AOSIS

Leadership power bases influence on quality of work-life and intention to stay among retailing employees

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Orientation: Retail managers utilise their position of authority to obtain the highest calibre work to uphold the perceived standards of their individual businesses.

Research purpose: The goal of this research is to investigate the impact of leadership power bases and workplace quality on employees' intentions to remain at a particular retail location in the Gauteng province.

Motivation for the study: Effective and efficient management of staff is a key factor in determining the success of retailers in businesses of all sizes in that employees can be significantly impacted by the leadership power a store manager possesses.

Research approach/design and method: A quantitative cross-sectional research design utilising a probability random sampling technique was adopted to collect data from a sample of 336 employees through a structured questionnaire.

Main findings: Reward power showed a negative prediction of quality of work–life, whereas coercive power and lawful power bases showed a favourable contribution to the prediction of quality of work–life. In addition, quality of work–life proved to be a significant predictor of intention to stay.

Practical/managerial implication: By investing in leadership development and fostering a supportive work culture, organisations can create an environment that encourages employees to stay for the long term.

Contribution/value-add: Understanding the influence of different power bases, organisations can target development opportunities that will improve overall leadership capability and create a more positive work environment.

Keywords: quality of work–life; intentions to stay; retailing; leadership power bases; reward power; coercive power; legitimate power.

Introduction

The retail industry is the second-largest employer in South Africa, which continues to have the most developed economy in sub-Saharan Africa (Boatemaa et al., 2019). To meet the needs of the final consumers, retailing is a socioeconomic system that brings people together to exchange goods and services for a little fee. Retailing is a range of actions that advertise goods and services to end users for usage on a personal or household level, according to Amit and Kameshvari (2012). In a similar vein, Boatemaa et al. (2019) define retailing as all activities related to the direct marketing of goods and services to consumers for their own, families or household consumption. The actions involved in selling goods or services to the final consumer for personal use as opposed to business purposes are hence referred to as retailing in this context. Indeed, Hameli (2018) concludes that retailing entails the activities of commodities supplied to final consumers.

In the last 8 years, the industry has increased by an average of 3% every year, with Gauteng province accounting for 26.5% of this expansion. However, according to Statistics South Africa (2018), the retail business has had it tough, as sales even in the most important month, December 2018, declined by 1.4%. The data also demonstrates a meagre rise of 3.1% in 2017 and 1.71% in 2016. As a result, the retail sector has been expanding relatively slowly.

The retail sector is a labour-intensive sector with a large workforce(Boatemaa et al., 2019). It is important to remember, nevertheless, that the nature of the retail workforce today is generally

significantly different from that of previous decades. Today, for instance, effective and efficient management of staff is a key factor in determining the success of retailers in businesses of all sizes. This means that employees can be significantly impacted by the leadership power a store manager possesses. Indeed, Malik and Budhwar (2022) contend that to persuade people to engage in desirable or necessary conduct, leaders must be endowed with authority. The exercise of power, according to Igbaekemen and Odivwri (2015), is a process that helps to explain how various leaders can affect the attitudes and actions of other employees within an organisation. According to Somoye (2016), having power is the chance of being able to impose one's will despite opposition from other employees. Therefore, to achieve organisational goals and objectives, the use of power inside an organisation must be balanced (Somoye, 2016).

The use of authority by management is necessary to guarantee that workers produce work of a totally acceptable standard, with few mistakes and minimal wastage of time or resources (Glass, 2018). As supervisors of retail operations, retail managers frequently have some authority to persuade staff members to carry out their regular duties. This power is the capacity to complete tasks in accordance with the bosses' wishes. This power base is defined by Robbins and Judge (2013) as the ability of person A to shape person B's behaviour so that B complies with A's wishes. The formal category of power, which is based on a person's position in an organisation or company and includes things like the capacity to coerce or reward behaviour as well as legitimate authority, was the only focus of this study (Nguyen et al., 2022).

The quality of an employee's work reflects how they organise and interpret their impressions to give their surroundings meaning, and this has a big impact on how they behave at work (Sharif et al., 2013). Retail managers utilise their position of authority to obtain the highest calibre work to uphold the perceived standards of their individual businesses. According to Berta et al. (2018), quality of work–life (QWL) is positively correlated with employees' performance at work and has a particular impact on employees' intention to stay (Yan et al., 2020). Additionally, it should be highlighted that in recent years, QWL has grown to be an important instrument for luring in experienced workers with the right qualifications (Mbui, 2014) and keeping staff (Sojka, 2014).

