

Push and Pull Factors in Relation to Skills Shortages in South Africa

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ABSTRACT There are many factors that push people out of the country. While affirmative action is one factor that contributes to emigration of skilled individuals, other factors include: crime, better wage offers, better quality of life and future for their children, economic stability and improved health care. These factors include: attractive salary packages, early retirement within the education sector, an opportunity to gain international work experience, an improved lifestyle and a variety of career choices. Immigrants, on the other hand, are pulled to South Africa as they see this as offering them economic opportunities that are not available in their home countries. These immigrants range from a large number of unskilled to a limited number of highly skilled workers. The main purpose of this study was to determine the factors that push or pull skilled labour into or out of South Africa and the consequences of this movement. The outcome of this study was achieved through undertaking a brief literature review of push-and-pull factors, followed by the empirical research. A survey-based research design was adopted using a closed questionnaire to determine the factors that either push or pull skilled labour from or to South Africa. The sample consisted of 800 organisations/businesses that seek to employ skilled foreign labour in South Africa. The results of this study have confirmed the findings of other research and similar studies undertaken. These push-and-pull factors cannot be addressed overnight; therefore, the recruitment of skilled foreign workers could be a short- to medium-term solution to the problem.

INTRODUCTION

Due to globalisation, there is an increased movement of people across borders. This “borderless” world has created opportunities largely for skilled individuals (Baruch et al. 2007: 99). Added to this, factors such as better job prospects, rapid advancements in technology, travel and communication that are more affordable and skills that are highly interchangeable, encourage people with skills to move beyond their national borders (World Bank 2003: 266). While these reasons may partly contribute to skilled South Africans leaving the country, there are other complex socio-political and economic factors that push them out of the country. With the advent of democracy in 1994, many South Africans felt insecure with the new political dispensation, and as a result they moved to countries where they could feel safe and offer their skills (Bailey 2003: 235).

Apart from the political situation, other important push factors identified include: violence and crime, affirmative action, declining education and healthcare standards, cost of living, level

of taxation and job security (Stern and Szalontai 2006: 123; Mattes and Richmond 2000: 28; Rogerson and Rogerson 2000: 47; Ramphele 2008: 19). These push factors are resulting in an increased loss of skills. According to the Harvard Group (2008), this loss of skills or human resource deficits are a major limitation to advancing economic growth prospects for the country. Kraak (2008: 22), in the Human Resource Development Review, concurs that skills shortages are a major impediment to socio-economic growth and development. Therefore, this continuous loss is a source of serious concern and has therefore received considerable attention from the South African Government since the advent of democracy in 1994.

While negative factors push skilled workers out of the country, there are certain positive factors that pull skilled workers to a country (Mattes and Richmond 2000: 32). Although South Africa is a developing country, the economic opportunities and services it offers attract many immigrants from neighbouring countries (CDE 2008: 16). However, most of these immigrants range from unskilled to partly skilled. These immigrants include Nigerians, Malawians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans. Immigrants from India, Pakistan, China and Europe, to a certain extent, are also attracted to South Africa (CDE 2008: 7). The work opportunities for these immigrants include working as artisans, domestics,

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services and other activities. The high profile job opportunities are offered to, among others, engineers, doctors, information technology experts and teachers (CDE 2008: 7).

Apart from the economic opportunities that attract immigrants to the country, other pull factors include: attractive salary packages, early retirement within the education sector, an opportunity to gain international work experience, an improved lifestyle and a variety of career choices (Du Plessis 2009: 49-50; Rogerson and Rogerson 2000: 48). Added to this, the demand for skilled workers is acquiring a global dimension. Therefore, highly skilled South Africans with high levels of education and advanced occupational skills are recruited (pulled) by firms in developed countries, such as Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Great Britain and Canada (Van Rooyen 2000: 62-68).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Various reasons are cited for the movement of skilled individuals into or out of a country. This movement is generally classified into two categories, namely push factors and pull factors (Baruch et al. 2007: 100). Push factors are generally associated with negative factors, as they are seen to drive a person out of his/her home country. Dovlo and Martineau (2004) concur that push factors are influences that arise from within the source country and facilitate a person's decision to leave. Most frequently, this movement is detrimental to the country because it is largely skilled people who leave. In other words, people may be forced to emigrate to countries that they find suitable in terms of, perhaps, improved lifestyles and better work opportunities. These push factors cover a broad range of issues, including:

- Crime and violence;
- Affirmative action;
- Declining education standards;
- Economic instability;
- Poor working conditions;
- Poor service delivery;
- Low income levels; and
- Political events.

