Neil (1983, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) highlight that high expectations regarding a work role have been positively associated with the experience of burnout.

#### ***2.4.1.4 Social environment***

Social support has been found to have a direct effect on burnout and a multitude of research has supported this notion (Schwab, Jackson, & Schuler, 1986). Constable and Russell (1986, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) found that the support of a supervisor is more successful in alleviating burnout than the support of fellow employees. The work environment and cohesion of employees is important in the creation or avoidance of a 'burnout culture' because group cohesion and socially oriented management has been negatively associated with burnout (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Furthermore, at a personal level, studies have shown that single individuals have a higher chance of burnout compared to those living with a partner (Maslach & Jackson, 1985).

#### ***2.1.4.5 Personality characteristics***

Many different personality characteristics have been linked to the experience of burnout. Some of these include: neuroticism, low self-esteem, external locus of

control, lack of hardiness, defensive coping mechanisms and trait-anxiety (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). For individuals working in the human services profession, several factors were found to contribute to the experience of burnout. These factors included a desire to connect with others; the personal capability of warmth and empathy; and a poor collective orientation (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Whilst an examination of personality characteristics was beyond the scope of this study, it is important to remember that such intrapersonal factors may also account for the occurrence of burnout.

#### **2.1.5 Implications of burnout**

The presence of burnout has implications for both the individual and the organisation of employ. Burnout has been associated with job performance as well as health related issues for the individual. Job withdrawal such as absenteeism, turnover and intention to quit is associated with burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). With regards to individuals who have not yet left their jobs, burnout may cause reduced efficiency and productivity as well as dissatisfaction and reduced commitment (Maslach et al., 2001).

The dimension of emotional exhaustion has been found to be “more predictive of stress-related health outcomes than the other two components” (Maslach et al., 2001, p. 406). However, with regards to mental health, Maslach et al. (2001) have shown support for a bi-directional causality between burnout and mental health.

Burnout was found to be a precipitating factor in mental illness and mental illnesses were also found to cause burnout (Maslach et al., 2001).

## **2.2 Attrition and turnover intent**

### **2.2.1 Attrition**

Turnover is commonly defined as the “annual rate of teachers leaving their particular school position” (MacDonald, 1999, p. 836). This includes both those that leave the teaching profession (wastage) as well as those that leave their particular position for another within the schooling system (MacDonald, 1999). Williams (1979, in MacDonald, 1999) refers to the term ‘wastage’ as those that leave the teaching profession due to circumstances such as retirement, resignation, dismissal and death. In other words, those individuals that prematurely leave the teaching profession for another industry or retirement. International research focuses mainly on the concept of attrition which is synonymous with turnover.

In a review of attrition literature, MacDonald (1999) concluded that the available research lacks consistency in defining a common concept of attrition as well as the methodological issues surrounding the study of this concept. Many studies assume that attrition takes place when a teacher stops teaching in a specific region of employment, however, it is observed that many teachers relocate and resume teaching in a different area (Stinebrickner, 1998). Given that relocation is not accounted for in many studies caution must be applied when comparing research results on attrition. For the purposes of this study, the mediating and moderating

factors highlighted in this past research have been included and considered below.

An overview of the factors involved in the phenomenon of turnover and its precursor, turnover intention, are discussed in the sections that follow.

## **2.2.2 Mediating and moderating factors**

### ***2.2.2.1 Working environment and conditions***

Research indicates that aspects of the working environment in which teachers find themselves are associated with attrition. The environment in which a teacher works is seen to affect the level of work satisfaction and the future career decisions that a teacher will make. Pitsoe (2013) indicates that some of these environmental factors include: (1) higher salaries (2) positive school climate (3) adequate support systems, particularly principal and central office support (4) opportunities for professional development (5) reasonable role demand and (6) manageable case loads. In addition, many studies report that less affluent, rural or under resourced environments with excessive demands on teachers are associated with attrition and turnover intention (Borman & Dowling, 2008; MacDonald, 1999; Stinebrickner, 1998). Similarly, MacDonald (1999) cites several authors who assert that higher rates of attrition are found in underdeveloped countries or in countries experiencing economic difficulties. MacDonald (1999) and Pitsoe (2013) conclude that an increase in salary as well as family-related changes (including child birth and marriage) influence the likelihood of a departure from the teaching profession. In addition, an important factor in potential turnover is the duration of years teaching.



#### ***2.2.2.2 Personal and professional factors***

Borman and Dowling (2008), MacDonald (1999) as well as Pitsoe (2013) indicated that educators are more likely to leave their jobs earlier on in their careers as well as when they are nearing the end of their careers. Although this is mentioned in sections above, Borman and Dowling (2008) have attributed attrition early and later on in an educators career due to several life-cycle factors. These life-cycle factors include the status of a educator's family which determines the likelihood of attrition, for example, early into a career educators may give birth to their own children, and often as a result will leave the profession for a period of time (Borman & Dowling, 2008). Borman and Dowling (2008) also note that later in an educator's career is often when attrition takes place as they are nearing retirement. Furthermore, teachers entering the profession with more established mechanisms of support and collaboration, such as social support and workplace collaboration, are at a lesser risk for attrition (Borman & Dowling, 2008).

#### **2.2.3 Attrition rates and implications**

Studies have indicated that teacher turnover is a major problem taking place on an international scale (Pitsoe, 2013; Xaba, 2003). Pitsoe (2013) indicates that research on attrition rates for numerous international countries ranges from 5% to 30%. Within South Africa, the number of teachers that leave the profession is higher than the number of teachers being trained. Furthermore, between the period of 2005 and 2008, 24 750 educators in South Africa purportedly left the profession, with the majority of these departures taking place in the Gauteng Province, followed by

KwaZulu-Natal (Department of Basic Education, 2012; Pitsoe, 2013). Attrition affects the quality of tuition provided to students and thus their level of achievement.

Attrition can have negative financial implications for schools as time and money need to be dedicated to recruitment and the subsequent training of new staff members. It may also result in the imbalanced allocation of experienced and competent teachers across different population groups and areas, with most of the trained, experienced and competent educators placed in urban areas (Pitsoe, 2013).

#### **2.2.4 Turnover intent**

Turnover intent is defined as an individual's intention to leave or remain at their organisation of employ (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Studies have shown that turnover intention is the "strongest cognitive precursor of turnover" (Tett & Meyer, 1993, p. 259). The most common precursors of turnover are job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intent to quit (Martin & Roodt, 2008).

Theoretical perspectives have developed in an attempt to understand how these above mentioned factors work together, namely the satisfaction-to-commitment mediation model; commitment-to-satisfaction mediation model; and the independent-effects model (Tett & Meyer, 1993):

- The satisfaction-to-commitment mediation model posits that commitment to an organisation develops from the satisfaction derived from fulfilling that job role. Job satisfaction indirectly influences an individual's intent to leave or quit and commitment is seen as a moderating factor in intent to leave.

- The commitment-to-satisfaction mediation model asserts the reverse of the above model. This model states that the commitment an individual has to an organisation generates a good attitude towards the job. Individuals are said to leave their jobs based on how they feel about their work and commitment to an organisation can be developed before entering that position.
- The independent-effects model states that commitment to an organisation and satisfaction with one's job are separate constructs with no specific causality observed. These two variables may influence one another mutually however both satisfaction and commitment are said to influence turnover uniquely.

In addition, research has highlighted two differing generic models of turnover: micro-level models that examine behavioural processes and outcomes; and macro-sociological models that define labour market circumstances and processes (Jacobs, 2005).

Micro-level models focus on cognitive processes that may result in an individual searching for a new job and subsequently developing the intention to leave their current employment. Macro-sociological models “stress the structural factors linking turnover rates to the existence and search for alternative external occupational opportunities” (Jacobs, 2005, p. 34). Furthermore, Mano-Negrin and Tzafrir (2004) indicate that actual turnover occurs most often alongside the occurrence of available employment opportunities that correspond to an individual's skill set.

Turnover intentions may be viewed stemming from the theoretical framework of both planned behaviour and cognitions preceding turnover. Turnover cognitions include any mental scheme that affects an individual's attitude which in turn affects their intent to leave or stay at their organisation of employ (Sager, Griffeth, & Hom, 1998). Ajzen (1991) presented a theory of planned behaviour which advocates that intention is a substantial predictor of real behaviour. Mobley (1982) as well as Fox and Fallon (2003) present research that displays a correlation between behavioural intention and the occurrence of turnover.

#### ***2.2.4.1 Development of the Turnover Intention Scale***

The Turnover Intention Scale (TIS) developed by Roodt (2004) aims to assess the degree to which an individual intends to leave their current employment. This scale was developed on the general South African population and subsequent research by Jacobs (2005) highlighted the validity of the TIS with an alpha coefficient of 0.913. Martin (2007) found the scale to have a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.895; thus also indicating an adequate reliability. Bothma and Roodt (2013) reported a Cronbach's alpha reliability of 0.81 for the TIS shortened scale (TIS-6).

The TIS consists of 15 items with responses given on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The total scores on this measure range from 15 to 75 with a mid-point of 45. Individuals falling within the range of the mid-point or higher experience a relatively strong desire to leave their jobs.

## **2.3 The South African education landscape**

### **2.3.1 The Education White Paper 6**

The Department of Education (2001) highlight the fact that special needs education is the sector in South Africa that is still characterised by segregation and inequality. The legacy of apartheid that was characterised by segregation based on race as well as disability still has great effects on special needs education in South Africa today. Typically, those learners who experienced barriers to learning as a result of severe poverty were not afforded educational support. Furthermore, white schools were well resourced whereas others were not. Post 1994, this legacy lives on however gradual changes in policy and practice are being made in order to correct the negative effects these inequalities have. In an attempt to rectify previous inequalities, the South African education landscape has made adjustments to its structure in relation to the placement of special needs learners. The South African Education White Paper 6 on inclusive education (Department of Education, 2001) advocates a move towards mainstream educators taking on inclusive education.

Inclusive education aims to deal with the diversity of needs seen in the student population through minimising the barriers to learning in the education environment. Inclusion tends to focus on adjusting the environment to meet a specific learner's needs whereas mainstream education generally refers to assisting the learner to cope by integration into the classroom routine. The emphasis in mainstream schooling is on the learner and the adjustments that need to take place within the learner to enable them to function within the 'normal' and established

classroom environment (Department of Education, 2001). Inclusive education on the other hand, focuses on the environment and the system in which a learner is situated. The classroom environment and surrounding context are seen to be the cause of a learners experienced barriers in learning. Adjustments therefore need to be made to the system as a whole in order to enable the learner to learn at an optimal level.

Therefore the key difference between mainstream and inclusive education is the location in which the learning problem is situated. Mainstream education views the problem as originating within the learner and inclusive education views the problem as a function of the surrounding system and environment (Department of Education, 2001).

With mainstream schools now accepting some learners with barriers to learning, adjustments must be made in order to accommodate these learners. Research regarding educators' sentiments around the implementation of inclusive education displays a common trend of resistance (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007). Educators are concerned with the need for resources and support in the implementation of an inclusive education system as well as their ability to cope with large class sizes (Oswald & Swart, 2011).

### **2.3.2 Burnout in South African educators**

#### ***2.3.2.1 Mainstream educators***

The teaching profession is characterised by high levels of stress and educators in school settings have significant levels of burnout and stress relating to their jobs (Stoeber & Rennert, 2008). A substantial amount of research has investigated burnout in educators across the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education (Jackson, 2004; Montgomery et al., 2005; Nel et al., 2011;; Pienaar & van Wyk, 2006; Rothmann & Essenko, 2007;; van Tonder & Williams, 2009). van Tonder and Williams (2009) examined burnout in urban secondary school educators in the Gauteng province, finding a high level of burnout in this sample.

Several studies have taken place in the North West province:

- Montgomery et al. (2005) used the MBI-GS on a sample of 646 primary school educators, and found emotional exhaustion and mental distance scales to be in the moderate and high range respectively.
- Rothmann and Essenko (2007) used the MBI-GS on a sample of 334 higher education support staff found moderate levels of emotional exhaustion and cynicism. Levels of emotional exhaustion and cynicism were positively related to one another.
- Jackson et al. (2006) used the MBI-GS on a sample of on 1177 primary and secondary level educators reporting emotional exhaustion and mental distance scores within the moderate range.

- Jackson and Rothmann (2005b) used the MBI-GS on a sample of 1170 primary and secondary school educators finding moderate levels of burnout in this sample.

Furthermore, (Rothmann & Barkhuizen, 2008) examined 595 higher education academic staff finding moderate levels of emotional exhaustion and professional efficacy as well as high levels of cynicism.

According to Jackson et al. (2006) the causal factors of burnout in South African mainstream secondary schools are problematic learners (learners with troublesome behaviour and a lack of parental support and involvement) and high workloads, which may be attributed in part to the OBE curriculum and ever changing multicultural landscape.

Educator burnout in primary and secondary schools across South Africa is seen to be caused by exhaustion and mental distance with a decrease in dedication, which has a negative impact on organisational commitment (Jackson et al., 2006). An extensive amount of research has taken place within the North-West Province relating to burnout in primary and secondary educational settings, across many different language groups (Montgomery et al., 2005). This research found that a lack of required resources and high job expectations were predictors of burnout in educators. Montgomery et al. (2005) report that following these findings interventions were implemented at an organisational level, which resulted in a decrease in the severity of mental distance and exhaustion.



### ***2.3.2.2 Inclusive education educators***

Engelbrecht, Swart, and Eloff (2001) conducted a study in South Africa investigating burnout in mainstream inclusive educators, specifically those with a learner with Down's syndrome in their class. Their study highlighted the causal factors contributing to burnout as well as the context in which these educators find themselves. Factors such as learner behaviour, issues related to the classroom, health, safety and hygiene issues as well as personal and professional competence acted as stressors (Engelbrecht et al., 2001). A lack of pre-service and in-service training regarding the changing expectations placed on educators as a result of the implementation of inclusive education, further contributed to stress levels in educators (Engelbrecht et al., 2001). This study indicates that the development of models to collaborate regarding the training and support needed in the implementation of inclusive education of various stake holders, such as educators, schools and provincial education departments (Engelbrecht, Forlin, Eloff, & Swart; Engelbrecht et al., 2001). Furthermore, the researchers indicated that support networks should be mobilised in order to assist educators with necessary resources and opportunities to build on the strengths of their learners. A comparative study of burnout in South African and Swedish educators found that educators in the South African context have less support and this often causes reluctance to work collaboratively within the inclusive education landscape (Nel et al., 2011).

### ***2.3.2.3 Special needs educators***

Research has investigated burnout in mainstream educators in South Africa however little to no research has focused on the prevalence of burnout in special needs educators in South Africa. Special needs educators differ to that of mainstream educators and educators in inclusive mainstream settings. Special needs educators typically teach at a school dedicated to meeting the specified needs of learners with different needs to the majority of learners in the mainstream school setting. For example, some schools exist specifically for learners with hearing or sight impairments and these schools offer different facilities and forms of tuition to assist these learners in their scholastic development.

These findings discussed here on burnout in South African educators highlight the utility of the transactional model in conceptualising stressors placed on educators and the development of burnout. Mainstream educators perceive an imbalance between the demands they face at work (high workloads and curriculum changes) and their ability to manage these demands. Engelbrecht et al. (2001) highlight that inclusive educators perceive a deficit in their own abilities and resources available to manage the demands of an inclusive classroom. Prolonged exposure to this experience, according to the transactional model, will result in educator burnout (Larrivee, 2012).

### **2.3.3 Educator turnover in South Africa**

#### ***2.3.3.1 Prevalence of attrition***

A high number of educators are leaving the profession in South Africa, and as previously mentioned, 24 750 educators left the profession between 2005 and 2008, which is more than were trained to enter the profession (Department of Basic Education, 2012; Pitsoe, 2013). Consequently several studies have highlighted the problem of attrition, it's causes and possible solutions to manage it (Mampane, 2012; Pitsoe, 2013; Xaba, 2003). More specifically, Pitsoe (2013) highlighted previous research on attrition that indicated certain school environment factors that contribute to attrition, including: lack of administrative support, lack of decision making abilities as well as a lack of support from parents and fellow employees. Pitsoe (2013) further highlighted certain dispositional factors that contribute to attrition, namely, youth, higher socioeconomic status, being female, having a reduced level of commitment and a lack of experience. Intention to leave the education profession has been linked to educator burnout on an international scale (Goddard & Goddard, 2006; Weisberg & Sagie, 1999), however research of this kind has not taken place in a South African context.

### **2.4 Burnout and turnover intent (South Africa and international)**

Maslach and Jackson (1981, in Pas et al., 2010) claim that high levels of burnout or emotional exhaustion in educators adversely affect the state of teaching and student-educator relationships. The International Alliance of Leading Institutes

(IALEI) argues that “(l)evels of teacher attrition and retention have severe implications for the quality of teaching” (2008, in Pitsoe, 2013, p. 315).