While a lot has been written about leadership in different contexts (Lee & Ha-Brookshire, 2015), little research is known on how leadership power base influences retail employees' QWL and employees' intention to stay. Researching the relationship between leadership power bases and employees' QWL and intentions to stay will provide valuable insights for organisations to improve leadership strategies, enhance employee well-being, reduce turnover and ultimately drive organisational success. Indeed, the goal of this research is to investigate the impact of leadership power bases and workplace quality on employees' intentions to remain at a particular retail location in the Gauteng province. According to Nanjundeswaraswamy and Swamy (2014) and Rodríguez-Modroño and López-Igual (2021), managers who have a strong leadership power base can motivate their team members to participate in projects that will increase their QWL and retain more workers. The research was guided by the following questions: What is the relationship between leadership power bases, QWL, and intention to stay among employees at a selected retail outlet in Daveyton Township, South Africa?
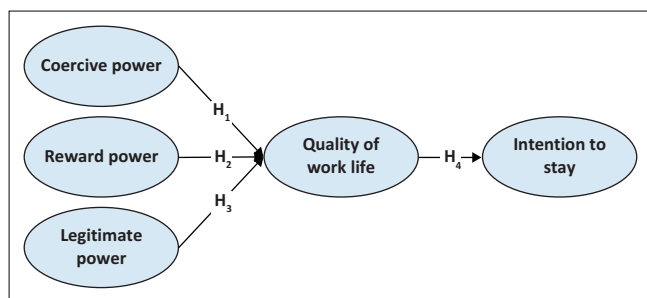
Objectives of the study

The goal of this research is to investigate the impact of leadership power bases and workplace quality on employees' intentions to remain at a particular retail location in the Gauteng province.

Theoretical framework and literature review

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a social psychology model developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in the 1970s. The theory explains how individuals make decisions about their behaviour based on their attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. According to the TRA, an individual's attitude towards a particular behaviour, such as QWL and intention to stay, is based on their beliefs about the outcomes associated with that behaviour (Tao, 2008). These beliefs can be positive or negative and depend on various factors such as personal values, past experiences and cultural norms. The TRA also considers how subjective norms, which are perceptions of social pressure to engage in or refrain from a particular behaviour, and perceived behavioural control, which are the individual's beliefs about whether they can perform the behaviour, can influence the individual's behaviour (Berta et al., 2018). The TRA has been widely applied to various fields, including health behaviour, environmental behaviour and organisational behaviour. In the context of organisational behaviour, the TRA can help understand why employees behave in certain ways, such as why employees choose to stay or leave a company, and how organisational factors, such as leadership style, can influence employee behaviour and attitudes.

Based on the foregoing observations, TRA could be used to explore the relationship between leadership power base, QWL and intention to stay among employees at a selected retail outlet. Leadership power base can influence employee QWL and intention to stay by shaping their attitudes towards these behaviours. For example, a leader who uses transformational leadership, expert power and referent power is likely to create a positive work environment that fosters employee engagement and job satisfaction. On the other hand, a leader who relies on coercive power or reward power may create a negative work environment that breeds resentment and dissatisfaction among employees. These different leadership power bases and their subsequent influence on QWL and intention to stay can be seen in the

H, hypothesis.

FIGURE 1: Conceptual framework.

context of the TRA. The attitudes of employees towards QWL and intention to stay would be influenced by their beliefs about the outcomes associated with these behaviours, such as job satisfaction, stress level and work–life balance. The subjective norms, or perceptions of social pressure, could be influenced by peers, management and organisational culture. Lastly, the perceived behavioural control, or the belief that employees have the necessary resources and support to achieve QWL and the intention to stay, could be influenced by the leader's power base. The relationships as discussed in the preceding paragraphs are now diagrammatically captured in Figure 1.

Power bases for leaders

According to French and Raven's (1959) research, power comes from a variety of sources for leaders. They investigate the origins of power in their research and pinpoint five well-known power sources: coercive, legitimate, reward, referent and expert power. French and Raven's (1959) work on power bases has been re-examined and amended over the years, and new supplementary dimensions have been added to it. For instance, Pfeffer (2003) noted that being able to provide resources for an organisation is a significant base of power, and Kanter (1977) added being detectable and the capacity to take risks as bases of power. As a result, efforts have been made to include information power in the bases of power.

Coercive power

Coercive power is founded wholly upon fear and takes place when someone who is in a position of leadership threatens subordinates with different reprimands if specific chores are not accomplished in time and appropriately (Maphanga & Mokoena, 2022). Banerjee (2009) defines coercive power as the authority based on subordinates' sense that a superior has the potential to penalise them for not adhering to defined conditions. In concert, Nguyen et al. (2022) view coercive power as subordinates' sense that a superior has the potential to penalise them if they fail to submit to the superior's influence. Fear of punishment, demotion, lack of recognition or even losing one's work serves as a means of communicating coercive authority (Nguyen et al., 2022). For this reason, employees fear punishment and opt to either comply or quit. Megheirkouni (2018) concludes that a coercive power base deployed by leaders has either a detrimental or positive impact on employees' will to stay.