As a result of the above and many other push factors, there is a large exodus of skilled workers as they can afford to offer their skills to other countries. This movement has negative consequences for South Africa. According to Borhat

et al. (2002), The Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) (2007: 9) and Kraak (2008: 22), there appears to be consensus that skills shortages are a major obstacle to economic growth and job creation in South Africa.

Pull factors, on the other hand, are positive factors that attract a person to another country (Mattes and Richmond 2000: 32). These factors reflect the actions of receiving countries that create the demand for, or encourage people to leave home (Dovlo and Martineau 2004). Enhanced working conditions, better business prospects and increased promotion opportunities are a few factors that encourage skilled individuals to come to a country. Other factors include:

- Attractive salary packages;
- Early retirement within the education sector;
- An opportunity to gain international work experience;
- Family networking;
- Globalisation;
- An improved lifestyle; and
- Variety of career choices (Du Plessis 2009; Rogerson and Rogerson 2000).

However, in the case of South Africa being a developing country, it also has the potential to attract immigrants (CDE 2008: 16).

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to:

- Determine the factors that push skilled workers out of the country;
- Determine the factors that pull skilled workers into the country; and to
- Make recommendations based on the findings of the empirical study.

FACTORS THAT PUSH SKILLED WORKERS OUT OF THE COUNTRY

The discussion to follow will focus on some of the major factors that push skilled workers out of the country.

Crime and Violence

The high crime rate is pushing many skilled workers out of the country. A common reason for their leaving is that they are looking for countries that are safer for their children and families. Therefore, crime is costing South Africa much in the form of the loss of lives, revenue

and skills. It also affects the functioning of certain sectors and results in a decrease in the brain pool, not to forget the psychological impact of crime. Therefore, Du Preez (2002: 82) and Du Toit and Van Tonder (2009: 23) confirm the view of other research that crime is a major push factor that results in the emigration of skilled workers. They also state that severe crimes, such as assault, murder and rape, are soaring. An average of 25 000 people are murdered each year in the country. Maritz (2002: 3) indicates that the financial costs incurred through crime are extensive. It costs approximately R250 000 to replace a skilled worker in South Africa.

Affirmative Action

Affirmative action and employment equity have pushed many skilled workers out of the country. These policies are a major source of concern held by white people (Mattes and Richmond 2000; Rogerson and Rogerson 2000). Individuals affected by affirmative action are of the view that their talents or skills are not appreciated by government or certain organisations. Therefore, many white South Africans have left South Africa to seek greener pastures (Ramphele 2008: 19). Results of a survey undertaken by the Southern African Migration Project indicate that approximately 83% of white people and 20% of black people are opposed to the government's affirmative action policy (McDonald and Crush 2002: 40).

Promotion Opportunities

In relation to the above policies, many skilled workers belonging to the minority race groups have been by-passed when company promotions were available. This is unacceptable to many such individuals. As a result, these skilled workers become part of the emigration statistics.

Declining Education Standards

The standard of education is deteriorating. In this recent shift from Outcomes-based education (OBE) to what is now referred to as education for 2025, the standards have been largely compromised. Our public education system is characterised by low education standards, inadequate provision for early childhood develop-

ment, declining matric pass rates, a decline in enrolments at FET colleges, a lack of resources, a decline in national education budget, under-qualified teachers, weak management, poor teacher morale, and high failure rates in schools, colleges and universities (SACSIS 2009). This situation is driving skilled people out of the country as evidenced in a study conducted by Bezuidenhout et al. (2009: 214). It was noted that 50% of South African doctors that emigrated indicated that better schooling opportunities for their children influenced their decision to leave the country. They are of the view that developed countries have higher education standards and increased career opportunities for their children. Furthermore, emigration for these skilled professionals is advantageous as they will have good employment opportunities in their new country.