Himle and Jayaratne (1987) asserted that individuals working with high levels of burnout reported strong turnover intentions. Rothmann (2003) indicates through a review of literature, that burnout is associated with turnover intention and health problems. Rothmann 2003 reviewed previous research and reported contradictory findings. Firstly, studies in the Netherlands as well as in South Africa found that the effects of work on an individual might result in burnout and ill-health. Contrary to this however, other studies found that work contributes to wellbeing and stated that a lack of work could be detrimental to an individual’s health. Although research endeavours on burnout in mainstream educators is gaining momentum, little research is available on burnout and its associations with turnover intentions within the South African educator population, both in mainstream and special needs.

## **2.5 Aim and rationale**

This study aimed to describe the level of burnout in special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal and to ascertain if there was an association between burnout and turnover intentions within the special needs educator population in this region. Gaining insight into this will enable a greater understanding of the South African education context so as to inform further research and to guide possible interventions and assistance. It is hoped that this

study will guide further research endeavours so as to build up a substantial research base from which the Department of Education may draw.

Keeping in mind the changes implemented as a result of the Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) and the lack of research within the special needs context, it is therefore important to investigate burnout in special needs educators and the degree to which burnout relates to turnover intent. The significance lies in the fact that burnout and turnover intent have a negative impact on the educational output of a teacher thus impacting the quality of education received by learners.

This study aimed to answer the following questions:

- To what degree does burnout occur in special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal?
- Is there a significant relationship between burnout levels and intentions to leave current positions?
- What factors affect the level of burnout and turnover intent in special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal?

Therefore, the aim of this study was to expand on the current literature on burnout within a South African special needs education context in relation to the problem of turnover intention.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter provided an account of significant literature on burnout, attrition and turnover intentions. The development of these concepts was discussed as well as the implications of burnout and turnover intentions on educators and learners locally and internationally. The South African education context was discussed further in relation to these concepts forming the backdrop for this study. The following chapter will describe the research methodology, namely, the research design, sample information, data collection and data analyses conducted.

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter contains the methodology employed for the purposes of this study. The research design, sample characteristics as well as data collection and analysis techniques are discussed. Furthermore, the validity of measures as well as all ethical considerations is discussed in relation to the research conducted.

### **3.2 Research design**

This study employed a descriptive quantitative design in which correlational data analysis was utilised. The research design stemmed from a positivist paradigm that aimed to gain a quantifiable and appropriate account of phenomenon taking place in social reality, specifically, the phenomenon of burnout in special needs educators and their intention to leave their current jobs (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006). It aimed to examine an external reality that remains constant, in an objective and law-like manner (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). This study endeavoured to identify the degree to which burnout occurs in special needs educators and to ascertain whether a relationship exists between burnout and intention to leave. A quantitative study was therefore appropriate as it allowed burnout levels to be measured and correlated with intentions to leave.

This quantitative study was a descriptive study because very little published research is available on burnout in special needs educators in South Africa. A descriptive study takes a tentative approach to research, collecting data without manipulating the

environment or variables under study (Grimes & Schulz, 2002). Descriptive research “represent(s) the first scientific toe in the water in new areas of inquiry” (Grimes & Schulz, 2002, p. 145). There was no evidence published regarding burnout and intention to leave within the special needs educator population in South Africa. Therefore, a descriptive study was required to guide initial research in this field. Two questionnaires were administered to the participants in order to measure the identified variables. These measures are described further in Section 3.3.1.

### **3.3 Sample**

The sample population consisted of special needs educators in and around Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. Special needs educators include any educator working within a non-mainstream school setting. In other words, special needs educators refers to any individual working as an educator within a school environment that caters for any form of barrier to learning that prevents the learner from attending a mainstream school. Every effort was made to recruit a sample that was representative in terms of demographics. The researcher made contact with each special needs school in Pietermaritzburg, listed by the Department of Education.

#### **3.3.1 Sample size**

There was no indication of the number of employed special needs educators within the Pietermaritzburg area. There were about nine special needs schools in and around Pietermaritzburg. The researcher was able to establish an estimate of the sample population through enquiry at each school. It is estimated that there are



about 140 educators employed at these special needs schools in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. The researcher aimed to acquire a sample size of 100. A general rule of thumb advocates that the number of participants taking part in a study investigating a relationship or correlation should not be lower than 50 (Wilson VanVoorhis & Morgan, 2007).

### **3.3.2 Sampling method**

The sample was selected by means of nonprobability sampling, specifically purposive sampling. Purposive sampling selects participants based on their availability to participate in the study as well as their specific characteristics on which the research is based (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). Individuals who work as educators at special needs institutions in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal were targeted for this study.

Nonprobability sampling is used in quantitative research when time and expense are limited (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). According to Goodwin (2008, in Morgan, 2008), this technique is suitable if the participants selected are appropriate for the study. In order to minimise bias, the researcher must ensure that the sample is representative and a description of the sample should be provided in a manner that allows others to scrutinise its relevance (Morgan, 2008). The sample selected was recruited from a range of special needs schools in and around Pietermaritzburg. A detailed description of the sample has been provided.

### **3.3.3 Sample recruitment procedure**

The researcher obtained a list of special needs schools in and around Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal from the Department of Education (attached in Appendix 1). Permission to conduct research in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions was gained (attached in Appendix 2). Following ethical clearance from the UKZN Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSS/0419/015M attached in Appendix 3), telephonic contact was made with the target schools' relevant gatekeeper (most often the principal). The nature of the study was explained and permission to conduct research was requested. An email was sent to the gatekeeper including a document with information on the study (attached in Appendix 4). The gatekeeper then informed staff of the study. A suitable time was arranged to administer the questionnaires with the individuals who chose to participate in the study. A copy of the consent form and information sheet was given to each participant and the voluntary nature of the questionnaire was reiterated along with an explanation of the research aims (Appendix 5).

### **3.4 Data collection**

The researcher was present to administer the questionnaires at a time set up that was suitable for the participants. The study was introduced and explained briefly and each participant was provided with the information sheet and consent form (see Appendix 5.1). Once the consent form was signed, the participants were given the questionnaires and instructed as to how to complete them. The estimated duration of questionnaire completion was ten to fifteen minutes and the overall process of

introduction, administration, conclusion and thanks took on average twenty-five minutes. Once participants had completed their questionnaires, the researcher provided them with information on burnout (see Appendix 5.2). Participants were not required to give their name or school of employ so as to maintain their anonymity. Completed questionnaires were placed in a blank envelope after which the researcher thanked the participants for their participation and informed them that the results of the study would be made available to them via email with the school's relevant gatekeeper. Questionnaire answers were then collated by the researcher in order for quantitative data analysis to be performed.

### **3.4.1 Instruments administered**

#### ***3.4.1.1 Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Scale (MBI-GS)***

The MBI-GS is an instrument that has been used worldwide to measure occupational stress in human service professions. Studies in South Africa have made use of the MBI-GS to assess the burnout levels of teachers in primary and secondary schools as well as other helping professions, and it has been found to be a reliable, valid and psychometrically sound measurement tool within a South African context.

The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the MBI-GS subscales as reported by Maslach, Jackson and Leiter (1996, in Jackson & Rothmann, 2005a) varied from 0.87 to 0.89 for the emotional exhaustion subscale; and 0.73 to 0.84 for the cynicism subscale. Maslach and Jackson (1986, in Jackson & Rothmann, 2005a) found an internal consistency of 0.79 for the depersonalisation subscale. As mentioned previously, a

number of studies have found the MBI-GS to be a valid and reliable measure within the South African context (Jackson, 2004; Kruger et al., 2002; Pienaar & van Wyk, 2006; Rothmann, 2003; Rothmann & Barkhuizen, 2008; Rothmann & Jansen van Vuuren, 2002).

This scale measures burnout according to three sub scales, namely emotional exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2002). It is comprised of 16 questions with answers given on a 7-point Likert-scale. This scale was used to measure the degree of burnout in each participant. This measure is displayed below in Figure 3. Due to copyright restrictions the MBI-GS could not be fully included (refer to Appendix 6).

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### MBI-General Survey

How often:	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Never	A few times a year or less	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day

---

How Often 0-6	Statements:
1. _____	I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2. _____	I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3. _____	I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.

*Figure 3* Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey sample (Schaufeli et al., 1996)

#### **3.4.1.2 Turnover Intentions scale (TIS)**

Turnover intent is defined as an individual's intention to leave or remain at an organisation (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). The TIS measures the construct of turnover intention and is used as a predictor of turnover (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). It is comprised of 15 questions with answers given on a 5-point Likert-scale. This scale was used to measure each participant's intention to leave his or her current position. The TIS has been found to be valid and reliable in measuring the construct of turnover intention in South Africa and is used as a predictor of turnover (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Jacobs (2005) and Martin (2007) (in du Plooy & Roodt, 2013) found the TIS to be valid and reliable, with an alpha coefficient of 0.913 and 0.895 respectively. Bothma and Roodt (2013) reported a Cronbach's alpha reliability of 0.81 for the TIS

shortened scale (TIS-6).

The following section aims to ascertain the extent to which you intend to stay at the organisation.

Please read each question and indicate your response using the scale provided for each question:

**DURING THE PAST 9 MONTHS.....**

1.	How often have you considered leaving your job?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
2.	How frequently do you scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	All the time
3.	To what extent is your current job satisfying your personal needs?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
4.	How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
5.	How often are your personal values at work compromised?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
6.	How often do dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
7.	How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?	Highly unlikely	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Highly likely
8.	How often do you look forward to another day at work?	Always	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Never
9.	How often do you think about starting your own business?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
10.	To what extent do responsibilities prevent you from quitting your job?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
11.	To what extent do the benefits associated with your current job prevent you from quitting your job?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
12.	How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	All of the time
13.	To what extent does your current job have a negative effect on your personal well-being?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
14.	To what extent does the "fear of the unknown", prevent you from quitting?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
15.	How frequently do you scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	All of the time

*Figure 4 Turnover Intentions Scale (Roodt, 2004)*

### **3.4.1.3 Demographic questionnaire**

A brief demographic questionnaire was included with the administration of the MBI-GS and TIS. Studies have highlighted mediating and moderating factors associated with burnout and intention to leave (du Plooy & Roodt, 2013; Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996; Schaufeli & Maslach, 1993). As previously mentioned, factors such as age, gender, race, hierarchical job level, workload, level of experience, marital status, level of education have been highlighted as influential in the occurrence of burnout, turnover and turnover intention. A brief demographic questionnaire was drawn up according to the factors highlighted in these studies (attached in Appendix 8).

## **3.5 Data analysis**

Descriptive statistics were generated in order to investigate the degree of burnout within special needs educators and their scores on the Turnover Intentions Scale. A basic frequency distribution table was created as well as a basic table of descriptive statistics (including sample size, mean, standard deviation). The data was assessed to determine whether it was normally distributed. The skewness and kurtosis of the data was examined through the calculation of a z-score in order to ascertain whether the data were more than one standard deviation from the mean. The cut off for normality was a z-score should be in the range of -1.96 to 1.96 indicating that the distribution of the data is fairly normal (Doane & Seward, 2011). The significance displayed by the Shapiro-Wilk p value was also examined and should be above 0.05 (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965).

A Cronbach's alpha coefficient was performed to check the reliability and consistencies of the MBI-GS and the TIS measurement instruments. Cronbach's alpha indicates the internal consistency of a measure by assessing the average correlation of each item or question in a measure alongside every other question (Wilson & MacLean, 2011). In essence it is a measure of the consistency of the responses given for different scale items (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2012).

Research endeavours to measure an underlying phenomenon or construct namely, the latent variable, burnout and turnover intention (De Vellis, 2012). In researching these underlying constructs, burnout and turnover intention, cannot always be assessed or observed directly and thus scales were developed to measure the desired constructs in a concrete and quantifiable manner. De Vellis (2012, p. 14) states, "measures are proxies for variables that we cannot directly observe". The reliability of a developed scale is therefore essential in correctly measuring the desired construct. Without a reliable scale, researchers cannot be certain that a measurement scale assesses what it sets out to measure in a stable and consistent manner. Measurement theory shows that items on a scale measuring the same construct should each have a strong relationship with that construct and therefore each scale item should share a strong relationship with each other (De Vellis, 2012). Because it is not always possible to determine the link between scale items and the latent variable, researchers determine the intercorrelation of the scale items (De Vellis, 2012; Field, 2009). The level of internal consistency of a scale is determined by the intercorrelation of the scale items. The most common measurement of internal



consistency is Cronbach's coefficient alpha. If several factors / constructs are measured by one scale (as in the case of the MBI-GS) then the intercorrelation between each subscale item should be assessed (Association, 2013). For example, items 1,2,3,4 and 6 make up the emotional exhaustion subscale on the MBI-GS. The internal consistency of this subscale was assessed to determine its reliability in measuring the sub-construct of emotional exhaustion, which makes up burnout. The same took place for the cynicism and professional efficacy subscales. Alpha coefficients of 0.70 or larger indicate an acceptable reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Data collected from the questionnaires was analysed through the use of the Pearson's correlation coefficient as well as Spearman's rho correlation coefficient. The Pearson's correlation coefficient is a method "used to investigate the degree of the relationship between two interval/ratio variables" (Wilson & Maclean, 2011, p. 468). The Pearson's correlation coefficient investigates a linear relationship between burnout and intentions to leave. Spearman's rho measures the monotonicity of the data and reflects the extent to which a change in the direction of X is associated with a change in Y. Whereas Pearson's correlation coefficient measures the average strength of the linear relationship between two variables, Spearman's rho does not require that this relationship is perfectly linear and does not have to be constant over the entire range of values. Should Pearson's correlation coefficient be used to analyse data that is non-linear, the strength of the relationship between two variables will be underestimated. Because the data was not normally distributed, both the Pearson's correlation coefficients as well as Spearman's rho correlation

coefficients were calculated in order to avoid underestimating the strength of the relationship between burnout and turnover intention. This information is discussed further in Chapter 4. A significant correlation is displayed by a p-value of 0.05 or less, however this does not display the effect size which is displayed by  $r$ .  $R$  is described as small medium or large by values of .10, .30 and .50 respectively (Cohen, 1992).

Regression analysis was conducted in order to ascertain which independent variables (such as age, gender, level of experience) influence/predict levels of burnout and turnover intent (Field, 2009). Regression analysis aims to estimate the association between one or more explanatory variables and a single outcome variable (Hoffmann, 2010). The independent variable is said to influence the outcome variable, otherwise known as the dependent variable (Hoffmann, 2010). Multiple linear regression analysis was most appropriate for this study as the social context was hypothesised to contain many independent variables that could not be separated from one another. Multiple regression analysis enabled the researcher to “find a linear combination of independent variables” (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2012, p. 339) that predicted a dependent variable. Independent variables are factors derived from the demographic questionnaire. As previously mentioned, these factors were selected due to mediating and moderating factors associated with burnout and intention to leave (du Plooy & Roodt, 2013; Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996; Schaufeli & Maslach, 1993). The significance of the multiple regression analysis was examined requiring a p-value of 0.05 or less. The beta coefficient value was then examined for the variables that were deemed significant. The beta coefficient

accounts for the amount of change occurring in the dependent variable brought about by changes in the independent variable.

### **3.6 Validity of the methodological approach**

A positivist paradigm was selected due to the nature in which previous burnout studies have taken place. A quantitative study was appropriate because the research aimed to ascertain the degree of burnout in special needs teachers. Burnout was investigated in relation to intention to leave therefore rendering correlational analysis of the data appropriate. This study was descriptive as there was not enough quantifiable data available on burnout and turnover intent in special needs educators in South Africa. The findings of this study are not generalizable on a large scale, however this study aimed to inform further research on a larger scale. Because the sample was recruited via a nonprobability sampling method, issues of bias could occur. Due to volunteer sampling, the generalisability of the results of this study is limited. However, the results are still valuable in that they serve to inform and guide future studies in an under researched field. As explained above the MBI-GS and TIS were selected because they are valid and reliable within the South African context.

### **3.7 Ethical issues**

#### **3.7.1 Community participation**

The proposed research did not involve any community participation. This was due to the nature of the study (being a masters dissertation) and the requirements thereof. The purpose of this research was identified in relation to gaps in available research

as well as in relation to the current landscape of education practices in a South African context (Department of Education, 2001).

### **3.7.2 Social value**

It is hoped that this study will guide further research efforts, which will benefit the community of special needs educators with the aim of assisting interventions in relation to the South African education landscape. Given the changes put forth in the Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001), expanding research around special needs educators could assist the Department of Education in understanding what these educators require to function at an optimal level.

### **3.7.3 Scientific validity and integrity**

The research methodology has been discussed in detail and the selected methods are justified. Although the research was small scale, the research was treated as an initial study to inform further avenues of research and to expand current theory into an area that has not been extensively researched (Terre Blanche et al., 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012).

