

**Talent Management: Attracting and retaining academic staff at  
selected public higher education institutions**

**by**

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# DECLARATION

**STUDENT NUMBER: 723-510-0**

I declare that *Talent Management: Attracting and Retaining Academic Staff at Selected Public Higher Education Institutions* is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....  
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**DATE**

# **ABSTRACT**

The challenge being experienced by higher education to attract and retain talented academics, particularly black staff, motivated this particular study. The challenge has been experienced by the higher education sector since the democratic dispensation in South Africa in 1994 with minimal published research having been undertaken in this specific field. In addition, it did not appear that there was a tangible solution or strategy by education leaders to respond to the crisis facing higher education. Meanwhile, seasoned academics, particularly white staff, continue to retire taking with them invaluable intellectual capital at a loss to academe. The challenges cited by academics for leaving academe do not augur well for the academic profession as a career of choice particularly for young black potential academics. The present study adopted a mixed methods approach using data collection instruments associated with both the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. Talent management typically consists of four pillars of intervention viz. attraction, retention, development and deployment. The first part of the doctoral thesis focussed on the analysis of literature and empirical documents found in three of the four talent management pillars, namely attraction, retention and development. Deployment is not practical in the academic sector. The second part of the doctoral thesis focussed on a sample of academics in particular colleges or faculties at three South African universities. In the process following the implementation of the survey and interviews, ideas and themes were identified in the data. The research study presented a recommendation in response to the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff, with a particular emphasis on the development of black academics at lower levels. This is within the broader context of the academic employer value proposition. The study recommends that to attract and retain talented academics, particularly black staff, education leaders should focus on investing resources into the management of talent inherent in black academics at lower levels.

## **KEY TERMS**

Academic, talent management, employee rewards, development, recruitment, selection, workload

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I started my PhD officially in May 2013 and was not quite sure at the time what was required of me. On this journey, however, I have matured in my thinking and research writing skills. While I was busy with my doctoral thesis, I managed to complete the global remuneration practitioner examinations through WorldatWork that contributed towards the highest accreditation possible by the South African Reward Association (SARA) as a master reward specialist and by the South African Board for People Practices (SABPP) as a master human resources professional.

I must first give thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ for carrying me through an experience that has changed me as a person. I would not have been able to comprehend the scope of the exercise, relate effectively with stakeholders or analyse the material, without the wisdom, which He alone provided.

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Philippians 4.13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

**MS K KISSOONDUTH**

**STUDENT NUMBER 723-510-0**

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
AP	associate professor
AQIP	Academic Qualification Improvement Programme
ARWU	Academic Rating of World Universities
BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
CEE	Commission for Employment Equity
CEMS	College of Economic and Management Sciences
CHE	Council for Higher Education
CHET	Centre for Higher Education Transformation
CLC	Corporate Leadership Council
CLM	Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management
CPI	consumer price index
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DHET-TOC	Ministerial Oversight Committee
DoE	Department of Education
EACEP	Existing Academics Capacity Enhancement Programme
EMS	Economic and Management Sciences
EVP	employer value proposition
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Act
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HEQF	Higher Education Qualification Framework
HESA	Higher Education South Africa

HR	Human Resources
HRIS	Human Resources Information System
HRP	human resource plan
HRT	Human Resources Training
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPMS	Integrated Performance Management System
JL	junior lecturer
KPAs	Key performance areas
L	lecturer
LL	lower level
LRA	Labour Relations Act
ML	middle level
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NDP	National Development Plan
NESP	Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme
NGAP	New generation of academics programme
NRF	National Research Foundation
ODL	Open distance learning
P	professor
PDMS	Performance and development management system
PoPI	Protection of personal information
PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
SA	South African
SABPP	South African Board of People Practices
SARA	South African Reward Association



SD	Staff development
SDA	Skills Development Act
SHRM	Society of Human Resource Management
SL	senior level
SRIHC	Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee
SSAUF	Staffing South African Universities Framework
SSEP	Supplementary Staff Employment Programme
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
TMS	Talent management strategy
Unisa	University of South Africa
UP	University of Pretoria
VKSP	Vision keepers support programme
Wits	University of Witwatersrand

# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL OVERVIEW

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Defining talent in an individual is a topic of much discussion in employment circles (Botha, Bussin & de Swardt, 2011; Bussin, 2014; Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens & Weale, 2005; Tettey, 2006:1-85). Once defined, identifying and managing talent in an employee is an equally complex task. If the total employment package offered by the employer is appealing, accompanied by a recruitment and selection strategy that is effective to attract a talented employee, the employer would need to ensure that it has in place an effective retention strategy (Bussin, 2014; DHET, 2015; Mondaq, 2013). During this time, the employer would seek to obtain return on the investment that will be made in the recruited employee (Bussin, 2014). Each employee is unique in terms of what attracts him or her towards a place of employment. For this reason, a customised attraction and retention strategy may be necessary to respond to the challenge to retain talented academics, particularly black staff.

Recruitment and retention difficulties for academics in the United Kingdom HE sector appear to be a recent phenomenon. During the 1970s and 1980s, there were a few concerns in the United Kingdom about the ability of universities to recruit and retain academic staff as well as a potential retirement crisis. The issue became more prominent during the 1990s and evidence based on the difficulties reported by United Kingdom university human resource specialists, suggests that difficulties have grown since 2005 (Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens & Weale, 2005).

In addition, Tettey (2006:1-85) reports on a case study of five universities in sub-Saharan Africa, namely the University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa), University of Botswana, University of Ghana, University of Ibadan (Nigeria) and the University of Makerere (Uganda). This study was motivated by the fact that Africa is losing, in significant numbers, its intellectual capital in socio-economic and political development. Unfortunately, much of the expertise base of African universities has been eroded as a result of academics leaving, to the extent that there is not enough capacity to provide quality training for a new generation of academics. The knowledge areas most affected by and vulnerable to the loss of talent and high turnover in African

universities include, but are not limited to health sciences, engineering, business, economics and computer or information science (DHET, 2015; Tettey, 2006:50-85; Unisa, 2013a).

The researcher points out that the study argues that higher education institutions should build an inclusive culture, which embraces diversity and the competitiveness of the total employment package. Tettey (2006:6-10) emphasises that higher education (HE) needs to address the shortfalls in attracting and retaining talented academics in an African institution of higher learning. Booysen (2007:47-50) agrees and adds that South African (SA) institutions face an additional challenge of recruiting and retaining competent previously disadvantaged employees. The creation of a uniquely SA working environment that truly values diversity and all employees' contributions, achieves institutional imperatives and is self-sustaining is of paramount importance (DHET, 2015; Horwitz, Browning, Jain & Steenkamp, 2002:1105-1118; Horwitz, Jain & Mbabane, 2005:4-32; Thomas, 2004:237-255).

Pienaar and Bester (2008:32-41) highlight the need for SA higher education institutions (HEIs) to act proactively in terms of the acquisition and retention of knowledgeable, skilled and experienced academic staff or run the risk of losing competitive advantage and the ability to generate new knowledge. Pienaar and Bester recommend that a study focusing on the retention of academic staff in the early career phase should be done by other HEIs in South Africa and more academic staff should be encouraged to participate. A Nexus database search was conducted to confirm that a later research study has not been done.

This chapter will highlight the background and rationale for the research study. In doing so, the scene will be set in terms of the loss of academics identified by the cited researchers (Horwitz, Jain & Mbabane, 2005:4-32; Horwitz, Browning, Jain & Steenkamp, 2005:4-32). The unique needs of a talented black academic throughout his or her academic career were also taken into consideration. For this reason, the case study targeted academic staff at junior, middle and senior level from the different racial and gender groupings in the College of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of South Africa (Unisa) and University of Pretoria (UP) and the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management at University of Witwatersrand (Wits). The study examined the factors that may contribute to the challenge to attract and retain academic talent, particularly black staff at the selected institutions and to present

recommendations and conclusions to address the same. The limitations to the recommendations are also captured succinctly in this chapter.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

Given the change in the political governance of South Africa since 1994, the SA higher education (HE) landscape has undergone major changes in the past more than 20 years. Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens & Weale (2005) report that growth in student numbers who are in pursuit of knowledge, the conferment of university status on potential academics, changes in the funding regime, and greater emphasis on accountability have led to substantial change in the nature of academic jobs. Academic staff are under great pressure to produce research outputs, which in turn influences the funding allocated to a university by the relevant governing department of education. These changes have altered not only the amount of work demanded of academic staff but also the content.

The restructuring and consolidation of the HE landscape in South Africa is a key element in the broader strategy of achieving the goals for the transformation of the HE system (Department of Higher Education and Training [DHET], 2013b; National Commission on Higher Education [NCHE], 1996). The success of a vision for a single, coherent, differentiated and highly articulated post-school education and training system lies in its integration with interdependent priorities as articulated in the National Development Plan ([NPC], 2011:294-329). The revitalisation of the academic profession is an urgent priority and hence an ongoing process.

Academic staff are both teachers and researchers and their sustained contribution to knowledge creation, innovation and skills development at both individual and countrywide level is critical. According to DHET (2013b:35-96), the total instruction and research staff complement for the 23 universities in South Africa in 2009 was 16 320. Of these, 44% were women. However, at the higher end of the academic ranks, there are four times as many male professors as female professors. The age breakdown of instruction and research staff at these institutions is of concern. In 2009, almost 50% of academics were at least 45 years old. This reflects an aging academic population. Moreover, almost 55% of all permanent professional staff at universities are white while Africans make up less than 30% (DHET, 2013b:35-96).

This major transformation necessitates a closer examination of the actual changes and the future consequences of such changes for the sector and its constituencies. Amongst the 10 most important changes in higher education, the changing nature of the academic workplace features prominently (Jansen, 2005:293). Since change cannot be prepared for adequately, it immediately generates anxiety in most individuals. In any sector, change alone tends to increase staff mobility. Talented employees appear to join or leave institutions for personal and professional reasons. These reasons may be influenced by racial experiences in the workplace. If talented black employees are leaving the SA HE sector due to silent, entrenched dynamics within institutions that maintain hidden barriers to equity, these dynamics must be addressed for social transformation to take place (Booyesen, 2007:47-48).

Societal changes are still dictated by or bound within primarily racial categories due to the polarisation of the SA society (NPC, 2011). The question remains how South Africans can break down mentalities of old categories of citizenship and redefine themselves as a unified nation to move beyond racial categorisation and political bondage. New social identities could conceivably be constructed from categories coupled to professional identities, work identities, socio-economic status or other new social identities rooted in some factor other than race. Although numerous pieces of legislation have been put in place to achieve greater social justice, progress in redressing unfair discrimination in the workplace has been slow and uneven (Commission for Employment Equity [CEE], 2006:1-7). These dynamics are compounded by an aging professoriate in higher education and a lack of skills transfer programmes that support mentorship of talented employees (DHET, 2013b:1-70).

Talent management at Unisa is a council imperative (Unisa, 2013d). The talent management strategy at Unisa was approved by Council in June 2012 (see Unisa, 2013d) and outlines four pillars on which rests the attempts by the institution to manage talent, namely attraction, retention, development and deployment (Bussin, 2014). Preliminary data from the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) database in the Department of Human Resources over a five-year period suggests that it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract and retain black lecturers and junior lecturers due to, amongst others, their attraction to more lucrative employment offers in the private sector (Unisa, 2013a). In order for these two academic categories of employees to progress to senior lecturer, associate professor and professor levels they would

need to build a progressive career path at Unisa. An effective retention strategy, aligned with the talent management strategy and institutional strategy, would need to be in place to ensure that black junior lecturers, lecturers and senior lecturers remain in the employ of Unisa and increase their research output as they progress to higher levels of academia.

The retention of academics from designated groups continues to be an area of concern for higher education. Many of the institutions highlight strong external competition as a real challenge to retaining skilled black academics. Retention is affected by the high potential mobility of trained academic staff from the designated groups who are in short supply in the SA job market (Cook & Jagers, 2005). In an attempt to reach employment equity targets, institutions appear to poach talented academics from other HEIs. Black academic staff tend to leave academia at higher rates than whites do (Booyesen, 2007:47-71; CHET, 2003:7; Potgieter, 2002:30). The reasons for this dynamic begs further investigation. Some institutions have ring-fenced a substantial amount of funds to attract, develop and retain black academic staff (Mkhwanazi & Baijnath, 2003:108).

Cassim (2005:663) highlights the importance of an institutional environment prioritising employment equity, particularly addressing the needs of previously disadvantaged individuals in HEIs. Potgieter (2002:30) adds that reasons need to be identified as to why black academic staff move out of institutions. The cited author suggests institutional racism, racism couched as liberalism, racism in performance evaluations, black essentialism, poor management or leadership and changes in the political landscape, which affect the institution. It could therefore be concluded that an enabling environment is necessary to achieve equity and diversity in HEIs in South Africa.

Booyesen (2007:47-71) suggests reasons for the high attrition rate amongst blacks to be amongst others, a white male-dominant institutional culture with minimal trust between role players, which continues to exclude black academics through formally or informally exclusionary network practices. In addition, black people are selected as tokens and are not fully integrated into institutions because of little delegation of real responsibility or decision-making authority, owing to the persistence of stereotypes. Further, there may be ineffective talent management of black staff. The researcher suggests that there may also be a lack of black mentors and role models.

The racial profile of academic staff in higher education remains heavily skewed and dominated by whites (Subotzky, 2003:5-6). Cassim (2005:653-665) proposes a definite strategy in the short, medium and long term to manage the underrepresentation of black staff in academia, which is part of the legacy of apartheid education. The institutional environment is changing rapidly, and there is a growing need for globally aware managers and professionals with multi-functional skills and expertise, technological literacy, business strategic skills and the ability to operate in different cultures, structures and markets (Chambers, Foulon, Handfield-Jones, Hankin & Michaels, 1998:44-57). At the same time, it is becoming very clear that the attraction and retention of academics are becoming increasingly challenging. A number of surveys suggest that many large institutions are already suffering a chronic shortage of talented employees (Kinnear & Sutherland, 2001:15-18; Sparrow & Hiltrop, 1994:1-14). The competition for talented employees has picked up momentum because employees now have the luxury of choosing where they would like to work. SA institutions do not only compete within the HE sector for talented academic staff but also keep up with attractive employment offers from the public service, private sector, institutions on the African continent and from abroad.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

In this research study, the focus was on the challenges that face three selected HEIs in South Africa to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff. This particular focus area is limited in terms of published research (Nienaber & Bussin, 2009:2). This study therefore investigated a potential shortfall in this research field as well as an urgent need that Unisa, UP and Wits have to stem the outflow of talented black academic staff. With approved ethics clearance, the case study was conducted amongst a profile of academics in a selected college or faculty at Unisa, Wits and UP.

The problem of academic attraction and retention is a global one, which affects both developing and industrialised countries. The issue of academic staff attrition and retention in developing countries is documented in published literature. This is because the issue tends to be subsumed under the general category of talent management without particular attention being devoted to it. In fact, the factors that are contributing to the loss of academic talent in general are identical to those behind employee staff attrition. This problem is compounded in the SA HE sphere by unique factors

experienced by African universities in the form of financial sustainability, involvement of organised labour unions in the work environment and the lack of competitive remuneration for academic staff (Bussin, 2015; Higher Education South Africa [HESA], 2014; Tettey, 2006:12;).

The DHET (2013b) includes amongst its goals, a representative staff component, which is sensitive to local, national and regional needs and which is committed to standards and ideals of creative and rigorous academic work. The academic profession is aging, and requires renewal if SA universities are to expand or compete on the knowledge production front (Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens & Amar, 2005). There is a shortage of academics, especially in scarce skilled areas and at particular universities. SA universities are in general characterised by low success rates and therefore low throughput rates (NPC, 2011). The turnover rate of academics, particularly black staff specifically at the University of South Africa (UNISA), University of Pretoria (UP) and University of Witwatersrand (WITS) was not available to the researcher from DHET. A senior DHET official highlighted the challenges that were being experienced to obtain pertinent retention data on black academic employees from universities (DHET, 2013b).

Talented employees represent only a particular percentage of an entire institutional human resource (HR) capacity. It remains a challenge for employers to identify the employees who are high performers and those with hidden potential, and then to nurture the tender talent. The student and academic experience is changing with the times and whilst turnover amongst academics is a natural phenomenon, dysfunctional turnover, particularly amongst talented black academic staff, is a cause for concern within the SA HE landscape still aiming for a transformed sector. The employer value proposition (EVP) is the total employment package that an employer offers to an employee in exchange for his or her talent, commitment, knowledge, skills, experience and contribution. Employers have to consider the value proposition that is offered to talented employees and whether it is responsive to gender, generational and cultural needs (DHET, 2013b:1-70).

The diagram below (see Diagram 1.1) depicts an EVP that may be offered by an employer to a talented academic employee. The researcher provides an explanation of each element of the EVP immediately after Diagram 1.1. In this study, the researcher reflects on all elements of the EVP in chapters' two to six. Based on the



findings from the analysis of literature in chapters two to five, the empirical data in chapter six and the case study in chapter eight, the researcher makes pertinent recommendations on one specific dimension of the EVP in chapter nine, in response to research question seven.

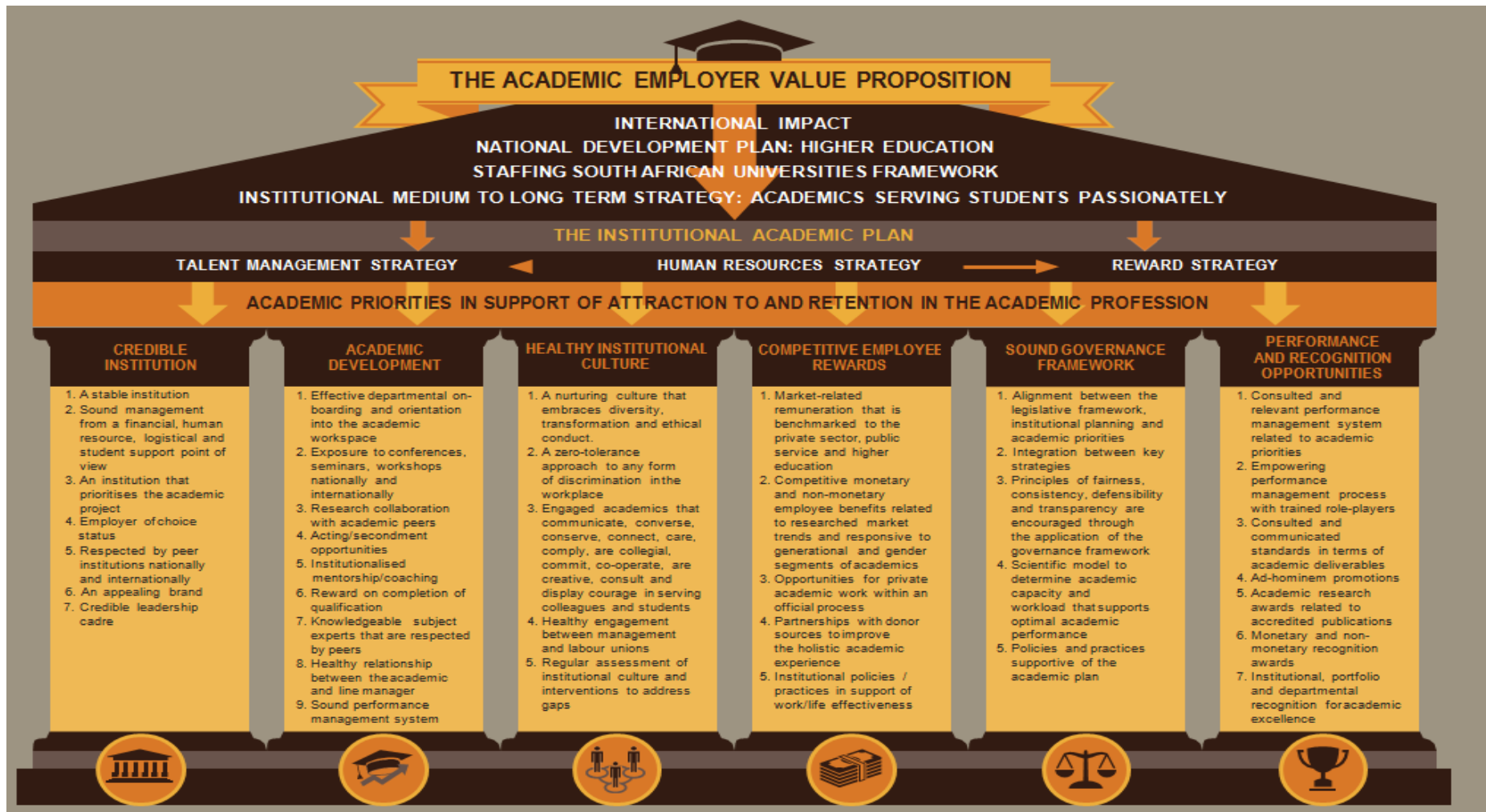


Diagram 1.1: Employer Value Proposition (SHRM, 2011:7)

In Diagram 1.1, the national higher education agenda articulated in the National Development Plan (NDP) sought to address national education priorities but needed to be sensitive to international dynamics influencing higher education (NPC, 2011). Flowing from the NDP, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has implemented the Staffing South African Universities Framework (SSAUF) in an attempt to respond to the challenge to attract and retain talented academics, particularly black staff (DHET, 2015). The strategy of each university should ideally incorporate the SSAUF in its planning, especially when finalising the institutional academic plan.

The institutional academic plan as alluded to in Diagram 1.1 should give effect to the institutional human resource strategy as opposed to vice versa (DHET, 2013b). The rationale for this proposal is that the academic priorities drive the core business of the institution. All interventions in the institution, including the investment of resources, should therefore support the achievement of the academic plan. The talent management strategy and the reward strategy would find expression from the human resource strategy. The success of the cited strategies lies in its integrated implementation at all levels in the institution (DHET, 2013b; Unisa, 2013c; Unisa, 2013d). Flowing from the cohesive implementation of the human resource strategy, talent management strategy and reward strategy, the research proposes the following six dimensions that are interdependent in influencing the attraction and retention of academics, particularly black staff, namely a credible institution, academic development, healthy institutional culture, competitive employee rewards, sound governance framework as well as performance and recognition opportunities (Corporate Leadership Council [CLC], 2006b).

A credible institution as highlighted in Diagram 1.1 commands respect from its peers and competitors nationally and internationally (Towers Watson, 2011). Academics are attracted to credible institutions in terms of employment for the stability, academic output and credibility that the university represents and the fact that these elements influence their personal academic profile. The holistic development of an academic is prioritised in the institutionalised implementation of the talent management strategy (Bussin, 2014). This in turn is crucial to the attraction and development of academics, particularly black staff.

A healthy institutional culture that is highlighted in Diagram 1.1 is communicated by existing employees in an institution internally and externally (Ellison, 2004; Larsson, Brousseau, Kling & Sweet, 2007:361-381). This in turn influences the retention of existing academic staff and may contribute to the attraction of talented academics as well. Competitive employee rewards, ranging from remuneration to employee benefits and work-life effectiveness interventions influence the attraction and retention of talented academics (Botha, Bussin & De Swardt, 2011:1-12). It appears, however, that remuneration has more influence on attracting an academic than during the retention phase (HESA, 2014). There may be gender, generational and life-stage preferences for the different elements of employee rewards (Macky, Gardner & Forsyth, 2008:857-861).

A sound governance framework (see Diagram 1.1) enables employees to experience the fair, defensible, consistent and transparent application of institutional policies (Main, Jackson, Pymm & Wright, 2008:225-238). This contributes to an ethical culture within the institution. An employer who aims to be a high-performing institution in its sector should acknowledge the high-performing academic and as far as possible incentivise the individual (Subramony, 2008:778-788). The employer should aim to create an institutional culture that appreciates, cares for and recognises academics who strive for excellence.

The literature review covered recruitment and selection, retention, training and development and remuneration as human resource functions. The review of literature indicated that the attraction and retention of academics into the HE sector have been researched (DHET, 2015; Jansen, 2005:293-314; Netswera, Rankhumise & Mavundla, 2005:36-40; NPC, 2011). However, there appears to be limited literature available specifically on the attraction and retention of talented academics, especially blacks, in the SA HE sphere. The following concepts outlined were particularly relevant to the research study.

### **1.3.1 Recruitment and selection**

Although the statutory framework in South Africa regulating recruitment has been enhanced since the end of the apartheid era to redress discrimination and to correct imbalances in the demography of South Africa, the progress by education leadership to achieve greater social justice in the workplace has been slow. In order to improve access

to academic institutions by designated groups, it is necessary to review the way in which policies and practices, such as recruitment and selection, are implemented within the institution (Kuye, 2001:8). This review would enable the researcher to understand employee mobility resulting in institutions experiencing turnover.

### **1.3.2 Turnover**

The Unilever Institute of Marketing at the University of Cape Town (2006:10-60) found that a significant number of black employees had changed jobs within the general employment market at least once within the three years preceding their study. Some degree of turnover is inevitable and perhaps desirable, although high rates of turnover can be costly to the reputation of an institution and to the quality of instruction (Dee, 2004:593). Dysfunctional turnover occurs when an organisation loses strong-performing employees, whereas functional turnover results from the loss of poor-performing employees (Park, Ofori-Dankwa & Bishop, 1994:353-365). An institution needs functional turnover to ensure that new and talented employees replace those who have terminated employment and were not adding value. In essence, the employer needs to manage the talent inherent in its employees.

### **1.3.3 Talent management**

Within Unisa, the demand for skilled, knowledgeable and experienced academic staff has been increasing due to growing student numbers over the past few years (see Unisa, 2013d). This phenomenon is particularly relevant to an open distance learning (ODL) institution, such as Unisa, where students who have not been able to secure registration at a residential university due to limited space available, are able to pursue their post-matric qualifications through open distance learning (Unisa, 2013d.10-50). The employer would need to ensure that transformational imperatives are also complied with in terms of the employment of permanent academic staff as well as students that are registered (CHET, 2003:7; DHET, 2015; Van Dijk, 2008:385-395).

### **1.3.4 Transformation**

HEIs in South Africa remain obligated to comply with transformational legislation to ensure that South Africa has a diversified workforce (DHET, 2015; Republic of South Africa [RSA],

1998a). Black professionals moving from one job to another within short periods of time severely compromises the achievement of equity targets (Booyesen, 2007:47-71). It is widely accepted today that the responsibility of retaining talented employees of the different racial and gender groupings is that of the employer (Botha, Bussin & De Swardt, 2011:1). This responsibility is made more challenging as a result of the dynamic working environment in which an academic operates.

### **1.3.5 The changing nature of the academic workplace**

The academic workplace has changed dramatically, and the meaning of such changes in the lives of students and employees is described in terms of disruption, alienation, the loss of community and shared identity (Webster & Mosoetsa, 2002:48-82), and the reality of an aging professoriate must be dealt with. It is also possible that talented employees are lost due to cumbersome, tedious and time-consuming appointment processes. The recruitment and retention of especially leading and promising black scholars will remain one of the most difficult tasks facing HE, in part because of the financial attractions of the private sector and also because of the changing nature of the academic workplace (Tettey, 2006:11).

## **1.4 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION**

The main research question was “Which remedies could be pursued to strategically attract and retain talented black academic staff?”

## **1.5 SUB-RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The sub-research questions of this research study are:

- What has been published on attraction as a public human resource function?
- What has been published on retention as a public human resource function?
- What has been published on training and development as a public human resource function?
- What has been published on remuneration as a public human resource function?

- What empirical documents have been published in terms of the statutory and policy framework regulating the attraction and retention of talented academic staff?
- What is the most appropriate research method to investigate talent management at UNISA, UP and WITS?
- What are the gaps in terms of current talent management practices of academic staff at UNISA, UP and WITS?
- How could the current talent management practices at UNISA, UP and WITS be improved to effectively attract and retain academic staff?

## **1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this research study were to:

- analyse what has been published on recruitment and selection as a public human resource (HR) function (Chapter two);
- analyse what has been published on retention as a public HR function (Chapter three);
- analyse what has been published on training and development as a public HR function (Chapter four);
- analyse what has been published on remuneration as a public HR function (Chapter five);
- analyse the statutory and policy documents regulating the management of talented employees at Unisa, UP and Wits (Chapter six);
- implement an appropriate research methodology that would identify the current talent management strategy of academic staff at Unisa, UP and Wits (Chapter seven);
- identify the gaps in terms of current talent management strategies of academic staff at Unisa, UP and Wits (Chapter eight); and
- recommend strategies that would attract and retain talented academic staff at the selected public HEIs (Chapter nine).

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research study assumed a mixed method approach, comprising quantitative and qualitative macro research methods/paradigms.

### **1.7.1 Quantitative research design**

A quantitative research design involves the processes of collecting, analysing, interpreting and writing the results of a study through statistical presentation, structured collection etc. (Delport, 2005). Specific methods exist in both survey and experimental research, which relate to identifying a sample and population, specifying the type of design, collecting and analysing data, presenting the results, making an interpretation, and writing the research in a manner consistent with a survey or experimental study.