Economic Instability

Many skilled workers are leaving the country due to the state of the economy (Bornman 2005: 388). Savings are eroded due to the high inflation rates and continuous fluctuations in the currency create a considerable degree of uncertainty in the future of the country. According to Rogerson and Rogerson (2000: 49), 74% of people who emigrated were unhappy with the level of taxation, and 71% were unhappy with living costs.

The discussion to follow will focus on factors that pull skilled workers to a country.

FACTORS THAT ATTRACT SKILLED WORKERS TO A COUNTRY

There are many factors that pull skilled workers to a country. The discussion to follow will focus on certain common factors.

Globalisation

Due to globalisation, the mobility of skilled individuals has increased. Taking into consideration the push factors already mentioned, globalisation serves as an attractive force because international standards are applicable to certain professions. As a result of the common curricular for medical practitioners, automatic registration within the British Commonwealth countries

is possible (Iredale 2001: 10). Furthermore, incentives offered by developed countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Great Britain and Canada attract highly-skilled South Africans with high levels of education and advanced occupational skills (Van Rooyen 2000: 62-68).

Salary Opportunities

Many skilled workers are attracted by lucrative salary packages (Dzvimbo 2003: 6). These high salaries are generally offered by developed countries such as Australia, Canada, the USA and Europe (Rogerson and Rogerson 2000: 48). These countries recognise the value of highly-skilled workers.

Family Ties

Many skilled workers are also attracted to countries where there is some family link. Countries such as Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom have large South African communities. A friend or relative may have emigrated a while ago and this has now created an opening for the skilled worker not only in terms of family relationships, but also creating work opportunities (Kuznetzov and Sabel 2006: 7). It also reduces the problems of moving and adjusting to the new country (Bhorat et al. 2002: 2).

Quality of Life

As mentioned in the earlier section, crime is driving a large number of skilled workers out of the country. These individuals are attracted to countries that offer a safe and better quality of life, not only for themselves, but also for their entire family, especially their children. They see a better future for their children in terms of increased safety and security, better education opportunities and therefore good work opportunities (Bezuidenhout et al. 2009: 214). These factors lead to a good quality of life.

Promotion Opportunities

Many skilled workers are attracted to certain countries due to greater job mobility and promotion opportunities. They see such opportunities passing them in this country due to certain government policies such as affirmative action (McDonald and Crush 2002: 40).

Recruitment Agencies

Certain countries have very active recruitment agencies within countries where there are high quality skilled workers such as in South Africa (Bhorat et al. 2002: 2). These agents actively recruit skilled workers, therefore contributing to the brain drain in the country (Dzvimbo 2003: 6 and Bhorat et al. 2002).

The discussion to follow will discuss the results of the empirical study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The empirical results of the study are presented according to the international classification, namely push-and-pull factors (Immigration 2011). These sub-sections are therefore subjected to an exploratory factor analysis: Factors that push skilled workers out of South Africa and factors that pull skilled workers to the country. In each section, the suitability of factor analysis is tested by means of the Bartlett Test and the KMO measure. A KMO value of 0.6 should be present before factor analysis is considered (Matlab 2010). Generally, values between 0.5 and 0.7 are mediocre (Du Plessis 2009: 26), while values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good. Values between 0.8 and 0.9 are considered excellent (Field 2007: 640). Finally, the Cronbach alpha is also calculated to show the level of reliability (see Table 3). All the factors have good internal consistency, and are regarded to be reliable since all of them returned Cronbach alpha coefficients in excess of 0.58 (Cortina 1993, in Field 2007: 668).

Push Factors

The results of the analysis with regard to the push factors appear below.