### **3.7.4 Fair selection of participants**

The population selected for the research was relevant to the aim of the research. Special needs educators in the Pietermaritzburg and surrounding areas were targeted and all educators were given the opportunity to participate. In the long term these educators could potentially benefit from this research as the findings are

intended to inform and guide further research and interventions in the field of burnout and intention to leave in the special needs education field (Terre Blanche et al., 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012).

### **3.7.5 Favourable risk / benefit ratio**

Because educators work in a highly stressful and busy environment, the administration of the questionnaire was organised at a time that was suitable for the participants who chose to participate. Administration of the questionnaire had an estimated duration of ten to fifteen minutes. This was therefore favourable for the participants, as they did not have to give up a large amount of time from their busy schedules. The level of risk was therefore minimal with potential long-term benefits for both educators and learners (Terre Blanche et al., 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012).

The questionnaires investigated issues that could be deemed as sensitive to some participants. Participants answered questions on their levels of burnout, potential unhappiness in their current position and whether they have thought about leaving. This had the potential to create discomfort for the participant. Participants were therefore made aware that they may terminate participation at any stage should they wish to, with no adverse effects on them (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). They were also given access to counselling services by means of referral to the Child and Family Centre based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus. Referrals were confirmed with the Child and Family Centre (Appendix 9).

The research aimed to benefit the participants and to inform the Department of Education who oversees the overall functioning of education in South Africa. There is evidence that an educator's level of burnout can adversely affect students' educational output and discipline (Bradshaw, Hershfeldt, Leaf & Pas, 2010). Therefore it was important to research this area not only for the sake of educators but also for the generations of students. This has a long-term effect on developing skilled expertise in South Africa (Mampane, 2012).

This study provides data on the wellbeing of the educators in the special needs context that will have an impact on the implementation of the policies proposed in the Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001). This directly affects special education educators with the primary aim of providing literature that will form the basis of intervention in the school environment. The sole purpose of investigating this area was to ascertain whether burnout exists in these educators so that future interventions can be planned. A detailed report on the findings of this study will be provided to the Department of Education. This will have a ripple effect on the quality of teaching and educational output that directly impacts the learner.

### **3.7.6 Independent and competent ethical review**

Research only commenced once ethical clearance was obtained from the UKZN Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee (attached in Appendix 2). Approval from the Department of Education was also granted (attached in Appendix 3).

### **3.7.7 Adequate informed consent**

The autonomy of participants was protected through the adequate use of an informed consent form (Terre Blanche et al., 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012). The relevant school gatekeeper was approached to elicit the participation of educators in this study. Participants were not required to give their name or school of employ so as to maintain their anonymity. Each participant was instructed to place their completed questionnaires in a blank envelope to further protect their anonymity.

### **3.7.8 Ongoing respect for dignity**

Participants and all those involved in the data collection process were treated with respect and dignity. Individuals approached to participate in the study could freely decline or could choose to terminate participation at any stage. The sample population was informed of the nature of the study and as well as the motives that drive it (Terre Blanche et al., 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012).

## **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter provided a detailed account of the research, sampling strategy and data collection procedures and statistical analyses that form part of this study. The MBI-GS and TIS measures were made use of in collecting data on burnout and turnover intent within a special needs educator sample. The results of the analyses run are provided in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 4 Results**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter contains the results of the quantitative analyses performed on the data collected from the questionnaires provided to participants, including the MBI-GS, TIS and basic demographic indicators. The sample characteristics and the highlighted predictive independent factors are presented first followed by an account of the descriptive statistics of the measurement scales. The reliability of each measurement scale was assessed through the use of a Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A correlation coefficient was then performed in order to test for a relationship between burnout and turnover Intention. Furthermore, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the predictive influence of certain factors on burnout and turnover Intention.

### **4.2 Sample characteristics**

The participants in this study consisted of special needs educators (N = 63). The mean age of participants was 41.60 (SD = 10.998) with a minimum age of 23 and a maximum age of 64. Further descriptors are displayed in Tables 1 to 8.

The individuals who participated in this study consisted of 43 women and 19 men of whom 30 were Indian, 15 Caucasian, 12 Black, 2 Coloured, 2 Asian and 1 labelled as Other and 1 missing. While the researcher made every effort to recruit a representative sample by contacting each of the ten special needs schools in Pietermaritzburg so as to acquire a sample that is representative, due to nonprobability, purposive sampling; the recruited



sample is not equally distributed across all racial groups. This however may be due to clusters of certain racial groups found in specific areas in the Pietermaritzburg region. The majority of participants (48.4%) are classified in the Indian racial group with the remainder falling into the following groups; 24.2% Caucasian, 19.4% Black, 3.2% Coloured, 3.2% Asian, and 1.6% Other. 43 (69.4%) were female while 19 of the participants (30.6%) were male. This information is displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1

*Gender and racial group*

N	Gender			Race						
	Female	Male	Missing	Caucasian	Indian	Black	Coloured	Other	Asian	M
63	43	19	1	15	30	12	2	1	2	1

Notes: M = missing

### 4.3 Factors of interest

Several factors of interest are described here that were investigated due to their potential mediating or moderating influence on burnout or turnover intention. The basic descriptive statistics of these factors are highlighted below.

#### 4.3.1 Level of education

The participants ranged in their level of acquired education with the majority of participants (41.3%) educated at a postgraduate level. 25.4% held an undergraduate degree while 11.1%

of participants held a Diploma level of education. 9.5% held a Masters degree while only 3.2% were placed at a Matric level. These results are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2

*Level of education*

Level of education	N = 63	
	Frequency	Percent
Postgraduate Degree	26	41.3
Degree	16	25.4
Diploma	7	11.1
Missing	7	11.1
Masters Degree	5	7.9
Matric	2	3.2

**4.3.2 Marital status**

The majority of participants were married (60.3%), with the remainder being single (20.6%), divorced (7.9%), in a relationship (6.3%), and widowed (3.2%). Table 3 below displays the marital status distribution of participants.

Table 3

*Marital status*

Marital status	N = 63
----------------	--------

	Frequency	Percent
Married	38	60.3
Single	13	20.6
Divorced	5	7.9
In a Relationship	4	6.3
Widowed	2	3.2
Missing	1	1.6

#### 4.3.3 Living situation

The participants indicated what their living situation was with 46.0% living with a partner and 39.7% living without a partner. 14.3% did not indicate their living arrangements. This is displayed in Table 4 below.

Table 4

#### *Living situation*

Living with a partner		N = 63
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	29	46.0
No	25	39.7
Missing	9	14.3

#### 4.3.4 Financial status

The participants indicated their level of financial security on a Likert-type scale. The distribution of financial security is summarised in Table 4 indicating that 36.5% are financially comfortable; 27.0% struggle financially but manage to make ends meet; 25.4% indicating that money is not a problem; and 11.1% indicating that it is very difficult to make ends meet.

Table 5

#### *Financial status*

Financial status		N = 63
	Frequency	Percent
Comfortable	23	36.5
Struggle but manage	17	27.0
Money not a problem	16	25.4
Difficult	7	11.1
Total	63	100.0

#### 4.3.5 Grade and size of class

Table 6 summarises the grade taught by participants. As special needs education provides more support in various ways, the sizes of each class are generally smaller than a mainstream class. Therefore the grades have been labeled according to each school's classification system, i.e. LSEN senior to represent the learners who are in their senior phase of special needs education. It is evident that the participants teaching a senior phase class

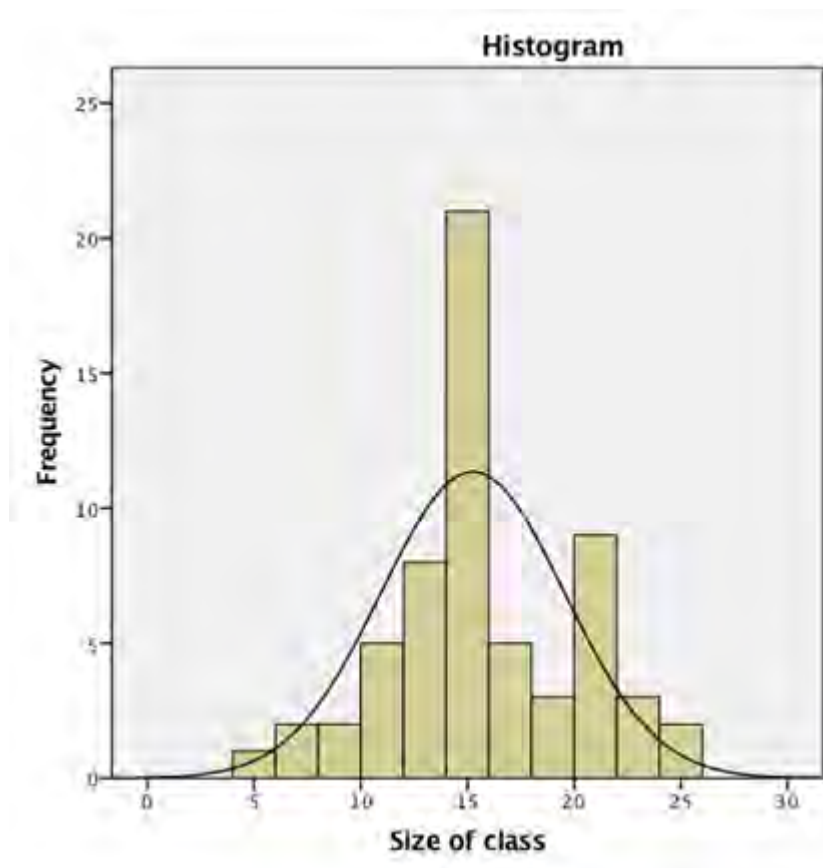
(42.9%) are somewhat equal to the participants that teach a junior phase (36.5%). Only a small portion of the participants teaches a specialist unit such as an autistic unit (4.8%). This information is displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

*Grade taught*

Grade		N = 63
	Frequency	Percent
LSEN Senior	27	42.9
LSEN Junior	23	36.5
Missing	10	15.9
Specialist Unit	3	4.8

The size of the class each participant teaches varied greatly however the majority reportedly teaches a class with 15 learners (27%). This information is displayed in Figure 5 below.



*Figure 5* Frequency distribution of the number of learners in a class

#### **4.3.6 Number of years teaching and always a special needs setting**

Please see appendix 11 for the frequency distribution of the number of years participants have been involved in teaching. The number of years teaching ranged evenly from 1 year to 41 years with an even distribution across the range.

Table 7 summarises the education setting that educators have worked at, namely, either working purely in a special needs setting or non-special needs settings such as mainstream schools. The majority of participants have worked in settings other than special needs education (74.6%), whereas a smaller majority have only ever worked in the special education needs sector (23.8%).

Table 7

*Special needs setting*

Always taught in special needs setting			N = 63
	Frequency	Percent	
No	47	74.6	
Yes	15	23.8	
Missing	1	1.6	

**4.3.7 Management responsibilities**

Most participants do not have management responsibilities (65.1%) while the remainder (30.2%) had management responsibilities in their current work role. These results are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

*Management responsibilities*

Management responsibilities			N = 63
	Frequency	Percent	
No	41	65.1	
Yes	19	30.2	
Missing	3	4.8	

## 4.4 Descriptive statistics - measurement scales

### 4.4.1 Maslach Burnout Inventory

#### 4.4.1.1 Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated in order to ascertain the reliability of the measurement scales administered. Because the MBI-GS is made up of three subscales measuring different concepts or factors that make up burnout, each subscale was assessed in terms of its own reliability. The MBI-GS emotional exhaustion subscale is made up of five items; the MBI-GS cynicism subscale is made up of five items; and the MBI-GS professional efficacy subscale is made up of six items. Together, these three subscales make up the 16-item MBI-GS.

The psychometric properties and internal consistency of the MBI-GS have been validated in South Africa as well as internationally (Bakker et al., 2002; Montgomery et al., 2005; Rothmann & Barkhuizen, 2008; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002; Storm & Rothmann, 2003). This study further supports this, finding a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.921 on the MBI-GS emotional exhaustion subscale, 0.817 on the MBI-GS cynicism subscale and 0.742 on the MBI-GS professional efficacy subscale. This displays that all three MBI-GS subscales are reliable because they are above the minimum accepted value between 0.7 and 0.8 (Field, 2009; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). These alpha coefficients display that the MBI-GS is a reliable measure within the South African context.



#### **4.4.1.2 Distribution of MBI-GS scales**

A review of the three MBI-GS subscales highlighted that the data presented on these scales does not appear to be normally distributed. A Shapiro-Wilk test ( $p > .05$ ) (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965) and an inspection of their histograms, box plots as well as their normal Q-Q plots indicated that the data is not entirely normally distributed for the emotional exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy subscales. The emotional exhaustion subscale yielded a skewness of -0.023 ( $SE=0.302$ ) and a kurtosis of -1.297 ( $SE=0.595$ ) with a Shapiro-Wilk p-value of 0.004. The skewness and kurtosis z-values are -0.076 and 2.1798 respectively. The cynicism subscale yielded a skewness of 0.831 ( $SE=0.302$ ) and a kurtosis of -0.329 ( $SE=0.595$ ) with a Shapiro-Wilk p-value of 0.000. The skewness and kurtosis z-values for the cynicism subscale are 2.751 and -0.552 respectively. The professional efficacy subscale yielded a skewness of -1.440 ( $SE=0.302$ ) and a kurtosis of 2.531 ( $SE=0.595$ ) with a Shapiro-Wilk p-value of 0.000. The skewness and kurtosis z-values of the professional efficacy subscale are -4.768 and 4.253 respectively. It is therefore evident that data are skewed and kurtotic for all three MBI-GS subscales, differing significantly from normality. Therefore it should be assumed that this data is not normally distributed in terms of its skewness and kurtosis as well as the Shapiro-Wilk p-values, which should be above 0.05 (Doane & Seward, 2011; Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). Most parametric analyses, such as Pearson's correlation coefficient, assume that data is normally distributed. If a parametric test were performed on data that is not normally distributed then the results run the risk of underestimating the strength of a correlation, for example. Therefore because the data on the MBI-GS subscales are not normally distributed and the TIS is normally distributed, both a parametric and a nonparametric test of correlation was performed.

#### **4.4.1.3 MBI scale descriptive statistics**

The Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey is comprised of three subscales, namely, emotional exhaustion (EX), cynicism (CY) and professional efficacy (PE). High scores on the emotional exhaustion and cynicism subscales with low scores on the professional efficacy subscale is associated with high levels of burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002).

- High levels of burnout are associated with the following scores across the three different subscales: EX, a score of 16 or over; CY, a score of 11 or over; and a PE score of 23 or less.
- Moderate levels of burnout are associated with the following scores across the three different subscales: EX, a score between 11 and 15; CY, a score between 6 and 10; and a PE score between 24-29.
- Low levels of burnout are associated with the following scores across the three different subscales: EX, a score between 0 and 10; CY, a score between 0 and 5; and a PE score of 30 or more.

The majority of participants in this study fell into the high range of emotional exhaustion (49.2%) with the remainder falling into the low range (38.09%) and moderate range (12.69%). The cynicism subscale was relatively equal across its ranges with 33.33% falling into the low range, 31.74% falling into the moderate range, and 34.92% falling into the high range. With regards to the professional efficacy subscale, the majority of participants fell into the low range (55.55%), followed by 23.8% falling in the moderate range and 20.63% falling into the high range. This information is displayed in Table 9 below.

Table 9

*Frequency distribution of participant scores on the MBI-GS*

MBI scales		N = 63				
	<u>Low</u>		<u>Moderate</u>		<u>High</u>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Emotional exhaustion	24	38.09	8	12.69	31	49.20
Cynicism	21	33.33	20	31.74	22	34.92
Professional efficacy	35	55.55	15	23.80	13	20.63

The means and standard deviations for all three subscales were derived and displayed in Table 10. The mean scores for the MBI emotional exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy scales were 14.90, 10.10 and 28.08 respectively. It is therefore evident that the educators who participated in this study were experiencing moderate levels of burnout (Schaufeli et al., 1996).