To support the findings of previous case studies and to explore the field of study in depth, a web-based survey was administered from a secure online source to all academics at the College or Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the Unisa, Wits and the UP once ethics clearance from each institution had been finalised. The academics were required to respond to the questionnaire as honestly and completely as possible within a specified time frame. The data that was contained in the completed questionnaires was collated and analysed to identify possible trends. Where necessary, the researcher probed specific feedback during the qualitative study specifically through the one-to-one interviews.

### **1.7.2 Qualitative research design**

Qualitative approaches to data collection, analysis, interpretation and report writing differ from the traditional, quantitative approaches (Babbie.1998). Purposeful sampling, collection of open-ended data, analysis of text or pictures, representation of information in figures and tables, and personal interpretation of the findings all inform qualitative methods (Bowen, 2008).

The research topic might have been somewhat sensitive in the academic profession and was likely to elicit emotional responses from responding academics. The use of quantitative research methods to obtain data was limiting in that it did not identify the perceptions behind the responses that were received. Neither were the perceptions



available in the analysis of institutional annual reports, published policies and statistical data.

It was therefore necessary to interview at least 10 academics at lower (junior lecturer), middle (lecturer and senior lecturer) and senior (associate professor and professor) level from the different race groups as well as obtain the views of male and female academics on a one-to-one basis. The impressions of the junior academic were expected to differ significantly from the senior academics who were expected to be seasoned in terms of research output, teaching and community engagement. For historical reasons in South Africa as a result of the apartheid era, the views of the black and white members of staff in terms of the appeal of the academic profession were particularly important.

## **1.8 SAMPLING**

Sampling involves identifying a smaller consistent group of academic staff at each of the identified institutions that would be representative of the entire referenced population. Interviews were conducted with at least 10 academics comprising junior and senior academics: at least four African, four whites, one Asian, one coloured, five male and five female academics. The interviews were conducted after the informed consent of the academic member of staff had been obtained. The responses from the quantitative and qualitative study will remain anonymous and are only utilised for the purposes of the research study.

## **1.9 COLLECTION OF DATA**

The research design refers to the overall strategy, which the researcher chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby ensuring the researcher will address the research problem effectively. The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. In this particular research study, the data collection instruments that were used were the survey questionnaire for the quantitative study and the interview schedule for the qualitative study. The units of analysis were Unisa, UP and Wits. The unit of observation was the feedback from the implementation of the survey questionnaire and interview schedule.

After ethics clearance had been obtained from Unisa, applications for ethics clearance were submitted to Wits and UP. Once the three selected institutions had confirmed ethics clearance, the researcher met with the Executive Dean of the relevant college/faculty at each of the selected institutions. The purpose of the meeting was two-fold, namely to introduce the researcher and the research topic as well as obtaining the support of the Executive Dean in terms of the highest response rate towards the quantitative study and voluntary participation in the qualitative study. The sample of academics in each of the selected institutions received an introductory email from the Executive Dean encouraging them to participate in the research study. In addition and thereafter, the researcher sent out an introductory email providing more details of the process that was to unfold in terms of the survey and interviews.

This research study used both quantitative (survey questionnaires, statistical data available in the HR information system, published literature, journals, government material, published reports) and qualitative (interviews conducted with academic staff) research and data analysis. Data obtained from different sources was triangulated to verify the validity of the findings of the survey questionnaires with the analysis of the one-to-one interview feedback and the analysis of published reports and applicable policies.

#### **1.10 ANALYSIS OF PERTINENT STATUTORY AND POLICY-RELATED DOCUMENTS**

During this study, documentation in three broad areas were analysed to identify the framework within which the talent of academics is managed in the SA HE sector. In addition, the possible gaps within the framework that was contributing towards the high turnover rate amongst academics in HE, was also be considered. The following were studied:

- statutory provisions governing the employment of personnel in South Africa with respect to universities in the country;
- Published reports and guidelines from DHET and education stakeholders on the attraction and retention of academic staff; and

- Relevant miscellaneous reports pertaining to attraction and retention of employees, from private sector institutions since academic staff appeared to be influenced by lucrative employment offers from the private sector.

### **1.11 LIMITATION OF STUDY**

The limitations within the context of the research study are highlighted below:

- Since there are 26 universities in South Africa, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data from three universities cannot be generalised to the SA HE system.
- The researcher therefore exercised caution in not generalising the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data to be reflective of academia in the selected institutions but to reflect the views of the respondents and interviewees only within the selected colleges/faculties.
- The survey database was constructed to protect the anonymity of all respondents. As a result, the feedback was not broken down per university but seen as a complete dataset of the population.
- The author had no access to classified documents; therefore, no reference to such information is made in this research report.

### **1.12 ETHICS CLEARANCE**

Approval for ethical clearance was obtained from Unisa, UP and Wits to conduct an anonymous survey from a secure online source to all academic staff in the relevant College/Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. It was necessary to obtain ethics clearance from Unisa first and to incorporate the approval from Unisa into the application to Wits and UP. A provisional survey was conducted with a sample of academic staff at Unisa towards quality assuring the final survey instrument.

### **1.13 STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTERS**

A summary of the content of each chapter in this particular research study is provided below:

Chapter one introduces the problem statement and aim of the research study. The context is the historical background of South Africa and the challenges facing the national HE landscape to achieve the core business and to contribute towards the educational imperatives articulated in the NDP. In this chapter, the problem statement is described and each research objective is articulated against the background of pertinent challenges.

Chapter two reports on an analysis of published literature in terms of recruiting and selecting employees to an institution.

Chapter three reports on an analysis of published literature in terms of retaining employees in an institution.

Chapter four reports on an analysis of published literature in terms of training and developing employees and the effect thereof on their retention.

Chapter five reports on an analysis of published literature on the remuneration of employees and the effect thereof on their retention.

Chapter six reports on an analysis of statutory and policy-related documents from stakeholder groupings, which affected the scope of the research study.

Chapter seven highlights the research methodology and design that were followed to conduct a quantitative and qualitative research study of a sample of academics in a specific college/faculty at three selected institutions, namely UP, Wits and Unisa.

Chapter eight reports on an analysis of the actual case study at UP, Wits and Unisa and on an analysis of the feedback from the quantitative and qualitative studies.

Chapter nine presents a summary of the research study with pertinent recommendations flowing from Chapter eight. The recommendations are also aligned with the recommendations by Higher Education South Africa (HESA) and the NCHE, which identified a need for a more accountable and supportive regulatory framework to guide universities on how to progress towards a transformed HE sector. These recommendations are provided against the background of the analysis of published literature, statutory and policy-related documents in chapters two to six, the findings in chapter eight as well as the research questions articulated in Chapter one.

## 1.14 KEY TERMINOLOGY

Key terminology that was utilised in this research study:

- **Higher education** - refers to education that normally takes place at universities and other HEIs, both public and private, which offer qualifications on the Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF) (DHET, 2013b:1-70).
- **Academic employee** - any person appointed to teach or to do research at a public HE institution and any other employee designated as such by the council of that institution (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1997b:1-66).
- **Staff turnover** - the migration of highly skilled professionals to other institutions irrespective of investments in the education of such professionals by their own institutions (Abassi & Hollman, 2000:333-342).
- **Talent management** - represents a focussed and segmented approach to managing people in strategic roles in the institution. Talent management is the integrated and systematic processes of attracting, engaging and retaining key employees and potential institutional leaders (Kock & Burke, 2008:458).
- **Black people** - a generic term which means Africans, coloureds and Asians (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1998a, 1998:1-28).
- **Designated groups** - blacks, women and people with disabilities (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1998a:1-28).
- **360-degree performance assessment** - an assessment of an individual's performance by peers, subordinates, line management and himself/herself.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

# **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION AS A PUBLIC HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

To attract an employee to an institution could pose a significant challenge for an employer in any sector, especially if the sector is undergoing major changes. Internationally, HEIs have either undergone major realignment or the process is still in progress, making the sustainability of the academic profession a significant concern (Blackmore, 2002:419-441; Curri, 2002:133-151; Finkelstein, 2003:6-14; Gumpert, 2000:67-91; Mok, 2003:117-129; Wood & Meek, 2002:7-25). The retirement of seasoned academics and the apparent ill-preparedness of the next generation of academic staff to take over the reins is the focus of discussion of many HE forum agendas (Anderson, Johnson & Saha, 2002). The challenge necessitates a closer examination of the dynamics surrounding the attraction of academics to the profession, particularly the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection strategy as well as the competitiveness of the employer value proposition.

### **2.2 THE RESEARCH RECORD**

With the assistance of the UNISA main library, electronic searches were conducted on the Nexus database of current and completed research in South Africa, as well as in the index of South African theses and dissertations, with a view to ascertaining whether research relevant to the subject of the present study has previously been done or embarked upon in South Africa. The key terms that were used were "recruitment", "attraction", "selection", "universities", "talent management" and "South Africa". A total of 23 research records were identified in this way on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

No doctoral thesis or master's dissertation dealing with the challenges facing higher education to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff was found. The search results ranged from the recruitment and selection of academics and students to a specific higher education university to the challenges facing universities to retain academics and

students from a branding, method of recruitment, selection, gender and generational point of view. Case studies that were related to the research topic were conducted at specific universities in South Africa. Within the context of higher education in South Africa, the number of employees in a university and the number of students that are enrolled in a university is a differentiating factor between institutions. Institutions of higher learning in South Africa include comprehensive universities, traditional universities and universities of technology. The experience by selected universities to attract and retain talented academics particularly black staff might include generic challenges experienced consistently by universities in higher education regardless of the category of institution (Jansen, 2005:293-314). This observation will be considered during the implementation of the questionnaire at UNISA, UP and WITS.

Although part of the research search results (Webster & Mosoetsa, 2002:59-82; Barkhuizen & Rothman, 2006:38-46) identified dynamics that were relevant to students, in principle, the issues that attracted students to universities and impacted on their retention could still be relevant to academia in terms of the factors that influence the attraction and retention of academics, particularly black staff. There was a specific gap in the research record in terms of strategies by universities to attract and retain previously disadvantaged individuals; Africans, coloureds, Indians, women and the disabled.

Research results from specific universities included an analysis of attracting and retaining academics from a gender, generational and talent point of view. In specific case studies at universities, the effectiveness of the recruitment process was scrutinised to determine the specific points when the institution might be compromising itself in attracting and retaining academics. Since the recruitment process extends from the impact made on a potential recruit through its brand and employee value proposition to the use of employees as marketing agents to the actual recruitment and selection process to fill a vacant position, case studies have attempted to unpack specific factors that contribute towards an effective recruitment and selection process.

The literature search also extended from case studies in terms of attracting and retaining academics in different disciplines. While the factors that attract and retain employees is somewhat generic, there might be specific factors that employees in a particular discipline

might value more than the next discipline thus impacting on their recruitment, selection and retention. This possibility could be enhanced from the point of view of generational and gender preferences. The use of technology to elevate the effectiveness and efficiency of processes in the workplace is the trend in the current workplace. The literature search also included an assessment of on-line recruitment to determine whether recruiting employees through the elevated use of technology is a value-add to current traditional methods of recruiting and whether relevant role-players are adequately equipped to manage the responsibilities attached to on-line recruitment.

### **2.3 THE PLACE OF PUBLIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN THE DISCIPLINE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

Public Administration consists of policy, finance, human resources, control as sub-disciplines. The researcher's focus in the doctoral thesis was on public human resource management.

### **2.4 A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON RECRUITMENT**

Being an employer of choice is more than attracting, recruiting, engaging and retaining a competent workforce that contributes to strategic business outcomes. It is also about the job seeker choosing the employer from a wide variety of employment choices available thus implying that the employer meets a particular profile in the employment market. The pool of available talent is however limited; employers would need to shift away from traditional methods of recruiting to more innovative ways of attracting talented employees who are marketable (Branham, 2005:57-68). In an attempt to find a competitive edge, Van Dijk (2008:389) support an analysis of the reasons for employees leaving institutions so that possible gaps in the recruitment and selection of these employees can be addressed. Cooper (2007:18) as well as Mkhwanazi and Baijnath (2003:111) add that employers would need to understand the profile and needs of the target audience and adapt the recruitment strategy accordingly. This is particularly relevant within the changing academic environment.

The academic responsibility has changed dramatically over time with an increased focus on administrative responsibilities challenging the time available for teaching, research and



community engagement. Wolhuter, Higgs, Higgs and Ntshoe (2010:141-156) summarise academic concerns to range from an increasing workload to reduced work autonomy, restricted access to research funds, a new profile of students and non-competitive remuneration. Within this context, more lucrative employment offers, albeit outside academia in the private and public sectors, would most likely attract academics. It is for this reason that current employers need to consider the generational and gender preferences of employees, as it appears that each segmented grouping has common traits (Smola & Sutton, 2002:363-382). Aligned to the contingency theory, a one-size-fits-all recruitment and selection strategy does not appear to be practical (Robbins & Judge, 2011). It appears that, if the environment within which the employer operates is dynamic, the policy framework needs to be adjusted when necessary.

Three major factors appear to attract an individual to a competitive employer, namely a strategic recruitment strategy, an effective selection strategy, and a competitive employee value proposition (Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2008:4-31; Swanepoel, Erasmus, Van Wyk & Schenk, 2005:259; Van Dijk, 2008:385-395).

#### **2.4.1 Concept of recruitment**

The recruitment process starts with a need that arises out of the workforce planning process. Swanepoel, Erasmus, van Wyk and Schenk (2011:259) caution that a poor planning process that does not accommodate the approved institutional structure, the available resources and inherent risks will translate into filled positions that have no alignment to the strategic direction of an institution. Employers are reminded that medium- to long-term planning is crucial before any recruitment drive can be embarked upon (Swanepoel et al., 2005:259). Certain activities must be performed to attract the necessary job applicants from whom selection will take place. Recruitment can therefore be described as those activities in HR management that attract a pool of talented candidates who have the necessary potential, competencies and skills to assist the institution to achieve its objectives.

Barber (1998:5) and Taylor (2005:201-218) define **recruitment** as attracting talented employees who will elevate the profile of the institution. This implies a relationship between strategic recruitment of talented employees and a competitive institutional brand.

Recruitment creates a diverse pool of applicants, supports the institution to achieve a representative workforce and ensures that the applicant pool comprises competent candidates (Swanepoel et al., 2011:121; Thomas & Wise, 1999:375). The need for the employer to justify the investment made in recruitment by appointing competent employees is emphasised (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2008:3-150; Rothwell & Kazanas, 1994:300-450). Marvin (2007:24) agrees that the measurement of a successful recruitment process is the appointment of competent candidates.

Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) encourage employers to change stagnating and rigid recruitment approaches that are past- and present-orientated to be present- and future-orientated instead. According to Nel et al. (2005:224-226), future trends in strategic recruitment include the use of temporary personnel as opposed to permanent employees, flexible working hours, job rotation to improve skills as well as experience and telecommuting. This suggests that the workforce will be even more dynamic in future with employees moving from job to job more rapidly. Investments in physical office space seem illogical with new-age employees being able to operate from remote locations and still assist clients.

Aggarwal and Bhargava (2008:4-31) highlight that the employee's relationship with the employer begins at the onset of the recruitment process and not when the appointment is finalised. This implies that the retention of the employee actually begins at recruitment, which emphasises the interdependent relationship between the recruitment and appointment processes. While internal factors influence these processes, external factors also affect the recruitment process. The contingency theory (Peretomode, 2012:13-17) zones in on the environmental influences that affect the recruitment strategy (Trevor, 2011). Gerber, Nel and Van Dijk (1992:176) highlight that, while the employer has limited to no control over external factors, internal factors are those decided upon by the institution, and these are crucial to the culture that the employer is trying to build. Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar (2003:999) agree that recruitment is a very complex process in which job seekers are exposed to multiple influences.

### **2.4.1.1 *Effective recruitment strategy***

Olsen (2013:147) points out that competitive employers maintain their market position through strategic and relentless recruiting. Olsen encourages academia to adopt the same principles by not just searching for the right people but by proactively pursuing them with a flexible reward offering until they are appointed. This implies an interdependent relationship between institutional leadership and HR professionals to implement a rigorous recruiting strategy and flexible reward package. Bussin (2014:42) points out that in practice, however, human resource management officials are not seen as a credible or strategic business partner but rather in their traditional role of administrators. As a result, institutional leaders often learn too late that some recruitment-related decisions compromise the employer.

Tanova (2003:107-114) highlights that strategic recruitment implies finding the right people with the right skills for the right jobs first where they are a best fit and where they can affect the strategic direction of the institution. Geier (2006:2-5) encourages employers to -

- develop a visionary strategy only after a thorough SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis;
- define the current institutional culture and changes that might be necessary to ensure alignment to the vision;
- conduct a skills and competency audit for approved positions on the institutional structure;
- reward people fairly but competitively;
- develop people continually; and
- communicate crucial information to employees on an ongoing basis.

There can be little disagreement about the fact that people are an employer's most valuable resource thus implying that their recruitment must be thorough. Van Dijk (2008:285-295) emphasises that the recruitment process must be managed effectively as it inadvertently enables an employer to achieve the goals the organisation has set. Van Dijk (2008:285-295) supports strategic recruitment and differentiates between recruitment to develop employees (which generally occurs at lower levels in the institution) as opposed

to recruitment to select employees. The latter focus occurs mainly at the senior levels in the institution. Senior employees must possess managerial skills. To maintain consistent strategic direction, senior employees who are recruited must be able to settle into the requirements of the position quickly and add value. Competitive employers cannot afford to appoint senior employees and thereafter spend a significant amount of time to develop them before they could add value. Gerber et al. (1992:176) emphasise that the consistency, transparency, fairness, reliability and defensibility of the recruitment process must be protected to contribute towards a healthy institutional culture.

A successful recruitment strategy must be thoroughly consulted, sensitive and responsive to the needs of stakeholders, including labour unions, and be managed within a balance of financial sustainability and competitive reward packages for employees (Vermeulen, 2007:274). The challenge for employers would be to strike a balance between fiscal prudence and competitive remuneration to attract new employees.

An employer who strives to attract employees from the few talented employees that are available in the labour market in comparison to the demand for the same employees, must always bear in mind that competent, skilled and experienced employees are motivated by the challenging requirements of the vacant position. Once they master the key performance areas (KPA) of their position, they will either seek new opportunities within the existing institution or leave to find more lucrative employment. Van Dijk (2008:390) therefore emphasises the need for employers to realise that successful recruitment will not necessarily result in successful retention, and encourages institutions to consider retention together with recruitment and not in silos. The human capital theory (Nafukho, Hairston & Brooks, 2004:545-551) suggests that the human characteristics of an individual contribute to the recruitment challenge (Greve, Benassi & Sti, 2010:35-58; Ng & Feldman, 2010:207-237). This implies that the attitudes, behaviours, ideals and experiences of specific generational groupings in the workplace respond to recruitment strategies differently, thus implying that employers would need a deeper understanding of the job seeker to enable strategic recruitment (Underwood, 2007a:43).

To enhance the strategic effect of the recruitment process, Davidson (2004:24-28) suggests that employers should recruit talent from diverse markets to increase the

possibility of finding competent employees from which a selection can be made. This implies that a potential academic may be found within the public service or private sector and not be restricted to the HE sphere. Van Dijk (2008:394) agrees that recruiting talent requires an integration of the recruitment strategy, talent management strategy and the HR strategy. The importance of the effect of the integrated approach on the business strategy is emphasised (Lewis & Heckman, 2006:139-140; McCauley & Wakefield, 2006:5). It appears that if portfolios within an institution operate in silos, the most effective recruitment strategy would be a dismal failure.

#### **2.4.1.2 *Internal factors that affect the recruitment process***

The recruitment process is in itself dynamic and influenced internally by, amongst others, institutional strategic plans, recruitment policy, recruitment criteria and issues of financial sustainability (Swanepoel et al., 2005:263).

##### **2.4.1.2.1 *Strategic plan***

A pillar of financial sustainability is to undertake financial and strategic planning. Recruitment aligned to the strategic plan enables employers to strive towards a competitive edge amongst peers (Swanepoel et al., 2005:26). The long-term plans of the institution, aligned to its vision, are the basis for the detailed shorter-term plans on which the recruitment strategy is based. It is essential that the HR leaders advise management continually of the effect of recruitment decisions on the achievement of strategic deliverables. This particular concept and practice will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 6 (see 6.6.5.1.1) of this research report.

##### **2.4.1.2.2 *Recruitment policy***

It could be argued that good governance in an institution is the responsibility of the institutional leaders. Before an institution can start recruiting, senior management must set the foundation by finalising a strategic recruitment policy, taking various internal and external factors into consideration; thus, implying a sound governance framework within which recruitment can take place. The recruitment policy must therefore capture the principled approach to dealing with all the factors in the recruitment chain that would result in a fair, transparent and defensible recruitment strategy (Swanepoel et al., 2011:206).

The cited authors imply that in the absence of a governance framework, the recruitment process might run the risk of losing credibility. This particular policy provision will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 6 of this research report.

Cherrington (1995:192) adds that the recruitment policy should give effect to the institution's business strategy implying that a misalignment is likely to result in wastage of resources and poor recruitment choices. The recruitment policy should address principled issues of ethical recruiting, target audiences, job descriptions and employee reward. Nel et al. (2005:220-244) agree that the institution's recruitment policy should guide management to appoint competent employees within professional HR standards that will add to its competitive edge.

Damoyi and Tissiman (1997:33) stress that the recruitment policy should emphasise the importance of job descriptions being accurate, relevant and strategically aligned to the needs of the institution. The cited authors imply that the potential risks to the institution, if incorrect job descriptions are used to inform advertisements, could be irreversible.

Brewster, Carey, Grobler, Holland and Warnich (2008:150) add that the objective of the recruitment policy should be clearly reflected in the actual document. Munetsi (1999:30-35) adds that the recruitment policy must be drafted after taking into account the institutional philosophy, mission, strengths and weaknesses, thus implying that employers may be implementing a recruitment strategy in isolation and hence experiencing limited success. Boxall and Purcell (2008:20-351) caution employers that if the recruitment strategy is implemented in isolation, valuable resources would be wasted and it could potentially compromise the competitive intent of the institution (Davis, 2005:331-335; Ryan & Tippins, 2004:305-318). Munetsi (1999:52) emphasises the guidance and leadership that HR professionals find in sound recruitment policies.

#### *2.4.1.2.3 Recruitment criteria*

According to Swanepoel et al. (2011:259), recruitment criteria that are not related to the skill, competency and experience articulated in the official job description for the vacant position, have a ripple effect and could result in flawed advertisements and poor appointments. Vermeulen (2007:272) agrees that it is crucial to recruit effectively. Advertisements should be carefully drafted, accurate, detailed and unambiguous and

should provide a realistic insight into the requirements of the position. Specific criteria should guide the process if formal recruitment drives do not yield any success and might necessitate headhunting. The institution must invest in the content of advertisements to act not only as a request for applicants but also as a driver for talent. According to Brand (2008:207), institutions should adopt a recruitment approach by presenting candidates with relevant criteria about the job and the institution. This implies that potential applicants must be able to access pertinent information easily after reading an advertisement and deciding whether to apply. Greenhaus (2000) and Vermeulen (2007:272) support the investment in ensuring that recruitment criteria e.g. job specifications, are sound, leading to targeted recruiting and subsequent appointments.

There may be a gap in practice where employers immediately seek to fill a position after it has been vacated. Within a culture of heightened fiscal prudence, it might be wise for employers to assess the effect of the vacant position to determine whether existing resources cannot perform the same responsibilities. Such a focus might result in a streamlined workforce with a considerable degree of effectiveness and efficiency.

#### *2.4.1.2.4 Financial sustainability*

There can be little argument that financial sustainability is a priority for most employers especially within a climate of maximum competitiveness. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) highlight the non-competitive remuneration packages that may be offered to appointees as a result of cost-related concerns. It is useful to note that remuneration appears to be more important to job seekers than to employees already within an institution (Towers Perrin, 2003:1-34). Vermeulen (2007:274) agrees that for employers, the emphasis is on achieving more with less and ensuring that available resources are used optimally. It would be required of an employer to plan holistically how the available budget will be spent, keeping in mind that some expenditure items would not have a once-off but a recurring effect.

#### *2.4.1.2.5 Strategic human resource personnel*

Losey, Meisinger and Ulrich (2005:12) argue that if HR managers and line managers do not plan correctly for the future, they may appoint the wrong people to positions. It may

be extremely difficult to terminate the employment of employees who do not perform optimally. Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnston, Sandholtz and Younger (2008:1-288) support the argument by emphasising the ripple effect if a particular role player does not perform optimally.

Marvin (2007:24) agrees that the success of any operation depends on the level of skill, competency and aptitude of employees who are appointed to execute them. It can be argued that, to enable strategic recruitment, HR officials must be respected as credible and strategic business partners. This mind-set shift can be achieved through consistently supporting management with accurate business information to enable ethical decision-making (Brand, 2008:206; Bussin, 2014:42). Stead, Worrell and Snead (1990:233-242) agree that, in the context of effective HR management, line managers may be seen as an extension of HR officials and therefore need to be empowered with the necessary HR knowledge and skills to manage employees effectively within their area of responsibility.

#### *2.4.1.2.6 Workforce planning*

Sullivan (2002:46-50) emphasises the adverse effect on an institution if workforce planning is not prioritised. This implies that planning precedes the development and implementation of any strategy. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) add that workforce planning over the medium to long term is critical for an institution to be staffed more efficiently. This implies that workforce planning integrates the attraction, retention and development dimensions of the talent management strategy (Nel et al., 2005:213-214).

Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy (2010:184) agree that a shortage of talented employees is a significant concern for employers who seek a competitive edge thus emphasising the effect of poor planning. These authors therefore motivate that HR planning - a process, which an institution uses to ensure that it has the capacity and the right profile of employees to deliver a particular service currently and in the future - is crucial to the sustainability of the institution. The risk that an institution faces if workforce planning is not conducted comprises an inability to meet future personnel needs and misalignment between the investment of financial resources and expected institutional outcomes.



### **2.4.1.3    *The influence of the external environment on the recruitment process***

The recruitment process of an institution is influenced by a number of factors external to the institution, which employers who seek a competitive advantage in the labour market, should factor into their planning processes.

#### *2.4.1.3.1    The dynamic labour market*

The response to an advertisement depends on the availability of candidates who fit the job profile available in the market. If the market has an adequate supply of the talent that is being sought, there would be a very positive response to an advertisement. A limited response might imply that the required skill is a scarce skill or potential applicants do not meet the required standards. Should that be the case, employers would be required to find creative solutions to the challenge, such as offering a sign-on bonus to entice applicants to apply for an advertised post. The ability of the employer to offer competitive recruitment packages would need to be balanced with the need of the institution to maintain financial sustainability (Nel et al., 2005:220). It is implied that monitoring the labour market continuously would enable employers to adapt recruitment strategies accordingly, particularly since categories of scarcity tend to fluctuate. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) concurs that the recruitment and retention of talent are increasingly of concern, requiring employers to monitor the composition of the target audience and the dynamic labour market in the competition for skilled, knowledgeable and experienced employees.

Employers who research the needs of the limited talent pool from where new employees are attracted implement strategic recruitment strategies and gain a competitive advantage. This implies a close focus on the generational groupings in the workplace. Codrington and Grant-Marshall (2004:1-250) and Lancaster and Stillman (2002:6) identify a generation as a group of individuals who were born about the same time. Smola and Sutton (2002:363-382) agree that generational groups share certain historical and social experiences, which shaped their views. Kupperschmidt (2000:65-76) agrees that the different generational groupings differ in their personal values, work ethic, mode of communication and manner of socialisation inside and outside the workplace.

Zemke, Raines and Filipczak (2000:153) and Crampton and Hodge (2006:11, 19-22) agree with three distinctly different generational groupings in the workplace who were born

at different stages with unique views and preferences: baby boomers (1941-1960), generation X (1961-1980) and generation Y (1981-2000). Cummings and Worley (2001:1-694) add that employees are at different stages of maturity in their career, and one employee will therefore experience aspects of the total employer offering quite differently from the next employee. The **employer offering** refers to the employer value proposition in exchange for the skill, experience, knowledge and contribution of the employee. With this mix of different generations at varying levels of maturity, competitive employers recognise that there is a need to adapt institutional policies, such as the recruitment strategy and employee value proposition, to attract generation-specific talented employees (Milgram, 2008:1-14). With the difference in values, needs and work ethic between the different generational employees, the opportunity to implement a differentiated recruitment and attraction strategy to attract employees in a specific generational segment in an attempt to increase future results, appears to be wise (Rynes, Gerhart & Minette, 2004:386-387).

#### *2.4.1.3.2 Governance framework*

According to Swanepoel et al. (2011:259), the legislative framework in South African regulates unfair discrimination in the workplace and supports an environment that presents equal opportunities to all employees within basic conditions of employment (Swanepoel et al., 2011:209-210). Applicable legislation includes the Basic Conditions of Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1997a) and the Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1998a). The statutes will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 6 of this research report.