On the other side, Robbins and Judge (2013) claim that managers feel that their staff naturally despise work, therefore, must be led or even pressured into performing. Based on these assumptions, the system of punishments and rewards is totally dependent on the followers. Based on the contents of this section, it can be stated that there is a significant relationship between coercive power, which refers to the ability of a leader to influence employees' behaviour through punishment or threat and the QWL among employees at a retail shop outlet. The hypothesis is specifically focused on how different forms of leadership power bases, such as coercive power, may affect employees' perceptions of their work environment and overall QWL.

Power of reward

According to Somoye (2016), the ability to reward and incentivise subordinates for following specific operational instructions and commands from a superior body falls under the category of reward power. Examples of reward power include, but are not limited to promotions, bonuses, salary increments, time off from work and public recognition. Thus, people comply because it yields positive benefits for them (Nguyen et al., 2022). This implies a promise to increase an employee's benefits, those benefits that can only be provided by the person in a superior position (Nguyen et al., 2022). Hassard and Cox (2015) point out that an imbalance in the relationship between the effort exerted and rewards received has a direct bearing towards an employee's perceptions on QWL. Furthermore, Megheirkouni (2018) revealed that rewarding the power-based conduct of leaders has a big effect on an employee's QWL. It can therefore be stated that there is a significant positive relationship between a leader's power to reward employees and the QWL experienced by those employees. This hypothesis suggests that when leaders have the ability to provide rewards, such as promotions, bonuses, recognitions or other forms of positive reinforcement, it will have a favorable impact on the QWL for employees. The hypothesis assumes that when leaders have the authority and willingness to utilise their reward power effectively, employees will perceive their work environment as more positive and enjoyable. Consequently, employees may experience higher job satisfaction, enhanced work engagement, improved work–life balance and greater overall well-being.

Legitimate power

Legitimate power refers to the authority vested in a leader because of their position or role within the organisation. This power comes from the understanding that the leader has the right to influence and give orders to their subordinates. According to Somoye (2016), legitimate power is the kind of power that comes from having a significant amount of power at work. Subordinates recognise and accept this form of power as being in accordance with the established rules and regulations that are regarded as legal by both parties (Nguyen et al., 2022). According to Maphanga and Mokoena (2022), legitimate authority is dependent on the positions that leaders perform within the organisation and the type of relationships that they have with other workers. Similarly,

Somoye (2016) depicts legitimate power as the proper method of managing personnel and compelling them to perform tasks they would ordinarily resist when on the clock. When leaders effectively utilise their legitimate power, it results in improved QWL for the employees.

According to the hypothesis, it is proposed that there is a positive relationship between a leader's legitimate power and employees' QWL. This implies that when leaders effectively utilise their legitimate power, it results in improved QWL for the employees. According to Nguyen et al. (2022), the use of legitimate power leads to trust and confidence among employees. Thus, when employees perceive their leader's authority as fair and just, it fosters a positive work environment. This, in turn, can enhance QWL as employees feel valued, respected and motivated to perform their best (Maphanga & Mokoena, 2022). Furthermore, leaders with legitimate power could provide clear instructions and define goals for their employees. This clarity helps in reducing ambiguity and confusion in the workplace, leading to improved job satisfaction and QWL (Maphanga & Mokoena, 2022). Additionally, a leader's legitimate power enables them to allocate resources, provide support and facilitate the necessary tools for employees to perform their tasks effectively. With sufficient resources and support, employees can experience greater satisfaction and a higher QWL. There is a need to caution; however, that a leader's legitimate power should be exercised in a fair and unbiased manner. Employees who perceive fairness in decision-making and treatment are more likely to have a positive QWL. When leaders utilise their legitimate power equitably, it enhances job satisfaction, commitment and overall well-being among employees.

Against the above backdrop, the following hypothesis can be stated: There is a positive relationship between a leader's legitimate power and employees' QWL. However, it is important to note that the relationship between a leader's legitimate power and employees' QWL may be contingent upon various factors such as organisational culture, employee empowerment and the leader's interpersonal skills. This hypothesis assumes that leaders effectively use their legitimate power to create a positive work environment, but it may not hold if leaders misuse or abuse their authority.