Table 10

*Mean Score and Standard Deviation*

MBI-GS Scale	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Exhaustion	14.90	9.098	0	30
Cynicism	10.10	8.098	0	30
Professional Efficacy	28.08	7.364	0	36

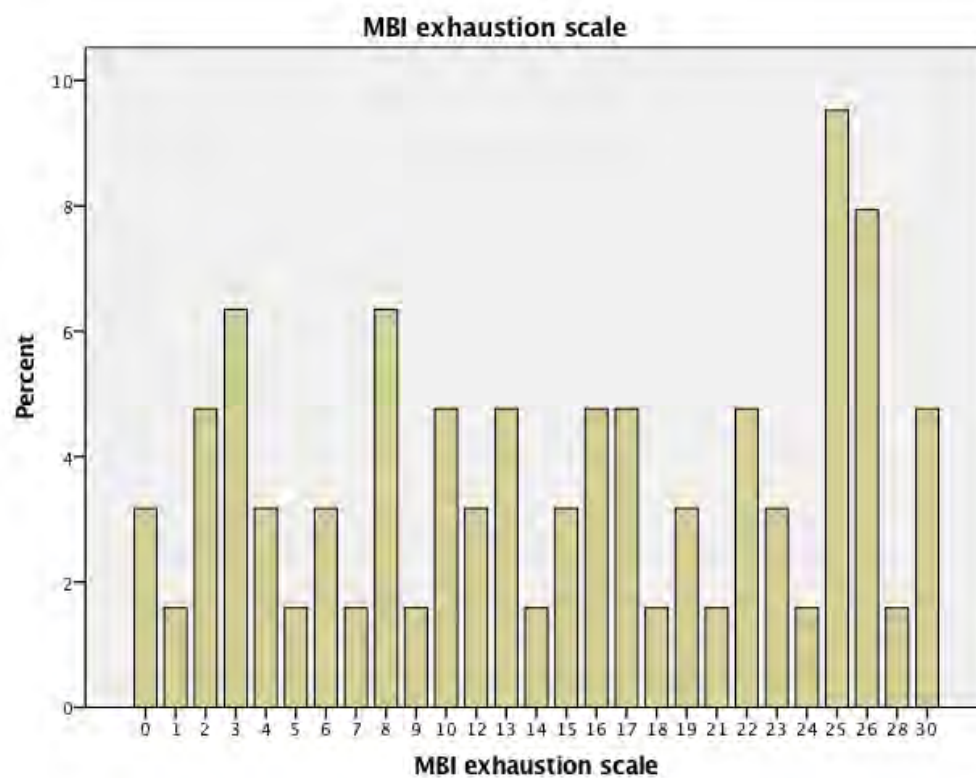


Figure 6 Frequency distribution of scores on the MBI emotional exhaustion scale

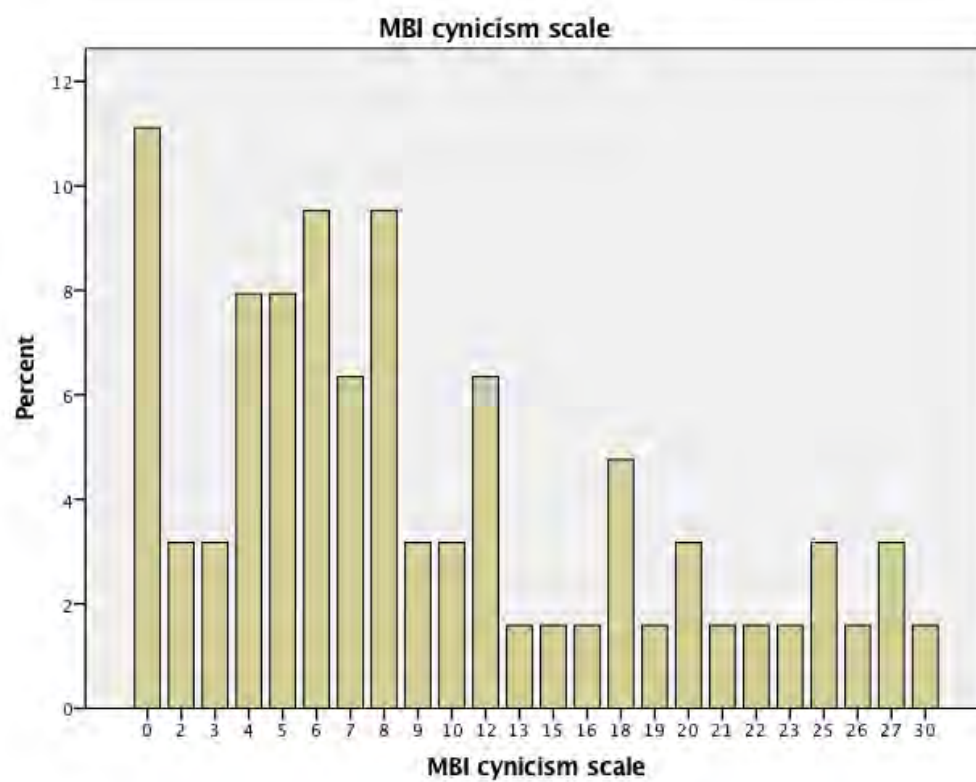


Figure 7 Frequency distribution of scores on the MBI cynicism scale

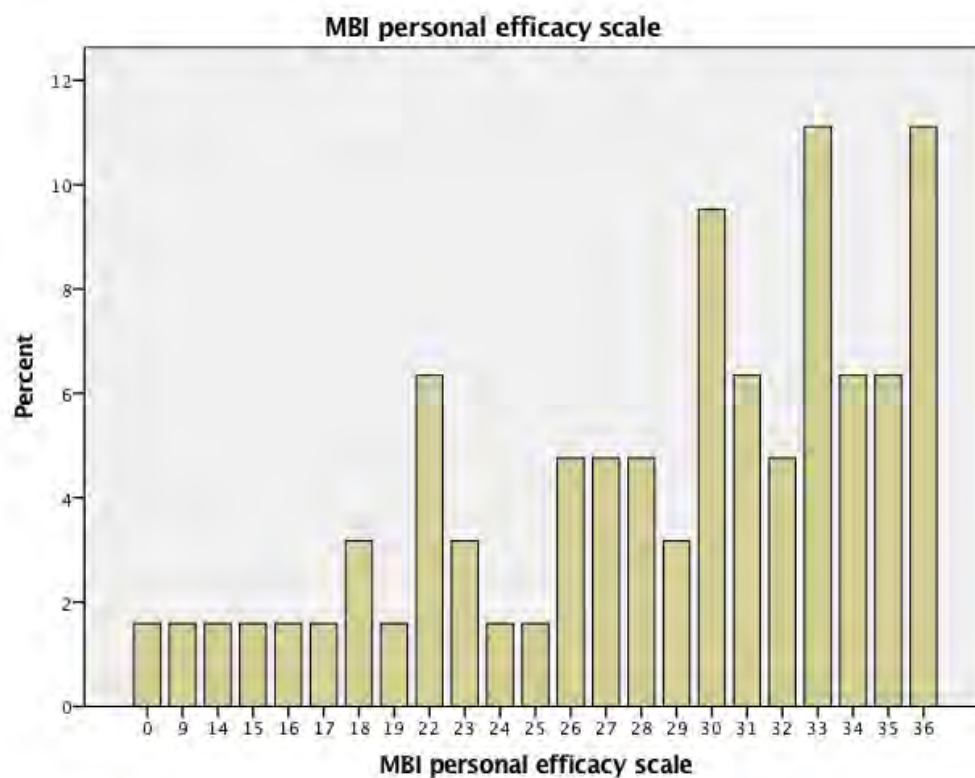


Figure 8 Frequency distribution of MBI professional efficacy scores

#### 4.4.2 Turnover Intention Scale

##### 4.4.2.1 Reliability

The Turnover Intentions Scale is comprised of 15 items with an alpha coefficient of 0.884.

The Turnover Intentions Scale is therefore a reliable measure (Field, 2009; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

##### 4.4.2.2 Distribution of the TIS

The data presented on the Turnover Intentions Scale indicated a skewness of 0.087

(SE=0.302) and a kurtosis of -0.987 (SE=0.595) with a p-value of 0.085. Therefore it may be concluded that the data on the TIS is approximately normally distributed (Doane & Seward, 2011; Shapiro & Wilk, 1965).

#### 4.4.2.3 Descriptive Statistics of TIS:

The Turnover Intentions Scale is comprised of 15 items with responses given on a 5-point Likert-scale. The total scores on this measure range from 15 to 75 with a mid-point of 45. Individuals falling within the range of the mid-point or higher experience a relatively strong desire to leave their jobs. The range of turnover intention scores was relatively even with 53.96% displaying a low intent to leave and 46.03% displaying a high intent to leave their jobs (see Table 11). The mean and standard deviation was derived for the Turnover Intentions Scale, indicates that the educators who participated in this study showed moderate levels of turnover intent (see Table 12 and Figure 9 below).

Table 11

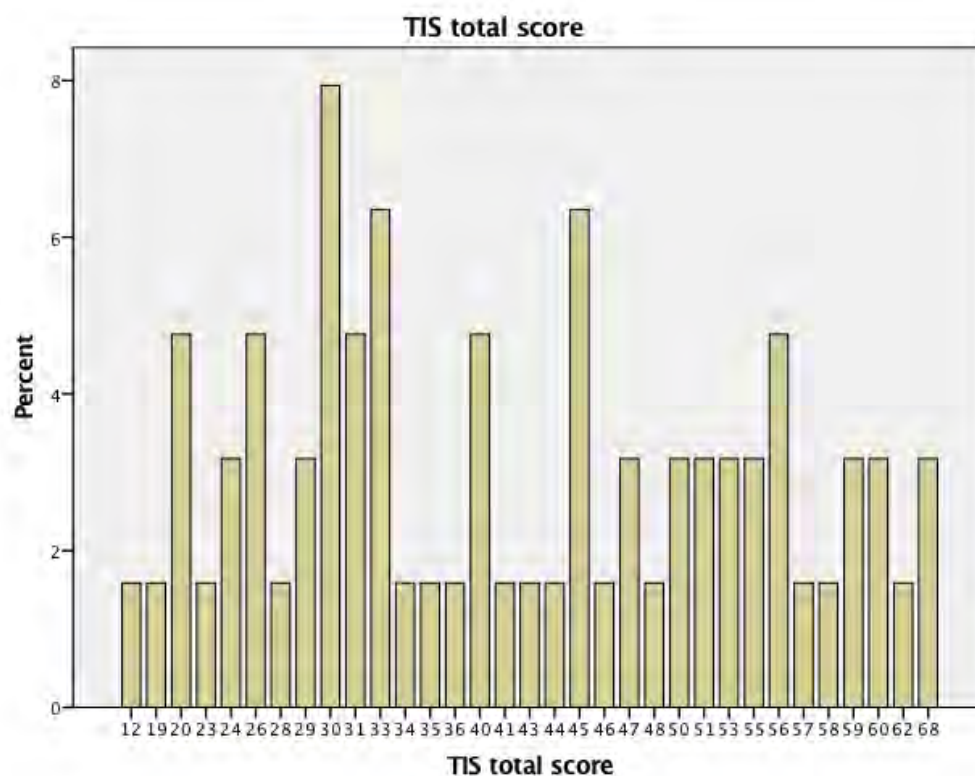
*Frequency distribution of TIS scores*

	Low		High	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
TIS	34	53.96	29	46.03

Table 12

*Mean and Standard Deviation Scores*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
TIS	40.62	13.738	12	68



*Figure 9* Frequency distribution of turnover intentions scores

A basic frequency distribution was conducted in order to ascertain whether the data is normally distributed. It is evident that the data (bar one outlier) appears relatively normally distributed (see Appendix 10 for this information).

Therefore it is evident that the MBI-GS subscales were not normally distributed whereas the data on the TIS was normally distributed. Therefore, in order to accommodate for this, both a Pearson's correlation coefficient as well as a Spearman's rho correlation coefficient were performed (as discussed in section 3.4 and section 4.4.1 below). The sample characteristics were highlighted and the measurement scales were found to be reliable. Furthermore, the data indicates that overall, the participants in this study had moderate levels of burnout and turnover intention.

## 4.5 Main results

### 4.5.1 Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis aims to establish the nature and strength of a relationship between two variables; it does not examine this relationship in terms of causality (Privitera, 2014). During the process of data analysis, should a relationship be found to exist between burnout and turnover intent, the strength and direction of that relationship is measured (Ismail, 2010). Because the data collected is ordinal in nature and is not normally distributed, a nonparametric correlation analysis such as Spearman's rho was performed. The use of Pearson's correlation coefficient on data that is not normally distributed may run the risk of underestimating the strength of the relationship. Therefore, both the Pearson's correlation coefficient and Spearman's rho correlation coefficients were reported on in order to give an indication of the extent to which the skewness and kurtosis of the data influenced the outcome. Through the use of scatterplots, the data collected for this study was found to be monotonic, thus Spearman's rho is an appropriate form of analysis.

#### ***4.5.1.1 Exhaustion and turnover intention***

A Spearman's rho correlation coefficient assessing the relationship between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention rendered a correlation coefficient of .583 (significant at the 0.01 level). The Pearson's correlation coefficient rendered a coefficient of .574 (significant at the 0.01 level). This indicates that a strong bivariate relationship exists between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention. Therefore increases in emotional exhaustion were correlated with increases in turnover intentions. This data is displayed in Table 13.



Table 13

*Correlation coefficients MBI EX and TIS*

			TIS Total Score
Spearman's rho	MBI EX	Correlation Coefficient	.583**
		Sig (2-tailed)	.000
		N	63
Pearson Correlation	MBI EX	Correlation Coefficient	.574**
		Sig (2-tailed)	.000
		N	63

Notes: EX = emotional exhaustion

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

#### **4.5.1.2 Cynicism and turnover intentions**

A Spearman's rho correlation coefficient assessing the relationship between cynicism and turnover intention rendered a correlation coefficient of .791 (significant at the 0.01 level). A Pearson's correlation coefficient rendered a coefficient of .769 (significant at the 0.01 level). This indicates that a very strong bivariate relationship exists between cynicism and turnover intention. Therefore increases in cynicism were strongly correlated with increases in turnover intention. This data is displayed in Table 14.

Table 14

*Correlation coefficients MBI CY and TIS*

			TIS Total Score
Spearman's rho	MBI CY	Correlation Coefficient	.791**
		Sig (2-tailed)	.000
		N	63
Pearson Correlation	MBI CY	Correlation Coefficient	.769**
		Sig (2-tailed)	.000
		N	63

Notes: CY = cynicism

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

#### **4.5.1.3 Professional efficacy and turnover intentions**

A Spearman's rho correlation coefficient assessing the relationship between professional efficacy and turnover intention rendered a negative correlation coefficient of -.314 (significant at the 0.05 level). A Pearson's correlation coefficient rendered a coefficient of -.260 (significant at the 0.05 level). This indicates that a negative relationship occurs between professional efficacy and turnover intention however the strength of this relationship is low. Therefore this suggests that as professional efficacy increases so turnover intention decreases. This data is displayed in Table 15.

Table 15

Correlation coefficients MBI PE and TIS

			TIS Total Score
Spearman's rho	MBI PE	Correlation Coefficient	-.314*

		Sig (2-tailed)	.012
		N	63
Pearson Correlation	MBI PE	Correlation Coefficient	-.260 <sup>*</sup>
		Sig (2-tailed)	.040
		N	-.314 <sup>*</sup>

Notes: PE = professional efficacy

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Overall, increases in turnover intentions are related to increases in emotional exhaustion and cynicism; and decreases in professional efficacy.

#### 4.5.2 Regression analysis

Multiple regression analyses were conducted in order to gauge the likelihood of certain independent variables affecting both burnout and turnover intention. The independent variables were age, gender, race, level of education, marital status, living situation, financial status, grade taught, class size, years teaching, always taught in special needs contexts, and management responsibilities. Three individual multiple regression analyses were performed on the three subscales of burnout to provide an overall understanding of the effect of these variables on burnout. A multiple regression analysis was also performed to establish the effect of these independent variables on turnover intention. The results of these analyses are displayed in Table 16 to 19.

#### 4.5.2.1 MBI emotional exhaustion

Table 16

*Predictive effects of various factors on emotional exhaustion*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R2	SE of Estimate	F	df	Sig
1	.587 <sup>a</sup>	.345	.092	8.671	1.361	12	.236 <sup>a</sup>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management responsibilities, Size of class, Always taught in special needs class, Race, Live with a partner, Age, Financial status, Level of education, Grade participant teaches, Gender, Marital status, Number of years teaching

b. Dependent Variable: MBI emotional exhaustion scale

Using an enter method, the results indicate a statistically non-significant positive relationship between the predictor variables and Emotional Exhaustion,  $R^2 = .345$ ,  $F(1.361)$ ,  $p > 0.001$ . The independent predictor variables highlighted in the table (management responsibilities, size of class, always taught in special needs class, race, live with a partner, age, financial status, level of education, grade participant teaches, gender, marital status, number of years teaching) explained 34.5% of the variance in emotional exhaustion however this inference is not statistically significant. The standardised regression coefficients, t-values and p-levels are reported in Table 17.