#### *2.4.1.3.3 Labour unions*

Nel et al. (2005:220) and Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) agree on the importance of labour union involvement in the workplace to represent the interests of employees. Unions generally provide meaningful input into the different stages of recruitment from the point of view of the influence on their constituents. Nel et al. (2005:220) add that informed participation by labour unions could enhance recruitment processes to the advantage of the employer by implementing a recruitment strategy, which is thoroughly consulted, sensitive to the needs of role players and which earns credibility amongst employees in the institution. Institutions where the involvement of unions is not governed by a sound

policy framework but managed on an ad hoc basis could contribute to labour tension, a break in trust between collective bargaining parties and ultimately effect on the stability of the institution. When applying for advertised positions, potential applicants are influenced by the perception of how stable an employer is.

#### **2.4.1.4 Sources of recruitment**

Potential employees can be identified from a variety of sources within and outside an institution. The HR professionals responsible for recruitment must exploit all possible sources internally before exploring external opportunities (Dessler, 2014:173). Talented employees who are within an institution and who meet the requirements of advertisements should find a progressive career path within the institution. Senior management must build a culture of prioritising a progressive career path for talented internal employees before employing new talent.

##### *2.4.1.4.1 Internal sources of recruitment*

Recruiting personnel into vacant positions can be achieved through various mechanisms that are available within the institution.

##### → **Skills repositories**

Singer (1990:166) encourages a skills audit, which enables an employer to identify the skills available within the institution and whether the talent in employees with a specific skill set is being used to the advantage of the employer. The database of employee-specific skills would serve as input for the talent management strategy and support the career pathing of employees. The skills inventory would identify the current level of skills available, the skills required within the institution, further training and development needs to realise the strategic vision and possible areas of reskilling and upskilling. It is suggested that line managers could also use the career-related information to have career conversations with employees, to coach and mentor them in order to enable them to apply for more progressive career opportunities in the institution.

→ ***Job posting***

Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) highlight the opportunity for internal appointments should job vacancies be advertised on notice boards or in internal newsletters within the institution. This method of recruiting supports the possibility of the best internal candidate applying but it may also have the effect that the position may not be filled for a long period and employees may transfer from job to job. One of the risks would be that employees do not read the notice boards regularly and hence are not aware of the job posting. Job postings may therefore not attract the attention of potential applicants. This particular method is limited as it does not cater for the attraction of talented employees from outside the institution, as such candidates may not have access to job posts available internally.

→ ***Supervisory input***

If employee relations with supervisors are effective, the supervisor would be able to highlight the strengths of the individual with ease. However, the most common reason for employees exiting an institution is said to be poor relationships with supervisors. This implies that supervisors may be challenged to promote the strengths of the employee if the relationship between both parties is tense. The human capital theory suggests that the human characteristics of an individual contribute significantly to a particular phenomenon. In this particular case, the personality and managerial ability of the supervisor might be contributing to employee turnover, resulting in a vacancy that needs to be filled again (Greve et al., 2010:35-58). Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) highlight the advantage of a supervisor recommendation towards the filling of a vacant post if relations are sound. Nel et al. (2005:221) advise that to limit the effect of subjectivity from supervisory input as far as possible, it would be necessary for performance management mechanisms to be monitored closely.

**2.4.1.4.2** *External sources of recruitment*

It is possible that the filling of a vacant post requires a wider pool of qualifying candidates than what is available within the institution. This necessitates the employer utilising mechanisms that are outside the institution to reach a broad target audience.

→ ***Employment agencies***

The institution may utilise employment agencies to recruit suitably qualified candidates if a particular need exists. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) report that the use of employment agencies may be a viable option for an employer if the management of the administration surrounding recruitment needs to be outsourced or the objectivity of the process needs to be elevated. Nel et al. (2005:222) add that employers may use employment agencies when the institution is too small to have its own HR department that could carry out the recruiting process or when the vacant position is one that would attract many applicants resulting in a time-consuming selection process for the institution. Using employment agencies could, however, be an expensive undertaking. Grobler et al. (2008:1-200) note that institutions use agencies as a screening mechanism to locate experienced candidates, thus reducing the risk that institutions have with employing directly or through advertising. Gomez-Mejia et al. (2010:194) agree that employment agencies could be particularly effective if an employer is looking for a specific skill in an employee. While employment agencies do provide a specific service, the return on investment would need to be weighed by employers within the broader institutional challenge of financial sustainability.

→ ***Educational institutions***

It could be a proactive approach for employers to identify competent and skilled individuals nearing the completion of their studies who might benefit from possible internships within the institution. Employers might expose such individuals to competency testing so that the employer could elevate the strengths and support the areas of weaknesses. Should interns from the disadvantaged groupings secure permanent employment, the equity profile of institutions would improve (Swanepoel et al., 2005:267-269).

Nel et al. (2005:222) point to a possible risk to the credibility of employers if the recruitment process of interns is not sound. Dessler (2014:184) adds that their recruitment might create animosity amongst existing employees if candidates do not meet the minimum advertised requirements but are chosen over internal candidates who might have a wealth of experience and skills. This implies that the improper use of candidates from education

institutions could compromise the retention of existing talented employees, which again emphasises the need for a sound recruitment policy to guide the process.

→ ***Walk-ins***

Walk-ins refer to a practice by individuals that approach an institution for employment in a vacant post spontaneously without making an application (Swanepoel et al., 2011). Singer (1990:168) questions the wisdom behind walk-ins, as it is time consuming for candidates seeking jobs. Gomez-Mejia et al. (2010:196) advise employers to invest time and resources in recruiting strategically, which will produce a list of candidates who not only meet the required criteria but also have an impressive profile in the advertised field. Torrington, Hall, Taylor and Atkinson (2009:51) discourage informal methods of recruitment as such recruitment denies an institution the opportunity to select the best possible candidate from the widest pool of applicants, presents opportunities for nepotism and limits opportunities to previously disadvantaged individuals. Dessler (2014:186) supports walk-ins, particularly for contract personnel and seasonal employees. Although Dessler supports informal methods of recruitment for seasonal workers, it does not shift the emphasis on a sound recruitment system. The recruitment process must be defensible regardless of whether the position to be filled is permanent or temporary, implying transparent and fair processes to recruit employees.

→ ***Headhunting***

Top performers are pursued by competitive institutions through specialised recruiting agencies or they may be approached personally with an offer to fill a vacancy. Although headhunting is considered if standard recruitment practices repeatedly do not yield a suitable candidate, Torrington et al. (2009:52) quickly highlights the exorbitant costs associated with using headhunting agencies, especially if the candidates do not prove to be worthwhile investments. If an advertisement deviates from the official requirements of the position to accommodate a headhunted candidate who does not meet the official requirements, competent applicants and employees within the institution would lose trust in the employer and institutional processes. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) emphasise the need for a sound recruitment governance framework that could mitigate such risks. The

costs associated with headhunting should be a deciding factor when deciding whether to pursue this route. It may be possible that the employer has not reached the target audience through the advertisement and would need to strategise on revising its approach before additional HR costs are considered.

→ ***Consultants***

Torrington et al. (2009:52) do not support the use of consultants due to the exorbitant fees they charge. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) emphasise the sound governance framework that is necessary if consultants are to be used to protect the confidentiality of the applicant and integrity of the consultant agency. While, on the one hand, consultants would be skilled and experienced in specific fields, on the other hand, employers invest significantly in skills and development of employees and may have in-house expertise on a range of matters. Perhaps a criticism of employers is that they tend to seek the services of consultants at additional institutional cost when the same quality of service is available in-house at no additional cost.

→ ***Clients***

According to Nel et al. (2005:222), employers often overlook the recruitment opportunities available through their customers. Clients, who may not wish to apply for vacant positions themselves, could offer valuable referrals for consideration. Torrington et al. (2009:51) do not encourage informal recruitment methods as this is open to irregular practices by employees, which compromise the appointment of a candidate and effective HR processes. Applications received from customers must be submitted towards the official recruitment and selection process and be subjected to the same requirements as applicants who respond to the advertised position. Swanepoel et al. (2011:222) agree that the credibility of the recruitment and selection process must always be protected by the HR professionals and support a sound governance framework, which will enable recruitment choices to be fair, transparent and defensible.

→ ***Direct mail***

Although technology has changed the way people do things, it appears that applying for vacancies through advertisements in the local media still remains a popular route

especially for employees who do not have access to technology or are computer illiterate (Anderson, Salgado & Hulsheger, 2010:291-304; Nel et al., 2005:222).

#### **2.4.1.5 Recruitment methods**

An institution may choose between various recruitment methods that suit their preference, audience and most importantly, their budget (Swanepoel et al., 2005:269). An institution would need to analyse the financial feasibility of recruitment methods available and make informed decisions (Russo, Gorter, Nijkamp & Rietveld, 1997:599-623; Sims, 2002:1-20). Moser (2005:188-197) and Chan (2006:169-184) compared the responses of internal and external employees who were recruited and found varying degrees of satisfaction. The recruitment method that is used can determine the degree of success (Swanepoel et al., 2011:220). Devitt (2005:9) encourages employers to conduct research into the skill set they require from the new appointee as well as the job hunting preferences of target audiences.

##### *2.4.1.5.1 Advertisement*

Torrington et al. (2009:51) highlight that, despite the advances of technology, the most popular method of recruitment remains the advertisement in the local media. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) agree that job seekers still appear to scan advertisements in the local media. According to Highhouse, Stierwalt, Bachiochi, Elder and Fisher (1999:426), job advertisements in the newspaper are often the only sources of information available to a person making a decision about whether or not to apply for a job within an institution. This implies that the advertisement must attract attention and be accurate. Rafaeli and Oliver (1998:352) note that job advertisements provide applicants with information about the values of the institution and employee rewards (Cable & Judge, 1996:294-311; Turban & Greening, 1996:658-672). Pertinent information, such as the structure (Turban & Keon, 1993:184-193) and values (Judge & Bretz, 1992:261-271) of an institution have a positive influence on the ability of the institution to attract a potential applicant.

According to Vicker and Royer (2005:210), the key to placing advertisements strategically is to think like the candidates you want to attract. This implies that employers would need to research the preferences and values of the generational groupings in the target



audience and place the advertisement appropriately in the correct advertising medium to appeal to the target audience.

→ ***Appointment criteria in the advertisement***

Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) emphasises that employers should invest sufficiently in the key requirements of the vacant position that is advertised as well as the overall effect of the advertisement. Cooper (2007:1-19) adds that the advertised remuneration and employee benefits first catch the attention of applicants before they scrutinise the appointment criteria to determine whether they qualify. The employee reward that is advertised gives the applicant a perception of the profile and stability of the institution.

Rose (2006:12) adds that an applicant's attraction to an institution is affected by a variety of factors, such as the advertised requirements for vacant positions. Nieuwenhuizen (2009:323) suggests that appointment requirements for senior lecturer, associate professor and professor with regard to accredited publications and supervision experience should be lowered. Nieuwenhuizen argues that this would attract more people to academic positions who can then be developed in their positions by motivating them to publish literature and reward them per publication and per successful supervision of post-graduate students. This point of view would support the attraction and retention of talented previously disadvantaged individuals in higher education. Tettey (2006:3-4) agrees with the review of appointment requirements. This can be counter-argued by a remark that, since the standard of the academic profession is quite high, lowering appointment requirements at the higher academic levels will be lowering the standard of the academic profession, which in turn will lower the standard of knowledge being produced and result in poorer tuition, research output and supervision of students (Higher Education South Africa [HESA], 2010:2).

→ ***Visible commitment to diversity***

The provisions of applicable legislation such as, amongst others, the Basic Conditions of Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1997a) and the Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1998a) provide a framework for employers to maintain a workforce that is representative of the demographics of the country. To achieve this ratio, the employer's advertisements should

attempt to reach a wide range of suitably qualified and skilled candidates, including previously disadvantaged individuals (Swanepoel et al., 2005:269). Ng and Burke (2005:1195-1210) established a correlation between a culture that is increasingly diverse in terms of gender, race and nationality, and the attraction of high-performing applicants thus implying that high performers are attracted to a diverse culture. Tiemo and Arubayi (2012:211) point to the added value from unions who, in representing their constituents, can make meaningful contributions on how to enhance the appeal of advertisements to a diverse audience.

The varied employee reward offerings that are included in an advertisement may appeal in diverse ways to the target audience. Thomas and Wise (1999:5) and Freeman (2003:68-76) suggest that females tend to place more emphasis on work-life effectiveness to strike a balance between their personal and work commitments whereas males tend to value competitive remuneration to ensure that their financial commitments in support of the family are adequately met. Ogbogu and Adeleke (2012:4754) highlight that the advertisements placed by Nigerian universities do not attract as wide a pool of candidates as is possible because advertisements are not utilised to show a visible commitment to diversity. Bennett (2002:1-134) and Ogbogu (2006:1-50) encourage employers to utilise the power of job advertisements to attract female applicants into academia. Thomas and Wise (1999:388) agree that institutions may be able to recruit certain profiles of candidates strategically, through amongst others, advertisements for vacant positions, by emphasising their commitment to diversity at the outset during the recruitment process. Despite the published literature cited on the effect of diversity-related statements in the advertisement (Highhouse et al., 1999:425-442; Perkins, Thomas & Taylor, 2000:235-255), it remains uncertain whether diversity-related statements have the desired effect on attracting previously disadvantaged individuals.

Avery and McKay (2006:57-187) encourage employers to exploit the potential of advertisements to attract previously disadvantaged individuals. According to Netswera et al. (2005:39), SA higher education is inequitable in terms of its reach to students from different race groups, cultures and genders and access to funding opportunities implying that a diverse employee workforce will appeal to a diverse student population.

→ ***The advertisement as a marketing tool***

Drafting a compelling advertisement, which immediately captures the attention of potential applicants and increases the chances of attracting the varied applicant pool that is desired, could affect the ability of an institution to attract talented applicants (Vicker & Royer, 2005:12). According to Swanepoel et al. (2011:259), Nel et al. (2005:222), Blem (2000:47) and Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boschoff and Terblanche (2004:20-420), employers should align advertisements to attract attention, generate interest, create a desire in the job seeker to apply for the vacancy and then spur the job seeker to act upon the desire. If advertisements are used as a marketing tool within the strategy to recruit, it could achieve the recruitment of talented employees and an elevated employer brand. There should be an interdependent relationship between the marketing section in an institution and the recruitment HR officers.

Specific corporate images portrayed in recruiting advertisements may directly influence the attractiveness of jobs offered to applicants. According to Cable and Turban (2003:733), advertisements attract the attention of applicants often purely because of the brand of the institution. The view that employer branding strategies assist in shaping the perceptions of an institution as an employer of choice and hence have some bearing on potential new employees being recruited into an institution is supported by several researchers (Highhouse et al., 2003:986-999; Johnson & Roberts, 2006:38-40; Madia, 2011:19-24; Parry & Wilson, 2009:655-673).

The job-specific information in an advertisement must be accurate and informative in addition to being pertinent institutional information that would pique the interest of applicants (Swanepoel et al., 2005:270). Applicants will be able to verify the information employers include in advertisements through the wealth of information accessible on the Internet. Employers must be able to withstand credibility tests; hence, the inclusion of accurate information in the advertisement is crucial (Nel et al., 2005:220).

Nienaber (2011:56-79) highlights that people with different personality types, traits and preferences as well as from different cultures and geographic locations, are motivated differently. Nienaber motivates that employers should shift their focus from advertising

specific elements of employee reward and instead communicate the competitiveness of the total reward package unique to segments of the target audience.

A job seeker may feel the urge to respond to the advertisement and consider the options available. Unique pieces of information contained in the advertisement will appeal to the applicant, including wanting to be employed by an institution with a particular brand. The job seeker might eventually respond to the advertisement and submit an application (Torrington et al., 2009:51-55).

#### *2.4.1.5.2 Special events recruiting*

Recruiting through the opportunities available at institutional events are significant as such events market the institution and elevate its brand (Swanepoel et al., 2005:271; Torrington et al., 2009:53). The emphasis remains on sound recruiting and preserving the credibility of the employer.

#### *2.4.1.5.3 Internships*

Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) and Gomez-Mejia et al. (2010:195) highlight the advantages and disadvantages associated with recruiting potential applicants doing internships. This option might be necessary as a result of employers complying with government priorities to provide opportunities for employment for the skilled unemployed individuals in the country. The institution may finalise projects quicker with the additional HR capacity without necessarily appointing temporary personnel at financial cost. On the other hand, students may be disappointed if their internship does not translate into active appointment with the institution. A potential risk of accommodating interns in the workplace could be employers feeling pressured to comply with government priorities by employing interns permanently who may not be competent on completion of the period of internship.

#### *2.4.1.5.4 Technological solutions to recruitment*

Swanepoel et al. (2011:259), Nel et al. (2005:223-224) and Olson (2013:162) agree that the popularity of e-recruitment is growing rapidly as a result of its efficiency and reach to younger audiences. Fontyn (2001:32) adds that recruitment via social media has added benefits in that the brand of the employer is elevated even further. This implies that

recruitment strategies must allow for such flexibility within a sound governance framework. European and American institutions appear to use social media increasingly to attract, recruit and select suitably qualified applicants (Meister & Willyerd, 2010:80-100). However, financial constraints may hinder institutions in Third World countries from exploiting the benefit of using technology (Anderson et al., 2010:291-304; Madia, 2011:19-24; Tippins, 2009:69-76; Zibarras & Woods, 2010:499-511). Nel et al. (2005:224-226) remind us that although e-recruitment provides the automation and efficiency of information management, may reduce costs to recruiters and increase the choice of jobs to candidates, the use of the Internet requires a financial investment by the employer not only to establish an Internet presence but also to sustain it.

## **2.4.2 A review of literature on the selection strategy**

After a thorough recruitment exercise, Dessler (2014:202) emphasises that the most important link in the filling of a vacant position is the selection of the most competent candidate. Swanepoel et al. (2011:233-234) add that it is crucial that each role player in the selection process possess the basic knowledge, experience and skills in HR management concepts and practices.

### **2.4.2.1 Concept of selection**

Recruitment and selection are two different processes that are interdependent but necessary for the appointment of suitably qualified candidates. Mondy (2010:136) refers to **selection** as the process of choosing the best candidate from a group of applicants for a particular position in an institution. Whereas the recruitment process is aligned to encourage individuals to seek employment with the institution, the purpose of the selection process is to identify and employ the right person for the right job (Mondy, 2010:136). Pillay, Subban and Qwabe (2008:321) agree that people are the most important resource for institutional success. It would be illogical for the employer to select individuals for appointment who do not add value to business outcomes. Although the selection committee is mandated to select the most competent candidate after the interview and related testing process, the Employment Equity Act (RSA, 1998a) requires the achievement of transformational objectives, which may mean that the most competent candidate may not be appointed.

Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2001:352) agree that the objective of the selection process is to match the applicant's competence, knowledge, skills and experience with the advertised job requirements in a fair and transparent manner. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) highlight the importance of selection committees having sufficient relevant information available about the shortlisted candidates to make the most informed decision. Swanepoel et al. (2011:259) define selection as the process of determining which individuals will best match particular jobs in the institutional context, taking into account individual differences, the requirements of the job and the institution's internal and external environments.

#### **2.4.2.2 Selection process**

It could be argued that the step in the recruitment and selection process, which generates the most controversy, is the selection of the candidate to be appointed. The entire process must be governed by a sound policy framework that must be reviewed regularly and which will minimise the risk of unethical conduct on the part of relevant role players and lead to a credible appointment process. Dessler (2014:202) emphasises that the most important objective of selection is to determine person-job fit, which implies to match the knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies of the position with those of the interviewed candidates and make the most strategic decision.

##### **→ Initial screening**

Traditionally, a standard application template has been used to evaluate job applicants against the advertised criteria (Nel et al., 2005:234). Cherrington (1995:226) cautions that if new criteria are introduced during the selection process, which were not part of the advertised requirements, the entire selection process might lose credibility. Nel et al. (2009:237) agree that the credibility of the selection process must be preserved as it affects not only the appointment of a candidate but also the culture of the institution, especially if inconsistencies are not dealt with decisively. Vicker and Royer (2005:32) support a sound screening process that will add to a credible appointment process, including preserving the confidentiality of the process.

According to Brand (2008:207), a lack of administrative capacity to finalise the list of candidates who have applied could result in lengthy delays to finalise the screening process. This is particularly relevant if the response to an advertisement has been overwhelming, and might explain why employers often do not acknowledge receipt of all applications but choose to communicate with shortlisted candidates only.

During the initial screening process, potential interviewees might be eliminated due to, amongst others, unethical conduct by the HR practitioners and poorly trained members of the selection committee. These weaknesses may compromise the attraction of potential candidates to an institution and may be addressed through the implementation of approved procedures which outline how the filtering process should be conducted (Swanepoel et al., 2011:239-240). This implies that an employer may lose the opportunity to be competitive if the initial screening process results in the talented employee not being shortlisted for an interview.

→ **Interviews**

Berry (1998:106) emphasises the need for the interview panel to be experienced in all aspects of the process and professional during the actual interview process. Vicker and Royer (2005:37) agree that relevant interview training is necessary for the selection committee so that each member understands the extent of his or her contribution to the eventual outcome.

Nel et al. (2005:237) report that an interview is used to extract information from the applicant and to make a judgement on the basis of this information. Cherrington (1995:245-248) highlights that the responsibilities of the vacant position will dictate the type of interview that is appropriate. Nel et al. (2005:237-239) identify six types of interviews, namely -

- a **structured behavioural interview** - the panel prepares a list of predetermined questions and does not deviate from it during the course of the interview;
- a **semi-structured interview** - only the major questions are prepared in advance by the panel, and these guide the interview;
- an **unstructured interview** - questions are not planned in advance and the candidate's responses to questions determine the course of the interview;

- a **stress interview** - stressful situations are simulated to allow the candidate to respond on the assumption that people perform best under pressure;
- a **group interview** - candidates are interviewed together, and information is collated per candidate by the interview panel; and
- a **panel interview** - the panel poses questions to a single applicant.

It is logical that, if a consistent practice is to be applied, all interviewees be asked the same questions. Leading questions may flow from the responses of the interview candidates. The committee must therefore agree on the main questions and respect the candidate by not asking unethical questions, such as his or her religious affiliation or sexual preference. Brand (2008:207) adds that interviews are subjective, and therefore prone to human error, irregularity and bias. It is therefore important that more structured interviews be used to limit the element of bias and possible discrimination against an applicant.

After a thorough and professional interview, the probability of whether the candidate is suitable for the position should be apparent. Arulkumaran (1999:362) emphasises that the competence of the interviewees must enable the panel to make an informed decision. Olson (2013:148-149) adds that all interviewees must leave feeling appreciated and respected, and he points out an error by many selection committees, namely to interrogate candidates beyond what might be necessary. It can be argued that even if a candidate is not successful, he or she might be what the employer is looking for in another vacancy. Employers might consider maintaining records of talented unsuccessful candidates to enable an internal headhunting process when the filling of vacancies proves to be difficult. It can further be argued that the employer has an opportunity during the interview process to make a positive impression on all candidates and elevating their opinion of the institution thereby contributing to the institutional brand (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2010:190-197).

In addition, institutions are increasingly regarding video conferencing as a very useful tool, even more than face-to-face interviewing, particularly due to the cost saving involved (Straus, Miles & Levesque, 2001:363-381). Although face-to-face interviews are sometimes regarded as subjective and unreliable, Anderson and Witvliet (2008:1-13) found that face-to-face interviews are still the most frequently used and a popular selection



technique where technology is not available. It would appear that where finances have allowed the employer to invest in technological equipment, employers are at liberty to explore more innovative methods of applicant selection by using technology. Where finances do not allow, employers are still comfortable to use traditional selection procedures. It can be argued that face-to-face interviewing provides an added advantage of enabling the panel to create a rapport with the candidate as well as read the body language of candidates during and on conclusion of the interview process, which could provide selection committees with valuable insight towards making the correct appointment.

→ ***Employment testing***

Nel et al. (2005:240-241) highlight that employment tests, which measure personality, strengths and weaknesses of candidates that are being interviewed, had regained popularity at the time of their research. Mondy and Noe (1996:198-199) support the use of employment tests as the results of these tests can support an informed decision by the selection panel. The information shared by candidates during interviews is not necessarily conclusive in making the most informed selection decision. Psychometric testing (Swanepoel et al., 2011) provides the employer with insight whether the candidate is the best fit for the advertised position and the manner in which the institution operates. Swanepoel et al. (2011) reports that the applicant selection process of candidates varies from employer to employer. It has been a common practice in the 2000's for many institutions to select candidates through face-to-face interviews and competency testing. According to Lievens, Dam and Anderson (2002:580-601), employers are increasingly using online testing, thus enabling employers to determine the person-job fit before employment. Bevan and Fryatt (1988:10) point out that recruitment tests are optional in private sector institutions in the United Kingdom while Schackleton and Newell (1994:23-36) observed that in the European private sector, the use of tests was on the increase at that time though not necessarily the case now. Technology has arguably changed the face of the selection process. As a result of the increased availability of technology, institutions increasingly use computerised testing and multimedia tests in the selection process. Schmidt and Hunter (1998:262-274) assert that interviewees are being subjected

to a number of relevant tests, which will provide the selection committee with valuable information to enable decision-making.

→ ***Reference checking***

The listing of referees in an applicant's curriculum vitae provides the employer with an opportunity to confirm the credibility of the applicant. Reference checking uncovers potentially damaging information about the interviewee, which he/she might not have shared and which will enable the employer to filter through potential appointees. Cambern (2003:1-10) indicates that applicants generally manipulate information regarding their educational qualifications, criminal history and remuneration. Mathis and Jackson (2006:251) support the use of reference checks and add that, although most referees are reluctant to respond to specific questions, they are comfortable to provide general information pertaining to the interviewee. McCormick and Ilgen (1985:195) caution that references from credible sources may be used only where the referee had observed the candidate perform duties in the past and was in a position to express an opinion. Dessler (2014:220) supports the use of reference checking to avoid making appointment errors that might be irreversible.

→ ***Selection decision***

Gomez-Mejia et al. (1998:152) highlight that the HR division is generally responsible for appointment decisions. On the other hand, Torrington and Hall (1995:230) point out that appointments are also regarded as management prerogative. Nel et al. (2005:242-243) disagree and support the participatory role that the HR division should play in the selection process to maintain consistency in appointments.

Grobler et al. (2008:1-200), Schumann (2001:93-111) and Louw and Mayer (2008:1) emphasise the importance of ethical selection decisions as the employees' performance after appointment affect the competitiveness of the employer. Vicker et al. (2005:77-81) add that the approved candidate might negotiate the remuneration package being offered, especially if the candidate's experience and qualifications are substantially more than the advertised requirements.

Swanepoel et al. (2011:259-260) emphasise the importance of employers reflecting on a recruitment and selection process on conclusion of an appointment, sifting out possible gaps in the policy or process and addressing the gap timeously. Such reflection enables employers to remain competitive and credible. Once the employee has been attracted, selected and approved for appointment, the next challenge that confronts the employer is to apply the talent of the employee to the benefit of the institution whilst ensuring that the employee has a progressive career path with the employer. Gomez-Mejia et al. (2010:212-213) emphasise the need for a retention strategy that is mutually beneficial for the employer and the employee. An analysis of published literature in terms of the retention of an employee as an HR function will be covered in Chapter 3 of this research report.

→ ***Appointment of the approved candidate***

The appointment of the most suitable candidate concludes the attraction and selection process. The success of the recruitment and selection strategy can only be determined by the contribution the successful candidate makes in the institution towards the achievement of strategic imperatives (Swanepoel et al., 2011:257-258).

### **2.4.3 Employer value proposition**

In terms of attracting an employee to an institution, the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection strategy is supported by a competitive employer value proposition. The employer value proposition (EVP) is the holistic package offered by an employer in exchange for the productivity of an employee. From the employer's perspective, this would include the remuneration, employee benefits, performance and recognition incentives, talent development opportunities, work-life initiatives and a healthy organisational culture (Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2011:7). From an employee perspective, the employee's engagement with the EVP determines his or her level of effort in bringing the vision of the institution to life. From an employer perspective, a strategically designed EVP attracts, engages and subsequently retains employees to achieve institutional success.

The experience of employees within an institution would influence individuals in the target market to respond to advertisements for vacant posts. It is therefore argued that employers must realise the effect of marketing agents inside the institution in the form of existing employees. The experience of employees with the EVP would translate into being ambassadors and marketing agents for the institution, directly or inadvertently (Worldatwork, 2011a:16, 65). Metcalf et al. (2005:16) argue that recruitment and retention are influenced by the entire reward package and not by individual elements within employee reward. The total package might include remuneration and employee benefits, a positive work environment, a diverse institutional culture, career and development opportunities, performance and recognition opportunities and work-life fit initiatives. Fitzenz (2010:68-69) agrees that employers must focus on a competitive EVP and a packaged reward offering to maintain a competitive edge. In comparison to other elements within a total package, remuneration is a tangible factor in the attraction stage, while the other elements tend to become important when the individuals are in the institution already and therefore affect their retention (Rees, 1973:10-220).