Quality of life at work

Quality of work–life refers to the overall work experience of employees, including their job satisfaction, work–life balance and perception of their well-being within the organisation. According to Maphanga and Mokoena (2022) and Purwanto et al. (2021), QWL is a collection of workplace-related tactics, actions and culture that boosts employee happiness by enhancing working circumstances. In addition, Maphanga and Mokoena (2022) define QWL as considering employees' needs and preferences in relation to working conditions, possibilities for professional growth, compensation, work–family role balance, leadership power base and social interactions. In a similar vein, Purwanto et al. (2021) define

QWL as the extent to which people may meet their critical personal requirements while working for the firm. Furthermore, Acharya and Siddiq (2017) acknowledge that the goal of QWL is to increase workplace engagement and employee motivation by enhancing the attractiveness of the work itself rather than focusing exclusively on improving terms and circumstances of employment. The result is that QWL demonstrates a healthy balance between work and home life, which also ensures organisational productivity, an employee's job happiness and their intention to remain with the same organisation for a longer period (Maphanga & Mokoena, 2022). Although QWL is not a unitary state, it has been acknowledged as integrating a hierarchy of perceptions that include both elements that primarily reflect life satisfaction and general feelings of well-being as well as work-based elements like job satisfaction, relationships with coworkers and salary satisfaction (Rodríguez-Modroño & López-Igual, 2021). As a result, a person's QWL is influenced by their direct work experiences as well as the direct and indirect dynamics that shape those experiences.

Qualitative aspects of work–life (QWL)

According to Mirkamalia and Thanib (2011), QWL has a multi-perspectival structure made up of relationships between things like pay or reward systems, obtaining employment for employees, workflows and workloads, engagement in decision-making and chances for career advancement. According to Rodríguez-Modroño and López-Igual (2021), aspects of QWL include the capacity for judgement, the consequences of decisions, independence at work, forecasts for learning, the application of skills, barriers in the workplace, performance management criteria, a variety of responsibilities, acknowledgement, interpersonal relations, accomplishments and job contribution to the comprehension of organisational goals, as well as employees' involvement in the decision-making processes. Research was done in the Slovak setting by Sojka (2014), who divided the QWL dimensions into three categories: primary, secondary and tertiary characteristics. These classes were divided into a 10-structure dimension of QWL specified as workload, job-related content, monetary compensation, work position, social relationships and the potential for career advancement, as well as location, working conditions, benefits, organisational culture and brand image. Ngcamu (2017) claims that the literature review on QWL identifies a variety of dimensions that are partly related to one another.

Better QWL, according to Rodríguez-Modroño and López-Igual (2021), can boost employee morale while reducing turnover intention, attrition and absenteeism. According to Nayak (2016b), an employee's decision to stay or quit is largely influenced by how satisfied they are with various aspects of their work–life. Based on the above discussions the following hypothesis is developed: There is a positive correlation between QWL and employees' intentions to stay at work.

The hypothesis suggests that as the QWL improves, employees are more likely to have stronger intentions to stay

at work. This means that QWL factors, such as fair compensation, job security, work–life balance, supportive work environment and opportunities for growth and development, do contribute to job satisfaction. Higher job satisfaction is associated with an increased commitment to the organisation and a greater likelihood of staying on the job. Apart from that, QWL is also associated with organisational commitment. When employees are committed to the organisation tend to develop a stronger emotional attachment and loyalty to the organisation. This commitment leads to a higher intention to stay at work.

Studies have consistently shown that QWL factors can reduce turnover intentions. By enhancing QWL, organisations create an environment that meets employees' expectations and fulfills their needs (Rodríguez-Modroño and López-Igual 2021). This, too, reduces their motivation to seek employment elsewhere and increases their intentions to stay with the current organisation. Additionally, QWL directly impacts employee engagement, which refers to the level of enthusiasm, dedication and involvement employees have towards their work. Engaged employees are more likely to form a strong emotional connection with their work and organisation, leading to a higher intention to stay. Employees' intention to stay is also because of the positive work relationships created by QWL (Purwanto et al., 2021).

While the hypothesis suggests a positive correlation, it is important to acknowledge that other factors beyond QWL also influence employees' intentions to stay at work, including individual career aspirations, external opportunities and personal circumstances. Nevertheless, organisations that prioritise and invest in improving QWL are likely to foster a work environment that encourages employees to stay and contribute to their long-term success.

Intention to stay

Employees' intention to stay at work refers to their commitment and desire to remain employed in their current workplace. It is influenced by various factors, including the leadership power bases and the QWL. Leadership power bases, derived from French and Raven's seminal work, refer to the sources of influence that leaders possess over their subordinates. The five types of power bases are coercive, reward, legitimate, expert and referent power.