Table 17

*Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting emotional exhaustion*

Model	Standardised Coefficients	T	P
-------	---------------------------	---	---

		Beta		
1				
	Constant		.068	.946
	Age	.039	.122	.904
	Gender	-.006	-.031	.976
	Race	-.202	-1.346	.188
	Level of Ed	.290	1.698	.100
	Marital status	.203	.997	.326
	Live with partner	.106	.624	.537
	Financial Status	-.048	-.293	.771
	Grade Teach	-.019	-.120	.905
	Size of Class	.338	2.201	<u>.035</u>
	Years Teaching	.049	.149	.882
	Always SN	-.313	-1.745	.091
	Management			
	Responsibilities	.041	.211	.834

a. Dependent Variable: MBI emotional exhaustion Scale

Table 17 shows that only the Size of Class ( $\beta = .339$ ,  $t = 2.201$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) rendered a statistically significant relationship with emotional exhaustion.

The predictive effects of the various factors and cynicism are displayed in Table 18.

#### 4.5.2.2 MBI cynicism

Table 18

*Predictive effects of various factors on cynicism*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	SE of Estimate	F	df	Sig
1	.497 <sup>a</sup>	.247	-.044	8.275	.848	12	.604 <sup>a</sup>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management responsibilities, Size of class, Always taught in special needs class, Race, Live with a partner, Age, Financial status, Level of education, Grade participant teaches, Gender, Marital status, Number of years teaching

b. Dependent Variable: MBI cynicism scale

Using an enter method, the results indicate a statistically non-significant positive relationship between the predictor variables and cynicism,  $R^2 = .247$ ,  $F(.848)$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . The independent predictor variables highlighted in the Table 18 (management responsibilities, size of class, always taught in special needs class, race, live with a partner, age, financial status, level of education, grade participant teaches, gender, marital status, number of years teaching) explained 24.7% of the variance in cynicism however this inference is not statistically significant. The standardised regression coefficients, t-values and p-levels are reported in Table 19.

Table 19

*Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting cynicism*

Model	Standardised Coefficients	T	P
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Beta				
1	Constant		1.414	.167
	Age	-.312	-.913	.368
	Gender	.054	.275	.785
	Race	-.012	-.075	.940
	Level of Ed	.017	.095	.925
	Marital status	-.077	-.354	.726
	Live with partner	.078	.429	.671
	Financial Status	.028	.160	.874
	Grade Teach	-.306	-1.777	.085
	Size of Class	.295	1.791	.083
	Years Teaching	.510	1.464	.153
	Always SN	-.222	-1.158	.256
	Management			
	Responsibilities	-.079	-.382	.705

a. Dependent Variable: MBI cynicism Scale

Table 19 displayed that none of the independent predictor variables rendered a statistically significant relationship to cynicism. The predictive effects of the various factors and professional efficacy are displayed in Table 20.

#### 4.5.2.3 MBI professional efficacy

Table 20

*Predictive effects of various factors on professional efficacy*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	SE of Estimate	F	df	Sig
1	.642 <sup>a</sup>	.412	.185	6.650	1.812	12	.090 <sup>a</sup>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management responsibilities, Size of class, Always taught in special needs class, Race, Live with a partner, Age, Financial status, Level of education, Grade participant teaches, Gender, Marital status, Number of years teaching

b. Dependent Variable: MBI professional efficacy scale

Using an enter method, the results indicate a statistically non-significant positive relationship between the predictor variables and professional efficacy,  $R^2 = .412$ ,  $F(1.812)$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . The independent predictor variables highlighted in Table 20 (management responsibilities, size of class, always taught in special needs class, race, live with a partner, age, financial status, level of education, grade participant teaches, gender, marital status, number of years teaching) explained 41.2% of the variance in professional efficacy however this inference is not statistically significant. The standardised regression coefficients, t-values and p-levels are reported in Table 21.

Table 21

*Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting professional efficacy*

Model	Standardised Coefficients	T	P
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Beta				
1	Constant		2.539	.016
	Age	.553	1.829	.077
	Gender	-.073	-.422	.676
	Race	.247	1.741	.092
	Level of Ed	.310	1.912	.065
	Marital status	-.026	-.136	.893
	Live with partner	-.006	-.037	.971
	Financial Status	-.094	-.607	.548
	Grade Teach	.125	.821	.418
	Size of Class	-.095	-.650	.521
	Years Teaching	-.730	-2.370	<u>.024</u>
	Always SN	.002	.013	.989
	Management Responsibilities	-.546	-2.971	<u>.006</u>

a. Dependent Variable: MBI professional efficacy scale

Table 21 shows that the years teaching ( $\beta = -.730$ ,  $t = -2.370$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); management responsibilities ( $\beta = -.546$ ,  $t = -2.971$ ,  $p < 0.06$ ); rendered a statistically significant relationship with professional efficacy. The predictive effects of the various factors and turnover intention are displayed in Table 22.

#### 4.5.2.4 Turnover intentions scale

Table 22

*Predictive effects of various factors on turnover intention*

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	SE of Estimate	F	df	Sig
1	.508 <sup>a</sup>	.258	-.049	14.067	.842	12	.610 <sup>a</sup>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Management responsibilities, Size of class, Always taught in special needs class, Race, Live with a partner, Age, Financial status, Level of education, Grade participant teaches, Gender, Marital status, Number of years teaching

b. Dependent Variable: MBI turnover intentions scale

Using an enter method, the results indicate a statistically non-significant positive relationship between the predictor variables and turnover intention,  $R^2 = .258$ ,  $F(.842)$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . The independent predictor variables highlighted in Table 22 (management responsibilities, size of class, always taught in special needs class, race, live with a partner, age, financial status, level of education, grade participant teaches, gender, marital status, number of years teaching) accounted for 25.8% of the variance in turnover intentions however this inference is not statistically significant. The standardised regression coefficients, t-values and p-levels are reported in Table 23.

Table 23

*Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting turnover intention*

Model	Standardised Coefficients	T	P
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		Beta		
1				
	Constant		1.415	.168
	Gender	-.050	-.235	.816
	Age	-.471	-1.345	.189
	Race	-.193	-1.156	.257
	Level of Ed	-.060	-.312	.757
	Marital status	.111	.486	.630
	Live with partner	.096	.515	.610
	Financial Status	.175	.983	.334
	Grade Teach	.042	.211	.835
	Size of Class	.346	1.956	.060
	Years Teaching	.614	1.750	.091
	Always SN	-.125	-.633	.532
	Management			
	Responsibilities	-.001	-.003	.998

a. Dependent Variable: MBI turnover intentions scale

Table 23 displays that none of the independent predictor variables rendered a statistically significant relationship to turnover intentions.

#### 4.6 Conclusion / Summary

In this chapter the results of the data analyses were reported and presented. These results indicate that both the MBI-GS and the TIS may be considered to be valid and reliable

measurement instruments. The data collected on the MBI-GS subscales was not normally distributed however the TIS data was normally distributed. The results indicate that certain dimensions of burnout correlate strongly with turnover intent while other dimensions do not. Specifically, cynicism is positively associated with turnover intent while emotional exhaustion is only moderately associated with turnover intent and professional efficacy has a negative yet weak relationship with turnover intention. The regression analysis did not render any significant predictors of burnout or turnover intention in relation to the factors highlighted by previous research. Specifically though, the class size was found to be a predictor of emotional exhaustion and the years spent teaching as well as management responsibilities were found to be predictors of professional efficacy.

## **Chapter 5 Discussion**

The aim of this study was to identify and describe the level of burnout in special needs educators and to ascertain whether a relationship exists between burnout levels in these educators and their intention to leave their current employment. In addition, this study aimed to examine the factors that potentially influence burnout and turnover intention in special needs educators. This chapter discusses the results and findings presented in Chapter 4 as well as the possible implications of these findings. The descriptive findings are discussed first followed by an in-depth discussion of the relationship between burnout and turnover intentions.

This discussion continues with an account of the correlation between each burnout subscale and turnover intentions followed by a discussion of the significant predictors of each dependent variable elicited through multiple linear regression analyses. The discussion is concluded with an integration and synthesis of the findings reported, according to the South African inclusive education context in which teachers work.

This study is of value because it aims to address the lack of available research on burnout and turnover intentions within a South African special needs educator context. High levels of burnout have been associated with an adverse effect on teaching and considering the changes taking place in the South African special needs education context, it is necessary to examine this population. Although this study is not generalisable to the South African special needs teaching population as a whole,

the aim was to initiate research in this context with the hope of directing further research in this area appropriately. Therefore the MBI-GS and TIS were made use of to ascertain the level of burnout in a Pietermaritzburg sample of special needs educators as well as their intention to leave their current organisation of employ.

### **5.1 Burnout and turnover intention levels**

The results indicated that this population is moderately burnt out due to emotional exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy mean total scores all falling in the moderate range (14.90, 10.10 and 28.08 respectively), as indicated by the MBI-GS scale (Schaufeli et al., 1996). Specifically, the majority of educators who participated in this study fell into the high range on the emotional exhaustion and cynicism subscales and the low range on the professional efficacy subscale. The mean of these subscales however places these educators at a moderate level of burnout. The mean scores for each subscale fell on the cusp of the top of the moderate range (i.e. the cynicism mean score of 10.10, narrowly misses a high range classification which is 11+). The majority of participants fell within the high range on the emotional exhaustion and cynicism scale (49.20% and 34.92% respectively) and the low range on the professional efficacy scale (55.55%). This indicates that a substantial percentage of this sample is burnt out, or at high risk of burning out, experiencing high levels of emotional exhaustion and cynicism and low levels of professional efficacy, indicative of the burnout experience (Maslach, 1976; Schaufeli et al., 1996). This is of concern because burnout negatively affects an educator's outcomes and thus the quality of education provided (Pas et al., 2010). It also has negative

implications for an individual's health and wellbeing and is also associated with job withdrawal, absenteeism and turnover intention (Maslach et al., 2001).

Previous research on burnout in South African educators did not focus on an overall classification of burnout for the sample (i.e. moderately burnt out) however mean scores were provided which allows for classification into low, moderate or high ranges on each subscale. For example, van Tonder and Williams (2009) reported high levels of burnout in secondary educators in the Gauteng province attributed for the most part to the OBE curriculum, disrespectful and poorly disciplined learners as well as large classes and a lack of support from the Department of Education (van Tonder & Williams, 2009). Furthermore, several studies indicated that educators in the North West province experience moderate levels of burnout (Jackson & Rothmann, 2005b; Rothmann & Barkhuizen, 2008; Rothmann & Essenko, 2007). Rothmann and Essenko (2007) reported that burnout in South African higher education support staff was positively associated with demands in the work place and a lack of available resources to manage these demands. These findings further support the use of the transactional model in understanding the process of the development of burnout in South African educators (Larrivee, 2012). The imbalance between demands and resources is evident from these studies highlighted above and is of concern in the development of burnout.

The data provided on the TIS indicated a mean total score of 40.62 with a standard deviation of 13.738 thus indicating that this population has a moderate level of turnover intent. The TIS does not provide graded categories of turnover intent, it

merely has a mid-point cutoff between high and low turnover intention, thus nuanced analyses of the results were not possible. However, given the mid-point cutoff, it is of concern that just under half the sample had high scores on the TIS. These intentions combined with the high risk of burnout described above (high emotional exhaustion and low professional efficacy) indicate that the special needs education sector needs urgent attention to attempt to balance the demands made on educators and the resources available to them. The number of educators leaving the profession in South Africa between 2005 and 2008 was 24 750, with more educators leaving the profession than joining it, thus indicating that turnover is a significant problem (Department of Basic Education, 2012; Pitsoe, 2013). Because turnover intent is the strongest cognitive precursor to actual turnover, the moderate level of turnover intention in this study provides an early warning of the development of turnover (Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Factors to consider in the TIS scores in the current study include the macro-sociological effects of the economic and employment landscape in South Africa (Jacobs, 2005). Some educators may feel the need to leave their current employment but with economic strains and a slow employment market, this may prove difficult, therefore resulting in their complacency or acceptance of remaining in their current position of employment. This may further contribute to the development of burnout as the prolonged experience of stress results in burnout (Larrivee, 2012).



## **5.2 Relationship between burnout and turnover intention**

### **5.2.1.1 Cynicism**

The correlational analyses performed indicate that a very strong positive relationship exists between cynicism levels and turnover intentions, as evidenced by a Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of .791 at a 0.01 significance level and a Pearson's correlation coefficient of .769. This indicates that an individual's level of cynicism is positively associated with their intention to leave their current employment. These results indicate that an individual's experience of cynicism is linked to their intent to leave their current employment. Cynicism is defined as an indifference or apathy concerning one's work overall, thus as one experiences an increase in these negative emotions these results indicate that the cognition / planned behaviour involved in turnover intent increases. Similarly, as cynicism levels decrease so do intentions to turnover. This does not imply that cynicism causes turnover intention, it simply displays that these two variables are positively associated. Further research may highlight the causality of this relationship. However it may be hypothesised according to the transactional model, that due to the prolonged experience of irreconcilable stressors in the work place, which may be more pronounced in the special needs sector, the individual may develop emotional and physical side effects (as explained by emotional exhaustion and cynicism) that lead to the development of burnout (Larrivee, 2012).

### **5.2.1.2 Emotional exhaustion**

Furthermore, correlational analyses between emotional exhaustion levels and turnover intentions rendered a Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of .583 at a 0.01 significance level and a Pearson's correlation coefficient of .574. This indicates that a strong positive relationship exists between these two variables meaning that an individual's level of exhaustion is positively associated with their turnover intentions. Shirom (1989, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) indicated that the most typical manifestation of burnout is chronic fatigue and some teachers experienced more somatic complaints than others who were not burnt out (Wolpin, 1989). Therefore it appears that the experience of physical exhaustion is an indicator of burnout impacting the affected individual on a physical level.

### **5.2.1.3 Professional efficacy**

The professional efficacy variable rendered a Spearman's rho correlation coefficient of -.314 at a 0.05 significance level and a Pearson's correlation coefficient of -.260. This indicates that a moderate negative relationship exists between professional efficacy and turnover intention. It is evident that the Pearson's correlation coefficient has underestimated the strength of the relationship between professional efficacy and turnover intentions as a coefficient of -.260 is classified as a low strength level whereas -.314 is classified as moderate strength (Cohen, 1992). Professional efficacy can also be described as personal accomplishment or an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks effectively. Therefore the negative correlation indicates that a change in the direction of professional efficacy is met

with a change in the opposite direction of the associated turnover intention variable. Reduced professional efficacy can affect individuals by causing a reduction in their productivity levels (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Furthermore, previous research on South African mainstream school educators has indicated the inefficacy results when there is a lack of available resources necessary (Jackson et al., 2006). This however was not explored in this study.

#### ***5.2.1.4 Integration***

Previous research indicated that emotional exhaustion was the most commonly identified dimension of burnout however in this study it appears that cynicism may be the most strongly correlated dimension to turnover (Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Furthermore, emotional exhaustion and cynicism resulted when educators felt overloaded and experienced social conflict in the work environment (Maslach et al., 2001).

Himle and Jayaratne (1987) indicate that high levels of burnout are associated with high levels of turnover intention. Furthermore, longitudinal research has indicated that burnout can result in dissatisfaction with one's position of employment (Wolpin et al., 1991). Therefore, elevated scores on the cynicism subscale may indicate the occurrence of experienced dissatisfaction with one's position of employment, caused by burnout. Although the mean total score on the cynicism subscale was not elevated in comparison to the other two subscales, the correlation between the cynicism subscale and turnover intention was substantially stronger. This does not indicate that cynicism causes turnover intent; it simply indicates that these two

variables are strongly associated with one another. Further discussion of this will take place in 5.4. Further research examining the causality of these variables however, will allow for better insight into the relationship between these factors.

### **5.3 Factors influencing burnout and turnover intention**

The results suggest that the independent predictor variables do not account for a significant proportion in burnout and turnover intention levels experienced. Specifically however, it was found that the size of a class predicts emotional exhaustion levels in burnout ( $\beta = .339$ ,  $t = 2.037$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); years teaching and management responsibilities predict the level of professional efficacy in burnout ( $\beta = -.682$ ,  $t = -2.161$ ,  $p < 0.05$  and  $\beta = -.526$ ,  $t = -2.734$ ,  $p < 0.05$  respectively). No factors were found to significantly influence the levels of cynicism in burnout and turnover intention.

#### ***5.3.1 Factors influencing burnout***

Previous research has indicated that an individual's gender may influence the experience of burnout however conflicting findings have been documented and Greenglass (1991, in Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996) indicated that this was due to confusing gender with work roles and hierarchical positions. This study however found no association between gender and burnout.

A negative relationship was found between management responsibilities (indicative of hierarchical positions) and professional efficacy levels ( $\beta = -.526$ ). Therefore

higher management responsibilities result in lower professional efficacy scores.

Educators with more management responsibilities may have a lower sense of efficacy in the work environment and a higher level of burnout. Due to the nature of this study, the possible reasons for this were not explored, but a tentative hypothesis may be, that the exposure to management challenges and policy demands made by the Department of Education, results in a sense of frustration and hopelessness in managing these demands.