The analysis regarding factors that push skilled workers out of South Africa is suitable for an exploratory factor analysis, as the KMO measure and the Bartlett's test returned values of 0.698 and smaller than 0.000, respectively (see Table 1). The factor analysis identified five factors within the construct identified by the literature research as 'push factors'. This means that the construct consists of five underlying dimensions that are identified as separate factors. Since the objective of the research is to identify factors and to simplify the dataset, the orthogonal

rotation Varimax was selected to load a smaller number of variables highly onto the factors (Field 2001: 749). Five factors were extracted by rotating the component matrix. Table 2 indicates the factor loadings.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.698
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2082.322
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

Table 2: Factor loadings (Push factors)

Statements	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
51	.822	.204	-.385	.128	.156
45	.765	-.160	-.168	.314	.334
43	.752	-.260	-.148	.400	.183
37	.072	.886	-.112	-.148	.126
38	-.273	.835	-.107	-.061	.117
49	.032	.693	-.012	-.371	.306
39	.083	.058	-.917	.047	.040
40	.405	.072	-.838	.038	.051
41	.363	.186	-.667	.021	.392
46	.275	-.264	.105	.783	-.152
47	.100	-.314	-.396	.780	.221
48	.303	.103	.033	.719	.234
44	.345	.000	.046	.214	.776
42	.003	.261	-.314	-.094	.739
36	.126	.477	.215	-.036	.625
50	.485	-.035	-.207	.412	.586
% of variance explained	24.55	18.72	12.22	7.68	7.09
Cumulative %	24.55	43.23	55.44	63.13	70.22

In relation to Table 2, the factors below push skilled people out of the country:

Factor 1: Employment Issues

Statements 51, 45 and 43 loaded heavily onto factor 1. These statements have factor loadings above 0.75. These statements are all related to employment issues. High levels of taxation, cost of living and lack of work recognition are factors that push skilled people out of the country. This outcome gives support to the earlier discussion on economic instability. The factor explains a variance of 24.5 percent, which makes it the most important of the five factors. This factor is confirmed as a push factor by a similar study in Zimbabwe and South Africa (2011), where a high unemployment rate

(94%) and no minimum wages pushed migrants into neighbouring economies such as South Africa. This study also substantiates factor 5 (work opportunities).

Factor 2: National Policies

Statements 37, 48 and 49 loaded heavily onto factor 2. All three portrayed heavy factor loadings. Statement 49 had a factor loading in excess of 0.69, while statements 37 and 48 exceeded 0.80 as factor loadings. The statements that loaded onto factor 2 all relate to government policies, such as *Affirmative Action* and *Black Economic Empowerment*. The results give support to the literature study undertaken in the earlier section of the article, where mention is made of certain groups of the population who are unhappy with these policies of South Africa. They feel marginalised and hence feel 'pushed' out of the country. This factor explains a variance of 18.72 percent.

Factor 3: Standards of Living

Statements 39, 40 and 41 loaded heavily onto factor 3. Statement 41 had a factor loading in excess of 0.68, while statements 39 and 40 exceeded 0.80 as factor loadings. The statements that load onto factor 3 have a bearing on the standard of one's living. This includes salaries and wages and the quality of education. The shortcomings in the quality of our education system, as evidenced in the earlier section of the study, are pushing many skilled workers out of the country. Therefore, they choose to move to countries that will provide their children with quality education. Factor 3 explains a variance of 12.22 percent. Zimbabwe and South Africa (2011) found that poverty and strict restrictions on freedom of speech, assembly, and the press, to be serious pushing factors for migration. This substantiates the fact that the standard of living in general acts as a push factor, while it can also act as a pull factor in countries with better living standards. The standard of living directly impacts on the quality of life, which substantiates factor 4 below.

Factor 4: Impact on Quality of Life

Statements 46, 47 and 48 loaded heavily onto factor 4. While these three statements may not

be directly related, they do have a degree of commonality in that these are issues that drive a person to leave the country. Some skilled workers leave the country so as to unite with family members, while others resume duties in other countries due to the relocation of companies. Other individuals are unhappy with the public service delivery of the country and this pushes them out to countries that offer better services. Factor 4 explains a variance of 7.68 percent.

Factor 5: Work Opportunities

Statements 44, 42, 36 and 50 loaded suitably onto factor 5. All three portrayed factor loadings of 0.63 percent, while statement 50 had a factor loading in excess of 0.59. These statements are all related to the following factors that push skilled workers out of the country, namely employment opportunities, quality of healthcare, crime and promotional opportunities. As part of the earlier discussion, mention was made of violence and crime. The results indicate that the respondents felt likewise. Factor 5 explains a variance of 7.095 percent.