Because of the detrimental effects and high costs associated with real turnover, academics have been interested in studying employee intention to stay (Kelly et al., 2019); Li et al., 2020). Intention to stay (ITS) is described as 'employees' intention to stay in the present employment relationship with their current employer on a long-term basis' by Johari et al. (2012). This shows that an employee's intention to stay has an impact on their behaviour as it affects how attached they are to their employer or even how likely they are to leave (Jeen, 2014). According to Kumar and Govindarajo (2014), Yan et al. (2020), a lot of businesses have an impact on

employees' intentions to stay by way of their working environments, leadership styles, recognition programmes and reward structures.

When leaders have coercive power, employees may feel compelled to stay at work because of the fear of negative consequences if they decide to leave. This power base relies on fear and punishment and may lead employees to stay out of obligation rather than commitment. On the other hand, leaders who have reward power can positively influence employees' intention to stay at work by offering tangible or intangible rewards, such as promotions, bonuses or recognition. This power base creates a sense of appreciation and satisfaction, strengthening employees' commitment to the organisation and intention to stay (Coetzee et al. 2015; Megheirkouni, 2018; Somoye, 2016). It can indeed be asserted that the intention to stay at work is influenced by leadership power bases and QWL. Effective leaders who use their power bases to create a positive work environment, foster meaningful relationships and support their employees' growth contribute to higher levels of commitment and intention to stay. Additionally, a positive QWL that includes a healthy work environment, work–life balance, fair treatment and career opportunities further strengthens employees' intention to remain in their current organisation.

Methodology
Research design

This study combined a descriptive research design with a causal research design. While causal research was used to look at the connections between the study constructs, the descriptive research design was used to characterise the nature of the relationship between the study variables (Loganathan, 2013). A quantitative research strategy is more suited for this study as it eliminates the subjective factors connected to the qualitative research method (Du Plessis & Rosseau, 2007) and improves the accuracy of results through statistics analysis (Berndt & Petzer, 2011).

Sampling method

The selection of a sampling method is influenced by the study's objectives, the resources available and the sort of research design used. Because every employee has an equal chance of participating, a probability sampling method employing a straightforward random sample technique was used. Because of the limitations imposed by the nature of the business, simple random sampling was used instead of stratified probability sampling because it was determined that the population was not segmented into homogeneous groups. To maintain sample sizes utilised in comparable earlier research like Megheirkouni (2018) and Gayathiri et al. (2013), the nominated sample for this investigation ($n = 350$) was set at 350. As a result, the proposed sample size was the most practical and sufficient to provide an accurate representation of the personnel of the chosen retail shop.

Research instrument

Because self-administered structured questionnaires lessen the possibility of observer bias and increase the reliability of data, the researcher used it to gather data (Malhotra, 2010). The questionnaire, which had four sections and was self-administered, was used to collect pertinent data from the respondents. Participants were asked for general demographic information in Section A, including their age, gender, marital status and highest level of education. While Sections B to D used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, to collect data on the study's components. Section A included multiple choice and dichotomous items. The revised Rahim's Leader Power Inventory (1988), which has a stated reliability of 0.87, was used in Section B to collect data on leadership power bases, while Section C sought information on the quality of work–life. Questions on quality of work–life were derived from a six-item questionnaire with a stated reliability of 0.87 from Chinomona and Dhurup's (2014) study. Lastly, Section D's stay intention questions were adopted from Price and Mueller (1986) four-item questionnaire with a stated reliability of 0.78.

Data collection procedure

Data were gathered with the aid of four trained fieldworkers to avoid ambiguous data variations and to guard against potential low response rates. Specific details concerning the profile of the respondents are provided in the results section. Data collection occurred between May and July 2021. The questionnaire was initially pilot tested on a sample of 40 employees (who were left out of the main survey) before the main study data collection to identify and detect questionnaire errors as well as to assess the reliability of the measuring instrument. Finally, 350 questionnaires were distributed for the main study survey, of which 336 were deemed valid for analysis, yielding a response rate of 90.4%.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Vaal University of Technology. The ethical clearance number is FRECMS-04116452-A013 89345617). This study followed the guidelines set forth by the university's policy on research ethics by first obtaining consent (gatekeepers' permission) from the participating retail locations before the study began. The following ethical issues were upheld: (1) respondents in the study received information regarding the nature and purpose of the study, (2) respondents were personally approached to participate in the study in terms of their availability and gave informed consent before data collection,

(3) core ethical issues such as respect, honesty, anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to during the study, (4) as well as assurances that the information they provided would remain private and anonymous; hence respondents' responses were analysed on a group basis and thus could not be traceable to specific individuals.