Hale and Bailey (1998:7-72) support investment in a competitive EVP and add that employers must align the reward strategy to elevated institutional performance and critical elements of institutional change, reward correct employee behaviour and communicate the EVP at every opportunity. Munsamy and Venter (2009:1-9) encourage employers to focus on a packaged reward offering to employees. Tettey (2006:3-4) adds support to a competitive EVP and a system of segmented rewards, implying that a standardised reward offering would not be attractive to all potential employees.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

A HE environment that is not stable but introducing continual change, institutional financial instability, non-competitive employee reward offerings for academics, among others, are factors which influence the attraction to the academic profession negatively. If the academic profession is not regarded as a viable career option, this implies that the contribution of knowledge to society would be compromised, which has serious implications for a progressive standard of living. Within a limited talent pool, the competition by institutions for talented employees is considerable. Employers who wish to

be regarded as employers of choice and who want to maintain this status must be flexible in their practices and should align all relevant policies, particularly the recruitment and selection strategy, to the changing internal and external environment as well as the unique needs and preferences of the talented employee they seek to employ. Employers must be mindful that each generation of employees within the workplace has a unique work ethic, employee reward preferences and outlook on life. Competitive employers appear to be responding positively to the unique reward needs of segmented groupings of employees in the workplace, which include, amongst others, gender or cultural groupings. The competitive employer would seek to build an inclusive workplace culture that earns the reputation that diversity is encouraged. Employees are attracted to institutions for a variety of reasons including, amongst others, remuneration, employee benefits, performance and recognition initiatives, career and development opportunities, work-life balance initiatives or the entire employee value proposition.

Competitive recruitment and selection strategies may differ from one institution to the next, and will be influenced by:

- the strategic direction the institution is taking;
- the alignment of the recruitment and selection strategy to the HR strategy, reward strategy and institutional strategy;
- the extent to which relevant HR planning is done for the short, medium and long term;
- fiscal prudence that is exercised; and
- the competence of the HR personnel who manage the entire process towards a successful end.

It is crucial that the role players who are involved in the recruitment and selection process be competent to perform the function. The credibility of the selection process is crucial, and would add to a positive institutional culture. The investment made by the employer in recruiting a particular candidate should ideally be reaped by the level of productivity from the employee once appointed.

Skilled, knowledgeable and experienced employees will be recruited by the most persistent employers who administer a range of recruiting techniques - from exploiting the

use of the Internet to headhunting and recruitment agencies. Such employers would invest much into ensuring that the brand message communicated during the recruitment strategy is consistent with the message the new recruit receives once appointed. Employers who strive for a competitive advantage will seek the most effective methods of recruiting competent employees and be flexible to change a method if it does not reach the target audience. In being flexible, the current and future dynamic needs of potential applicants should be understood and catered for. Recruitment and selection policies and processes must also be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that audit gaps are addressed and that recruitment strategies remain relevant to the internal and external environment.

It would be a waste of resources to recruit, select and appoint competent applicants, and then not be able to retain them. The unrealistic expectations and general lack of knowledge that many job applicants have about the position at the time they receive an offer could have a bearing on whether or not they decide to stay or resign. Often when expectations that are created at the time of recruitment are not realised, the employee may become disillusioned and decide to resign. Recruiting the most competent people to meet the HR needs of an institution is part of the challenge for the employer. The remaining challenge for the employer is how to retain the competent employee who was recruited. Chapter three will deal with the factors that contribute towards the retention of the appointed employee within academia.

## CHAPTER THREE

# RETENTION AS A PUBLIC HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Metcalf et al. (2005:11-12) highlight that retention is affected by the entire employment package and not by one specific element only. The package would typically include different elements of employee reward and the intrinsic aspects of the job such as academic teaching and research, job security, work autonomy, career progression, work-life effectiveness, collegiality of colleagues and an enabling working environment. For the purpose of this chapter, the reward elements of development and remuneration are excluded but are described in Chapters 4 and 5. The focus of Chapter 3 is on the intrinsic aspects of the job and their effect on retention.

Once the employee is appointed, the employer faces the challenge of creating a culture within the institution, which appeals to the employee and, at the same time, developing the potential within the employee to the advantage of the employer. The emphasis an employer places on the alignment between individual and institutional performance in strategies and investment of resources is crucial to the degree to which employers will maintain a competitive advantage in the market (Bussin, 2014:1).

The different generational groupings in the workplace were described earlier (see 2.2.2.1.1). While the workforce becomes increasingly diverse, employers are mindful of the wealth of knowledge, experience and skills leaving the institution as a result of baby boomers retiring and generation Y being quite different in terms of their mode of operation (Bussin, 2014:17; Tettey, 2006:1-20). Adequate succession planning does not appear to have taken place to enable suitably qualified and knowledgeable employees within the institution to continue with the same or higher level of competence and skill (Schramm, 2005:6). The employer is forced to consider innovative methods, including the use of technology, to manage competent employees to achieve strategic outcomes (Lawler, 2008). Before employers look for skilled and experienced employees outside the institution to address the skills deficit caused by, inter alia, a high turnover rate, they must

focus inward, interrogating current retention mechanisms. Retention mechanisms could be the reward strategy, talent management strategy and the institutional culture in terms of which employers engage, encourage, empower and motivate employees to build lasting careers within the institution (Wickramasinghe, 2007:108-129).

It appears that the challenge to retain talent is being experienced across all employment sectors, including the HEI sector where academics are attracted from within the HEI market as well as from the general labour market. Academe does not appear to be an attractive career option anymore (Pienaar & Bester, 2008:32). Anderson et al. (2002:1-168) agree that where the profession used to be able to retain a specific calibre of individuals who were passionate about teaching, research and community engagement, the profession does not appear to be having the same effect anymore. While the crisis facing academe to retain talented academics appears to be well documented in literature, what appears to be a gap in practice is the co-ordinated and integrated effort by education leaders to retain competent academics (Netswera et al., 2005:36-40).

In Chapter 3, the researcher has reported on relevant literature pertaining to the retention of employees to identify gaps, best practices, the best fit and, most importantly, a strategic fit to the institution. How well employers manage the expectations, career needs, communication styles and learning needs of each generation in the workplace will affect their ability to attract, develop, engage and retain skilled and experienced employees.

### **3.2 RETENTION STRATEGY**

With a widening gap between the demand for and supply of skills, the successful employers look to integrate their strategies, policies and practices proactively to become the employer of choice (Bussin, 2014:25; Metcalf et al., 2005). What works in one industry, will not necessarily work in the next, requiring employers to implement a retention strategy that is sensitive to internal changes, current initiatives in the general labour market and dynamics that may be relevant to the specific industry in which the employer is located (Tettey, 2006:5-20). A one-size-fits-all retention strategy is not the answer neither is procuring additional funds to improve the retention challenge. Employers are required to understand the needs of the employee from a talent development, employee reward and institutional culture perspective, implying that racial, generational and gender segments



would need to be considered. Where it might not be practical to individualise employee reward offerings, HR metrics, especially in the field of employee data, could enable the employer to customise reward offerings to suit segments within the workforce (Fitz-enz, 2010:1-368).

A significant shift away from past practices sees line managers playing an increasing role in the interdependent relationship with HR officials towards effectively managing employees, ranging from the management of their performance to recruitment, selection, training and development (Dessler, 2014:32). This implies that it is necessary for line managers who are in direct contact with employees to be empowered so that they can be an extension of the HR manager.

### **3.2.1 Employer value proposition (EVP)**

The EVP was described earlier (see 1.1.3). Employers who implement strategies aimed at benefitting the employees in silos and who fail to see the competitive advantage in integrating strategies and aligning them to the core institutional strategy may not experience much success in retaining talented employees (Kochanski, 2004:26-33). Employers are often frustrated at their inability to retain talented employees in whom they have invested (Corporate Leadership Council [CLC], 2002b:5-45; Michaels, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod, 2001:25-199; Munsamy & Venter, 2009:1-9; Sartain & Schumann, 2006:1-272). It appears that what is required is for employers to improve the entire experience that is offered by the institution and make this as rewarding as possible in exchange for the employees' contribution to the institution (SHRM, 2011:7).

A common mistake by employers is not considering the effect of the entire work experience on the employee. This ranges from how conducive the work environment is to collegial relationships in the workplace. The termination of employment is not necessarily a bad thing especially if employees consistently perform poorly. However, the risk of dysfunctional turnover is significant when the EVP is perceived to be less competitive than that of other institutions (Munsamy & Venter, 2009:1-9). A differentiated EVP might appeal to different segments in the workforce (Sartain & Schumann, 2006:50-100). Bussin (2014:125) adds that a differentiated EVP not only motivates talented employees to join the employer but also encourages current experienced and skilled employees to stay.

This implies that the link between the EVP and retention is the talent management of the employee.

### **3.2.2 The talent management strategy**

With the immense competition for talented employees, employers appear to have shifted their focus from recruiting talent in the labour market to exploring the management of talent in employees at the institution. This implies that employers seek to optimise internal processes so that the right talent is available at the right time in the right place in the right capacity to achieve the strategic and operational goals of the institution (Bussin, 2014:19). CIPD (2012:1) defines talent management as a cyclic process involving the identification, recruitment, development, engagement, deployment and, ultimately, the retention of competent employees who add value to an institution. This implies that retention is only one aspect of talent management; other dimensions may include the attraction, development and deployment dimensions (see 1.1.3). Dessler (2014:45) defines the talent management process as the employer being focused on how high-performing and high-potential employees in the institution are managed towards their retention for as long as possible.

Employers often overlook key opportunities to affect the retention of talented employees. Bussin (2014:19) encourages employers to be strategic in their policies and procedures and to utilise every opportunity to convince the employee that they are employed by a competitive institution. This implies that employers need to consider the effect of the institutional brand that is projected, the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process, and the valued-add of integrating new employees into their workplace.

On a practical level, Bussin (2014:20) argues that employers often invest heavily in recruitment and selection processes but do not extract the full return on investment. A case in point is that employers may appoint a suitable candidate, possibly from outside the institution, but neglect to capitalise on internal candidates who were interviewed and who might have shown competence. It is suggested that competent internal candidates could be mentored and coached in their current position towards the filling of vacancies for which they might be suitable. Dessler (2014:45-50) suggests that the employer should consider minute details involved in engaging employees, such as a nurturing environment,

supportive line managers and adds that a regular measurement of whether employees are engaged with their work as well as an analysis of exit interviews would assist the employer to identify gaps in the talent management strategy.

There is no formula for the successful management of talented employees (Lee, 2001:1-9). Employers are required to be flexible in their policies and practices to adapt to the changing needs of talented employees. Employers must distinguish between best practice and best fit. A best practice in managing talented employees within the HR field will not necessarily suit the climate of a particular employer (Torrington et al., 2009). This implies that retention mechanisms may need to be customised to suit the unique profile of talented employees in an institution. Bussin (2014:19) points to talent management not being a new concept, as employers have been developing the potential within employees for years. What employers are now required to do is to adapt their thinking and processes slightly to suit the current climate in the workplace. Bussin (2014:19) explains that where HR managers might have managed talent-related initiatives in the past, collaboration was now required between the HR official and the line manager to nurture the talent in employees and expose experienced and skilled employees to developmental assignments, which enable him or her to exercise his or her hidden potential. Such assignments may include, amongst others, mentorship, coaching, shadowing and job coaching (Unisa, 2013d).

### **3.2.2.1 *Generational effect***

Due to the increase in life expectancy, different generations of employees might be employed at the same time in an institution (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003:1-384). Salkowitz (2008:47) emphasises the need for employers to understand the unique life experiences and aspirations of the baby boomers, generation X and generation Y employees as the understanding could present opportunities to gain a competitive advantage in the market. Salkowitz (2008:3) highlights the advantage of researching the strengths and weaknesses of the different generations in the workplace and adapting the retention strategy to suit the needs of the different generations. The younger generation may benefit from coaching and mentoring by the older generation while the older generation in the workplace could gain from generation Y's practical knowledge and understanding of technology (Zemke et

al., 2000:153). (This implies that the management of talent within an employee is prioritised within the workplace. If the workforce consists of a mix of younger and older employees, there would be complementary and conflicting engagements in the workplace, and young employees could have a positive effect on a competitive employer, again elevating the talent management of the employee (Macky et al., 2008:857-861; Underwood, 2007a:43).

Torrington et al. (2009:16-18) point to the effect that talent management processes have not only on the employment contract between the employer and the different generations of the employee but also on the psychological contract between parties.

### **3.2.2.2 *Psychological contract***

In managing employees, the employer tends to concentrate on the deliverables agreed to in the written contract that is negotiated between parties. However, Gomez-Mejia et al. (2010:16-17) point to employees' expectations being especially aligned to the psychological contract with the employer, which is what the employee understands to be the reciprocal commitments in the employment relationship, which started during the recruitment process. Once the employee settles into the position, he or she might experience unfair practices in his or her workplace or different departments working in silos. This might result in the employee's expectations changing, which will influence his or her behaviour in the workplace (Lee, 2001:1-12; Rousseau, 1989:121-139). Rousseau (2004:120-127) highlights that employees create their own psychological contract through their recruitment experience, career development opportunities exposed to and reward received for the work that is performed. In the psychological contract, the employee tries to align his or her expectations of the employer with what the employer offers in the negotiated employment contract. Since the fundamental nature of the psychological contract is unspoken between parties and somewhat subjective, the employer might be challenged in managing the employee's expectations. To limit the misalignment between the psychological contract and the written contract, Lee (2001:1-9) emphasises that the employer would need to communicate a consistent message to the employee to build a relationship of trust with the employer.

The psychological contract between the employer and the employee affects the ability of the employee to be creative and the extent to which he or she is engaged in his or her work (Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2008:4-31). This implies that if the psychological contract is prioritised, the possibility of the employee being retained by the employer is somewhat higher. Guest (1998:649-664) found that the psychological contract influences the employee's job satisfaction, institutional commitment, trust in the employer, employee relationships in the workplace, motivation, institutional citizenship and the intention of the employee to leave the institution. Furthermore, Sutton and Griffin (2004:493-514) emphasise that the line manager should communicate regularly with the employee on matters of mutual interest and the employer should, in turn, communicate a consistent message at all times to employees.

The psychological contract appears to be having a significant influence on the retention of the employee. The challenge for the employer is that the unspoken nature of the psychological contract implies that the effect on the employee is not tangible and therefore difficult to measure if the employee is not comfortable to share his or her views based on his or her life and work experiences fully (Lee, 2001:1-9). On the one hand, the supervisor manages the employee in terms of the agreed deliverables in the employment contract; conversely, the employee responds to a large extent to the line manager from within the parameters of the psychological contract thus creating a platform for possible miscommunication between parties.

### **3.2.2.3 Induction programmes**

Nel et al. (2005:251) highlight the stress associated with starting a new job, and indicate it to be one of the most stressful experiences in life. A comprehensive induction programme, which is sensitive to the new employee, his or her adjustment to the environment and provides the new recruit with accurate employee information, contributes to his or her retention.

At the time of appointment, the new employee would have a particular perception of the institution. Swanepoel et al. (2005:298) add that the experience of the incumbent would have been built on his or her reaction to the brand of the institution prior to submitting an application for a vacant position, the experience of applying for the position followed by

the experience of being selected for an interview and then ultimately being informed that he or she is the selected candidate. This implies that the employer must understand the effect of minute details in processes on potential new employees. Employers might consider an induction process into the institution as this assists with the stress of transition from one employer to the next, followed by an orientation into the relevant department where the employee will be based (Swanepoel et al., 2011:258-259).

Dresang (2002:219-220) cautions that the probationary period of the new employee requires the support of the employer to assist the employee to settle into the requirements of the post. It can be argued that if the employer neglects to support the employee during the probation process and he or she is not permanently confirmed into the post, the investment made in the recruitment and selection of the employee could be regarded as wasteful expenditure.

The employees in a workplace enable an employer to achieve the strategic imperatives of the institution. For this reason, employers should consider changing their focus from the management of a strategy to the management of people with needs (Cook & Jagers, 2005:4; Salopek, 2000:24-26). This mind shift implies that the challenge could be effectively addressed by encouraging robust dialogue between the employer and employee and responding to employees' needs.

Bussin (2014:39) emphasises a strategic people management approach implying the integration of the talent management strategy with the human resources and alignment thereof with the institutional strategy to achieve maximum effect on the achievement of institutional imperatives. The acceptance of all stakeholders, especially employees, the visible commitment by the employer to the management of talented employees and the flexibility of the talent strategy are crucial success factors.

### **3.2.3 Reward strategy**

The reward strategy represents the more tangible aspects of the employer value proposition (EVP) and is a strategic tool to attract, retain, motivate and engage competent employees provided that the EVP is linked strategically to the institutional and HR strategy (Bussin, 2014:1-40). Dibble (1999:1-307) emphasises that while employee reward has a positive influence on the retention of employees, the challenge of retaining employees

must be managed holistically. This implies that the sole investment of employee reward will not necessarily result in an engaged and retained workforce. WorldatWork (2011b:7) reinforces the alignment of a total rewards strategy to the HR strategy and institution strategy within a positive institutional culture to retain an engaged workforce and result in a high-performing institution. WorldatWork (2011b:7) proposes that the most important elements of a reward strategy are remuneration, employee benefits, work-life balance, performance and recognition and, lastly, development and career opportunities.

Milkovich, Newman and Gerhart (2014:313) propose a reward model comprising dimensions that are perceived to be important to the employee and employer, namely remuneration, employee benefits, workplace engagement, employment stability, peer acknowledgement, challenging work, adequate workload, work autonomy, career and development opportunities, performance management and an inclusive workplace culture. Samuel and Chipunza (2013:107) add that a system of differential rewards might appeal to high-performing academics.

Armstrong and Thompson (2002:1-10) support the flexibility of reward models that adapt to environmental, institutional and individual dynamics presenting the employer with a competitive advantage in the labour market. Srinivasan (2011:81) agrees that reward models are influenced by internal and external factors, and proposes that the reward model must be responsive to personal and professional development, a need for work-life flexibility, individual uniqueness and competitive remuneration.

Harris and Clements (2007:21-25) add that total reward models that are designed in accordance with the reward preferences of employee segments could have maximum effect at minimum cost. Kotze and Roodt (2005:48-55) recommend further research in the area of customising reward offerings according to generational groupings. Harris and Clements (2007:21-25) adds that the differences between generational groupings are linked to individual maturity rather than to generational preferences. Customised reward models may sound appealing to many employees and may appear to be a solution. However, Gross and Edelstein (2006:42-46) caution that in most institutions, there are too many employees to tailor-make individualised reward packages and administer them effectively on a practical level. In terms of the cited literature, there appears to be two

separate streams of thought, namely a one-size-fits all employee reward offering and a customised employee reward offering. A possible approach could be to group employees into defined categories, including generational groupings, since the different generations tend to have similar preferences. This implies that reward packages could be considered from the point of view of generational, cultural and gender needs while the employer balances competitiveness with financial sustainability (Bussin, Henn & Nienaber, 2011:56-79). In this context, a total reward package may contribute positively to employee engagement, retention and institutional performance. This may not necessarily solve the dissatisfaction amongst individual employees for a particular reward preference but could create variety in this area.

Nienaber and Bussin (2009:2) agree that it is practically difficult to manage customised reward packages in large institutions. Nienaber (2011:56-79) found that reward preferences differ according to a number of demographic factors, such as number of children, race, age, job level, educational qualifications, marital status, years of service as well as gender. Nienaber suggests administering reward models that cater for distinct segmented categories within the workforce as an alternative to accommodating individual preferences.

The need for a unique reward model is reinforced by the reward needs of employees that work for one institution but which may be located geographically differently. Such employees appear to have distinctly different reward preferences and motivators that might be influenced by local dynamics (CLC, 2002a:2-10). Employees in Europe and North America appear to value the dimensions of a reward model quite differently than employees from other countries. As an example, retirement provisions may be preferable in one environment while family and relocation benefits may be preferable in environments where talented employees are sourced internationally and need to relocate to their new positions (Chiang, 2005:1545-1563; Gunkel, 2006:5-20; MacGrain, 2000:1-50; Rehu, Lusk & Wolff, 2006:57-72).

Implementing one reward model to cater for the unique preferences of segments within the entire workforce could have a negative effect on the employer's competitive edge. While individualised reward offerings are impractical particularly in large institutions, it



appears to be strategic to consider flexible reward offerings to cater for employee segments (Nienaber, 2011:2). Structuring reward models in this manner would need to be informed by the needs of employees in the workplace. It is suggested by the present study that the reward needs of employees might be determined in employee surveys and during exit interviews. In addition, institutions that are located across the globe should consider the influence of local conditions on the reward preferences of employees in a particular country.

The best practice in the field of employee reward will not necessarily be a best fit in a particular institution. The best-fit model (see CLC, 2002a) is in line with the contingency theory (see Peretomode, 2012:13-17), which takes into account the various dimensions of the institution, including the institutional culture, leadership style, the work ethic of the employees, institutional size and structure of the institution (Bussin, 2014). Most importantly, the reward strategy must be a strategic fit taking into account horizontal and vertical alignment with other institutional imperatives such as the management of experienced employees and fiscal prudence (Armstrong & Thompson, 2002:1-20). This particular strategy is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

### **3.2.4 Institutional culture**

Harrison and Shirom (1999) point to the institutional culture being most influenced by the visible leadership of members of senior management, implying that management can strategically change the direction of culture in the workplace. Schein (1985:2) agrees but adds that the importance of utilising the culture to leverage a competitive advantage is misunderstood. Schein (1985) suggests that closer attention should be paid to the need for professional networks in the workplace, particularly for academics. Reina and Reina (2010:1-105) point to a culture of trust in an institution that is influenced by employees with power but who are not necessarily in positions of authority. SHRM (2011) emphasise the importance of employers devoting attention to the influence of the culture of an institution on the employer value proposition, which influences the retention of employees. This implies that the culture of an institution is not a once-off event but it develops over time endorsed by senior employees in the institution (Reina & Reina, 2010:10-90).

The culture within the institution is the manner in which things are done in the workplace, which binds employees together but operates unconsciously (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2010:42-158; Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz, 2005:17). Ellison (2004:1-263) emphasises the role played by institutional culture to guarantee institutional survival and attain competitive advantage. Changing the manner in which things are done therefore means influencing the existing culture of the institution to change direction, which in practice can be quite a challenge (Nel, Werner, Haasbroek, Poisat, Sono & Schultz, 2005:17).

Gomez-Mejia et al. (2010:42-158) highlight the positive influence of a healthy institutional culture on creating internal synergy, which, in turn, influences employee retention positively. Various factors influence a positive workplace culture including the influence of visible and decisive leadership within the institution (CLC, 2013). It is also possible that employees within the institution who may not be in positions of authority but who have power within the institution are driving the institutional culture. This implies that to change the culture within the institution would require an informed change management strategy, time, perseverance and decisive leadership. It is implied that an institutional culture study would need to be measured to determine, amongst others, whether a climate of trust prevails amongst employees as well as between the general employee population and institutional leadership (Reina & Reina, 2010).

While acknowledging the role of remuneration in employee retention, Mshana and Manyama (2013:88-90) point to the influence of a culture where commendation from colleagues for creative initiatives, and financial support for ongoing research is encouraged. Chew (2004) adds that remuneration provides a formal reward but ongoing recognition from peers, management and clients may be deemed more important to an employee in terms of staying with an employer.

#### **3.2.4.1 Profile of the workforce**

The changing profile of the workforce appears to be influencing the challenge to retain talented employees. Strack, Baier and Fahlander (2008:119-128) highlight that the workforce is not only aging but also becoming multi-ethnic. This appears to be the biggest demographic trend affecting employers. A mentored generation Y cohort does not appear

to be readily available to assume the roles of the aging baby boomer generation (Kupperschmidt, 2000:65-76). This gap would have a negative effect on service delivery by the employer. Strack et al. (2008:119-128) indicate that employers appear to be ill-equipped to deal with the profile of generation Y employees who have practical knowledge and understanding of technology, maintain jobs for short periods, and who thrive in environments that encourage innovative solutions to challenges. This implies that employers will need to find innovative solutions to deal with the gap left after employees have retired. Employers might consider bringing retirees back into the workforce in contract positions to mentor and coach generation Y employees (Strack et al., 2008:1124-128). One would need to keep in mind that the retirement age would also guide the period of permanent employment of a long-serving employee. Institutions could, however, have a monitoring mechanism in place, which will ensure that high-performing retiring academics who are willing to continue their contribution to the academic profession are approached timeously to enter into a fixed-term contract with the institution upon retirement (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003:4). Employers may also have to consider implementing an institutional knowledge management campaign which will have to enable a transfer of knowledge and skills from one generation to the next (Delcampo, Haggerty, Haney & Knippel, 2011:8-10; Salkowitz, 2008:11; Trunk, 2007:1).

#### **3.2.4.2 A climate of trust**

A climate of trust in the workplace appears to have a significant influence on the intention of the employee to leave. This however requires the employer to understand the reasons why employees are pushed or pulled out of the institution and the alignment thereof to the relationship of trust with the employer being broken. Employees may be pushed out of an institution towards another job as a result of elements within the institution that may be linked to conflict in the workplace, person-job misfit, poor work-life balance and dissatisfaction with remuneration or workload (Capelli & Hamori, 2006:6-10). On the other hand, employees may be pulled towards alternative jobs where the employment offers may be more lucrative or address a need that is not accommodated by the current employer (Anderson, 2005:501-523).

Masango and Mpofu (2013:891) highlight the importance of the employer understanding the diverse needs of his or her personnel and keeping this information relevant through regular employee surveys. The results of surveys and efforts to address gaps should be communicated to employees to highlight the employer's commitment to build a positive culture (De Beer & Radley, 2000:1-76). Regular interaction with labour unions could also be strategic to manage labour tension within the institution. To avoid the risk of disengagement by employees, the relationship between the employee and employer must be one of trust. The end result would be an employee who is emotionally connected to his or her work, strives to make a positive impression in the workplace and believes in a progressive career path with the current employer (Bussin, 2014:26). Lockwood (2006:5) urges employers to understand the changing nature of the workplace, the need by employees to have professional networks in the workplace, to participate in a diverse workplace culture that encourages democracy and which agrees that employee engagement results in the retention of talent. Kerr-Phillips and Thomas (2009:7) encourage employers to address issues concerning employees with visible and committed leadership reminding us that a relationship of trust will take time to build but a seemingly insignificant matter could break a fragile relationship.

This is particularly relevant in academia. Matier (1990:39-60) highlights that academics do not appear to leave when tangible aspects of their work experience are more attractive in another institution. Instead, they leave as a result of factors within the work environment that push them out of the workspace, such as harassment in the workplace or poor relationships with line managers. This implies that there are challenges within the workplace resulting in a breakdown of trust by the employee in the employer that may contribute to the decision by an experienced academic to leave. Employers cannot afford the dysfunctional turnover of experienced and scarce-skilled employees and would need to interrogate the gaps that may exist in practice about what is causing the loss of talent (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002:518). Chalofsky and Krishna (2009:189-203) confirm a positive relationship between an academic who trusts the employer, his or her level of engagement, and the level of commitment displayed by such an employee.

It appears that efforts to build an institutional culture of trust could currently be managed in silos by different role players. Belasco (1990) adds that the culture of an institution

cannot be changed without an integrated approach between stakeholders, including the input of academics in the institution, thereby suggesting that consulted academic values should be integrated into the institutional values. A key strategy therefore is the encouragement of trust, approval, acceptance and participation in the change management programme, which will reduce resistance, building ownership of the change and motivating people to make the change work. Barkhuizen and Rothmann (2006:38-43) emphasise that while general employee engagement surveys are important, leadership should also include retention surveys to identify problem areas that is resulting in the loss of talented academics (Bernard, 2012:278-299). Work engagement is positively related to the level of satisfaction by an academic in his or her fulfilment of the job, employee commitment and a low measurement of intention by the employee to leave an institution (Demerouti, Bakker, Jannssen & Schaufeli, 2001:279-286). Kahn (1990:692-724) adds that the likelihood of an engaged academic being retained is improved.

While institutional leadership plays a crucial role in building a culture of trust, Dessler (2014:36) emphasises that the role of the HR manager in this process is to facilitate the process proactively and to influence management strategically with pertinent HR metrics that relate to the health of the institutional culture. Blanchard (2007:1) highlights a range of initiatives that affect retention, which are facilitated by the HR official and driven by the line manager, such as -

- showing genuine interest in and appreciation to employees;
- making work meaningful;
- asking pertinent questions about institutional imperatives and progress towards the achievement thereof;
- building job competency;
- keeping personal contact with employees;
- making retention everyone's responsibility;
- supporting the career pathing of an employee;
- driving a culture of excellence;
- facilitating the change management programme; and
- supporting visible leadership in terms of the institutional values.