The above push factors explain a favourable cumulative variance of 70.22 percent. This exceeds 60 percent, which is regarded to be a good fit of the data.

The reliability analysis of Section C (1): 'factors that push skilled people out of the country' appears in Table 3.

Table 3: Reliability statistics

<i>Data Sets</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>
Factor 1	.736
Factor 2	.767
Factor 3	.793
Factor 4	.670
Factor 5	.647

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each of the five factors so as to estimate the reliability and internal consistency among the constructs (Field 2007: 666). All five factors have returned suitably reliable coefficients ranging from 0.74 to 0.65 and are evident in Table 3.

Wiredspace (2011) found, in an international study that a range of push and pull factors influenced West African immigration to South Africa. Prominent among these factors, is political instability, which acts as a push factor in the sub-region. The same authors found, in this research

that coups and military take-overs, political marginalisation of minority groups, dictatorship, and intrastate disputes are the major factors pushing Cameroonians and Nigerians out of their countries to South Africa.

Economic and humanitarian crises in the West African sub-region are also acting as push factors in influencing West African immigration to South Africa.

Migrations, such as those of Eastern Europeans to Western Europe, from South America to North America, from North Africa to Western Europe, are all classical examples observed similarly in this research that poor, unemployed and underemployed Cameroonians and Nigerians in their respective countries come to South Africa with the hope of finding a better economic environment.

The following pull factors in migration have been identified in the empirical research:

Pull Factors

All the statements, except *Statement 61*, on the pull factors loaded well onto the factors. Since this statement did not clearly load onto a specific factor, it has been deleted from the exploratory factor analysis. Table 4 shows the suitability for continued multivariate analysis and the adequacy of the sample employed.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

<i>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</i>		.706
<i>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</i>	Approx. Chi-Square	1255.222
	Df	36
	Sig.	.000

The large values for the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure indicate that the factor analysis pertaining to pull factors is suitable. Values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good. The data for this factor returned a value of 0.706, signifying a good fit for factor analysis (Field 2007: 640).

The results of the Bartlett's test indicate that it is suitable to proceed with a factor analysis, because the data should yield a p-value smaller than 0.0001. This indicates that the correlation between the variables is sufficient for factor analysis (Du Plessis 2009: 58). In addition to a favourable KMO value, the Bartlett's test returned a value smaller than 0.0001, and as such the factor analysis was performed. Three factors

were extracted. Once again *Varimax* rotation was employed to do so. Table 5 below indicates the factor loadings.

Table 5: Factor loadings (Pull factors)

Statements	Factors		
	1	2	3
56	.594	.157	.616
52	.896	.059	.037
58	.776	.201	.409
57	-.143	.890	.112
55	.232	.770	.153
59	.480	.626	-.140
53	.436	.541	.287
54	.038	-.023	.891
60	.177	.223	.777
% of variance explained	43.126	16.954	12.818
Cumulative %	43.126	60.079	72.899

In relation to Table 5, the following factors pull people to the country:

Factor 1: Quality of Working Life

Statements 56, 52 and 58 loaded heavily onto factor 1. The first two statements portrayed high factor loadings, while statement 56 had a factor loading in excess of 0.59. The issues pertaining to factor 1 include: living conditions, attractive destination and quality of life. These issues are interrelated and serve to pull skilled people to the country. The factor explains a variance of 43.13 percent, which makes it the most important of the three factors.

Factor 2: Working Opportunities

Statements 57, 55, 59 and 53 loaded heavily onto factor 2. All three portrayed factor loadings of over 0.63, while statement 53 had a factor loading in excess of 0.54. As per the discussion in the literature, the following are some of the factors that pull skilled workers to the country: salaries and wages, professional opportunities, education opportunities and working conditions. The responses to the statements proved likewise. The variance explained for factor 2 is 16.95 percent.

Factor 3: Quality of Family Life

Two statements (54 and 60) loaded heavily onto factor 3. All factor loadings were above

0.78. These statements are related to family ties and peace. The results indicate that people are pulled to a destination if it offers a peaceful life and some form of link to family. The factor explains a variance of 12.82 percent.

The above-mentioned three factors are all closely related to employment, a minimum wage and a growing economy, as identified by Zimbabwe and South Africa (2011).