Data analysis

Following the collection of the data, Excel was used for initial data preparation, including editing, checking, coding, capturing and cleaning (McDaniel & Gates, 2013). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26.0, was used to compute descriptive statistics (profile data frequency table, means and standard deviation), inferential statistics (correlations and regression analysis) and transformations of the coded data.

Results

Sample composition

In comparison to their male counterparts (34%; $n = 113$), most respondents (66%; $n = 223$) were females. The largest group of respondents ($n = 223$; 66.4%) were in the 21–30 age range. Most of the respondents had matriculated ($n = 241$; 71.7%). In addition, the majority reported having worked in a retail shop for between 7 and 10 years ($n = 193$; 57.4%).

Reliability and validity

The Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to assess the reliability of internal consistency. Table 1 displays reliability testing for all measuring scales used in this investigation. All of the scale's Cronbach alpha values were above the suggested cutoff point of 0.7, ranging from 0.764 to 0.913 (Hair et al., 2010). This indicates that all of the scale's elements draw on the same underlying structures. Additionally, the inter-item correlation values range from 0.402 to 0.762, exceeding the Hajjar (2018) advised cutoff point of 0.30. As a result, the measurement device was trustworthy (Hair et al., 2014).

The questionnaire was adopted and the scale items in the questionnaire adequately covered the influence of the constructs, addressing the questionnaire's content validity. It was decided to conduct pilot research to evaluate concept validity. The questionnaire was evaluated for suitability and to see whether it measured the study's constructs in advance of the pilot testing, with the supervisor's help. 40 respondents in all were chosen to take part in the pilot study. No modifications to the questionnaire were required considering the findings of

TABLE 1: Spearman's correlations, descriptive statistics and reliabilities.

Construct	CP	RP	LP	QWL	ITS	Means	Standard deviation	Cronbach	Item-total
Coercive power (CP)	1.00	-	-	-	-	3.64	1.322	0.808	0.643
Reward power (RP)	0.242**	1.00	-	-	-	3.74	1.303	0.847	0.667
Legitimate power (LP)	0.464**	0.512**	1.00	-	-	3.82	1.381	0.764	0.762
Quality of work–life (QWL)	0.542**	173**	756**	1.00	-	3.32	1.363	0.863	0.750
Intention to stay (ITS)	0.475**	0.124*	0.402**	0.397**	1.00	3.04	1.554	0.913	0.402

Note: *, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two tailed); **, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two tailed).

the pilot study. Through the results of Spearman's correlation analysis shown in Table 1, construct validity was also proven. These findings showed reliable values that were acceptable. Regression analysis was used to evaluate the predictive validity and indicated substantial correlations between the dependent and independent variables.

Correlation analysis

Finding out whether two or more variables are connected to one another is the goal of correlation analysis (Leedy & Ormond, 2021). While high correlation coefficients show strong links between two or more variables, low correlations show little or no relationship between variables (Cogtay & Thatte, 2017). As seen in Table 1, the study used Spearman's correlation analysis.

An analysis of the correlation matrix indicates significant positive associations between the research constructs.

The highest correlation coefficient among the study constructs was reported between legitimate power (LP) and QWL ($r = 0.756$; $p < 0.01$), followed by that between coercive power (CP) and QWL ($r = 0.542$; $p < 0.01$) and that between reward power (RP) and LP ($r = 0.512$; $p < 0.01$), indicating that the mentioned independent variables will significantly increase its associate dependent variable. Moderate correlations were found between CP and RP ($r = 0.242$; $p < 0.01$), CP and LP ($r = 0.464$; $p < 0.01$), CP and ITS ($r = 0.475$; $p < 0.01$), LP and ITS ($r = 0.402$; $p < 0.01$) as well as between QWL and ITS ($r = 0.397$); $p < 0.01$, implying that independent variables exhibit a positive relationship with their dependent variables. However, the correlations between RP and QWL ($r = 0.242$; $p < 0.01$) as well as between RP and ITS ($r = 0.124$; $p < 0.01$) were low suggesting that the reward power leadership base does not support QWL and ITS.