While there appears to be agreement that a culture of trust affects the engagement of an employee, it is possible that additional factors are collectively deemed important by the employee to secure retention, such as work autonomy, consultation in decision-making and ongoing communication with the line manager. In practice, there might be a gap in terms of identifying strategic initiatives that are either contributing towards or damaging the culture within the institution; hence, there is a need to obtain ongoing feedback from employees during performance reviews, employee surveys, needs assessments, institutional health surveys, consultative bargaining forums and staff meetings. Creating a climate of trust between the employer and the employee involves understanding the employees' changing needs in a dynamic working environment affected by internal and external variables and implementing relevant mechanisms to meet the needs of the employee (Belasco, 1990:1-276).

#### **3.2.4.3 Frequent communication**

Netswera et al. (2005:36-40) conclude that ongoing formal and informal communication between the employer and employee has a positive effect on retention. This does not imply an overload of information but rather communicating on matters of mutual interest that are of strategic importance. Communication appears to reinforce a healthy relationship between parties with a deep understanding of each other. The CLC (2004:1) suggests that communication of key messages should be endorsed by senior management who appears to drive the culture within the institution.

Excellence in the work environment is supported by ongoing communication between role players. Dessler (2014:39) highlights the strategic advantage the employer could gain by using the platform of technology to communicate on a range of issues with the employee, particularly generation Y employees who thrive in an e-environment (see Macky et al., 2008).

Communication within the academic sector is deemed equally important, particularly within a dynamic HEI environment. The Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET, 2003:7) mentions that the work of an academic is generally isolated and detached from dynamic processes in the institution, which invite employee involvement. To bridge the silos that might be evident within the academic profession or between academia and

the rest of the institution, a change management programme might be useful to encourage cross-functional communication and promote a better understanding between the academic and administrative sectors (Metcalf et al., 2005:xix; Oshagbemi, 1996:389-400).

#### **3.2.4.4 Adequate working arrangements**

The more lucrative the overall employment package, the more likely it is that academics will experience a working environment which will have a positive effect on their retention. Srinivasen (2011:82-90) highlights that the work environment must nurture the talent in an academic, and found that development opportunities, a strong ethical culture, a focus on work-life effectiveness, women empowerment initiatives and workplace autonomy, supported the creation of an engaged workforce.

On the other hand, Robbins and Coulter (1999:15) identify a number of factors that influence employees to leave an institution, namely -

- confusion about the role of the academic;
- work overload;
- adapting to the continuously changing HEI environment;
- continuous restructuring of the environment;
- poor self-confidence to assume elevated levels of responsibility;
- poor collegial relationships; and
- a restrictive work environment that does not embrace diversity with an emphasis on compliance and job-person misalignment.

##### **3.2.4.4.1 Work autonomy**

Employees, in particular academics, value the degree to which the job gives them freedom to conduct their main responsibilities, and independence to find creative and innovative solutions to questions that hamper the progress of society (Dockel, 2003:20-276). Daly and Dee (2006:59-64) add that academics place a high premium on their engagement with their peers to further academic goals without the restriction of bureaucracy.

Boyer, Altbach and Whitelaw (1994:28) emphasise that the hesitation by education leaders to afford academics professional freedom must be understood in context. The HEI environment within which academics may contribute research around controversial

matters is often highly volatile, thus creating tension in the highest political circles. For this reason, education leaders in a developing country have to try to find a balance between protecting the freedom of expression of academics and the political agenda. This may be at the expense of the academic responsibility. Restricting academic freedom may damage the profession by compromising expression and further research (Daly & Dee, 2006:59-64).

Kaye and Jordans-Evans (1999:32) highlight that employees who are creative, self-motivated and energetic require stimulating work opportunities, personal challenges, freedom to grow at their own pace and a need to have some bearing on the growth and progress of the institution. Samuel and Chipunza (2013:106) add that the academic profession affords one flexibility in terms of working hours within which one should accomplish academic responsibilities.

Parker and Jary (1995:319-338) argue that leadership changes at national level affect the institutional operational plan which creates a ripple effect on the autonomy of the academic; ultimately, the leadership changes tend to increase the power of management in the institution with a simultaneous decrease in the autonomy of the academic. In line with Parker and Jary (1995:319-338), the contingency theory focuses on the environmental influences that may affect the academic role. Within context, the international academic agenda, political instability on a particular continent, restructuring of the HEI landscape, sensitivity of political matters within a nation, and consistent change within the education portfolio of a country will affect the academic within an institution as the employer is forced to adapt to international and national dynamics (Robbins & Judge, 2011; Sun, Zhao & Yang, 2010:775-801; Trevor, 2011:1-288).

The emphasis leaders of universities place on academic autonomy and its value adds to a healthy democracy and may clash with the political plan of a country (CHE, 2008). Ongoing dialogue and courage to defend academic priorities may be one route for the academic agenda to remain prominent in discussions between the three interdependent education leaders, namely the principal and vice chancellor of the university, the Minister of Education and the president of the country. A silo approach between the three interdependent partners may compromise academic freedom resulting in the academic



profession slowly losing its appeal and experiencing difficulty in retaining academics (Kaye & Jordans-Evans, 1999:32).

#### 3.2.4.4.2 *Research opportunities*

Higher education has changed dramatically in recent years in terms of the medium of instruction, diversity of the student population, increase in student numbers, restructuring and realignment in view of new education agendas (Pienaar & Bester, 2009:376-385). These changes affect the quality of the deliverables and job satisfaction of academics. The work of an academic is unique in terms of the official responsibilities of research, teaching and community engagement. The workload has become quite stressful (Barkhuizen, Rothman & Tytherleigh, 2004:1-40; Bellamy, Morley & Watty, 2003:13-27; Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua & Stough, 2001:53-72).

Metcalf et al. (2005) agree that a substantial change in the nature of any job is likely to increase turnover as a misalignment develops between the nature of the job to which a person was recruited and the revised content of the job. The perceived change in the academic role from performing the core function of research to becoming administrators, detracts from research being conducted, which is a concern for education leaders (Johnsrud & Heck, 1998:539-555; Ntshoe, Higgs, Higgs & Wolhuter, 2008:391-403).

The primary responsibility of an academic is to conduct research, teach and perform community engagement (Rothmann & Jordaan, 2006:87-96). In addition, the academic's workload is increased by additional administrative and managerial tasks. Metcalf et al. (2005) highlight academics' frustration at their diluted role, which they view as a burden and taking them away from their core functions. Arnold (2005:27) points to academics feeling disempowered by the additional responsibilities, which have a negative effect on their research productivity. This implies that academics might consider leaving the academic world. Anderson et al. (2002:1-168) caution that the intention by academics to leave will easily translate into resignations unless urgent interventions are implemented to address academic concerns.

On the one hand, the academic endeavour to conduct research and add to a knowledgeable society is without question. On the other hand, academics are voicing a concern that their role is diminishing and their influence on society is being compromised.

While research output is emphasised in the academic sector, the priority that an academic attaches to the quality of his or her research output is an individual choice. This is consistent with the provisions of the human capital theory (see Nafukho et al., 2004:545-551) which suggests that the human characteristics of an individual contribute significantly to the eventual outcome of a particular product (Greve et al., 2010:35-58; Ng & Feldman, 2010:207-235).

#### 3.2.4.4.3 *Job security*

In the past, academics may have been employed in terms of fixed-term contracts only for specific projects and not as the norm. However, Barnes and O'Hara (1999:229-239) note the increasing trend to employ academics in fixed-term contracts as the norm and the effect this is having on staff morale. Bryson (1996:1-20) and Patrick (1998:1-15) add that the trend created a sense of job insecurity. In his research, Amar (2004:89-104) found, however, that job security is not a concern for generation Y employees, who believed that if they were adding value to their employer and were marketable, they were comfortable in a permanent or contract position. Samuel and Chipunza (2013:107) recommend that senior academics (in other words, baby boomers) who are employed in academe in terms of fixed-term contracts could be considered for permanent employment to improve their sense of job security as they approach retirement. The profile of the baby boomer generation considers security in employment to be highly important in view of their pending retirement and need to maintain their professional and personal financial commitments. This particular consideration is aligned to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where the need for safety and security is tantamount to a basic need of a human well before one's potential can be realised (Maslow, 1943:370-396).

Samuel and Chipunza (2013:97-109) conclude that the lack of security in employment is significantly affecting job satisfaction and the increasing use of fixed-term contracts has been identified as an important reason for academics to leave the sector due to job insecurity (Bett, 1999:5-30; Bryson & Barnes, 2000a:147-241).

It appears that the use of fixed-term contracts is becoming a trend in higher education for academics of all generations. However, recent labour legislation in South Africa prevent employers from reappointing fixed terms contracts repeatedly (RSA, 1995). It is

suggested that, although the trend applies unilaterally to all levels of academia, it should be considered for generation Y academics, within the provisions of the afore-mentioned labour legislation, as it fits their profile not to remain in the employ of one institution for very long but to make a significant impression during the limited duration of the contract (Samuel & Chipunza, 2013:97-109).

#### *3.2.4.4.4 Managerial challenges*

Dessler (2014:43) highlights the new role of HR managers to be more involved than in the past in longer-term planning, formulating and executing HR policies and practices that produce the employee competencies and behaviours the institution needs to achieve its strategic aims. Wells (2003:49) agrees that HR managers must adopt a more strategic role than in the past in decision-making. Bussin (2014:17) adds the importance of the line manager as providing an enabling environment for the employee to excel.

Michael (2008:10-100) highlights that one of the critical roles of management is to create an inclusive work culture that would influence talented employees to stay with the employer even if more lucrative job offers are available outside the institution. The role of the manager is crucial in staff retention as employees leave their managers, and not institutions, when the work environment becomes stressful as a result of interpersonal conflict (Balfour & Neff, 1993:473-486; Beardwell & Claydon, 2007:1-30; Morrow, Suzuki, Crum, Ruben & Pautsch, 2005:681-694). The academic's passion for research might fade in the light of conflict with his or her line manager. Employees who choose to continue working within a poor relationship with the line manager, show increasingly less commitment to KPAs and may carry the stress of the work environment into personal relationships (Balfour & Neff, 1993:473-486; Callier, 2011:110-122; Morrow et al., 2005:681-694).

Fourie (2007:349) highlights the influence by leaders on the culture of an institution on account of their leadership style and visible position on institutional matters. Employees function within that culture and strive for varying standards of excellence (Stuart-Kotze, 2006:51-52). The 1993 World Bank study of seven African universities in Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe found that staff retention

problems were compounded by weak institutional managerial capacity (Tettey, 2006:1-86).

The culture within an institution is driven by employees in positions of authority, particularly those with power (Wits, 2015a). It is therefore logical that if the culture of the institution is divisive and contributes to the exit of talented employees, there would most likely be gaps in the leadership competence of the institution (Purcell, Kinnie, Hutchinson, Rayton & Swart, 2003:1-88). In terms of the structural theory (see Babbie, 2004), leadership responsibilities are a direct function of the number of levels within the institution. Employees in managerial positions must be capacitated and empowered to manage the needs and competencies of the different levels of employees in their area of responsibility (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2010:1-688; Hijazi & Bharti, 2007:58-68). The CLC (2005:4) agrees that the quality of managerial leadership is a significant contributor to the employee's intention to leave an institution. This implies that institutions must invest in talent management strategies, such as developing, coaching and mentoring employees in managerial positions to ensure that they supervise their subordinates in a manner that nurtures the employees' talent, elevates their standard of performance and motivates them to remain in the employ of the institution.

#### *3.2.4.4.5 Changing academic work environment*

Webster and Mosoetsa (2002:59-82) highlight the pace of change involving academia with the main concerns being a loss of community and shared identity, a sense of alienation in the workplace, dwindling respect for the work performed by academics, and a series of restructuring exercises. Each realignment exercise introduces a series of new changes. Matier (1990:39-60) and Ahlrichs (2000:1-272) add that academics find it difficult to adjust to the pace of change and the requirements of a diverse and changing work environment. An enabling environment is extremely important, albeit changing, supported by the necessary resources (Gaiduk & Gaiduk, 2009:149-168; Robbins, 1986:105-106). According to Newstrom and Davis (1997:261), if employee commitment is high, employee turnover will be low.

Anderson et al. (2002:8) highlight the changes in the academic work role from the point of view of excessive workload versus workload complexity. What was initially centred on

teaching, research, community service and limited administration has evolved into a more complex workload comprising also a sharper focus on the use of technology to perform the core academic role, an emerging profile for research management, and a compliance-focused work environment.

Academics generally are challenged by a demanding administrative load and juggling professional and personal commitments with limited time available to finalise research projects (Hemmings, Rushbrook & Smith, 2007:307-332; Petersen & Gravett, 2000:169-176). While academe is still in the process of change, academics are generally self-motivated to pursue the research agenda (Bryson & Barnes, 2000b:147-241; Oshagbemi, 1996:389-400; Ward & Sloane, 1999:1-138). Notwithstanding, Potgieter (2002:1-367) summarises the need for an effective retention strategy in higher education integrating key standalone strategies such as the HR strategy and the reward strategy, to respond to the steady exodus of academics (see 1.1.3).

#### *3.2.4.4.6 Academic work overload*

The core function of the academic appears to have changed with an added focus on administrative and managerial responsibilities. Role overload is identified as one of the most important concerns of academics affecting their retention (Anderson et al., 2002:20-168; Barkhuizen et al., 2004:1-439; Gillespie et al., 2001:53-72; Olivier, Venter & De Lange, 2004:15-40).

During a workload analysis study conducted by Cawood et al. (2008:153-179), academics raised the consequences of role overload on their development, performance, productivity, remuneration and the finalisation of research, motivating the need for a scientific academic workload model. Parsons and Slabbert (2001:77) suggest that an informed scientific model be used to allocate work to academics to ensure consistency, transparency and an equitable workload.

Added to the challenge of work overload, the increase in the academic-student ratio has increased significantly with access to education having improved with time. The diverse student base with a range of new needs also places academics under pressure with a need for further training and development to manage the diverse culture more effectively (Barkhuizen et al., 2004:1-35; Fourie & Alt, 2000:115-124; Gillespie et al., 2001:53-72).

Role overload with limited resources and capacity is also affecting academics' state of health and contributing to their burnout (Barkhuizen et al., 2004:1-35; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998:10-224). Webster and Mosoetsa (2002:59-82) highlight that academic stress about role overload appears to be an international phenomenon. Pienaar and Bester (2006:581-591) recommend that the specific areas of work of an academic be re-designed to address the challenge of work overload. Rothmann (2003:16-25) appeals to political, departmental and institutional education leaders to re-examine the workload model in view of the demands on the academic. Maslach and Leiter (1997:30-190) developed a model, which focuses on the degree of alignment between the academic and the dimensions of the job. The greater the alignment, the better the likelihood that an employee will be engaged in the workplace. Garnett and Mahomed (2012:87) report burnout being experienced by female academics as they try to balance work overload with personal responsibilities.

#### *3.2.4.4.7 Reduced teaching and research resources*

Samuel and Chipunza (2013:107) identify a direct relationship between the availability of resources and academic turnover. Most universities lack sufficient provision of these resources to enable academics to perform optimally; hence, the attrition of their senior academics to universities where the necessary resources might be available. Rothmann and Jordaan (2006:87-96) also confirm that academics are likely to invest more of their time in their professional responsibilities if institutional university leadership provides an environment conducive to working, with the necessary resources, within which academics can excel. George and Jones (1999:20-300) advocate for a comfortable work environment for an academic including adequate office space, technological equipment and research support. The provision of academic support through enhanced technological facilities is a reality. Yet Rosser (2004:285-309) highlights that few institutions provide adequate support for academics to integrate technology into their work. The extent to which academics feel supported in terms of being provided with adequate resources may easily influence their intention to stay or leave an institution.

It appears that in order for an employee to strive for excellence in a realistic way, the minimum resources should be made available for the academic to perform optimally. This

implies that if the HEI sector is experiencing funding challenges, which are expected to last over the long term, HEIs may have to prioritise other funding opportunities to generate additional income, such as possibly long-term partnerships with private sector donors (Samuel & Chipunza, 2013:107).

### **3.3 REGULAR REVIEW OF THE RETENTION STRATEGY**

The factors that appear to be important in retaining a talented employee are specific elements in the reward strategy, an inclusive culture that embraces diversity, leadership, development and career opportunities, work-life effectiveness initiatives and where academics are concerned, academic priorities. Since the retention factors are influenced by the internal and external environment, and because the preferences of the employee population are also dynamic, it is logical that an employer would find the need to review the retention strategy regularly to determine whether the strategies in place are in fact contributing to high performers remaining in the employ of the institution (Ahrichs, 2000). In utilising a number of initiatives as outlined below, valuable management information could be obtained that could be used to review the retention strategy.

#### **→ *Exit interviews***

According to Samuel and Chipunza (2013:109), attracting and retaining high-performing senior academic staff are HR functions and as such, HR departments should put mechanisms in place to track the reasons for academics' resignation. Information collated during exit interviews will be useful to understand why employees leave institutions, have intentions to leave or where underlying problems are fuelling the future exit of employees. Institutions need to implement sustainable retention practices.

The competition by employers for talent has increased the need for relevant information provided during exit interviews (Giacalone, Knouse & Montagiani, 1997:438-448). An exit interview is a discussion between a representative of an institution and a person whose employment with that institution has ended or will be ending shortly (Giacalone & Duhon, 1991:83). An exit interview can be used strategically to extract valuable information pertaining to the gaps within the institution that might be contributing to employees

intending to leave. This tool may contribute to reducing voluntary turnover at an institution and improve the quality of the institutional culture.

Cloete (1985:263) and Cumming (1989:370) identify the use of exit interviews as the most commonly used technique to determine the real cause of an employee leaving as opposed to the reasons provided in the official termination of employment document. Exit interviews delve deeper into the soft issues that led to the employee terminating employment with the institution. However, since human motives are complex, the exit interview is a procedure that requires the most tactful application to achieve the desired standard of accuracy given the subjectivity of information that would be provided by an exiting employee.

Giacalone, Knouse and Montagliani (1997:438) agree that exiting employees may offer biased responses as they may find it intimidating to share their true opinions and experiences about their work in the institution for fear that they might be compromised if future employers seek references from the current employer. The information that is shared may never be used to benefit the workplace, and no personal benefit should be gained from changes resulting from honest responses in the exit interview.

According to Nienaber and Bussin (2009:1-39), based on remuneration, variable pay, employee benefits, performance and career management, the quality of the work environment and work-life integration, survey participants in a private sector reward institution in Southern Africa rated employee benefits and work-life integration highly during exit interviews. Nienaber and Bussin (2009) add that employees tend to prefer a total reward package that adds value to personal and professional commitments to standalone reward elements.

The use of exit interviews appears to add value towards the retention strategy provided the information provided by the exiting employees is filtered to extract subjectivity as far as possible and is thereafter used to identify trends in terms of why employees are leaving the institution (Samuel & Chipunza, 2013:109).



→ ***Institutional health index surveys***

In view of the needs and demands of employees changing from time to time, Masango and Mpofu (2013:890) recommend that surveys that test the health of the institutional culture be conducted regularly through the inputs of employees. Institutional health index surveys pinpoint gaps in the internal functioning of an institution. This would give management the opportunity to identify underlying issues, which contribute to productive employees resigning.

Chambers et al. (1998:44-57) found a correlation between the institutional health index and institutional performance and agree that the information from the survey could be used to improve the gaps in the workplace that are possibly pushing employees out of the institution.

→ ***Retention interviews***

Mobley (1982:112-116) points out that an employee's intention to leave is part of a sequence of events in the psychological withdrawal of an employee from the job process. Samuel and Chipunza (2013:97-109) argue that institutions pay insufficient attention to employees' intention to leave (proactive) and rather focus on actual personnel turnover (reactive). This places the institution at a disadvantage since valuable information can be gleaned from such a retention interview, which could have a significant effect on and possibly reverse the employee's pending termination of employment. Searching for reasons why employees leave an institution at the time of their actual leaving might be viewed as reactive. It is therefore advisable that institutions have interviews with or obtain feedback from existing employees regularly to assess the capacity for retention. During such interviews, an employee's intention to terminate his or her employment with the institution might be revealed (Lambert & Hoban, 2009:96-118).

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

With fierce competition in the labour market for experienced and skilled employees, employers are challenged to retain talented employees by using the most effective retention mechanisms. This implies a continual focus on the institutional retention strategy to ensure the competitiveness of the institution. The changes that are made to the

retention strategy have a direct effect on the individual and combined responsibilities of HR leaders, institutional leaders and line managers. The shift in the balance of power from employers to employees in the workplace implies that employees will move easily to the next employer with the most lucrative offer. The streamlining of processes requires integration between the talent management strategy, reward strategy and HR strategy as well as alignment thereof to the institutional strategy (DHET, 2013b). The absence of synergy between institutional strategies immediately implies a steady loss of talented employees from the institution.

Employers must identify the talent in each employee and nurture that talent through institutional programmes and procedures towards elevating institutional performance. This implies understanding the employee segments in the workplace and customising employee rewards to suit the generational and gender groupings in the workplace. Where a perception might be that remuneration is most important to an employee, it appears that employees place more value on the total reward package such as a diverse institutional culture, which embraces communication, transparency, fairness, remuneration, employee benefits, performance and recognition opportunities, career and development initiatives, work-life balance programmes and where higher education is concerned, academic priorities.

It is logical that employers need to be proactive in determining whether employees intend to leave before employees actually terminate employment. The use of retention interviews, exit interviews, institutional health index surveys and employee feedback mechanisms is crucial to determine the needs most valuable resources of the institution, namely its employees. The institutional retention strategy must be owned, visibly supported and driven by members of top management in order for employees to support the vision underpinning the strategy. The commitment by top management to retain talented employees will be evident if institutional practices are consistent, ethical and bound by sound governance practices.

Chapter four will focus on the management of the performance of an employee that leads to training and development issues and the role that these functions play in the retention strategy of the institution. Achieving a balance between the attraction and retention of

talented employees is key in creating a workplace environment that engages, motivates and empowers employees.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AS A PUBLIC HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The development and training of employees were identified in Chapter three as a factor possibly affecting the retention of employees. This necessitated a close examination of the dynamics governing the training and development of an employee and the competitive advantage an employer could gain if the workforce was sufficiently skilled (Nel et al., 2005:393-410).

The visible signs of a competent workforce are informed decision-making, effective conflict resolution, elevated employee self-confidence, improved institutional morale and engaged employees (Nel et al., 2005:456). Stone (2014:357) adds that HR development could be a powerful tool to implement a new policy or strategy, change culture of an institution and respond to major internal and external institutional changes. Education leaders also acknowledge that, without a qualified, committed and adequately remunerated professoriate, no academic institution could be fully successful (Ogedegbe & Bashiru, 2014:112-115). The development of academics supports the standard of their teaching, research and community engagement efforts (Anderson et al., 2002:7).

### 4.2 DEFINING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A challenge that might compromise the career management of employees is that the concepts **development** and **training** are used interchangeably whereas their meanings are quite different (UP, 2015a). **Training** an employee starts with orientating him or her in the requirements of the new position, assessing the employee's needs and identifying relevant targeted training interventions for implementation. The **development** of an employee is implemented by the employer within a defined period to enhance current levels of performance as well as the personal growth of the employee. The training and

development needs of an employee are identified on the job and through the management of the employee's performance (Nadler & Nadler, 1989:6).

In order for human resources to be trained and developed, it is necessary for a systematic process to unfold. The employee is firstly effectively orientated into the institution and secondly into his or her immediate workplace. Following that, employee needs are assessed in line with a personal development plan and through a formal performance management process. This process culminates in a detailed HR training and development process, which is aligned to the achievement of institutional imperatives. The investment that the employer makes in the training and development of human resources should change employee behaviour towards elevating institutional performance (Purcell et al., 2009). The development and training of an employee is part of a process to manage the talent inherent in an employee in such a manner that it gives employers a competitive advantage (Marshall, 2000:184). In chapter four, the training and development cycle is described. This cycle starts with appraising the performance of staff.

### **4.3 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

The attention that the employer pays to detail of the management of employee performance depends largely on the strategic direction of the institution. It can be argued that it makes business sense for employers to seek returns on their investment in employees through elevated employee performance. If the training and development investment made does not influence employee behaviour in the required direction, it would be necessary to determine the point of disjuncture and whether employees have developed a mind-set that they are entitled to employee reward regardless of their performance. Competitive employers are compelled to monitor very closely the behaviour change in employees resulting from the training and development investment. Performance management systems must therefore be credible and well communicated amongst employees (Franzsen, 2003:653-665). This implies that performance appraisal is a critical process with a primary role of identifying training and development needs towards the management of talent inherent within the employee.

### **4.3.1 Performance management cycle**

The process of managing employee performance is appropriately termed a **cycle** as the employee's performance is managed continually during a process enabling the line manager to compare performance at the start and end of the same cycle. As employees reach performance peaks in an area of responsibility, development needs are then identified to prepare an employee for a progressive career move within the institution, which is aligned to the talent management strategy. Nel et al. (2005:476) highlight three tiers of a performance management cycle. The first tier is the process that is launched initially by ensuring that the individual's deliverables are aligned to the departmental, portfolio and ultimately the institutional strategy through specific, measurable, actionable and timeous objectives. The second tier comprises coaching of the employee through informal observations of performance, identification of possible performance gaps and counselling the employee to remedy the identified gaps. The third tier is the formal evaluation of employee performance, which results in skills development and mentorship.

Employees need to understand the new way in which performance is measured. Unlike the past, when employee output was measured and evaluated in isolation, competitive employers now measure employee output in relation to the value added and effect on the achievement of institutional goals (Crossley & Taylor, 1995:11).

### **4.3.2 Determining key performance areas and deliverables**

The KPAs against which the employee will be assessed must be captured in a performance agreement early in the professional relationship between parties (Subramony, 2008:778-788). The quantity, quality and timeous delivery of the deliverables must be articulated in the performance agreement, and both parties must understand their roles and expectations. Goals that are agreed upon must be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic (Nel et al., 2005:476-477).

Managing the performance of an employee as an isolated event will not add value to the performance of the institution (Subramony, 2008:778-788). For the appraisal process to be optimised, it has to be integrated with the HR management system, variable pay incentives, probation management of new employees, career mobility, discipline management and employee training and development processes (Dresang, 2002:173).

Line managers must ensure that employees understand the performance management process and both parties should prepare adequately in advance for performance reviews. During the formal performance review, parties should agree on areas for training, development and possible under-performance. The feedback from the line manager would need to be conveyed in a supportive manner that would set the employee on a path for skills development in areas where the employee might experience performance gaps (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2010:239-260).

### **4.3.3 Performance appraisal**

The difference between performance management and performance appraisal is that the former starts with performance planning and is crucial to the way employees are managed throughout the year of assessment during ongoing engagement with vertical (those in line managery and senior positions) and horizontal clients (those that are peers to the employee) in the institutional structure. The latter is generally an annual event culminating in the completion of a performance assessment form (Dessler, 2012:230).

Performance appraisal is a formal and systematic process through which the strengths and weaknesses of employees are identified, measured, recorded and developed (Unisa, 2013b). The ultimate purpose is to train the employee where possible gaps exist or to develop the employee where potential is identified (Gómez-Meijía et al., 2010:225). Swanepoel et al. (2005:372) argue that performance evaluation finds its true value in the implementation of the process where possible gaps are identified, enabling leaders to refine the process continually.

Mondy, Noe and Premeaux (1999:20-654) argue that while performance appraisal of employees refers to the actual evaluation of employees' performance, the management of the performance process occurs at a higher level between line managers and subordinates. Mondy et al. (1999) add that, during performance appraisal sessions, KPAs, target expectations, standards and risks are discussed and the way forward is agreed upon, particularly on the actual definition of performance excellence.

Evaluations must take place as agreed in the written contract between parties. Both parties have to share the successes and challenges that occurred during the period of review and decide together on the way forward into the next cycle of assessment. A

healthy engagement of strategic issues will result in refined outputs and deliverables of a high quality. In the session, each party is required to exercise his or her listening, problem-solving and analytical skills and should thus be trained in performance management (Nel et al., 2005:477-478).

In practice, however, it appears that the actual performance appraisal meeting is tense and disempowering (Bussin, 2013b). Line managers tend not to prepare thoroughly while employees tend to over-assess themselves leading up to a tense engagement as parties attempt to reach a compromise (Stuart-Kotze, 2006). Due to the tense atmosphere during the performance evaluation, line managers often succumb to the pressure and resort to allocating average ratings even if the employee is under-performing. Both parties tend to leave the appraisal session exhausted by the tension in the engagement (Dessler, 2012:213). Gomez-Mejia et al. (2010:215) suggest that the tension might be attributed to the conflict between the rational and political perspective affecting the employee's performance appraisal. The former assumes that the value of each employee's performance can be measured while the latter assumes that the value of an employee's performance depends on the goals of the line manager.