The pull factors explain a very favourable cumulative variance of 72.9 percent. Table 6 below presents the reliability coefficients of the factors.

Table 6: Reliability statistics

DataSets	Cronbach's Alpha
Factor 1	.817
Factor 2	.750
Factor 3	.704

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each factor so as to estimate the reliability and internal consistency among the constructs (Field 2007: 666). All constructs have returned an excellent reliable coefficient of 0.70 and higher. This is suitable and therefore shows good reliability and consistency.

Point of Inflection

In the case where multiple factors are identified from a dataset, it is good practice to apply a secondary measure to determine if all the identified factors should be retained (Field 2007: 633). Although the Kaiser criterion states that factors with Eigenvalues below 0.7 should be rejected, Stevens (in Field 2007: 633) argued that this measure is too strict and could result in valuable factors being discarded.

One way to examine the suitability of retaining a factor is by means of the *Point of Inflection* as secondary measure. The *Point of Inflection* examines the *Eigenvalues* of the factors in relation to their declining nature. Once the next factor's *Eigenvalue* does not significantly decline in its *Eigenvalue*, and as a result the variances explained are relatively the same, the *Point of Inflection* has been reached (Schönrock et al. 2009: 228). The marginal contribution of the next factor to the *Eigenvalue* (or for that matter the variance explained) is therefore examined. From the figure by Schönrock et al. (2009: 227), the principle of the *Point of Inflection* is illustrated,

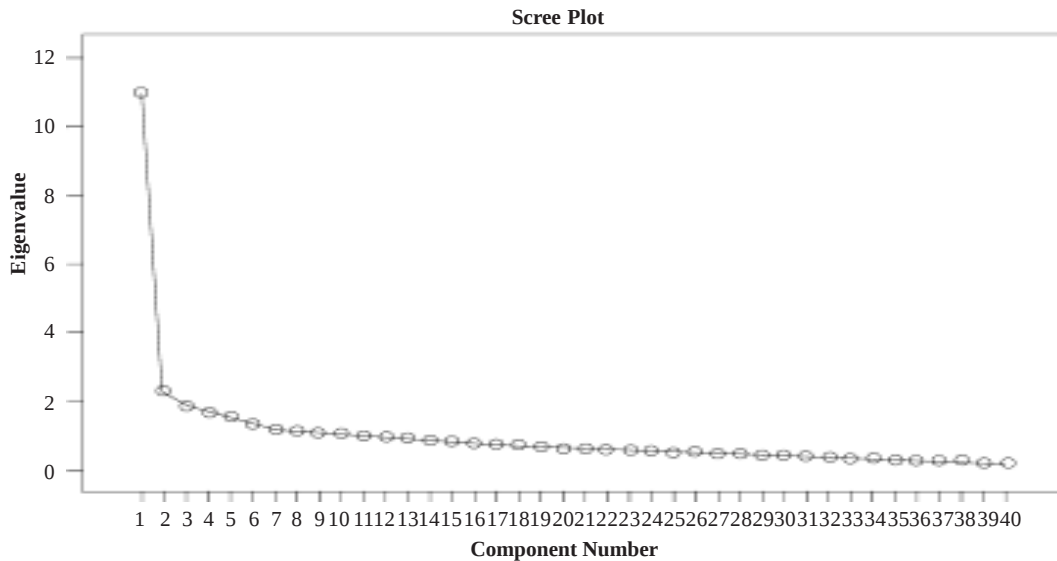


Fig. 1. Example to illustrate the point of inflection

showing that it is wise in this case to retain only two factors (see Fig.1).

Regarding the push-and-pull factors identified in this study, the application of the *Point of Inflection* appears in Figure 2.

From Figure 2 it is clear that no *Point of Inflection* exists with regard to the pull factors. All three factors are therefore retained. These factors even pass the strict *Kaiser Criterion* test as they all have *Eigenvalues* in excess of 0.7. With

regard to the push factors, the first three factors pass the *Kaiser Criterion* and lie above the *Point of Inflection* (at factor 4 in Fig. 2). In addition, Field (2007: 633) points out that if the sample size exceeds 250, the *Kaiser Criterion* can be regarded to be more authoritative.