The number of years teaching has a similar relationship with professional efficacy with a Beta coefficient of  $-.682$ . Therefore as the numbers of years teaching increases so the individual's professional efficacy decreases. Again the reasons for this finding were not explored, but it could be hypothesised that prolonged exposure to stressful work environments, gained over years teaching results in a sense of disillusionment. This may result in a reduced sense of professional efficacy.

This study also displayed that the size of a class influences levels of emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = .339$ ); thus an increase in the size of a class results in an increase in an individual's levels of emotional exhaustion.

Certain job characteristics have also been linked to the experience of burnout, including role ambiguity, conflict and lack of autonomy (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). This was not examined in this study however and is an avenue for further research.

Certain studies have displayed that single individuals have higher levels of burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1985) however no support for this assertion was found in the present study. This is related to the level of social support that an individual experiences which is said to moderate burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1985).

Several studies have examined personality factors in relation to the experience of Burnout within a non-educator population and support for various personality elements were linked to the development of burnout (Bakker, Van Der Zee, Lewig, & Dollard, 2006; Hochwälder, 2006; Kokkinos, 2007; Morgan, 2008). Furthermore, job satisfaction, commitment and high expectations have been linked to burnout. Although these factors were not the topic of this study, they could be explored in future research.

### ***5.3.2 Factors influencing turnover intentions***

No factors were found to significantly predict turnover intention in this study. In previous research, turnover and turnover intention have been linked to various working environments as well as personal and professional factors, however a pertinent finding states that turnover intention are higher in rural populations with a lower socio-economic status (Borman & Dowling, 2008; MacDonald, 1999; Stinebrickner, 1998). Mano-Negrin and Tzafrir (2004) stated that turnover is most likely to occur alongside appropriate and available employment opportunities. These opportunities may not be as readily available in lower socio-economic regions therefore meaning that an individual may express the intent to leave their current

employment however they may not do so due to lack of opportunity. Macro-sociological implications on turnover intent highlighted by Jacobs (2005), include the socially related structures that influence turnover intention. Further research into this along with socio-economic factors may prove to elicit certain predictive factors of turnover intentions that this study could not.

#### **5.4 Synthesis and integration according to South African context**

An important consideration here is the context in which South African educators are working in currently. With the dramatic changes in expectations put forth by the Education White Paper 6, many educators find themselves working under increased expectations with little support from management and the Department of Education. Research on the implementation of inclusive education has displayed that educators felt there was a lack of support and resources available as well as uncertainty around their knowledge and skills in catering for learners with special education needs (Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff, & Pettipher, 2002). Furthermore, in a study by O'Connor and Geiger (2009) mainstream educators expressed that the challenges they were facing include a lack of departmental and professional support as well as the need for training and resources to assist them to meet the current demands they face. These factors serve to promote the imbalance between perceived work place demands and changes and the available resources educators have in order to manage this.

Therefore, the results of this study may be accounted for according to these characteristics by making use of the transactional model of stress and burnout. Educators may experience a lack of professional support in managing the demands they face in the workplace. The size of an educator's class was correlated with emotional exhaustion in this study, perhaps pointing to an educator's experience of being overloaded and unsupported in managing high workloads. This ties in with subjective accounts provided to the researcher in the data collection process. Furthermore, emotional exhaustion and cynicism have been linked to individuals feeling overloaded and the experience of workplace social conflict (Maslach et al., 2001). This study also found that the emotional exhaustion and cynicism subscales were significantly correlated indicating that a strong relationship exists between these two subscales. This supports the notion that educators may be overloaded with high numbers of learners in their class contributing to larger and somewhat unmanageable workloads, coupled with a lack of support, this may lead to the presence of cynicism and emotional exhaustion in the burnout experience. The important consideration here is that this experience may lead to the development of burnout because educators perceive a lack of support and an inability to manage the high workloads they are faced with. The mediating and moderating factors in this study therefore pointed somewhat to this notion (correlation with emotional exhaustion and size of class) however further more in-depth research around this will provide clarity in this regard.

With regards to turnover of educators in South Africa, it is necessary to consider the economic and employment climate that exists currently. The presence of economic



difficulties and diminished employment opportunities may mean that although educators experience a moderate level of turnover intent, they may not leave their current employment due to a lack of available employment opportunities. This is supported by Mano-Negrin and Tzafrir (2004) who assert that actual turnover takes place according to available employment opportunities. Furthermore, the macro-sociological implications that define the labour market circumstances will influence actual turnover regardless of intent (Jacobs, 2005). In understanding the process that takes place, educators may have excessive demands placed on them, including large workloads and a large number of students in a class as well as a lack of professional support in the adjustments taking place with regards to inclusive education. This may lead to burnout and the intent to leave their current position however due to the economic climate and lack of opportunity to do so, they remain in their current employment and struggle on. This is supported by the fact that the number of years teaching was negatively correlated with professional efficacy. Therefore as the number of years teaching increases so it is met with a decrease in the individual's experience of their professional efficacy. Furthermore, management responsibilities were found to be a predictor of reduced professional efficacy further supporting the notion of overloaded educators. As these responsibilities increase so professional efficacy decreases.

Therefore, with the recent changes in the Education White Paper 6, and a general perception of minimal resources and a lack of professional support from the Department of Education (Oswald & Swart, 2011); coupled with the economic and employment climate in South Africa; educators in Pietermaritzburg may experience

stress in the workplace which may continue in a prolonged manner due to a lack of available alternative employment opportunities. The intent to quit is present however due to the inability to change jobs, prolonged stress occurs leading to the development of burnout.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

Therefore it is evident that special needs educators in the Pietermaritzburg region experience moderate levels of burnout and turnover intentions. Cynicism and turnover intention were the most strongly correlated in this sample however Emotional exhaustion was moderately correlated with turnover intention. This indicates that the factors that comprise burnout are related to turnover intention. Furthermore, professional efficacy was negatively correlated however weakly, with turnover intention indicating that increases in professional efficacy resulted in decreases in turnover Intention. Several independent variables were considered according to their predictive influence on burnout and turnover intention. The size of an educator's class, referring to the number of students present as well as years teaching influenced the occurrence of emotional exhaustion and professional efficacy. These results were discussed in relation to the context of current developments in the implementation of inclusive education and the role it plays in this regard.

## **Chapter 6 Conclusion**

This chapter will highlight the main findings of this study as well as various limitations present in this study in relation to sampling, resources and data analysis. The implications of this study as well as the recommendations for future research are then highlighted.

### **6.1 Summary of main findings**

The results of this study indicate that special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg experience a moderate level of burnout and turnover intentions, as indicated by the MBI-GS and TIS. Furthermore there is evidence that the MBI-GS subscales are correlated with turnover intentions as indicated on the TIS. Cynicism was found to be the most strongly correlated dimension of burnout and turnover intent with emotional exhaustion displaying a moderate correlation to turnover intent. Furthermore, research into variables that have an influence on burnout and turnover intent need to be explored, specifically in relation to macro-sociological factors that influence special needs educators in the South African context of inclusive education. Therefore further research is required in order to investigate these dimensions on a larger scale that will lend the generalisability necessary for policy development and the implementation of practical interventions.

## **6.2 Limitations**

### **6.2.1 Sampling problems**

Although there was no clear indication of the total number of special needs educators in the Pietermaritzburg region, it was estimated that there were approximately 140 educators based on the ten special needs schools listed by the Department of Education. Each school was approached to participate however only 63 educators elected to participate in the study. The results are not necessarily applicable to the wider population.

In addition, the sample was recruited through the use of non-probability, purposive sampling in which participants were chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate. Although this method of sampling is adequate when time and expense are limited, a clear description of the sample was provided so that it may be scrutinised for its relevance (Morgan, 2008; Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

Despite these sampling limitations the results point to the urgent need to further investigate the possibility of burnout in South African educators in various geographical settings and contexts. This study design could be replicated in other contexts.

### **6.2.2 Time and resource limitations**

This study occurred during the period of 2015 however ethical clearance was only granted in June of that year meaning that time limitations occurred in recruiting a

sample due to subsequent school holidays. In addition, research could not be expanded to further areas in KwaZulu-Natal and other provinces, as this would require separate ethical clearance from the Department of Education in each province. Furthermore, the researcher was not afforded that appropriate time and funding in order to implement research on a larger scale.

### **6.2.3 Analysis limitations**

Due to the abnormally distributed data on the MBI-GS scale, the analyses could not take place as intended. The intended analysis was a Pearson's  $r$  correlation between the two variables as well as multiple linear regression to ascertain whether any independent variables affect the dependent variables (burnout and turnover intention). Due to the normal distribution of one variable (turnover intention) and the abnormal distribution of the other variable (burnout), a correlation coefficient such as Pearson's  $r$  could not be conducted in isolation as it would violate the assumptions of normal distribution rendering these results invalid. Thus Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was included as a nonparametric test in order to avoid underestimating the strength of the relationship between burnout and turnover intention (as could have taken place by solely using a parametric test such as Pearson's correlation coefficient).

### **6.3 Implications and recommendations**

This study investigated the special needs educator population with regards to burnout and turnover intent. It is evident that turnover is a major problem the

education sector is facing both locally and internationally (Mampane, 2012; Xaba, 2003). With little available research on burnout and turnover intent on this population, this study served to initiate research in this regard. The results of this study indicated that special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, experience moderate levels of burnout and turnover intent. Cynicism was found to have the strongest correlation with turnover intent. Further research examining the causality of the development of cynicism and turnover Intention will allow for further insight into the relationship between these factors as well as how emotional exhaustion and cynicism interact according to the various predictor variables discussed.

Although burnout and turnover intention levels are considered moderate in this study, there is evidence that intervention would be warranted on both a work place and individual level (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Furthermore, this supports the recommendation for further research on a larger scale that will enable generalisability so as to mobilise interventions as necessary and to influence policy development in this regard. Although these findings are only relevant to the population of special needs educators in the Pietermaritzburg region, it serves to display that burnout and turnover intent are viable areas for further research on a larger scale. In addition, further research into the association between each burnout dimension and turnover intention will prove useful in identifying causal factors that contribute to its existence.

More specifically, the mediating and moderating factors highlighted by previous research on burnout and turnover intent were examined in this study with no significant variables predicting burnout or turnover intention. Therefore, because few of the factors selected predict burnout and turnover intention, it is worth examining other factors such as personality, work place environment and the socio-economic context in order to perform exploratory research into the various factors that could account for the presence of burnout and turnover intention in a South African special needs educator population.

As indicated previously, turnover intent is seen as the strongest precursor to turnover and is therefore an important factor to include in research (Martin, 2007; Tett & Meyer, 1993). It may be the case however, that those who have already left their positions as special needs educators have important views on the factors that led to this action. This study obviously could not include those educators who have already left their positions and therefore it is recommended that further research include these ex-educators. This is recommended because it is important that the body of research grow around this important topic. Substantial empirical and generalisable research is required in order to facilitate policy development and changes within the Department of Education. Knowledge of empirically supported causal factors related to burnout and turnover intent will enable the practical implementation supportive of strategies.

### *Intervention*

Research indicates that interventions implemented to handle burnout can take place at a workplace level as well as at an individual level, however a combination of both is most applicable (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). This study indicates that special needs educators are experiencing a moderate level of burnout. Many interventions are based on a preventative approach aiming to reduce the possibility of the further development of burnout and turnover intentions. Therefore interventions, such as “stress inoculation”, relaxation techniques and cognitive-behavioural approaches addressing maladaptive cognitions on the individual level aim to reduce the occurrence of the burnout pandemic while aiming to prevent further incidence or intensity of symptoms experienced (Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). Work place interventions take place with the aim of increasing productivity, communication and overall cost-affectivity.

Therefore, further research is required elaborating on burnout and turnover intention in special needs educators within a South African context. This should take place in relation to the implementation of inclusive education with the consideration of macro-sociological implications.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

The findings of this study, although not generalisable outside the population of special needs educators in Pietermaritzburg, indicate that burnout and turnover intentions are important factors to consider within the current South African education context. A strong relationship was found between emotional exhaustion



and turnover intentions as well as between cynicism and turnover intentions. Given the small scale of this study as well as the inconclusive predictors of burnout and turnover intention, further research is recommended.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: List of Special Needs Schools

#### VULINDLELA DISTRICT

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TEL. NO.	FAX NO.	FACILITY
Peter Pan Training Centre	P/Bag 2, Scottsville, 3209	033 386 8247	033 386 6318	SMH
Ekuhanyeni	PO Box 3093, Pietermaritzburg, 3200	033 398 1325	033 398 6602	SMH
Entokozweni	PO Box 3028, Pietermaritzburg, 3200	033 324 9046	033 324 9046	SMH
H.S. Ebrahim	PO Box 112, Luxmi, 3207	033 387 1320	033 387 8404	SMH
Open Gate	PO Box 8539, Cumberwood, 3235	033 342 5281	033 342 5281	SMH
St Christopher's	P/Bag 9080, Pietermaritzburg, 3200	033 345 4686	033 394 5839	NICP
Arthur Blaxall	PO Box 8132, Cumberwood, 3235	033 387 1400	033 387 2211	BVI
Indaleni	PO Box 669, Richmond, 3780	033 212 2331	033 212 2172	DHH
Newton	PO Box 4122, Willowton, 3200	033 342 0011	00 342 4233	PV

## Appendix 2: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Permission



education

Department:  
Education  
**PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:2/4/8/389

Mrs K Van Zyl  
31 Marshal Street  
PIETERMARITZBURG  
3200

Dear Mrs Van Zyl

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS**

Your application to conduct research entitled: **"BURNOUT IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATORS: ASSOCIATIONS WITH INTENTIONS TO LEAVE"**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 April 2015 to 30 April 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (See list attached).

**Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD**  
**Head of Department: Education**  
**Date: 13 April 2015**

**KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance  
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 beyond the call of duty  
EMAIL ADDRESS: [kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za) / [Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za)  
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: [WWW.kzndoe.gov.za](http://WWW.kzndoe.gov.za)

## Appendix 3: Ethics Committee Approval



12 June 2015

Mrs Kerry-Jane van Zyl 214585805  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs van Zyl

Protocol reference number: HSS/0419/015M

Project title: Burnout in Special Needs Educators: Associations with Intentions to Leave

**Expedited Approval**

In response to your application dated 29 April 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Carol Mitchell  
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor D McDonald  
cc School Administrators: Mr Sbonelo Duma

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: [simbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:simbap@ukzn.ac.za) / [snvmanm@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:snvmanm@ukzn.ac.za) / [mohunp@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mohunp@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

## Appendix 4: Gatekeeper Communication and Information Sheet

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Kerry van Zyl and I am currently registered with the University of KwaZulu-Natal where I am completing a Masters degree in Educational Psychology. I have a special interest in schooling as well as children with special needs due to time spent volunteering at a school for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

I would like to request the participation of the educators working at your school. Participation in this study would involve filling out a short questionnaire aimed at identifying burnout rates and intentions to leave.

The purpose of this research is to assess the burnout levels of special needs teachers and to see if there is an association with potential turnover. A lot of research is available on burnout in mainstream educators and I therefore feel it is important to look at special needs educators too. The reason for researching this topic is to produce data that will grow the body of research in this field. It will also give the Department of Education important information on what is really happening in our schools and this could assist them in providing the correct support or guiding policies and strategies.

Should educators wish to participate in this research, please note that participation is voluntary and not compulsory, and that they may withdraw at any stage should they so wish. All participant answers as well as details will remain confidential. Participants do not need to provide any information that will identify them including their name and the name of your school.

Consent forms as well as the questionnaire forms will be stored by me (the researcher) in a secure location. They will not be accessible to anyone else. The answers on the questionnaires will not be available to anyone else. The findings of this research will be made available in a general manner and because the research is quantitative the findings will be generalised and of a numerical nature.

I will be analysing the questionnaires and I will not be able to connect participant forms to participants or your school. Questionnaire forms and consent forms will be kept for five years in a secure location, after which they will be shredded.

The findings of this research could be published in journal articles or used in a presentation in which case the above notion of confidentiality remains. No information that will reveal identity will be published. Participants are unlikely to directly benefit from participating in this research, but their participation will help to provide information on special needs educators with regards to burnout. Many teachers in South Africa are leaving the profession or changing jobs so this research aims to provide information on these topics which could assist the Department of Education or other organisations in knowing where help is needed.

Thank you for taking the time to think about participating in this study. Should you need any further information or have any queries or concerns about this research, please contact me on 0724287889 or via email [kerryvanzyl@yahoo.com](mailto:kerryvanzyl@yahoo.com) or my Supervisor, Ms Carol Mitchell on 033 260 6054 or via email [mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za) . You may also contact Phumelele Xhimba at the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) on (031) 260 3587.