Regression analysis

Regression analysis aims to develop a regression model, or more precisely a prediction equation, that connects the dependent variable to one or more independent variables (Aaker et al., 2013). As a result, using independent variables as the basis, the regression model can be utilised to describe, predict and regulate the variables of interest. Co-linearity diagnostic tests were conducted to ascertain the assumptions of linear regression models (Field, 2009). Firstly, the correlation matrix was examined for the existence of multi-collinearity (i.e. > 0.80 criteria). As the inter-construct correlations were less than 0.80, they do not indicate collinearity issues. Furthermore, multicollinearity issues were examined using tolerance and the variance inflation factor (VIF). According to Pallant (2010), VIF values of more than 10 may also be cause for concern regarding multicollinearity. Furthermore, if the tolerance value is very low (0.10), it means that there are many variables with high correlations, which suggests multicollinearity. The tolerance and VIF values in both models fell within the acceptable ranges, indicating that multicollinearity did not cause any issues with the regression models. In accordance with the advice of Tabachnik and Fidell (2007), the scatter plot, standardised residual plot and Cook's distance were also used to identify any outliers. Scores that were tangential to the zero-point and lacked curvilinearity, or that were grouped in the middle, were shown on the scatter plot. Values > 3.3 or -3.3 were shown on the standardised residual plot. Cook's distance's maximum reported value of 0.212 indicates that the presence of outliers did not endanger the model's predictions. Regression analysis was then carried out to assess the relationship between the constructs, with the findings displayed in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that the three predictor variables (coercive power, reward power and legitimate power) together accounted for 65% (adjusted $R^2 = 0.646$) of the variance in QWL in the first model (Model 1). These findings demonstrate that a QWL is predominantly created by legal and coercive power bases, with some contribution from the combined influence of the three predictors. According to the second regression model's R^2 value of 0.569, 56.9% of the variance in QWL is thought to be directly related to

TABLE 2a: Results of regression analysis.

Dependent variable: Quality of work–life	Beta	T	Sig	Collinearity statistics	
				Tolerance	VIF
Model 1: Independent variables					
Coercive power base	0.456	8.886	0.000	0.770	1.229
Reward power base	-0.044	-0.827	0.409	0.710	1.409
Legitimate power base	0.210	3.556	0.000	0.582	1.720

Note: $R = 0.571$; $R^2 = 0.326$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.320$; F change 53.588; sig at < 0.000.
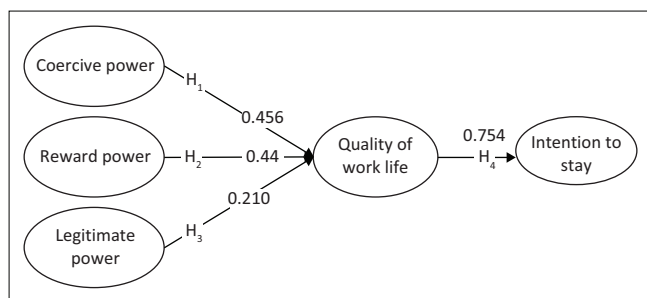Tol, tolerance value; VIF, variance inflation factor; Sig, significance.

TABLE 2b: Results of regression analysis.

Dependent variable: Intention to stay	Beta	T	Sig	Collinearity statistics	
				Tolerance	VIF
Model 2: Independent variable					
Quality of work–life	0.754	20.990	0.000	1.000	1.000

Note: $R = 0.754$; $R^2 = 0.569$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.568$; F change 440.581; sig at < 0.000.
Tol. = tolerance value, VIF, variance inflation factor; sig, significance.

H, hypothesis.

FIGURE 2: Conceptual framework model with regression results.

employees' intention to stay. With a beta weight of (= 0.754; p0.01), QWL's impact on employees' inclination to stay was represented.

Discussion

The conceptual framework of the study, which was presented in Figure 2, is herein presented to provide a better understanding of the results.

The first postulated hypothesis (H1) examined the relationship between coercive power and work–life quality. Both the Spearman's correlation coefficient ($r = 0.542; p = 0.01$) and the regression analysis predictive effect (= 0.456, $t = 8.886$, $p = 0.000$) confirmed the acceptance of the proposed hypothesis. These outcomes are consistent with the research by Quain (2019), which showed that coercive authority affects employee productivity and turnover. Similar results were discovered in Cumming's (2017) study, which showed that coercive power produces better results in terms of compliance and trust than other types of power.

The findings of the regression analysis in respect of the second hypothesis (H2, showed a weak, negative predictive effect of reward power on QWL (= -0.044, $t = -0.827$, $p > 0.409$). The correlation data also reveal a weak positive relationship ($r = 0.172$; p0.01) between reward power and QWL. This implies that reward power, an independent variable, does not help to explain QWL, a dependent variable. Therefore, H2 is not supported. These findings are consistent with research by Faiz (2013), who found a negative and inverse relationship between employee job satisfaction and reward power.

According to the study's third hypothesis (H3), legitimate power will have a favourable impact on QWL. This hypothesis was confirmed by a direct predictive effect, as expected (= 0.210, $t = 3.556$, $p 0.000$). A moderately positive correlation coefficient ($r = 0.402; p 0.01$) between the constructs supported this finding. Tost et al.'s (2018) research, which indicated that employees are only likely to emerge when the leader maintains legitimate power, supports the findings of this study. Additionally, Cummings (2017) discovered a favourable correlation between legitimate power and compliance in conduct and attitude.