#### **4.3.4 Performance appraisal method**

Performance appraisals appear to have shifted from bilateral engagement, often tinged with subjectivity, to the inclusion of feedback from interdependent colleagues in a horizontal and vertical relationship with the employee (Smither, 2005:33-36). This enhances the credibility of the final appraisal rating that is allocated to the employee (Dessler, 2012:217). The 360-degree performance (see Smither, 2005) appraisal tool therefore provides the employee with a balanced perspective on his or her performance in terms of the impression made on the recipient of a service. Competitive employers appear to use the 360-degree tool to identify gaps (Franzsen, 2003). However, on-the-job coaching or mentoring might be more appropriate to identify areas of training and development (Nel et al., 2005:479).

Peiperl (2001:1-190) highlights that employees could also receive negative feedback during the 360 degrees appraisal but often choose to ignore this in favour of positive feedback, thus not benefiting from possible introspection. Ivancevich and Matteson



(2002:192) caution that, despite the value that can be extracted from 360-degree evaluations and the multiple-source approach to the assessment of an employee's performance, research of the effectiveness of 360-degree evaluations has not kept up with the practice of their implementation. Multiple source feedback from line managers, peers and subordinates leads to a more accurate rating of the employee (Smither, 2005:33-36). There appears to be a trend towards using a system that provides feedback from the recipient of a service and peers of the employee who are horizontally (those who are the employee's peers) and vertically (those who are senior in position to the employee) placed to the employee thus providing a more balanced assessment of the employee's performance than a one-to-one performance appraisal between the employee and the line manager (Maylett, 2009:52-59).

#### **4.3.5 Performance rating techniques**

Rating techniques that are used during performance evaluations have generated a great deal of discussion and to some extent, controversy. Swanepoel et al. (2011:415-422) identify the relative rating technique and the absolute rating technique. The **relative rating technique** ranks employee performance from best to worst, and can create and sustain a high level of performance by identifying the weak and strong performers and rewarding the strong performers. Since it involves persons being compared, it could promote competition between employees, but affects morale poorly, does not assess an employee's progress in perfecting specific skills, and emphasises the performance of an individual as opposed to a team. The **absolute rating technique** allows the line manager to measure the performance of an employee on an ongoing basis. The ongoing engagement between the employee and line manager supports a positive relationship between the two parties. Swanepoel et al. (2005:385-390) support both the relative and absolute technique from the perspective of using the relative technique for comparing employees' standard of performance and the absolute technique for developing employees.

Swanepoel et al. (2011:380-390) highlight the relative rating technique, absolute rating technique, management by institutional objectives, use of assessment centres and the 360-degree performance assessment as performance rating techniques. The authors

then add that the use of the 360-degree technique and the assessment centre is gaining popularity within SA public sector institutions. At the assessment centre, employees are subject to role play while the selection panel observes the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate in comparison to the competencies required by the vacant position.

#### **4.3.6 Rater errors**

Errors tend to creep into the performance management process, and range from unclear standards against which the employee is evaluated to poor managerial attributes resulting in all subordinates being rated equally while there is a clear differentiation in performance between them (Dessler, 1997:360). Coleman and Briggs (2002) points to stress, gender and racial biases and debilitating leadership styles within the work environment that may contaminate accurate and valid performance ratings. This implies the need for a moderation process after the assessment process has been finalised.

In terms of moderating performance ratings, three approaches could minimise rating errors, namely -

- the statistical correction of ratings through a moderation and calibration process;
- addressing performance assessment challenges; and
- the development of raters in the crucial skills who are required to assess employees fairly and accurately (Mullins, 2002:707).

To minimise rater errors, Nelson and Quick (2002:176) add the need for employees to rate themselves honestly in terms of their strengths and weaknesses when submitting their self-assessment for the performance review.

#### **4.3.7 Feedback Interview**

Nel et al. (2005:484-485) emphasise that the feedback interview should guide the employee in areas where he or she is excelling and where training might be required. Cascio (1995:298) recommends that line managers use a guideline to conduct the feedback interview. The guideline should encourage objective feedback conveyed in an empowering manner. Bussin (2014:74-91) emphasises the importance of the line manager aligning the areas of training that might be required to support the achievement

of institutional imperatives. This implies that an employee must remain aware of the influence of his/her individual performance on the achievement of institutional deliverables (see 5.4.4.2.1).

It is crucial that line managers give the employee honest feedback after a performance appraisal thus enabling the employee to make the necessary adjustments in his or her performance before the next performance appraisal (Ready, Hill & Conger, 2008:63-70). From a talent management point of view, line managers would need to emphasise the strengths of the employee, guide the employee in how to convert weaknesses into strengths, and support the development of the employee through stretch assignments (see Unisa, 2013d).

#### **4.3.8 Possible causes of underperformance**

Feedback that is given to an employee during the post-appraisal interview should highlight areas where skills gaps exist, training is needed or developmental opportunities are possible. The performance review session, if conducted correctly, could also identify valid reasons for the employee underperforming and afford the employee the opportunity to respond to areas of under-performance (Koen, 2003b:500-521; Vilakshan, 2013:1-20).

Since performance management is an ongoing process, which involves planning, managing, reviewing, rewarding and development, employees must be able to appreciate the influence of their performance on the performance of the institution (Spangenberg, 1994:29). This research study suggests that the employee may not realise his or her areas of underperformance as he or she may be overwhelmed by tension in the working relationship (Purcell et al., 2009). Employers may need to focus on enhancing the people management skills of line managers to manage conflict during performance appraisals in a professional manner (Edwards, 2008:2-7). Bernard (2012:278-299) adds that when academics experience a management style to be oppressive, disengaging and insensitive, this translates into disengagement, possible underperformance and an intention to leave the employer.

Vilakshan (2013:1-20) attempts to understand the psychological causes of under-performance and suggests that when the thinking mind, emotional being and dynamic faculties of action are not functioning at an optimal level, the employee is not capable of

above-average performance. Koen (2003b:500-521) suggests that academics may under-perform possibly as a result of the poor relationship between the line manager and the employee, the effect of a dynamic HE environment, lack of commitment by the employee and the diverse institutional culture which introduces new demands on academia.

#### **4.3.9 Performance analysis**

Where employees under-perform or create a poor impression on the recipients of a service, the line manager may identify a need for training in a specific area. Other methods of identifying performance deficiencies are analysing job-related performance data, observation by line managers, interviews with the employee and/or line manager, attitude surveys, assessment centres and management by objective evaluations. Performance analysis might identify a performance gap in an employee, which could be remedied through targeted training or a developmental intervention (Dessler, 2012:184).

Line managers are required to engage with employees whose preferences, attitudes and attributes are significantly different from their own. The inability to perform in such a climate may necessitate diversity management training for the employee (Dessler, 2012:67). Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnelly (2000:15) add that a balanced value system, visionary strategy and an engaged institutional culture could elevate the performance of an institution.

#### **4.4 MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES**

Motivating employees is a key pillar of the talent management and retention strategy in the institution. Andrews (1988:252) defines employee motivation as the conditions that are required to attract, induce and maintain satisfactory performance in employees. Employees' motives drive their behaviour, consciously or unconsciously, towards goals. The motivational cycle therefore consists of three interdependent elements within an employee: a need, drive and a goal. The employee acts upon a need, which he or she may have, and strives to achieve the goal to satisfy the need. This implies that employers need to understand what motivates employees so that line managers can be empowered to inspire their subordinates towards elevated performance (Larsson et al., 2007:361-

381). The content motivational theory (see Swanepoel et al., 2005) concentrates on the factors that motivate behaviour and contribute to training and development needs (Nel et al., 2005:310-330). Smit and Cronje (1992) add to this by pointing to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (see Maslow, 1992:310-320) and argue that human beings always want more and are therefore never content. Riordan and Louw-Potgieter (2011:157-172) however, highlight the positive relationship between the motivational level of female employees and their work experience. These authors add that the time taken by women to rear children does not necessarily result in women not progressing in their career paths; in fact, it may result in women being more determined to carve a progressive career.

In addition, the process motivational theory (see Amar, 2004:89-104) emphasises the procedure by which an individual sets goals as well as does reflection and evaluation after the goals had been achieved. The expectancy theory (see Lunenburg, 2011:1-6) argues that the employee will be motivated to strive for higher goals if targets that are set are achieved and rewarded (Lunenburg, 2011:1-6). Rothwell (1996:22-32) points to employee performance improving as a result of development opportunities. Hennequin (2007:565-581) adds that the most talented employees often do not experience sufficient opportunities for career mobility but yet they maintain high levels of motivation through continuous training, task enrichment and status recognition.

Further to the above, the reinforcement motivational theory (see Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens & Amar, 2005:89-101) proposes that employee behaviour can be changed through manipulation - through either positive reward, negative reward, positive punishment or negative punishment. The employer is inclined to reward behaviour, which has a positive effect on strategic imperatives and to punish behaviour that compromises the progress of the institution. Within context, an employee may perceive the development opportunities available to him or her as a reward (Smit & Cronje, 1992:323).

The performance of an employee yields a particular behaviour, which enables the line manager to decide on the training or development intervention necessary to enhance positive behaviour and remedy negative aspects of an employee's behaviour.

## **4.5 EMPLOYEE TRAINING**

Development of an employee is a process during which the necessary experience and skills are acquired to become a successful leader in his or her institution. Development focuses on the competencies required for career pathing in an institution towards an envisaged position in the future. Training, however, addresses a current need through a planned process to modify the attitude, knowledge or behaviour of the employee through learning experiences in order to achieve effective performance (De Cenzo & Robbins, 1994:255). Training involves a process during which employees are orientated into the workplace. Their training needs are analysed while considering the minute details of the actual job (Unisa, 2014).

### **4.5.1 Orientation of employees**

The training process is initiated through the orientation of the employee into the workplace (Swanepoel et al., 2011). The orientation process is the first step of the socialisation process between the employer and a new employee. During this engagement, the employer seeks to instil the attitudes, standards, values and the behaviour patterns that are regarded as crucial to the institution, in the employee (Dessler, 2012:182). Whilst employers invest the same information in employees during the latter's early days at the institution, it must be acknowledged that the training and development needs of employees will not all be the same as such needs may be influenced by styles of learning, language preferences, institutional preferences and attitudes to change (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005). Induction training should be well planned, structured, informative and customised to serve the unique needs of the new appointees (Salopek, 2000:24-26). The opportunity to invest in a new employee from the outset can be viewed within the broader picture of personal development and capacity building. A new employee who is influenced positively regarding the institution from the outset may market the institution freely, and inadvertently be a marketing agent for the employer (Van Rensburg & Roodt, 2009:5).

### 4.5.2 Training cycle

Nadler and Nadler (1989:5) refer to training as job-related learning that is provided by employers for their employees within a defined cycle. The main aim is the improvement of employees' skills, knowledge and attitudes so that they can execute their duties according to set standards (Fourie, 2007:347-356).

**Training** of an employee places the emphasis on immediate improvement in job performance through the improvement of specific skills, while **development** prepares an employee for future job demands when he or she acquires new knowledge, skills and attitudes (Werther & Davis, 1996:282). Whether the employee displays a skills gap or an area for development to further his or her career, a reasonable approach by an employer is to conduct an analysis of the skills-related needs of the employee before any ill-informed investment is made in the employee.

### 4.5.3 Needs analysis

In determining the training needs of the employee, the employer matches the skills required in the official job description to the skills set of the employee. The skills gap is the identified need that the employer attempts to close so that the employee can perform at a higher level in the workplace (Dessler, 2012:184-198). Swanepoel et al. (2011:456-458) agree that a needs analysis must address the institutional need, competencies required in the actual job, and the needs of the employee. The institution must also measure the return on investment made in the employee after a reasonable period has passed since the date of appointment.

Each employee will have unique training and development needs having emerged from a variety of diverse cultures, backgrounds and institutions (UP, 2015a). The need for employees in line managery positions to be effective in managing diversity is crucial in the current workplace (Delahaye, 2005:70-71; Mkhwanazi & Baijnath, 2003:109). This implies that the detail of the need must be articulated carefully through amongst others, a task analysis in order for the original need to be addressed sufficiently.

#### **4.5.4 Task analysis**

While the needs analysis focuses on the skills needs of the employee who occupies the position, a task analysis focuses on the minute details of the actual job and the profile and skills set of the person who is required to fill the position. Task analysis is a detailed study of the job to determine which specific skills the job requires which will guide the nature of the training interventions that are necessary (Dessler, 2012:184).

#### **4.5.5 Training methods**

While employers may invest financially in formal training of an employee to influence workplace behaviour, the value of informal training methods such as on-the-job training, rotating an employee between different responsibility areas and the mentoring of an employee should not be undermined as mentorship can yield phenomenal results with minimal to no cost.

### **4.6 DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES**

Hall and Mervis (1995:322) highlight that, while the employee is surrounded by a dynamic environment, he or she tends to take a responsible role in planning his/her career. Schreuder and Theron (2001:21) highlight that employees plan their careers by obtaining relevant information about their values, personality, preferences and interests after which they try to align this information with their current working environment. Career planning and development by an employee should be aligned to the needs of the institution. This implies that employees would need to sharpen their skills set and improve their ability to be promoted within the institution (Larsson et al., 2007:361-381).

While the employer is responsible to provide development opportunities, the skills development of the employee through lifelong learning remains the responsibility of the employee. The employee may have the expectation that the process of skills development starts with the employer implying that a mind-shift is required in the workplace for parties to understand their individual responsibilities (Bussin, 2013b).



#### **4.6.1 Career development methods**

The employer plays a crucial role in developing the employee within a progressive career path and assisting him or her to make sound career choices in line with the employee's strengths and weaknesses (Meister & Willyerd, 2010:180-200). Career development tools are, amongst others, career planning workshops, career discussions and mentorship of employees.

##### **4.6.1.1 Career planning workshops**

Otte and Hutcheson (1992:19-20) point to career planning workshops covering development issues for an employee ranging from individual assessments to information about the work environment, comparison of one's perception of self with that of others, setting short- and long-term goals, support in decision-making and establishing and implementing career plans. Workshops, however, may not enable an employee to engage on a one-to-one basis with other participants, which is possible through career discussions with his/her line manager.

##### **4.6.1.2 Career discussions**

Career discussions that occur between the line manager and the employee support the career planning of the employee (Greenhaus, 2000). Employees could revert to career centres where a wealth of useful information would be located. Nel et al. (2005:463) encourage employees to plan their career by setting career goals and identifying the means to achieve such goals. The process of setting career goals would require the employee to identify his or her strengths and weaknesses and with the support of the employer, develop the strengths by taking on developmental assignments and gradually converting the weaknesses into strengths. Nel et al. (2005) encourage employees to study trends in the labour market in as far as scarce and critical skills are concerned and pursue careers in those fields to remain employable.

##### **4.6.1.3 Career planning workbooks**

Career planning workbooks can play a useful role if career centres are not accessible (Hennequin, 2007). Employees have the opportunity to plan their career paths, supported

by a wealth of information that is available electronically, as well as by taking into account their knowledge, skill and experience. Planning a career path by adopting a project management approach may be useful to determine whether the path is realistic and achievable (Anderson et al., 2002:87).

#### **4.6.1.4 Mentoring and coaching**

Ilevbare (2011:197-206) views **mentorship** as a developmental relationship between an experienced individual (mentor) and a less experienced partner (mentee) for purposes of sharing technical information, institutional knowledge and insight with respect to a particular profession. Hill and Bahniuk (1998:4) add that mentorship is a communication relationship between a senior experienced member of the institution and a junior talented employee, which supports enhanced performance by the employee, a greater degree of work satisfaction and fast-tracked career advancement.

Slightly different in approach from mentoring, **coaching** involves a special focus on guidance and support, goal setting, performance feedback and personal development. The level and quality of the expertise and experience of the coach influences the effect of the coaching experience and development of the employee (Allen, Eby, O'Brien & Lentz, 2008:343-357). Employers would be required to identify employees through a consistent, fair and transparent process that would benefit from a formal coaching or mentoring programme (Ilevbare, 2011:197-206). Where employees show potential to perform at a higher level than their current position and particularly where employees are exceeding the expectation the institution has of them, such employees should be mentored in the attributes of more progressive career positions, including senior positions in academe (Nel et al., 2005:477). This implies that line managers should be trained in the development of their own coaching and mentoring skills so that they can provide the necessary guidance to the employee (Gomez-Meija et al., 1998:219-223). Employers may consider institutionalising the practice of coaching and mentoring to promote lifelong learning and emotional adjustment to the workplace culture (Conger & Fulmer, 2003:392; Petit, 2004:20).

In order for the mentoring relationship to be a positive experience, it is advisable that the mentor and mentee share similar values, personality traits and interests (Allen & Eby,

2003:469-486). In addition, Petersen and Gravett (2009:169-176) point to the influential role of male and female mentors as well as role models to academics at all levels in their professional development. Chantiri (2010:14) found that mentoring young women, in particular adds more value to gender equality at senior levels than imposing quotas to achieve the same goal. Chantiri adds that the effect of mentoring previously disadvantaged employees, particularly females, in the workplace might not have been explored sufficiently.

#### **4.6.1.5 Job rotation**

An employee may be developed in a variety of jobs if he or she is rotated between job roles within the institution as opposed to remaining in one post for lengthy periods. Being multi-skilled would benefit the employer and employee (Werther & Davis, 1996:253). It can be argued that it might not be practical to implement job rotation in institutions with many employees as rotation might affect institutional service delivery negatively (Anderson et al., 2002:8).

#### **4.6.1.6 Role playing**

Role playing supports the career development of an employee in that the employee has to place him- or herself in a totally different position of authority and respond to the best of his or her knowledge of how to handle challenges. This could enable the employee to appreciate the challenges of other positions and see the alignment between his or her post and the post being enacted. The interpersonal skills and attitudes of employees who participate in such exercises might be developed in the process, which would affect collegial and networking opportunities (Barney & Shea, 2007:31-50).

#### **4.6.1.7 Case studies**

When employees are exposed to case studies on various aspects of employee behaviour or situations in the workplace, the employee is able to extract best practices from the examples that could be tailor-made to suit the unique workspace that he or she occupies. During the actual case study, the employee sharpens his or her decision-making skills and has the opportunity to engage in the discussion (Kotze & Roodt, 2005:48-55).

Work/life balance is highlighted as an important element of the development of the employee (Rose, 2008; WorldatWork, 2011a:1-8).

In addition, if employees are developed in terms of talent, they attach value to their development and as a result, are more committed to the employer (Badsha & Cloete, 2011). Based on a case study, Lai (2010:89-111) encourages universities to offer a supportive environment for junior academics to engage in research. Kuye (2001:9) points to employees being motivated to build a career path within a supportive environment in one institution as opposed to the broader labour market. Dockel (2003:1-176) argues that financial reward should not be the only motivator of training and development opportunities; employees should embrace the growth and maturity that result from development opportunities. Although promotional opportunities will enhance the development of an employee, Tetley (2006:1-86) emphasises that cumbersome promotional procedures in universities compromise the development of the employee. Through their 'grow your own timber' case study, Mkhwanazi and Baijnath (2003:110) highlight the benefit of developing talent from within the institution as opposed to seeking experienced and skilled employees from external sources. Koen (2003b:500-521) highlights the positive influence on the workplace if development opportunities result in improved qualifications and a wider pool of talented employees within the institution.

Ogbogu and Adeleke (2012:4754) highlight pertinent case studies that point to the need for employers to be responsive to the needs of minority groupings in the workplace. These authors encourage female academics, as part of the minority grouping, to acquire their doctorate degree, which is a prerequisite for advancement in academe. Avery and McKay (2006:157-187) add that female academics felt a need to prove themselves constantly in the workplace to be regarded as credible counterparts. This phenomenon was described by Avery and McKay (2006:157-187), as 'the dilemma of the less qualified' where minority groupings experience a need to justify their skills and abilities to secure their place within the majority group.

#### **4.6.1.8 Managerial influence**

Metcalf et al. (2005) found that line managers, in particular heads of departments, do not always have the skills needed to develop staff within their area of responsibility. This

implies that the training of line managers should be an institutional priority as a gap in this area could potentially result in experienced and skilled staff leaving the institution (DHET, 2013b). The CLC (2005:4) supports the development of line managers as this has a positive influence on the retention of talented employees. The function of effective HR policies and practices is influenced largely by the competence and leadership abilities of line managers in drafting and implementing these policies (Purcell et al., 2009). Martins and Von der Ohe (2002:56) emphasise the importance of institutional leaders visibly supporting employee development in the workplace as a factor that affects staff retention positively.

The dynamic and diverse culture in the workplace requires line managers to develop a new set of skills to manage the training and development of skilled and experienced employees. This implies that the profile of the line manager may be extending from the traditional role of purely managing the output of the employee to being a coach, mentor, guidance counsellor, advisor and communicator (Allen & Eby, 2003:469-486).

#### **4.6.1.9 *In-basket technique***

Using the in-basket technique (see Swanepoel et al., 2011:471), employees are required to present various options of solving the problem he or she picks out of the basket. The group eventually brainstorms the different options that are presented and analyse the advantages and disadvantages of each option. The intervention may encourage an employee to think creatively, innovatively and spontaneously thus developing an inherent talent in the process. The Kepner-Tregoe career development method (see Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:442) is a combination of the case study, the in-basket technique and role play methods (Kotze, 1985:72). Managing the career of an employee requires a multi-disciplinary approach taking into consideration the choice of career of the individual (Pienaar & Bester, 2006:581-591). The range of career development methods that are available enable the line manager to make the most appropriate choice in terms of which method to use to support the employee to manage his or her unique career.

## **4.6.2 Career management**

Lifelong learning implies continuous upskilling, reskilling and development to prepare employees for future career paths, which support their marketability (Greenhaus, 2000). In the view of Smola and Sutton (2002:363-382), staying with one employer for an entire career is a thing of the past. The new norm is spending short periods of time with an employer, gaining skills and experience and making an impression in line with the profile of generation Y (see Macky et al., 2008:857-861). Job insecurity is now a common source of anxiety as employees who have not kept up with technological advancements experience the possibility that an occupation or profession may become redundant (Salkowitz, 2008). The management of an employee's career contributes towards his or her marketability (Schurenberg, 2005:18).

Nel et al. (2005:463) define career management as a process during which an individual sets career goals and identifies the means to achieve them. The support of the employer is crucial to achieve realistic career goals. It can be argued that career management requires the employee to take the initiative of remaining marketable in fields that are scarce skilled. Hall and Mervis (1995:322) point to a trend that employees are taking the lead in planning their careers. Schreuder and Theron (2001:21) highlight the process that employees follow to match their profile with the working environment they are in or in which they would prefer to be. The career choice of employees is dependent on a variety of factors and is influenced, to an extent, by the training and development exposure the employee receives in the workplace. This implies that career management is primarily a developmental tool.

### **4.6.2.1 Career choice**

Since many countries have a semi-skilled population with small numbers of qualified employees, employers may need to identify their experience, skill pool and talent shortage proactively and embark on effective career development programmes to broaden their talent pool (Larsson et al., 2007:361-381; Nel et al., 2005:459). The choice of career that an individual makes may change a few times during his or her employment career and would depend largely on, amongst others, the personal career preference of the

employee, family-related influences and socio-economic factors (Schreuder & Theron, 2001:37).

The dynamic work environment inadvertently affects the careers of employees. Where careers used to be vertical in terms of upward progression in an institution, they are now more cyclical or horizontal (see Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006). In addition, employees are increasingly taking ownership of their careers while the employer plays a supportive role to the career management of the employee (Hall & Mervis, 1995:333-334).

Another crucial factor that appears to be affecting career choice is the extent to which an individual feels secure in his or her job. Job security has always been a crucial aspect of the academic career and may be affecting career choice. Winefield (2000:437-446) points to tenure being the only guarantee of academic freedom. Although the academic profession may not remunerate competitively, academics generally enjoy high levels of freedom to publish research even in areas that are controversial. Anderson et al. (2002:101) highlight that in the past, job security was a priority for more seasoned academics in comparison to junior academics. This view is in line with the generational theory that baby boomers value security in their jobs and tend to remain with one employer for extended periods, quite unlike generation Y employees who move quickly between jobs (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2004).

#### **4.6.2.2 Career choice theories**

An individual chooses a career within the context of preferences, orientation, aspiration as well as economic conditions and sociological factors (Swanepoel et al., 2011:399-403). Over the years, theories about how careers are chosen have been categorised into content and process theories. **Content theory** describes career choice in terms of individual characteristics or from a psychological point of view while **process theory** describes career choice as a dynamic process that evolves over stages of development (Schreuder & Theron, 2001:37).

#### → **Personality types**

With the competition for talented employees fierce in the labour market, employers are required to study the profile of personality types to understand their workforce better and

how to serve employee needs. Holland (1973:14-17) groups employees in terms of six basic personality types:

- the **realistic** personality has a very orderly approach to matters;
- the **investigative** personality prefers careers that embrace the acquisition of scientific knowledge;
- the **social** personality prefers socially orientate careers that involve the management of people;
- the **conventional** personality prefers systematic jobs that are conforming and orderly;
- the **enterprising** personality prefers professions where individuals can be manipulated and their behaviour aligned towards the achievement of institutional goals; and
- the **artistic** personality prefers careers where skills in language, art, music, drama and writing can be developed.

Workplace conflict may often occur as a result of personality clashes rather than because of differences of opinion thus emphasising the need for employers to be sensitive to personality types in the workplace in terms of assigning tasks and projects (Meister & Willyerd, 2010:153-160).

→ ***Environmental types***

The personality type of an employee is also aligned to the environmental preference of the same employee. Holland (1973:29-33) describes these types as -

- the **realistic** environmental type - influenced largely by environmental demands and opportunities which lead to the increased use of resources;
- the **investigative** environmental type - tends to observe and investigate physical, biological and cultural phenomena;
- the **social** environmental type - highlighted by a group consisting mainly of social personality types;



- the **conventional** environmental type - characterised by orderly and systematic manipulation of data such as record keeping, filing and reproducing documents;
- the **enterprising** environmental type - characterised by demands from the environment to manipulate others to achieve personal and institutional goals; and
- the **artistic** environmental type - dominated by environmental demands to be more artistic and free.

→ **Career anchors**

When employees start a particular career, they may not initially know whether that career would be the profession that would remain their lasting career choice. The employee undergoes a process of exploration during which he or she considers every aspect of employment with that particular employer in relation to his or her strengths and weaknesses. Through this process, the employee also gains a clearer self-concept (Schein, 1978:125). Schein describes a career anchor as self-perceived talent based on actual experiences, self-perceived motives based on feedback from others, and self-examination as well as self-perceived values based on encounters between oneself and the work environment where one is based. Schein (1978) further highlights a number of career anchors, including technical competence where employees confidently use their skills to improve their competence:

- **managerial** career anchor where the employees' strength is to manage other employees towards higher levels of performance;
- **entrepreneurial** career anchor where employees welcome opportunities to be creative;
- **lifestyle** career anchor where one aims for work-life balance; and
- a **service** career anchor where employees are motivated by a need to serve a disadvantaged cause in the community.

Role models in the world of experience of an individual tend to influence his or her career anchor. Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono and Werner (2005:420-450) points to children looking to significant elders to emulate them in as far as their career choices are

concerned. Swanepoel et al. (2011) argues that the influence of parents on the child's career choice is far greater than the influence of friends or teachers. Crites (1969:88) adds that the school exerts the second biggest influence on the child's choice of career next to the parental influence.

→ ***Career patterns***

Swanepoel et al. (2011:305) suggest that employees possess unique views about how their careers should develop. Larsson et al. (2007:361-381) identifies -

- a **linear** career pattern where employees opt for vertical progression through the institutional hierarchy seeking promotional opportunities and financial reward for their extraordinary efforts;
- the employee who tends towards an **expert** career pattern and who identifies with an area of expertise and strives to sharpen his or her skills even further;
- the employee who prefers a **spiral** career pattern and who tends to change his or her career field from time to time; and
- the employee that prefers a **transitory** career pattern and who tends to change career fields consistently every two to four years.

Ng and Feldman (2010:207-235) agree that employees must change their mind-set in terms of a career after being with one employer for an extended period. Planning one's career enables one to identify your own skills gaps and seek recourse to address the gaps. If skills are marketable, the employee could plan a career knowing that employers are in search for skilled and experienced personnel. Realistic career planning forces an employee to be proactive and to anticipate problems and opportunities. The most important outcome an institution can achieve in an employee is to make him or her marketable. Ironically, though, this very attribute might result in the employee being recruited by another employer (Swanepoel et al., 2011).

→ ***Career plateau***

Employees reach a career plateau in their life when there is no longer any opportunity to progress horizontally or vertically within an institution (Swanepoel et al., 2011). The

employee's career path may be restricted by the structure of the institution, which restricts upward mobility. An employee may also be restricted if he or she has mastered the content of the job with limited upward mobility as an option thus restricting his or her development (Powell, 2009:26). Stone (2014:412) points to a career plateau as that point in an employee's career at which the probability of an additional promotion is minimal. The reason for this could be varied but it is a reality that the progression of employees will come to a halt at some point given the fact that a limited number of promotional opportunities are available in any institution. Employees who reach a career plateau may get frustrated at the lack of career mobility influencing their intention to leave the employer (Swanepoel et al., 2011).