Kind regards,

Kerry van Zyl

!

## Appendix 5: Participant Particulars

### 5.1 Informed Consent and Information Sheet

#### **Burnout in Special Needs Educators: Associations with Intentions to Leave**

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Kerry van Zyl and I am currently registered with the University of KwaZulu-Natal where I am completing a Masters degree in Educational Psychology. I have a special interest in schooling as well as children with special needs due to time spent volunteering at a school for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

The purpose of this research is to assess the burnout levels of special needs teachers and to see if there is an association with potential turnover. A lot of research is available on burnout in mainstream educators and I therefore feel it is important to look at special needs educators too. The reason for researching this topic is to produce data that will grow the body of research in this field. It will also give the Department of Education important information on what is really happening in our schools and this could assist them in providing the correct support or guiding policies and strategies.

Participation in this study would involve filling out the short survey attached, aimed at identifying burnout rates and intentions to leave.

If you agree to participate in this research you should be aware that participation is voluntary and not compulsory, and that you can withdraw should you at any stage feel the need to terminate participation. All participant answers as well as details will remain confidential. You do not need to provide any information that will identify you including your name and the name of your school.

Consent forms as well as the questionnaire forms will be stored by myself and my supervisor in a secure location. They will not be accessible to anyone else. The answers on your questionnaire will not be available to anyone else. The findings of this research will be made available in a general manner and because the research is quantitative the findings will be generalised and of a numerical nature.

I will be analysing your questionnaire and I will not be able to connect your form to you or your school. Questionnaire forms and consent forms will be kept for five years in a secure location, after which they will be shredded.

The findings of this research could be published in journal articles or used in a presentation in which case the above notion of confidentiality remains. No information that will reveal your identity will be published. You are unlikely to benefit from participating in this research, but your participation will help to provide information on special needs educators with regards to burnout. Many teachers in South Africa are leaving the profession or changing jobs so this



research aims to provide information on these topics which could assist the Department of Education or other organisations in knowing where help is needed.

There is a small chance that you may experience some distress from participating in this study. If this is the case, even at a later date, please contact the administrator at the Child and Family Centre to make an appointment for supportive counseling, on (033) 260 5166.

Thank you for taking the time to think about participating in this study. Should you need any further information or have any queries or concerns about this research, please contact me on 0724287889 or via email [kerryvanzyl@yahoo.com](mailto:kerryvanzyl@yahoo.com) or my Supervisor, Ms Carol Mitchell on 033 260 6054 or via email [mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:mitchellc@ukzn.ac.za). You may also contact Phumelele Ximba at the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) on (031) 260 3587.

Kind regards,

Kerry van Zyl

---

*Tear consent form off here*

### **Consent Form**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (participant full name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this form and the nature of the research study. I consent to my questionnaire being used to examine burnout in special needs educators and the relationship with intentions to leave. I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without any negative implications.

---

Signature

---

Date

## 5.2 Burnout Pamphlet

### **Burnout**

“What is burnout?

Burnout is a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. As the stress continues, you begin to lose the interest or motivation that led you to take on a certain role in the first place.

Burnout reduces your productivity and saps your energy, leaving you feeling increasingly helpless, hopeless, cynical, and resentful. Eventually, you may feel like you have nothing more to give.

Most of us have days when we feel bored, overloaded, or unappreciated; when the dozen balls we keep in the air aren't noticed, let alone rewarded; when dragging ourselves out of bed requires the determination of Hercules. If you feel like this most of the time, however, you may have burnout.

You may be on the road to burnout if:

*Every day is a bad day.*

Caring about your work or home life seems like a total waste of energy.

You're exhausted all the time.

The majority of your day is spent on tasks you find either mind-numbingly dull or overwhelming.

You feel like nothing you do makes a difference or is appreciated.

The negative effects of burnout spill over into every area of life—including your home and social life. Burnout can also cause long-term changes to your body that make you vulnerable to illnesses like colds and flu. Because of its many consequences, it's important to deal with burnout right away.

### Dealing with Burnout: The "Three R" Approach

Recognize – Watch for the warning signs of burnout

Reverse – Undo the damage by managing stress and seeking support

Resilience – Build your resilience to stress by taking care of your physical and emotional health

### Warning signs and symptoms of burnout

Burnout is a gradual process that occurs over an extended period of time. It doesn't happen overnight, but it can creep up on you if you're not paying attention to the warning signals. The signs and symptoms of burnout are subtle at first, but they get worse and worse as time goes on.

Think of the early symptoms of burnout as warning signs or red flags that something is wrong that needs to be addressed. If you pay attention to these early warning signs, you can prevent a major breakdown. If you ignore them, you'll eventually burn out.

### Physical signs and symptoms of burnout:

Feeling tired and drained most of the time

Frequent headaches, back pain, muscle aches

Lowered immunity, feeling sick a lot

Change in appetite or sleep habits

### Emotional signs and symptoms of burnout:

Sense of failure and self-doubt

Loss of motivation

Feeling helpless, trapped, and defeated

Increasingly cynical and negative outlook

Detachment, feeling alone in the world

Decreased satisfaction and sense of accomplishment

### Behavioral signs and symptoms of burnout

Withdrawing from responsibilities

Using food, drugs, or alcohol to cope

Isolating yourself from others

Taking out your frustrations on others

Procrastinating, taking longer to get things done

Skipping work or coming in late and leaving early

### Preventing burnout

If you recognize the warning signs of impending burnout in yourself, remember that it will only get worse if you leave it alone. But if you take steps to get your life back into balance, you can prevent burnout from becoming a full-blown breakdown.

### Burnout prevention tips:

Start the day with a relaxing ritual. Rather than jumping out of bed as soon as you wake up, spend at least fifteen minutes meditating, writing in your journal, doing gentle stretches, or reading something that inspires you.

Adopt healthy eating, exercising, and sleeping habits. When you eat right, engage in regular physical activity, and get plenty of rest, you have the energy and resilience to deal with life's hassles and demands.

Set boundaries. Don't overextend yourself. Learn how to say "no" to requests on your time. If you find this difficult, remind yourself that saying "no" allows you to say "yes" to the things that you truly want to do.

Take a daily break from technology. Set a time each day when you completely disconnect. Put away your laptop, turn off your phone, and stop checking email. Nourish your creative side. Creativity is a powerful antidote to burnout. Try something new, start a fun project, or resume a favorite hobby. Choose activities that have nothing to do with work.”

Retrieved from (Smith, Segal, & Segal, 2015, February)

## Appendix 6: Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey

For use by Kerry van Zyl only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on June 18, 2015



[www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

To whom it may concern,

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Instrument: ***Maslach Burnout Inventory, Forms: General Survey, Human Services Survey & Educators Survey***

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Sincerely,

Robert Most  
Mind Garden, Inc.  
[www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)

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## Appendix 7: Turnover Intention Scale

The following section aims to ascertain the extent to which you intend to stay at the organisation.

Please read each question and indicate your response using the scale provided for each question:

### DURING THE PAST 9 MONTHS.....

1.	How often have you considered leaving your job?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
2.	How frequently do you scan newspapers in search of alternative job opportunities?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	All the time
3.	To what extent is your current job satisfying your personal needs?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
4.	How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
5.	How often are your personal values at work compromised?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
6.	How often do dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
7.	How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?	Highly unlikely	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Highly likely
8.	How often do you look forward to another day at work?	Always	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Never
9.	How often do you think about starting your own business?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	Always
10.	To what extent do responsibilities prevent you from quitting your job?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
11.	To what extent do the benefits associated with your current job prevent you from quitting your job?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
12.	How frequently are you emotionally agitated when arriving home after work?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	All of the time
13.	To what extent does your current job have a negative effect on your personal well-being?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
14.	To what extent does the "fear of the unknown", prevent you from quitting?	To no extent	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	To a very large extent
15.	How frequently do you scan the internet in search of alternative job opportunities?	Never	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	All of the time

## Appendix 8: Demographic Survey

### Demographic Questionnaire

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Race: \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status (married, single, in a relationship) :

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you live with a partner?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please rate your level of financial comfort:

- ☐ It is very difficult to make ends meet
- ☐ We are struggling but we manage to pay for the basics monthly
- ☐ Money is a small problem at times but we are comfortable for the most part
- ☐ Money is not a problem, we are comfortable

Grade / Level you teach:

\_\_\_\_\_

Class size (number of learners):

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of years teaching:

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you always taught at a special needs school?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any management responsibilities (i.e. of teachers or school administration)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 9: Child and Family Centre Referral Letter



11<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**To whom it may concern**

This letter serves to provide the assurance that should any participant require psychological assistance as a result of any distress arising from the research project titled: *"Burnout in Special Needs Educators: Associations with intentions to leave"* conducted by Kerry van Zyl a psychology Masters student from the University of KwaZulu-Natal; it will be provided by psychologists and intern psychologists at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus Child and Family Centre – phone 033-2605166.

Yours sincerely,

Prof D R Wassenaar  
[wassenaar@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:wassenaar@ukzn.ac.za)

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 Child and Family Centre  
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 Phone: +27 33 2605166;  
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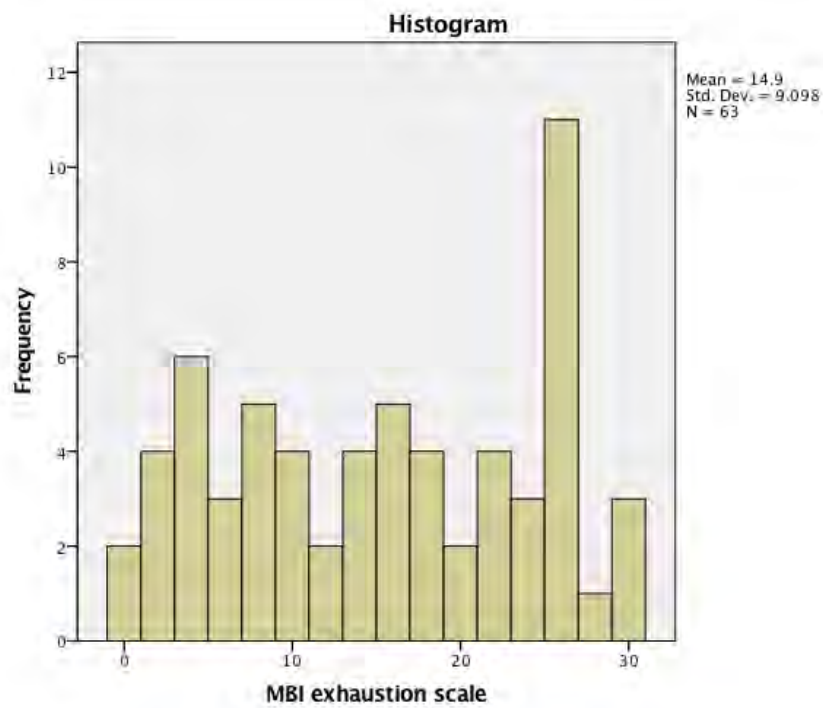
**Founding Campuses:**

- Edgewood
- Howard College
- Medical School
- Pietermaritzburg
- Westville

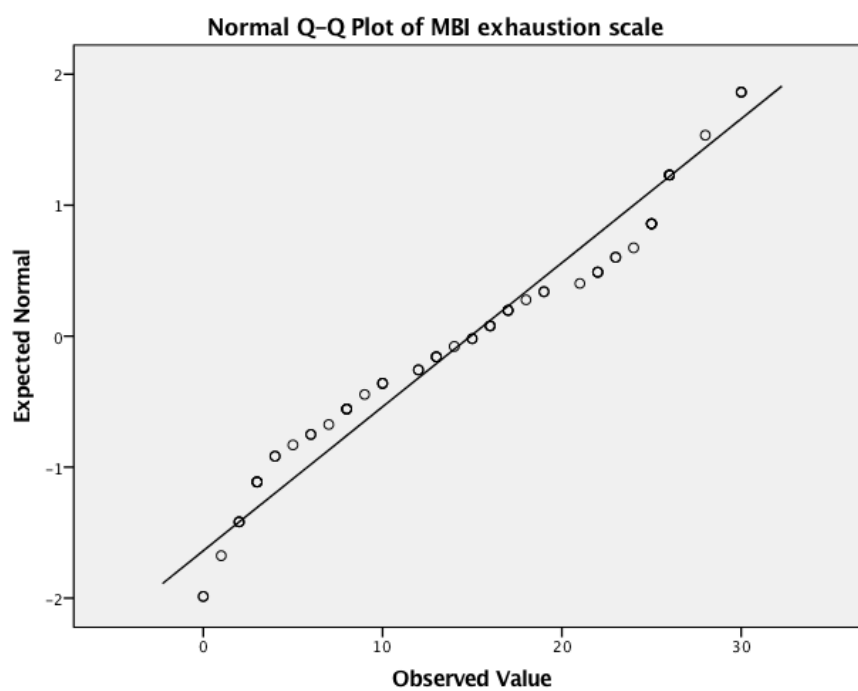
## Appendix 10: Normality Tests

### Appendix 10.1 MBI-EX

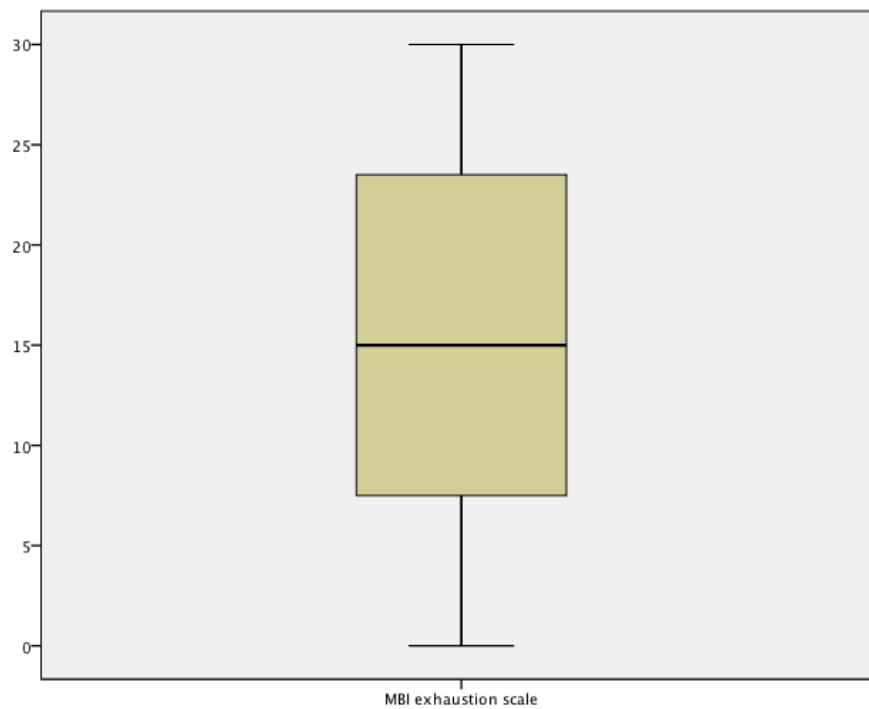
Histogram:



Normal Q-Q Plot:

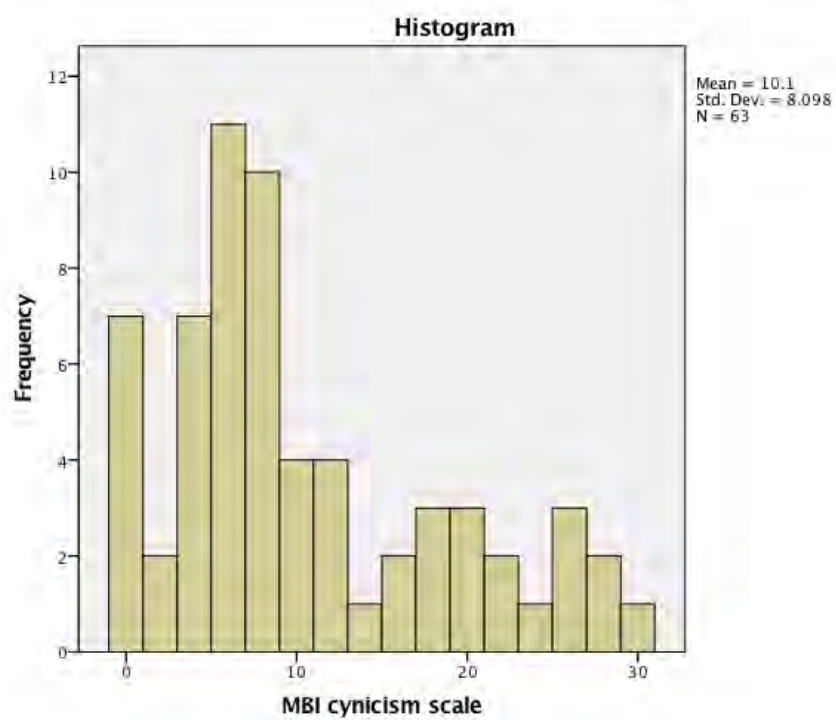


Box Plot:

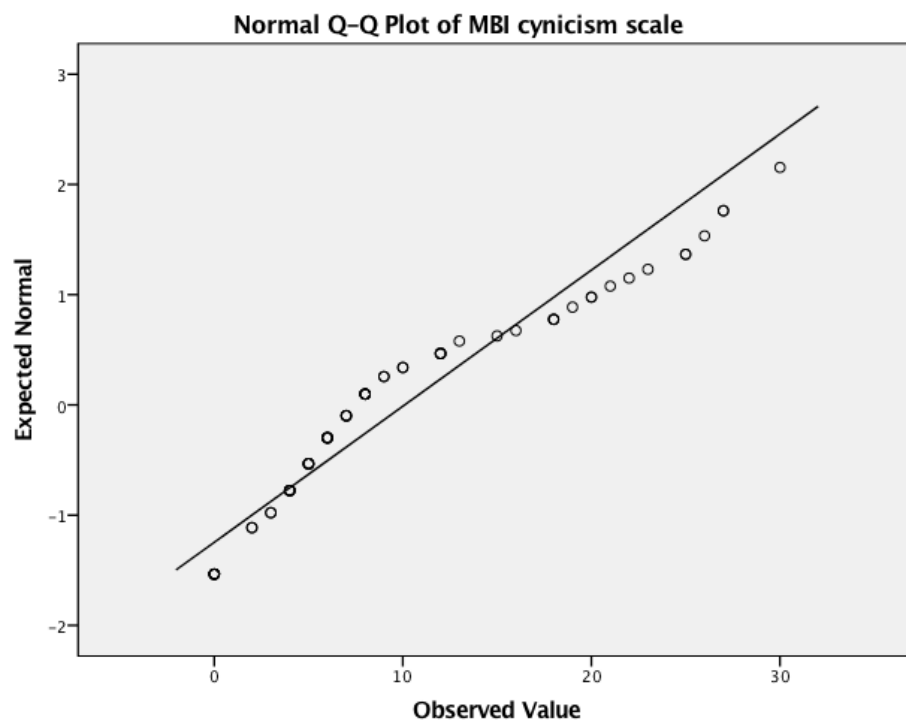


## Appendix 10.2 MBI-CY

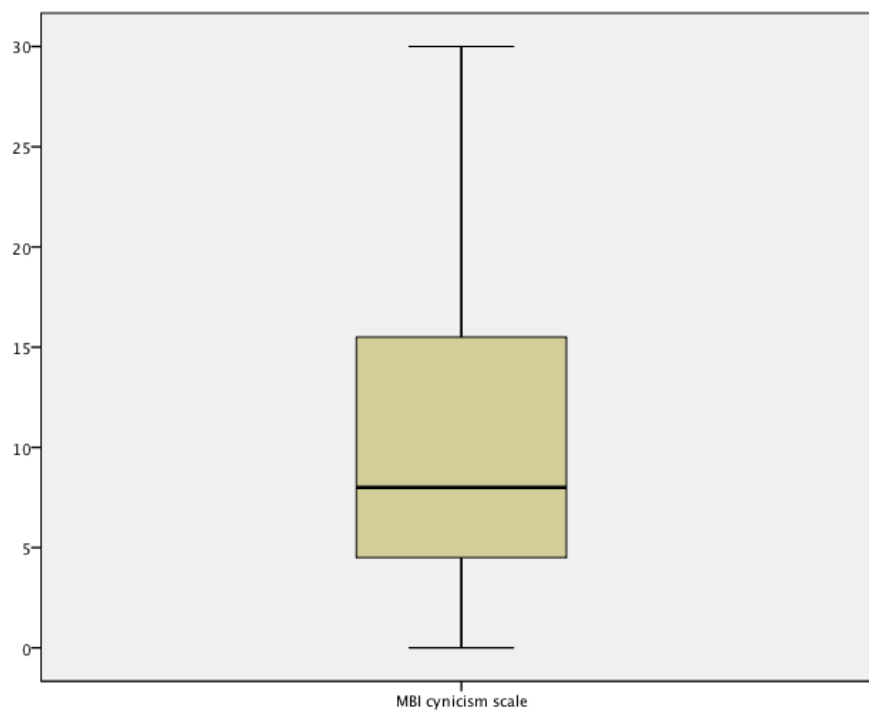
Histogram:



Normal Q-Q Plot:

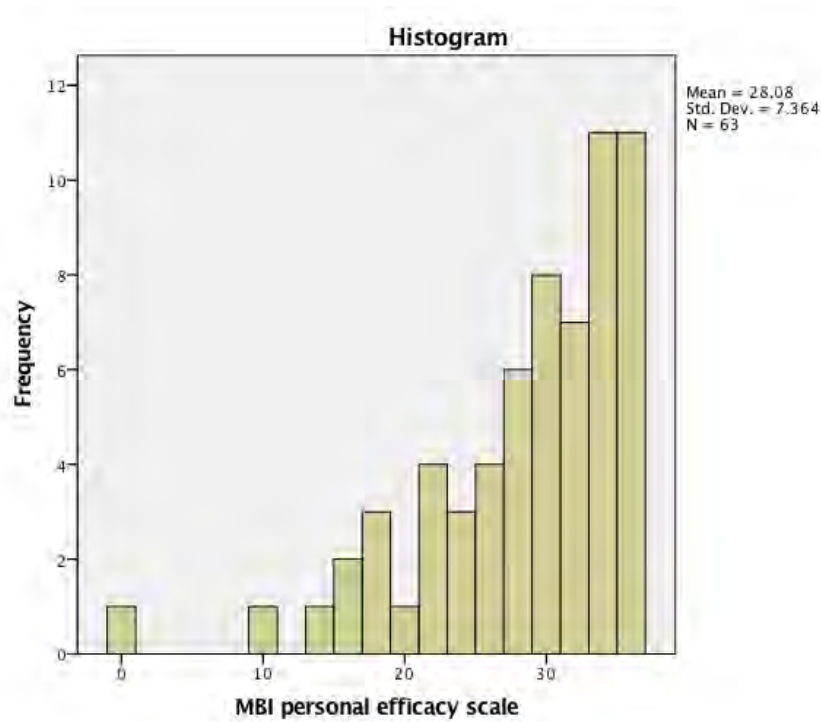


Box Plot:

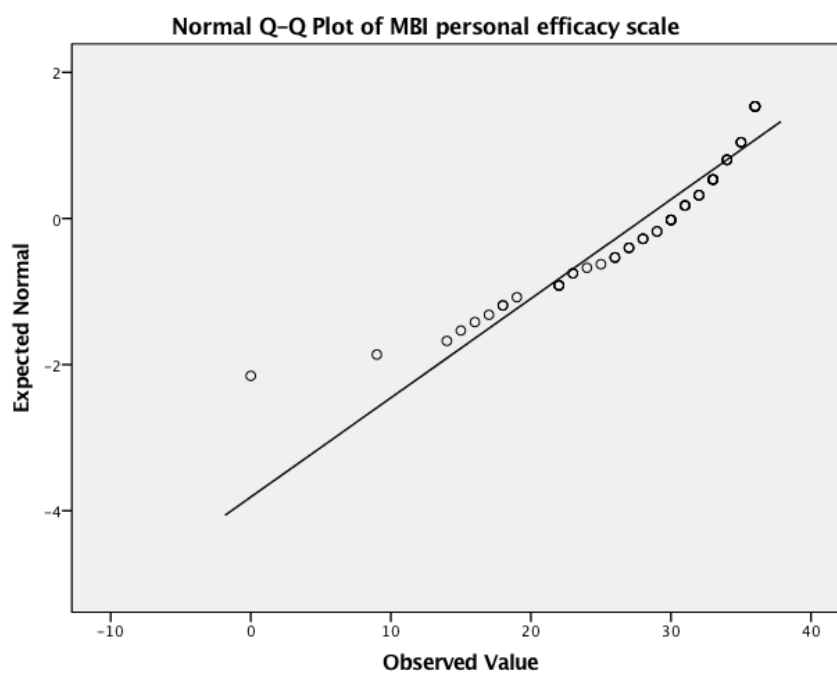


## Appendix 10.3 MBI-PE

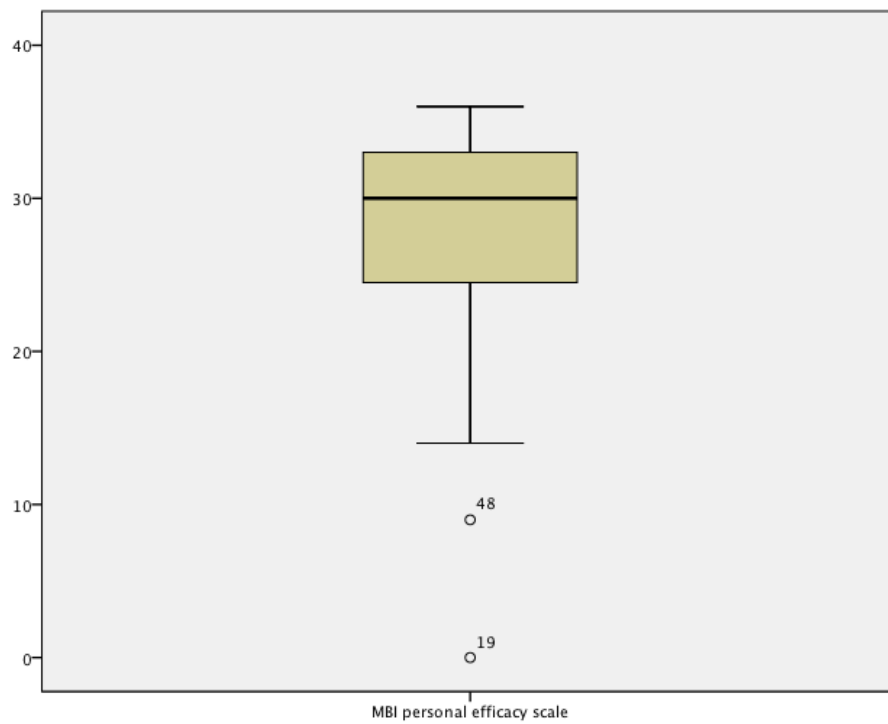
Histogram:



Normal Q-Q Plot:

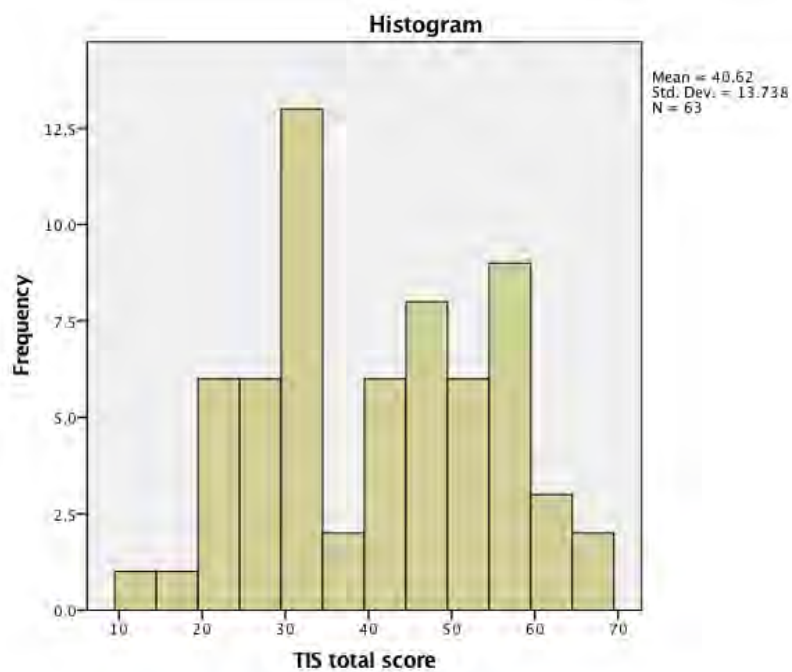


Box Plot:

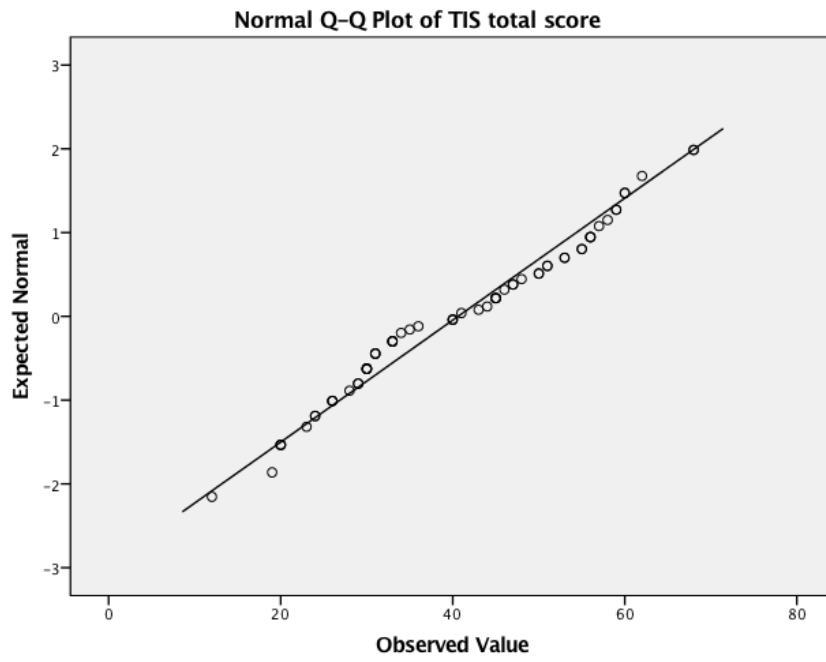


#### 10.4 TIS

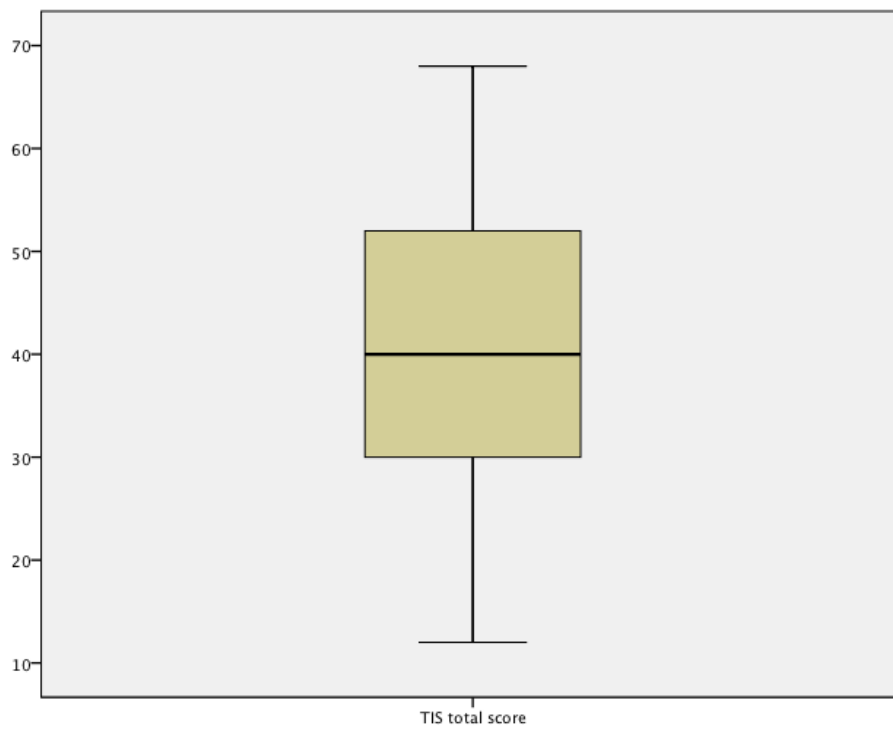
Histogram:



Normal Q-Q Plot:



Box Plot:



## Appendix 11

*Frequency Distribution of Number of Years Teaching*

Number of Years Teaching		N = 63
	Frequency	Percent
1	4	6.3
2	2	3.2
3	4	6.3
4	3	4.8
5	3	4.8
6	2	3.2
7	2	3.2
8	1	1.6
9	1	1.6
10	5	7.9
12	4	6.3
13	1	1.6
15	3	4.8
16	3	4.8
17	1	1.6
18	2	3.2
19	1	1.6
20	2	3.2



21	2	3.2
22	1	1.6
23	1	1.6
24	2	3.2
25	1	1.6
26	1	1.6
28	1	1.6
29	2	3.2
31	1	1.6
33	1	1.6
34	1	1.6
35	1	1.6
41	1	1.6
Missing	3	4.8