The analysis therefore shows that although the factor analysis identified five push factors, the first three factors can be regarded as higher-order factors, and that factors 4 and 5 are lower-

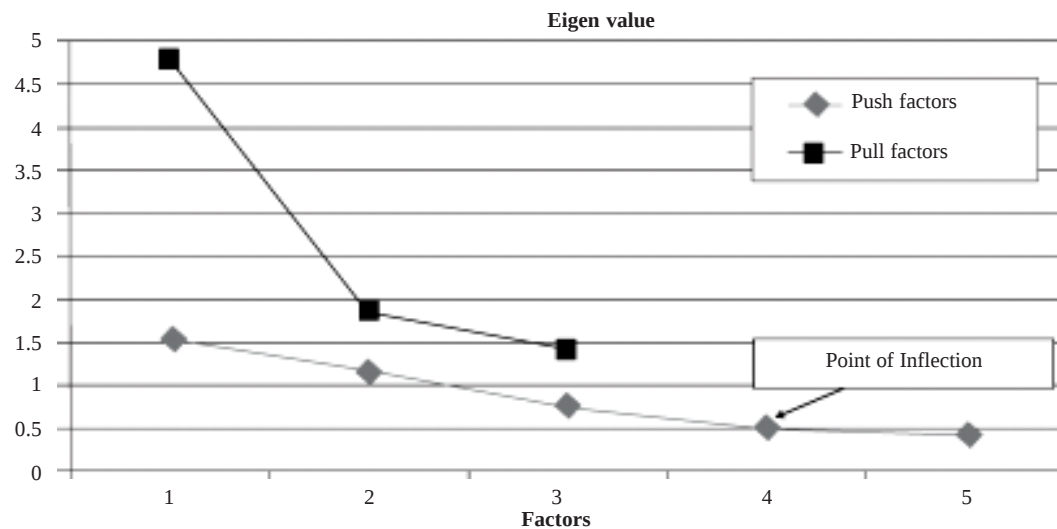


Fig. 2. Point of inflection for push and pull factors

order factors. In addressing the factors, management should, therefore, address factors 1 to 3 first, before addressing the last two factors. This would also be sensible because the first three factors declare more than 55% of the variance, while the last two factors add only 15% more variance. Field (2007: 634) finally points out that before discarding a factor, the original reason for the analysis should be considered. If the research is exploratory, therefore aimed at gathering information about the constructs, discarding should be heeded with great care. A secondary measure, namely that of variance explained, should also play a role in such cases. The fact that factors 4 and 4 indeed do declare 15% of the variance heeds Field's warning that they should not be discarded. These factors are therefore kept as part of the identified factors; albeit as ones of a lower order.

CONCLUSION

From the preceding discussion, it is clearly evident that there are certain factors that are pushing skilled South Africans out of the country. If the government and other relevant organisations do not step in and find solutions to the problems, then the exit of skilled workers would definitely continue. On the other hand, the majority of immigrants that come into the country range largely from unskilled to semi-skilled workers. It is a small number of skilled to highly skilled workers that come into the country. This situation is not suitable and cannot replenish the skills deficit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study, it is clearly evident that the South African government has to address the following push factors so as to reduce the emigration of skills. These factors include, among others:

- *Quality of education* has to be brought up to world-wide standards in order to retain skilled workers. This will encourage many skilled workers to remain in the country as they will be pleased with the standard of education that will be offered to their children.
- *Crime and violence and safety and security* are factors that need to be urgently addressed by the government. These are two

major factors that are contributing towards a large exodus of skilled labour.

- *Economic instability and political uncertainty* are other push factors. These are challenges that the government has to address in order to retain the skilled labour of the country.
- *Career opportunities and international work experience* are two factors that are pulling skilled South African labour out of the country. These factors are linked to *affirmative action* in that the highly skilled are of the opinion that their career opportunities are being diminished due to the government's policy of affirmative action. Due to this policy, their skills are not being duly recognised by the government. Therefore, the government has to be cautious in its implementation of this policy.

Therefore, it is clear from the above that the challenge facing the South African government is to focus seriously on finding solutions to the above push factors.

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