The fourth hypothesis (H4) is similarly supported by the current findings with a direct predictive effect (= 0.754, $t = 20.990$, $p 0.000$). Additionally, there was shown to be a high positive relationship ($r = 0.756$; $p 0.01$) between QWL and intention to stay. The findings are consistent with earlier research carried out by Naudé (2010) who looked at the QWL of front desk staff in particular lodging facilities. In a similar vein, Vather (2008a) discovered that a pleasant workplace was favourably connected with staff members' decisions to remain with a retail company, while Normala (2010) likewise discovered a strong positive relationship between QWL and employee retention.

Limitations

Firstly, a small sample size of data was gathered from three distinct retail locations of the same company. The results' generalisability was constrained by this. To ensure a significantly more representative sample of the population, future research should consider including a larger and more geographically diversified set of participants. As the study depended on self-reported data to test the suggested conceptual framework, it was also very difficult to confirm the real validity of the responses. Some respondents might have exaggerated or understated the scope of their assessments of the study variables. Only three leadership power bases – coercive power, reward power and legitimate power – were examined in this study. Additional research on other leadership power bases characteristics as expert power, referent power and information power may be possible. A cross-sectional design was also applied, representing views in connection to a certain time frame. Future research could solve this flaw by reducing the prevalence of social desirability bias through data collection techniques like observation. Another drawback was the decision to only use one quantitative research strategy for data collection. The employment of both qualitative and quantitative research designs in the future may be considered, with the qualitative research design being utilised to generate insightful ideas and clarifications.

Recommendations

This study revealed that different leadership power bases influence the quality of work–life and intention to stay of employees. It is therefore recommended that organisations invest in leadership training programs to enhance leaders' understanding and application of the different power bases. This will equip leaders with the necessary skills to foster a positive work environment, improve employee well-being and increase their intention to stay within the organisation. The study further highlighted the importance of referent power, which involves leaders being respected and admired by their followers. It is recommended that organisations should strive to create a culture that values respect, empathy and inclusion. Leaders should be encouraged to build strong relationships with their employees, becoming role models and mentors. This will help enhance the referent power base and subsequently improve the QWL and intention to stay

among employees. For the results of the study confirmed that reward power positively influences the quality of work–life and intention to stay, it is recommended that organisations review and enhance their reward systems. This could involve implementing performance-based incentives, recognition programs and competitive salary structures. By adequately rewarding employees for their efforts and contributions, organisations can strengthen their reward power base and improve employee satisfaction, motivation and retention.

Implications

The findings of this study can be used to enhance the effectiveness of their leaders. Thus, by understanding the influence of different power bases, organisations can identify areas where leaders may be lacking and provide targeted development opportunities. This will help improve overall leadership capability and create a more positive work environment. Secondly, employee retention could also be enhanced. In this instance, organisations can leverage this knowledge to develop strategies aimed at improving employee retention. By investing in leadership development, fostering a supportive work culture and strengthening reward systems, organisations can create an environment that encourages employees to stay for the long term. Finally, the study revealed that the QWL is significantly influenced by leadership power bases. By focusing on developing leaders with strong referent and expert power bases, organisations can create a positive work environment that prioritises employee well-being. This, in turn, can lead to higher job satisfaction, improved mental health and increased productivity among employees.

Conclusion

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the influence of leadership power bases on employees' QWL and their intention to stay within a retail outlet. It is evident that different power bases, such as expert power, coercive power and referent power, can significantly impact employee perceptions and behaviours. The findings indicate that leaders who foster an environment through reward and legitimate power tend to enhance the QWL for their employees and increase their intention to stay. The study findings further suggest that effective leadership plays a crucial role in nurturing a positive work environment prevalent in a collective cultural context. On the other hand, leaders who rely on fear, control and authority (coercive power) may create a negative work environment that ultimately leads to higher turnover intentions. Organisations should, therefore, invest in leadership development programs to enhance leaders' understanding of different power bases and encourage them to adopt transformational leadership approaches. By doing so, organisations can not only improve the QWL for their employees but also retain top talent, leading to higher performance, productivity and overall organisational success.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Authors' contributions

M.E.M. is responsible for writing the original article, data collection and interpretation and project administration. A.B.M. is the supervisor, responsible for reviewing and editing and formal assessment of the article. A.K.I. is also the supervisor, responsible for data analysis, reviewing and editing the article and formally assessing it.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, M.E.M., upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

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