Leibowitz, Kaye and Farren (1990:29-35) point to employees who find themselves in different stages of being **plateaued**. Being **productively plateaued** refers to an employee who is loyal to the institution and who continues to add value with minimum motivation. An employee who is **partially plateaued** disengages from the institution and values opportunities to acquire new skills. An employee who is **pleasantly plateaued** does not aim for promotion but remains loyal to the institution. Being **passively plateaued** refers to an employee who displays no interest to acquire new skills or change his or her situation.

Academics who are in contract positions reach a career plateau for the length of time that they remain outside permanent academic positions (Swanepoel et al., 2011:407-408).

Strict promotional requirements may also be restricting and result in academics not progressing within reasonable periods to higher levels thus affecting their development and career progression within the profession (Metcalf et al., 2005:28-29).

It is advisable for employers to engage with employees who have reached a career plateau to find creative ways of motivating their retention (Chay, Aryee & Chew, 1995:76). Employees who do not feel connected to the institution will quickly consider terminating employment in favour of more challenging work (Booyesen, 2007:47-71).

→ ***Obsolescence***

Bracker and Pearson (1986:113) define obsolescence as the extent to which employees lack the most relevant competencies to perform the duties of current or future roles successfully; thus, implying that an employee who does not upskill or reskill could become redundant in the institution. There are various factors that could disturb the balance between the employee and the job, such as a lack of appropriate skills and experience (Swanepoel et al., 2011:408-409).

Line managers need to be observant of the early signs of obsolescence in regular performance reviews and should respond by providing relevant training, encouraging continuous learning, providing opportunities in the work environment, extending employees' frame of reference and exposure, and motivating employees to keep abreast of changes in the field of work (Swanepoel et al., 2011:408-409).

→ ***Career movements***

The changing of careers by employees from time to time is not a new phenomenon and is influenced by the needs of the person, factors within the institution and dynamics within a sector in which the employee may be operating. Career movements take the form of lateral (i.e. progression on the same level), vertical (i.e. progression upwards in terms of his/her career path) or diagonal progression (ie. progression across different areas of responsibility (see Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:462-467). Swanepoel et al. (2005:409-410) highlight that employees might be dissatisfied with technological and work design changes, the institutional value system, interpersonal clashes with colleagues or the measurement and reward of work performance. These factors may fuel the decision to move from one career to another within the institution or from one institution to another. Swanepoel et al. (2005) argue that to manage personnel movement within the institution, it is advisable that the entire career movement process remain transparent, fair and subject to closer scrutiny, fully documented, lines of communication with applicants remain open and talented previously disadvantaged employees be developed within a transparent structured initiative towards a progressive career within the institution.

The management of an employee's career is a dual responsibility between the line manager and the employee with the employee probably required to play the leading role. The employee's career passes through phases with the ongoing development of the employee or might stagnate with internal and external factors beyond the control of the employee and line manager (Booyesen, 2007:47-71).

#### **4.6.3 Career development for pre-retirement phase**

Nel et al. (2005:465) propose that, if employers give an option to employees to retire before the normal retirement age, which is generally at 60 years, the employer has a responsibility not only to retire employees but also to assist them with career development for a new and often quite different career to the one they occupied before retirement. This would enable the implementation of mentorship and coaching programmes within the workplace. Employers should acknowledge the wealth of knowledge in potential retirees, and implement programmes to ensure that transfer of skills and knowledge takes place in the last few years before retirement. Where employees retire from the workplace prematurely, they would likely enter into a second or third career before actual retirement. Without a fulfilling job, retirees often struggle to maintain a sense of self-worth and identity. Employers should therefore have regular informative sessions for potential retirees, providing support and counselling to live a less structured life after retirement and make informed choices regarding financial investments (Swanepoel et al., 2011:303-310). Anderson et al. (2002:113) highlight a few best practices with regard to academics who approach retirement and opt for a career change thereafter, such as conducting exit interviews for potential retirees at least five years before the actual retirement age, hosting retirement seminars to support the potential retiree to prepare for retirement, and ensuring that succession plans are effectively in place and discussed during performance reviews. This may imply a gap in practice within universities in terms of implementing succession planning mechanisms timeously and a trend of reacting to the challenge of skilled and experienced academics leaving academia as opposed to managing this phenomenon proactively.

Renaud and Murray (1996:323-340) highlight the alignment between the age of an academic and his or her effectiveness as a teacher to a junior employee. This implies that

senior academics might be comfortable to assume a mentoring or coaching role to junior academics especially in the last few years before retirement to ensure knowledge transfer and succession planning. It can be argued that retired academics might be open to continuing in fixed-term contracts after retirement to continue contributing to the academic profession.

#### **4.6.4 Career management for dual-career couples**

To meet the standard of living, it has become necessary for both parties of a couple to be employed to live a particular standard of life and meet the expenses associated with maintaining a family. It is often the case that both parties may be working for similarly demanding positions. Stone (2014) defines a dual career as a situation where spouses and their partners have career responsibilities and aspirations.

Work and family conflict may result more with couples where only one party is employed. Conflict is likely to be generated between the professional and personal roles of employees when the number of hours worked is excessive or when there is a lack of control over the decision to work overtime or an inflexible work schedule, with irregular starting times and psychologically demanding work (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:460-462).

Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2000:298) highlight that dual-career couples find it useful to have a support system, a healthy corporate climate, managerial support and a focus on qualitative outcomes. Due to the additional pressures on dual-career couples, flexible working hours, family leave time and relocation benefits are needs that such couples would appreciate to support the performance of their duties (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:464-465).

Schreuder and Theron (2001)1997 suggest that family and work needs should be balanced through more institutional sensitivity for home life, the introduction of flexible employee benefits, flexible working hours and alternate career pathing. Stone (2014:414) emphasises the importance of HR managers developing specific policies to address the dynamics that employees and their partners experience when both parties are employed and striving for career mobility. The dual career couple will benefit from a supportive

workplace as he/she attempts to balance personal and professional commitments (Hewlett, 2002:73).

#### **4.7 CONCLUSION**

The management of employees' careers involves the integrated use of training and development opportunities to elevate individual, group, departmental and institutional performance. Career management can be used as a tool to develop employees and thus retain their services. Institutional and HR leaders must therefore view HR training and development as an investment rather than as a liability as the potential benefits have a direct influence on the achievement of institutional imperatives, particularly on the retention of the talented employee.

Employers who make the most effective strategic decisions will ensure survival in a highly competitive industry (Brewster, Carey, Grobler, Holland & Warnich, 2008). The competition for talented employees compels employers to nurture the potential embedded within employees in the institution through reskilling, upskilling and exposure to development opportunities (Datta & Iskandar-Datta, 2014:1853-1866). The analysis of an employee's training and development needs is a crucial process as it is followed by a financial investment in the employee (Subramony, 2008:778-788). Within a climate of financial sustainability employers can ill afford to invest poorly, especially if the investment has little or no effect on the achievement of institutional imperatives.

Before financial resources can be invested in the training and development of employees, a responsible employer must first undertake a thorough needs analysis of the employee. The needs become evident through a number of opportunities, including the orientation of employees at an institutional and departmental level to the management of their performance. To encourage the desired performance, employers would need to consider rewarding behaviour, which has a positive influence at an institutional level.

The effective management of an employee's performance yields training and development needs. The performance management process, however, is subjective thus lending itself to subjective results (Wickramasinghe, 2007:108-128). Calibration of performance ratings and performance appraisal feedback from multiple sources enhances the validity and reliability of performance assessment results (Maylett, 2009:52-59). This

in turn would translate into accurate training and development interventions for the employee. Ultimately, the financial investment that is made in an employee must influence his or her behaviour to add institutional effect.

Through ongoing career discussions, the line manager would be able to support the employee in the identified career path within the institution (Pienaar & Bester, 2009:376-385). The employee may be coached and mentored on the job or rotated between jobs to enable his or her holistic development. The line manager is required to consider the personality of the employee, his or her strengths and weaknesses as well as his or her areas of talent in guiding the career path of the employee (Randall, 2006:1-20). The demands placed on dual-career couples increases with time. Employers are challenged to consider more flexible working arrangements to accommodate the unique needs of employees, which results in deliverables being achieved but with employees not necessarily being office-bound (Salkowitz, 2008).

In Chapter five, an analysis of published literature will follow in terms of remuneration to academics, amongst others, whether remuneration is a contributing factor towards the attraction and retention of employees.



## CHAPTER FIVE

# REMUNERATION AS A PUBLIC HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the focus changes to the role that is played by remuneration in terms of attracting and retaining talented employees. Employee reward and the engagement of employees are interdependent variables and, if aligned to employee preferences, can have a significant effect on institutional performance and employee turnover (Nienaber, 2011:1-40).

Remuneration may reinforce positive behaviour towards the achievement of a high-performing institution (Stone, 2014:466). The CLC (2002a:8) reports that remuneration is the most important reward element to attract employees to an institution, but it plays a smaller role in terms of retaining skilled and experienced employees. On the other hand, effective remuneration practices are viewed as a means to meet institutional objectives of elevating employee morale and attracting and retaining talented employees (Kurlander & Barton, 2003:31-36). There is a positive correlation between the retention of employees, engaged employees and the financial sustainability of institutions (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development [CIPD], 2015:38).

In this chapter, the effect of fair, equitable, consistent and transparent application of remuneration on the attraction and retention of the employee is reported. In addition, the latest trend of pay for employee performance is analysed and examined in detail within an institutional environment where internal and external factors influence the remuneration policy of an institution.

### 5.2 DEFINITION OF REMUNERATION

Dessler (2012:240-241) defines **remuneration** as financial reward to employees consisting of guaranteed remuneration and variable items, which are aligned to the performance of the employee. Swanepoel et al. (2005:488), however, define

**remuneration** as the financial and non-financial rewards provided by an employer for the time, skill and effort of the employee in fulfilling job requirements aimed at achieving an institutional effect.

Competitive institutions distinguish between the remuneration of employees and implementing remuneration strategically. Where **remuneration** involves the monetary reward employees receive for the performance of their duties, **strategic remuneration** refers to employers aligning their remuneration-related policies and practices to the strategic imperatives of the institution (Stone, 2014:466-467).

It appears that the definition of remuneration has taken on a broader meaning in recent times from mere financial reward to an employee for just being in service. Employers have recently identified a strategic advantage in aligning remuneration to performance by the employee, which ultimately has an effect on the performance of the institution (Bussin, 2014:149-156).

### 5.3 BEHAVIOURAL EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE REWARD

Maslow (1943:370-396) mentions that employees have five levels of needs ranked hierarchically from physiological needs at the lowest level, security needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualisation needs. Employees would seek to satisfy each need from the lowest to the highest level implying that -

- needs on the lowest level (i.e. physiological needs) that are not met will influence higher-level needs being unfulfilled;
- needs to be remunerated for the work they do may be aligned to the need for security in terms of employment to manage personal and professional financial commitments;
- social needs may be aligned to the need to fit in within a workplace environment;
- esteem needs may be aligned to the need to be acknowledged by their peers for an area of academic excellence; and
- self-actualisation needs could be aligned to the sense of achievement they experience with a high level of productivity in terms of research output.

Herzberg's **motivation-hygiene theory** (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:314-379) also called the **dual-factor theory** states that there are certain factors in the workplace that cause job satisfaction, while a separate set of factors cause dissatisfaction. Within this context, remuneration to an employee may result in job satisfaction; however, if an employee feels that he or she is not being remunerated fairly in relation to peers, it may become a factor that compromises the retention of the talented employee.

Employees tend to attach their personal value to the remuneration they earn (Ogedegbe & Bashiru, 2014:114-115). CIPD (2015:13) indicates that employees have a subjective view of their own worth, which taints their perception of how much they should be remunerated for the work they do. Behavioural scientists (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2002; Newstrom & Davis, 1997) add that the employee's need for fairness is fundamental to a human being's way of engaging with society. This interaction with one's environment also underlines the need for employee remuneration to be managed by an employer in a fair, consistent and transparent manner (Tabibinia & Lieberman, 2007:90-101).

Male and female employees appear to value remuneration quite differently within the workplace. Thomas and Wise (1999:375-390) suggest that compared to white males, previously disadvantaged groupings value different dimensions of the reward offered by the employer. Females tend to attach more value to work-life effectiveness initiatives in the workplace with a trend towards a premium being placed on remuneration possibly as a result of the increase of single-parent homes. On the other hand, males tend to value competitive remuneration in an institution possibly as a result of maintaining households as the main breadwinner (MacGrain, 2000).

The financial investment made by an employer in an employee should contribute towards the achievement of institutional objectives. Based on the literature (see CIPD, 2015; Deci & Ryan, 2000; George & Jones, 1999; Ivancevich & Matteson, 2002; Nienaber & Bussin, 2009), it would appear that the employer should remain mindful that money has a powerful effect on human behaviour (CIPD, 2015:4).

## **5.4 OBJECTIVES OF REMUNERATION**

Tangible rewards appear to have a significant influence on employee retention as monetary incentives support the employee's need for work autonomy and respect from peers. Rewarding employees is therefore a primary area of focus if leaders want to change employee behaviour (Risher, 1997:14-15). It is critical that employers align the monetary investment in employees with the achievement of institutional strategies (Gomez-Mejia et al., 2001:325). The remuneration manager plays a crucial role in ensuring that the remuneration strategy is designed uniquely to accommodate market-related principles and the culture that the employer wants to inculcate in the institution (Gerhart, 2000:151).

### **5.4.1 Attracting adequately qualified applicants**

It seems that the employer who pays the most competitive remuneration will attract candidates with experience, skill and knowledge. It is however debatable whether remuneration is the primary motivator for talented employees to apply for advertised vacant positions. Employers are compelled to maintain the competitiveness of remuneration being offered by participating in market surveys (Swanepoel et al., 2005:490). In Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan and the United States, competitive remuneration ranked the highest in terms of persuading high-potential applicants to join an institution (CLC, 2006b:1).

The steady rate of retirement amongst seasoned academics (see Tettey, 2006; Metcalf, et al., 2005; Samuel & Chipunza, 2013) is a concern in HE circles worldwide implying that the need to recruit and retain talented younger academics is crucial. However, it appears that existing academics as well as new applicants to academe are discouraged to remain with or join the profession respectively as a result of non-competitive remuneration (Bussin, 2014). HESA (2014) adds that talented black academics are leaving the HE sector for more lucrative remuneration in the private sector. Academics are concerned that their remuneration is not as lucrative as what is available in the private sector (Bussin, 2013a. Metcalf et al. Weale (2005:xv) point to academics being attracted to academe as a result of remuneration for their core role of teaching, research and community engagement but are influenced to remain within the profession as a result of initiatives that influence their development and contribution to the academic profession.

Vermeulen (2007:272-283) emphasises the importance of fair and competitive remuneration related to the relevant market to attract talented employees. The author further suggests that employers consider paying a monetary incentive to persuade new employees to join an institution as well as an allowance to employees who remain within the institution for comparatively long periods during which they continue to add value.

Netswera et al. (2005:36-40), however, point out that contrary to popular belief, remuneration and employee benefits are not the driving factor behind employees terminating their employment. Instead, employees appear to value the total reward package that is offered by the employer. To determine the needs of their employees from a remuneration and employee benefits point of view and to respond to it, employers may want to test these needs from time to time. The CLC (2004:1-22) adds that employers should move away from a one-size-fits-all approach to a customised reward offering that suits employee needs. The CLC identifies competitive remuneration and employee benefits, quality managerial leadership, job fit and an enabling institutional culture, which embraces diversity as key retention drivers. Bussin (2014:110-130) agrees that employees appear to be looking at the total reward package that the employer is offering and whether that package appeals to a combination of personal and professional interests.

#### **5.4.2 Retaining adequately qualified employees**

Employers spend a significant amount of the budget appointing new employees into vacant positions, training new appointees and reskilling and upskilling existing employees to achieve a workforce that is empowered to support the institution in the achievement of its key deliverables (Holtom, Mitchell & Lee, 2008:232). Hale and Bailey (1998:72-77) emphasise that competitive employers must subscribe to basic principles of reward in striving towards premium institutional results, namely -

- paying for performance by employees;
- ensuring synergy between monetary rewards and key institutional drivers;
- implementing a consulted and enabling performance management system;
- over-communicating the reward strategy to all role players; and

- recognising employees for any effort of excellence.

Bussin (2014:110-130) points out that remuneration for a particular post remains the priority for an employee who is contemplating joining a new employer but this factor is not prioritised by an employee during his/her retention. This implies that, as long as employee remuneration is not a source of dissatisfaction, employers should consider other elements of employee reward that are regarded as important to employees (Nienaber & Bussin, 2009: 3-41). Swanepoel et al. (2005) emphasise the importance of employers maintaining competitive remuneration systems that compare well to comparable positions in other institutions and sectors. However Nel et al. (2005:278-279) highlight that, in addition to core remuneration, talented employees place a premium on monetary and non-monetary employee benefits ranging from generous leave provisions to retirement provisions, medical aid provisions and work-life balance initiatives. Salisbury (1997:74-75) adds that younger employees prefer a savings plan while older employees prefer health insurance and a sound pension plan. Employees appear to respond positively to a competitive remuneration package, performance-linked incentive rewards and participation in institutional profit-sharing (Kinnear & Sutherland, 2001:14-18).

Higginbotham (1997:1-9) cautions that competitive remuneration is not as important as fair remuneration implying that employees want to see that they are being remunerated fairly for the work that they are doing in comparison to other employees. Lawler (1971:1-318) proposes a pay satisfaction model that explains how employees are paid from an internal equity point of view. Lawler argues that pay satisfaction results when there is congruence between the amount of pay an employee feels he or she should receive and the amount of pay he or she is receiving. Once an employee reaches a pay level, respect by peers, supervisory support, development opportunities and work-life effectiveness appears to be important (Tomlinson, 2002:2). An employee's perception of fairness in terms of his or her remuneration is positively linked to his or her commitment to the achievement of institutional objectives (Ogedegbe & Bashiru, 2014:112-115).

Equity theorists (such as Subotzky, 2003; Thomas, 2004; Booysen, 2007) highlight that employees seek a balance between their investment in their work and what they receive as remuneration or recognition from the employer (Adams, 1963:422-436). An employer

who prioritises work-life effectiveness initiatives in the workplace shows visible and targeted support for the achievement of success by an employee both at work and at home (Rose, 2006:1-155). By emphasising the need for work-life effectiveness initiatives, the employer would be acknowledging the importance of the employee's personal and family commitments and the role that this plays towards an effective employee in the work environment.

Remuneration offers an employee an opportunity for security, autonomy, recognition and an elevated sense of self-worth, which might have an influence on the level of the employee's commitment (Hoyt & Gerdloff, 1999:275-294). Mathieu and Zajac (1990:171-94) point to a positive relationship between remuneration and commitment. However Igbaria and Greenhaus (1992:34-49) found remuneration to be positively related to institutional commitment and negatively related to turnover, provided that such remuneration was competitive. This implies that the competitiveness of remuneration within higher education in relation to the private sector may be the deciding factor in terms of its effect on employee commitment and turnover.

Lucrative remuneration packages influence the retention of academics because it fulfils a material need (Shoab, Noor, Tirmizi & Bashir, 2009:1-18). Rosser (2004:285-389) emphasises that remuneration affecting the ability to maintain a standard of living during retirement has a significant influence on academics remaining in the profession. Tetley (2006:1-85) agrees that poor remuneration is one of the key factors driving the lack of commitment by academics and influencing their turnover. This implies that competitive remuneration will contribute positively towards retaining academic staff (HESA. 2014).

The alignment between academic remuneration and career prospects in the private sector was a concern for HE leaders as the latter is a significant pull factor (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2006:280). Webster and Mosoetsa (2002:60) add that the lack of flexibility within academe to offer personalised remuneration has an effect on academics' intention to stay with an employer. Pienaar and Bester (2008:32-37) add that non-competitive remuneration to academics is one of the most important reasons why employers are challenged to recruit and retain the baby boomers and generation X, Y and Z (i.e. those born between 1946-

1964, 1965-1980, 1981-2000, 2001 to date) (Lancaster & Stillman, 2003; Macky et al., 2008) academics within the South African HE system.

Potgieter (2002:1-45) and Nieuwenhuizen (2009:310-324) adds that being rewarded financially to finalise research publications has a significant influence on academics' retention while the lack of research funding is one of academics' major frustrations. Academic staff should be granted the opportunity to work more flexible working hours at universities to enable them to supplement their salaries by performing academic-related work in the private sector (Bussin, 2014). The flexibility of working hours would enable academics to conduct research, perform teaching and learning duties and supervise masters and doctoral students at the students' unique pace (Nieuwenhuizen, 2009:31-324).

In some countries, such as South Africa and Austria, workplaces have become highly unionised. In their study, Gomez-Mejia and Balkin (1984:594-601) found that employees who were members of a labour union in the workplace were more satisfied with their pay than were non-unionised employees. The authors indicate that unions influence pay level through collective bargaining initiatives, which result in signed-off agreements enhancing employees' remuneration. In addition, unions also encourage employees to follow the grievance procedure if they experience unfair practice regarding their personal remuneration (Ogedegbe & Bashiru, 2014:112-115). Employees who are non-union members tend to benefit from the negotiated collective agreements (Bussin, 2011). This implies that, if union members do not perform their role effectively, they could influence employee motivation, productivity and consequently retention negatively.

### **5.4.3 Maintaining equity in remuneration**

In this regard, **equity** refers to perceptions amongst employees of fairness by the employer in the distribution of rewards (Bussin, 2014). **External equity** compares the remuneration and job grade of positions across an industry, while **internal equity** compares the remuneration and job grade of jobs of relative worth within the same institution (Swanepoel et al., 2005:490). Subramony (2008:786) reports that employees who perceive that their employer provides competitive remuneration in relation to peer institutions within the same industry are more likely to be engaged and motivated towards



elevated levels of performance thus contributing to higher levels of client satisfaction. A key factor in achieving equity in remuneration would be to conduct a thorough analysis of each job before linking it to a remuneration level (Bussin & Huysamen, 2011:45-54).

#### **5.4.3.1 Job analysis**

A job analysis process attempts to gather as much information as possible about the jobs that are present in the institution, their relationship to other jobs, alignment to the institutional direction and detail about the complexity and volume of the job in particular (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:13-195). Nel et al. (2005:272-275) highlight the purpose of job analysis to gather and organise information concerning the tasks, duties and responsibilities of specific jobs. Employee dissatisfaction regarding their remuneration often stems from their job grade (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:205). Employees tend to believe that their job grade should be higher, particularly if additional duties relate to an additional volume of work as opposed to relating to the additional complexity of the workload (Oshagbemi, 1996:389-400).

#### **5.4.3.2 Job evaluation**

Job evaluation is a systematic method of determining the worth of a job in terms of the content in relation to other jobs within the same institution (Dessler, 2012:244). The purpose of job evaluation is to identify the important characteristics of each job and to weigh the significant factors that define a job (Cascio, 1991:429). The content of the job description must be up to date, relevant and agreed upon between the line manager and the department responsible for structural design before the evaluation of the job description takes place (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005). By implication, using an inaccurate job description in the workplace will result in misalignment to the achievement of institutional imperatives and wasteful expenditure (Swanepoel et al., 2011). Each job description is evaluated in terms of the complexity, skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions of the job (Bussin & Huysamen, 2004:45-54).

To enable an accurate evaluation of a position, it is preferred that subject matter experts present the content of the job description to a trained and experienced job evaluation panel (Main et al., 2008:225-238). The job evaluation result enables the employer to rank

the jobs in a particular type of hierarchy and attach remuneration to each level of job related to remuneration in the relevant market in which the institution competes (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner, 2005:272-273).

This implies that, if the job evaluation panel is sufficiently trained and the presentation of the job description is in some way flawed, the incorrect remuneration will be attached to a particular job, which will ultimately contribute to the loss of skilled employees (Stone, 2014:469). Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner (2005:314-379) add that a common misperception is that the job evaluation process determines the value of the individual in the job instead of the key performance areas of the actual job.

#### **5.4.3.3 Pay surveys**

A **pay survey** is a vehicle to relate an institution's salary ranges to those for similar jobs in other institutions (Bussin, 2014). Pay surveys are available within industries that track the pay ranges within specific categories of employees and align the adjustment thereof to general factors, such as inflation or scarcity in the market, thus maintaining external equity (Stone, 2014:476).

Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono and Werner (2005:273) highlight that the majority of remuneration specialists use surveys in a specific industry to create, adjust or update an institution's pay system. Surveys can be purchased from a provider, which collates and interprets the data or the employer could commission a survey for a unique purpose (WorldatWork, 2011b).

WorldatWork (2011a) cautions that the data obtained from pay surveys should be validated and tested for its reliability before it influences management decision-making. This implies that equitable remuneration internally might be compromised if credible market surveys are not used.

After jobs have been evaluated and the grades have been established, the institution should establish a **pay structure**. A pay structure is determined by comparing remuneration within the institution with pay surveys that are available in the relevant industry. Institutions could also request a unique survey for its own purpose (Auld, 1991:17-21).

The salary survey by the Association of Commonwealth Universities reports that from academic salaries in 46 HE institutions in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom, Australian academic salaries were most competitive followed by Canada, United Kingdom and South Africa (see HESA, 2014; Tettey, 2006, ACU, 2013:1-4).

Canada pays the highest appointment salary for academics. At the time of the research, the United Kingdom paid academics on the lower levels most generously. In all countries, academic salaries compared poorly with equivalent roles in other parts of the private sector (ACU, 2013:1-4).

#### **5.4.3.4 Pay structure**

The remuneration due to an employee is determined by the job grade and the employee's performance (Bussin, 2014). Once all job grades have been established, an institution establishes a pay range for jobs of the same weighting (Nel, Van Dijk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono & Werner (2005:272-274). The salary range starts with the minimum of the pay scale and extends to the maximum of the pay scale (Stone, 2014:477). This implies that employers would need to justify the relative position of an employee on the pay scale in terms of experience, skill, knowledge and performance (Bussin, 2013b).

Swanepoel et al. (2005:508) point to pay structuring as a process where the information obtained from the job evaluation exercise is combined with information obtained from the pay survey to establish an **institutional pay structure**. Pay structures should be revised in line with the annual salary increase that is awarded by institutions to ensure that employees maintain their relative position in the salary structure (Bussin, 2013a). The pay structure for the year is generally accessible to employees on the institutional website promoting transparent and fair management of employee remuneration (Bussin & Huysamen, 2004:45-54). Swanepoel et al. (2005) add that pay structures of previous years enable the employer to understand the remuneration history of an employee.

Remuneration appears to have a positive bearing on employee retention if employees perceive that they are being remunerated fairly for the work that they do in relation to their peers (HESA, 2014; Main et al., 2008:225-238). Maintaining internal and external remuneration equity implies a dependence on reliable and valid pay surveys as well as

an effective job evaluation process within the institution. This also implies that the governance framework of the remuneration of employees should be sound, transparent, consistent and defensible (Bussin, 2011:101-118).

#### **5.4.4 Rewarding desired behaviour**

The principle of pay for performance (see Bussin, 2013b) informs a return on investment approach taken within the employment market in recent times (Bussin, 2014). It can be argued that employees within an institution would accept and approve the principle if it is applied consistently from the highest managerial level in the institution (Bussin, 2011). Practice, however, highlights a misalignment between performance and reward thus contributing to a negative institutional culture (Reingold & Wolverson, 1998:33-34). Taylor (1997:17-19) and Gerhart (2000) add that the average employee is frustrated with the employer's advertised commitment to pay for performance when it is not being practiced.

Due to global competition to survive, increased competition and financial sustainability concerns, the pressure on the employer to perform is significant (Stuart-Kotze, 2006). This affects the employer's use of flexible remuneration packages that are linked to individual, group or institutional performance significantly (Bussin, 2014). Unlike base pay that is guaranteed and not linked to employee performance, incentive remuneration is aligned to the performance of the employee (Stone, 2014:493).

##### **5.4.4.1 *Linking pay to performance***

Remuneration that is aligned to performance would be applicable to those employees who exceed a particular standard or target of performance (Gregg, Jewell & Tonks, 2012:89-122). Competitive employers argue that the only employees who would oppose the principle of pay based on performance would be those who tend to underperform (Purcell et al., 2009). Performance-based remuneration would extend beyond short-term incentives to longer-term incentives, such as profit-sharing plans, stock ownership plans and gainsharing plans (Stone, 2014:466-467).

In the recent past, remuneration was aligned to loyal service by an employee to an employer (Bussin, 2014:2-230).

Bussin (2011) adds that employees would work within a bureaucracy in return for permanent employment and fixed remuneration. This trend has gradually changed. Pay for performance is the most significant remuneration trend in the workplace and appears to influence employee absenteeism, turnover decisions and employee productivity (Dessler, 2012:249). Gregg, Jewell and Tonks (2012:89-122) report a direct correlation between variable pay and elevated performance by employees. Peetz (2006:132) emphasises that pay for performance reinforces the prerogative by line managers to gain return on the financial investment that is made in employees.

Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens and Amar (2005:89-101) emphasise that academics must be rewarded for performance that is beyond the minimum standard. However, employee performance must be managed in a fair manner for the principle of performance to be respected as a differentiator (Barkhuizen & Rothmann, 2006:38-46). Academics generally earn less than employees with comparable qualifications and experience in the private sector (Bussin, 2013a; ACU, 2013; Bussin, 2014; HESA, 2014). Notwithstanding the non-competitive remuneration, academics enter the profession due to their passion to conduct research, teaching and community engagement (Pienaar & Bester, 2009:376-385).

As a result of the non-competitive remuneration, academics earn additional income through other academic-related initiatives outside the institution (HESA, 2014; Main et al., 2008:225-238). This implies that academic output should be recognised and rewarded to encourage improved employee performance (Ogedegbe & Bashiru, 2014:112-115). Unisa (2013b) and Wits (2012a) found that, in practice, employers tend to reward mediocre performance that has little effect on the achievement of strategic deliverables. This might disempower high performers in the workplace if rewards are not perceived to be allocated fairly (Subramony, 2008:778-788). In addition, there appears to be a lack of objective performance measures per job, poor communication on performance-based pay, union resistance to performance-based schemes and resistance to change from pay aligned to loyal service to pay aligned to performance (Bussin, 2014; Bussin, 2013b; Purcell et al., 2009).

#### **5.4.4.2 *Creating a performance-orientating culture***

The management of employees' performance and the effect thereof on the retention of the employee was dealt with in Chapter 4 (see 4.4.3). The culture within the institution must be conducive to employee performance and reward aligned to performance (Underwood, 2007b; Webster & Mosoetsa, 2002:59-62). A performance-orientated culture within an institution implies a co-ordinated effort between interdependent partners in the workplace to ensure that the message of pay for performance is conveyed consistently throughout all initiatives and visibly supported by institutional leaders (Spangenberg, 1993:30-34).

Gerhart and Rynes (2003:189) highlight the correlation between elevated job satisfaction and performance-related reward (see 4.4.4). The performance management system that is utilised by an employer is crucial towards creating a performance-orientated culture in the institution (Ivancevich, 1998:352). The extent to which the work environment is supportive, nurturing to the employee and promotes an inclusive culture determines institutional health. Testing the institutional health index and culture will guide employers on whether there is adequate understanding of performance-based reward in the workplace (Kupperschmidt, 2000:65-76). A performance-based reward intervention for academics should remain competitive relative to other careers if it is to achieve the optimal effect in terms of retention (Metcalf et al., Weale, 2005).

##### **5.4.4.2.1 *Establish "line of sight"***

If employers implement their remuneration policy strategically, it would be critical for the line manager to ensure that the employee is able to establish a line of sight between his or her individual performance and that of the institution (Stone, 2014:468). Employees at higher levels in the institution might be able to establish a line of sight with relative ease as their employment contract is based on performance (DoE, 2009; Kakabadse, Kakabadse & Kouzmin, 2004:561-582; PWC, 2013). Employers need to invest more time into ensuring that employees at lower levels of the institution, who are in permanent employment, are able to link the effect of their performance to the productivity of the institution (Bussin, 2014; Bussin, 2013a). This is particularly relevant if the institution is not driven by profit, such as universities or public service departments. Employees who

function individually or as part of teams and are remunerated through commission based on productivity will realise the importance of their non-performance much quicker as the non-performance will affect their personal remuneration (Heneman, Ledford & Gresham, 2000).

#### *5.4.4.2.2 Establish clear performance standards*

If the institution makes a business decision to be a high-performing institution, the leadership has to implement processes to ensure that all policies, practices and resources are aligned in the same direction (see 4.4.3.6). The policy framework governing performance must be clearly articulated in terms of performance standards to assess the relative quality and quantity of employee performance. If the employee performance appraisal system is unreliable and is perceived to lack validity and reliability, it is quite unlikely that the monetary or non-monetary rewards that are distributed based on performance will have any effect on future levels of performance and productivity (Franzsen, 2003:131-138; Gregg, Jewell & Tonks, 2012:89-122; Hijazi & Bhatti, 2007:58-68).

The targets in the appraisal system must also inspire employees to strive for a particular standard in their performance (Swanepoel et al., 2005:511). Establishing performance standards aligned to accurate job descriptions is essential to reinforce the concept of pay for performance (Bussin, 2014).

#### *5.4.4.2.3 Implementing effective leadership*

Institutional leadership is being compromised by the trend of excessive remuneration to the top cadre of an institution with an absence in actual performance by members of senior management (Peretomode, 2012:13-17; CLC, 2013; CLC, 2014; CLC, 2006a). Bogle (2008:21-25) adds that in the United States, the ratio of total rewards to leaders of institutions to the remuneration of average workers has risen from 42:1 in 1980 to 280:1 times in 2004. This implies that the pay gap between top and middle management has grown. Bussin (2014:12-14) adds however, that in recent times, the pay gap has reduced slightly particularly with executives being employed in fixed term contract posts that are

aligned to individual performance. This implies that executives instil a performance orientated culture in the institution through their own example.

The trend in the modern workplace is to align variable remuneration to an employee with the performance of the employee. Such alignment contributes to the meaningful investment of resources and has an effect on a high-performing institution. This is particularly the case if institutional leaders lead by example in terms of performance (Bussin, 2014:133-186; Unisa, 2013b; Wits, 2010b; Stuart-Kotze, 2006).

## **5.5 INFLUENCE ON REMUNERATION POLICIES**

Remuneration policies must capture principled issues governing employee remuneration, ranging from internal and external equity to performance-related rewards, market comparisons, salary structure, governance and communication of remuneration (Bussin & Huysamen, 2004:45-54; Anthony, Perrewe & Kacmar, 1999). Remuneration committees give effect to the sound governance of remuneration policies and would therefore need to maintain objectivity, fairness, transparency and consistency in its resolutions (Main et al., 2008:225-238). Bussin and Huysamen (2004:45-54) indicate that remuneration policies are influenced by the retention of key staff, strategic thrusts, benchmarking and affordability. Ogedegbe and Bashiru (2014:112-115) add that pressure from competitors and continual redesign of institutions is having a significant effect on the design of remuneration policies.

### **5.5.1 External factors**

An institution does not function in a vacuum but is influenced by a range of interdependent variables, which exist inside the institution and outside of it. The manner in which the institution reacts to the range of interdependent factors will influence how successful the institution is in attracting, motivating, engaging and retaining talented employees (Bussin, 2014).

#### **5.5.1.1 Statutes**

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (75 of 1997), the Employment Equity Act (55 of 1998) and the Labour Relations Act (66 of 1995) regulate fair remuneration to employees



in the workplace. Fairness in terms of remuneration is coupled with defensible, transparent and consistent remuneration practices. The principle of remunerating employees should withstand these tests. Loopholes will result in changes to the applicable legislation to ensure that the remuneration of permanent and temporary employees remains defensible.

#### **5.5.1.2 Economy**

The consumer price index (CPI), periods where the country is in a recession, the general rate of employment as well as political factors within a country influence the local economy significantly and has an effect on whether the employer is able to pay employees at market rates (Samuel & Chipunza, 2013:97-109). This implies that the budget that the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) will receive annually from the National Treasury to fund institutions of higher learning might be compromised if the economy is not stable. The researcher deduces that institutions would need to review their budget allocations annually and prioritise items that have a direct effect on institutional objectives. They should also down-manage areas of over-expenditure or wasteful expenditure (DoE, 2009:1-10). In the case of universities, if student fees do not generate sufficient income and if the funding from the DHET is limited, the institution might need to secure sources of third-stream income to fund institutional priorities (HESA. 2014; Masango & Mpofu, 2013:883-895).

#### **5.5.1.3 Labour market**

The institution's ability to maintain competitiveness in terms of remuneration will depend on the need for a particular skill in the labour market (Swanepoel et al., 2005:494). The market within which an institution operates has a considerable effect on the salaries that employees receive. Regular comparisons of the employees' remuneration to the relevant market enable employers to keep their remuneration strategy as competitive as their budget will allow (Kakabadse, Kakabadse & Kouzmin, 2004:561-582). Towers Watson (2011:1-24) identifies a trend in the labour market where employees appear to be seeking a competitive reward package as opposed to standalone reward elements when applying for advertised positions.

Any institution will be influenced by external factors over which the employer may have limited to no control (SJTU, 2009; DHET, 2015; Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, 2015). The ability of the institution to compete for knowledgeable and skilled employees within the broader talent pool in the national market, will be determined by, amongst others, the ability of the institution to respond positively to changes in the external environment (Bussin, 2014:25-44).

## **5.5.2 Internal factors**

The ability of an institution to pay its employees market rates will depend on its productivity, size and availability of funding (Mondy et al., 1999:379).

### **5.5.2.1 Positioning remuneration in relation to the market**

The institution would need to make a principled decision in terms of positioning institutional remuneration to the external market. The institution may decide between three broad pay level options: the employer pays at a higher rate than the relevant industry for comparable jobs, the employer pays below the market, or institutional remuneration leads the market for six months of a calendar year and lags the market for six months of a calendar year (Bussin, 2014).

Employers often compare institutional remuneration to the median of the relevant industry implying that 50% of the market sample earns more than this salary and 50% of the market sample earns less than this salary (Bussin, 2011). Competitive employers who wish to attract the most qualified, skilled and experienced candidates will likely consider a lead remuneration position in relation to the market (Bussin & Huysamen, 2004:45-54). The most important consideration for employers in adopting a leading strategy is whether the institution can maintain that market position from an affordability point of view. This would depend on their funding model (Bussin, 2011:79-100).

### **5.5.2.2 Affordability**

Remuneration is still a major influence on employee motivation and behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2000:227-268). However, Nel et al. (2005:284) point to employers being mindful of the escalating costs of employee reward in relation to -

- total annual cost;
- the cost of remuneration per employee;
- the ratio of human resources related to the total payroll expenditure; and
- the cost of an employee per hour to the institution.

The rate of productivity, the profit margin and the alignment to competitors determine the ability of the institution to generate revenue to pay a competitive remuneration (Mondy et al., 1999:379).

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (2004:293-313) highlights the challenge facing higher education to retain talented academics taking into account financial constraints and more lucrative employment offers in the private sector and public service. This implies a decline in productivity and increased levels of job dissatisfaction (Naidu & Govender, 2004:5). The cost of replacing an employee is calculated conservatively at a minimum of thirty percent of an employee's annual salary and can rise to two thirds of the vacant position's annual salary (Netswera et al., 2005:36-40). Employers may have to assess the unique needs of high performers to tailor-make remuneration offerings if possible.

### **5.5.2.3 Employee needs**

Katz and Kahn (1996:355-356) highlight that remuneration aligned to loyal service does not yield an increase in performance. Grant and Shields (2002:313-334) add that, while employers are moving towards pay for performance, the previous practice eliminates the problem of biased line managers. Employees' preference for reward elements appear to be influenced by the generational grouping of the employee implying that the younger employee may prefer the cash in his or her pocket at the end of every month whereas an older employee who values a balanced lifestyle may prefer a total package with an emphasis on work-life balance initiatives (Swanepoel et al., 2005:495). Employers may therefore be required to allow an employee to make distinct choices as to how his or her package should be structured. If institutions are small, individual choices might be manageable in terms of administering a payroll system, but where institutions consist of

larger numbers of employees, the employer might consider a limited number of employee benefits catering for distinct groupings in the workplace (HR Highway, 2007:18).

Employees tend to prefer a total reward package (see 3.3.2.3) as opposed to a single reward element in the workplace. Total reward packages contribute positively to employee engagement and retention (Salaam, Alawiye & Okunlaya, 2013:1-9). Nienaber (2011:7) emphasises that the effect of reward packages is more significant if packages are designed in accordance with employee preferences.

Academics are generally passionate about research, and are motivated by the research incentives that can be earned (Oosthuizen, McKay & Sharpe, 2005). HE managers need to find creative solutions to reward academics adequately (Koen, 2003b:511). Academics in mid-career indicate the negative effect on employee morale as a result of salary compression (see Swanepoel et al., 2005:493) where the gap between salaries to top management and employees in lower levels is continually increased (Randall, 2006:2). Academics appear to value reward packages inclusive of their total cost to company plus the additional employee benefits, to remain within academe (Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens & Amar, 2005:89-101). Pienaar and Bester (2009:376-385) propose an improved remuneration system, which includes a combination of remuneration plus additional employee benefits, to stem academic turnover.

#### **5.5.2.4 Job requirements**

The requirements of each job in an institution will dictate the minimum level of skills, experience and qualifications required from an employee to enter into a position (Swanepoel et al., 2011). There is a positive alignment between skill-based pay and the commitment of the average employee (Mitra, Gupta & Jenkins, 1995:71-73). Although an employee who does not possess the required skills may also be committed to his or her job, it is possible that, if the employer invested in the improvement of the skills of junior employees, this may affect their level of commitment and their retention positively. Highly skilled employees are generally rotated between jobs to enhance their development (Milkovich & Boudreau, 1997:481). Skill-based pay implies an engaged and competent workforce with a positive effect on service delivery (Nel et al., 2005:275).

### **5.5.2.5 *Aligning the remuneration to institutional effect***

Competitive remuneration is a strategic driver to sustain employee motivation, reduce absenteeism and enhance productivity (Bussin, 2014). Van Dijk (2008:385-400) adds that the investment in employee remuneration must support the management of talent in the employee. This implies that the role of remuneration in the attraction, retention, development and deployment pillars of talent management is interdependent and must not be managed in silos (Mshana & Manyama, 2013:88-90). Lau and May (1998:211-226) point to top employers who are identified in credible surveys being associated with competitive reward and recognition packages. Academics are motivated by an intellectual challenge as well as competitive remuneration to ensure a comfortable period of retirement (Srinivasan, 2011:81-93). Bussin (2014:130-150) adds that the remuneration policy must address the strategy of retaining employees with scarce and critical skills.

To maintain a competitive position within a particular industry, an employer would need to find a balance between responding to the internal and external influences of an institution. It would not be possible to survive amongst peer institutions if the focus remained on one area of influence (Bussin, 2011:101-118).

## **5.6 BEST PRACTICES IN REMUNERATION MANAGEMENT TOWARDS EMPLOYEE RETENTION**

Within the context of aligning remuneration to talent inherent in employees, a number of best practices are relevant.

Nienaber and Bussin (2009:5-41) highlight a trend by employers towards a total guaranteed package system, customising remuneration to suit individual needs and lifestyle preferences, and an emphasis on variable pay aligned to employee performance.

To this, Bussin (2014:92) adds that employers tend to provide a combination of offerings that are relevant to an employee ranging from progressive career paths to inspirational leadership, a healthy organisational culture and differentiated employee rewards, in essence a competitive employer value proposition. An attractive all-inclusive employer value proposition has a bigger effect on employee retention than a standalone item, such as competitive remuneration (CLC, 2006:1-30).

Bussin (2013a:107-115) highlights that, in future, remuneration packages will be aligned towards team performance as opposed to individual performance. This implies that employees would need to excel within a team environment and appreciate the influence of group performance on the institution.

Ivancevich and Matteson (2002:200) emphasise the importance of communicating crucial aspects of the remuneration strategy to employees to elevate their understanding and to build trust in the employer. This implies that an employer may have competitive reward offerings but if not communicated adequately to members of staff, retention of experienced and skilled employees will continue to be a challenge.

Lastly, PWC (2013:9) adds that remuneration offerings in an institution should be as simple as possible to ensure effective management and adequate understanding by employees.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

Employee reward, specifically remuneration, is a strategic enabler to achieve a high-performing institution. In reaching that goal, institutional and human resource leaders must understand the emotional attachment employees have to their remuneration in that they perceive it to be the value that the employer ascribes to them. Remuneration appears to be quite important for an employee during the attraction to an institution and slightly less important during his or her employment with an institution. It would appear that employees prefer a total reward package personalised to suit individual preferences and generational specific needs.

The effect of the economy on the ability of an employer to pay market-related remuneration will depend on the remuneration strategy of the employer. The remuneration strategy of the institution in relation to the relevant market, will depend on the financial standing of the institution. The retention of talented employees appears to be influenced by the competitiveness of the remuneration that an employer offers and not purely by remuneration in exchange for employment.

No system for remunerating employees will be perfect. Each institution will draw from the best remuneration practices of competitors and the relevant industry and tailor-make its

remuneration strategy to suit the unique needs of the institution. A remuneration strategy that embraces a fair, consistent and defensible management of employee remuneration is likely to earn the employees' trust. While employees tend to look for a total reward package that addresses personal and professional needs, employers are willing to pay the required remuneration for employees who are skilled and experienced.

In Chapter six, the statutory provisions and relevant documents that regulate the challenges facing employers to attract and retain talented employees will be analysed to identify compulsory provisions, best practices and possibly gaps in the retention strategies of employers.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **ANALYSIS OF STATUTES AND POLICY PROVISIONS**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, literature in the field of remuneration as an HR function was analysed to identify factors that contribute to the attraction and retention of talented academics. Within the context of this research study, specific documents that have an effect on the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff, were analysed. These documents were broadly categorised into the statutory framework, the National Development Plan (which includes a framework for post-school education), strategic policy documents from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), pertinent documents from Higher Education South Africa (HESA) and institution-specific documents; the latter will include the institutional strategy which is aligned to the National Development Plan and applicable statute.

#### **6.2 UNIT OF ANALYSIS AND OBSERVATION**

The unit of analysis in this research study was the three institutions that formed part of the case study; namely Unisa (Unisa), University of Pretoria (UP) and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). The unit of observation was the product of human behaviour. In this particular context, this refers to applicable policies and reports. Management uses policies, amongst other interventions, to steer employee behaviour in a particular direction to give effect to the institutional strategy. The aim of the document analysis was to establish the statutory, governmental and policy framework, which informs the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff. In addition, the aim was to identify policy interventions at Unisa, UP and Wits that attempt to address the challenge.

#### **6.3 STATUTORY FRAMEWORK**

Relevant institutional documents that have an effect on this particular research study had to be aligned to statutes applicable to the area of study. It is therefore important to cite applicable extracts from statutes that have a bearing on how role players in the higher



education (HE) sector manage the skills, experience, qualification and knowledge of academic staff.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997 (RSA, 1997a) aims to advance economic development and social justice by giving effect to and regulating the right to fair labour practices conferred by section 23(1) of the Constitution, by establishing and enforcing basic conditions of employment and by regulating the variation of basic conditions of employment. Based on chapters two to five of this particular research study, the basic conditions of employment together with a lucrative total employment package appears to affect not only the attraction of academics, particularly black staff, to the profession but also plays a role in their retention.

The Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997 (RSA, 1997b) regulates higher education through, amongst others, providing for the quality assurance and quality promotion of higher education. This implies that the governance of matters pertaining to higher education is structured and visionary (Badsha & Cloete, 2011). This enables stakeholders to align the institution-specific strategies according to the provisions of the HE framework in South Africa (South Africa 1997b.s38B). By implication, the institutional strategies that affect the attraction and retention of academics, particularly black staff, should support the governance framework of higher education in South Africa to ensure synergy between the policy priorities at higher education (HE) and institutional level.

The Labour Relations Act (LRA), 66 of 1995 (RSA, 1995) provides a framework within which the employer and recognised labour unions collectively bargain matters of mutual interest. These matters include elements of conditions of employment, namely remuneration and employee benefits. Chapter 3 of the LRA (RSA, 1995) highlights the role of labour unions in the workplace by promoting sound employee participation in decision-making in the workplace and the effective resolution of labour union disputes. This implies that the LRA (RSA, 1995) may support academic staff in their participation of a recognised labour union, should they encounter a labour-related challenge in the workplace.

In addition, the Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998 (RSA, 1998b) provides an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop

and improve the skills of the South African workforce. The institutional strategy to improve the skills of academics must therefore be in support of LRA (RSA, 1995). This implies that the process to ensure equitable opportunities for the enhancement of relevant skills should be transparent, fair and defensible (Datta & Iskandar-Datta, 2014:1853-1866).

The Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 (RSA, 1998a) promotes equity in the workplace through the application of equal opportunity and fair treatment practices. This is achieved through the elimination of unfair discriminatory practices in the workplace. In addition, affirmative action measures redress the disadvantages in employment experienced by designated groups (Subotzky, 2003:1-13). The researcher deduced that the purpose of the above-mentioned statutes is to create an enabling framework that supports the retention of the academic member of staff. This implies that the content of any policy document by a political executive and senior university management regarding higher education in South Africa must be aligned to the relevant statutes. Should there at any time be a possible misalignment between policy documents guided by a political executive with relevant statutes, this may have a negative effect on the management of educational priorities within the HE sector and possibly result in the wasteful investment of resources within an institution (Cloete & De Coning, 2011:10-290; Swanepoel et al., 2011).

## **6.4 POLICY FRAMEWORK**

In providing leadership to the country, the political executive for higher education may implement a framework to guide the national achievement of educational priorities aligned to the statutory framework. It may then be expected of educational institutions to align the institutional strategic framework accordingly to give effect to the achievement of national priorities for education.

### **6.4.1 National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE): A Framework for Transformation**

In 1996, the NCHE published a report (see NCHE, 1996), which summarises the uneven distribution of resources in the HE sector in the past, and which may have influenced the attraction and retention of academic staff at a particular HE institution. In 6.4.1, sections from the report, which are relevant to this study are reported.

The South African HE system is capacitated in terms of research, teaching, physical and human resources (Netswera et al., 2005:36-40). However, in view of the historical imbalances of the past, it is clear that the HE system was flawed through inequitable, imbalanced and distorted policy and funding practices. Role players acknowledge that the strengths in the HE system must be maintained and the inherent weaknesses that threaten the future of higher education in South Africa must be addressed systematically through a process of transformation. The NCHE envisaged a collaborative effort in the transformation process, which involved participation by all sectors of society from a policy and partnership point of view in addition to the HE institution itself responding to the educational challenges (Fourie & Alt, 2000:115-124). Firstly, in 1996, the system perpetuated an inequitable distribution of access and opportunity for employees and students in terms of race, gender, class and geographical location (Rothmann & Jordaan, 2006:87-96). There appears to be gross discrepancies in terms of facilities available to academics in historically black and white universities (DHET, 2013a). Secondly, the NCHE identifies that there was a chronic mismatch between the higher education output and the needs of the economy (DHET, 2013b). The discriminatory practices of the past have limited the access of black citizens into fields such as engineering, science, technology and commerce (DHET, 2013b). Thirdly, the knowledge that is produced by higher education is not responsive to the problems and needs of the African continent (NCHE, 1996). In addition to the content of knowledge that needs to be produced, the teaching strategies and mode of delivery would need to be adapted to meet the needs of larger student numbers and the diversity of the student population (DHET, 2013a). Fourthly, the NCHE identified a need for a more accountable and supportive regulatory framework to guide universities how to progress towards a transformed HE sector (DHET, 2015). Fifthly, the NCHE advocates that higher education should promote a culture that embraces cultural and gender diversity (Tiemo & Arubayi, 2012:210-213). The researcher therefore deduced that, in identifying the imbalances in the HE system, the NCHE was positioned to propose a realistic framework for the transformation of the sector. The framework was aligned to overarching strategies by the government of the day to create a new framework for governance of higher education that sought to embrace the diversity of all racial groupings in South Africa.

#### **6.4.2 National Development Plan**

Aligned to the applicable legislative framework, the government gave expression to its priorities for the medium (two to five years) to long term (beyond five years until 2030) in each sector through the National Development Plan (NDP) (NPC, 2011). The NDP, in turn, guides government departments within a particular sector in South Africa (NPC, 2011). The educational priorities articulated in the NDP provide direction to each HE institution in terms of its medium- to long-term plans (NPC, 2011).

The NPC (2011:261-294) acknowledges that higher education provides opportunities for social mobility and simultaneously strengthens equity, social justice and democracy. Towards this end, the HE sector should strive to lay a solid foundation for a productive educational and science achievement and build a qualified, professional, competent and committed academic cadre by 2030. In addition, the NPC (2011) highlights that universities should support young, black, female students and researchers towards a target of Africans and women constituting more than 50% of research and teaching staff. To achieve this goal, the qualifications of all academics need to increase from the current 34% of academic staff with doctoral thesis to over 75% by 2030 (NPC, 2011).

Based on an analysis of the NDP, the priorities for higher education in South Africa over the next twenty years (i.e. until 2030) include a transformed and differentiated sector. In addition, the staffing and sustainability of universities are prioritised to prepare for the next generation of competent and qualified academic staff to take over from the aging cohort of academics (Tettey, 2006). The NDP (2011) has guided the framework of the DHET (2013b) in terms of the needs of post-school education.

#### **6.4.3 Department of Higher Education and Training: White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-School System**

The focus of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) is to improve the quality of post-school education and enhance a diverse workplace (HESA, 2010). This may be achieved through increasing research and innovation output, improving the quality of research and building on areas of strength that are identified as important for national development (DHET, 2013b).

### **6.4.3.1 Staffing universities**

The DHET identified the need for a plan to address the challenge of staffing South African universities (DHET, 2015). This comprises -

- creating an enabling environment for academic staff to improve their qualifications;
- creating a more supportive environment than is currently the case, for female academics given their personal responsibilities;
- improving conditions of employment for all academic staff; and
- attracting academics from other countries, where necessary.

The plan would also address attracting the younger generation into academe to replace the aging cohort of academics that approach retirement (Tettey, 2006). This implies that a generic plan for higher education may incorporate statutory and academic priorities in the response to a dynamic workplace in the process of transformation (DHET, 2015). The plan would need to be sustained by government through the allocation of the necessary funds to the education portfolio (DHET, 2013b).

Subsequently, the DHET responded through the development of the Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework (SSAUF) (DHET, 2015). The SSAUF is a comprehensive, transformative approach to developing future generations of academics and building staff capacity through three core programmes linked to academic development and two cross-cutting support programmes. The focus of the SSAUF is to urgently recruit, support and retain black academic staff to address their serious under-representation at all levels in the sector (Potgieter, 2002; Booysen, 2007:47-71). In addition, the framework acknowledges the need to create awareness of the academic profession as an attractive career option. The framework is multi-pronged. Firstly, the Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme (NESP) will identify students who are beginning to demonstrate academic ability at relatively junior levels. Such students will be lost to the academe unless an attractive package is available through strategic recruitment efforts (Madia, 2007:19-24; Metcalf et al., Weale, 2005). Institutions may prioritise the graduate development programme towards recruiting masters and doctoral graduates into academe. Secondly, the New Generation of Academics Programme (NGAP) will recruit new academics who

are attracted to the academic profession within equity considerations (Potgieter, 2002; Webster & Mosoetsa, 2012:59-82). Thirdly, the Existing Academics Capacity Enhancement Programme (EACEP) will support the development of existing academics to complete their doctoral studies or through addressing specific gaps with respect to the teaching development, research development, social engagement and academic leadership (Delahaye, 2005; Koen, 2003a; Mkhwanazi & Baijnath, 2003:1-12). The Supplementary Staff Employment Programme (SSEP) is a support programme that will enable universities to recruit specific skills on a needs basis in a temporary capacity to address specific gaps (RSA, 1998b; Metcalf et al., 2005). In addition, the Staffing South Africa's Universities Development Programme (SSAU-DP) cuts across the core programmes and supports teaching and research developments in each of the programmes (DHET, 2015).

The researcher deduced that the SSAUF is a delayed response by the DHET to manage the challenge to attract and retain black academic staff since the onset of the democratic dispensation in South Africa in 1994, as the SSAUF was published approximately 21 years later (DHET, 2015). The SSAUF is set at a strategic level, and provides limited guidance to universities on how to manage the retention of young academics that are prolific researchers and excellent teachers (DHET, 2015). This implies that, if the academic sector within a university is not operating as an integrated cohesive unit, the policy effect of the SSAUF might not be noticeable in the university in the short to medium term. Universities can ill afford to operate in silos if talented young black academics are to be retained (Tettey, 2006; Metcalf et al., 2005). The SSAUF does not elaborate on the critical and unique profile of the senior academic who is required to mentor young academics nor does it provide context of the challenging academic environment within which the same mentorship is to take place (Ilevbare, 2011:197-206; Chantiri, 2010:14). In addition, the profile of a master's and doctoral supervisor, which is crucial towards influencing a student into the academic profession, is not mentioned in the SSAUF (DHET, 2015). The researcher therefore deduced that the SSAUF is a critical framework but should not be implemented in isolation; rather, it should complement an effective institutional retention strategy.

### **6.4.3.2 Financial support from the DoE towards universities**

From the point of sustaining universities financially, the DoE (2003:106) provides a guideline that the management of remuneration to all employees should be between 57.5% and 63% of recurrent unrestricted income. The DoE (2009:1-10) highlights that the total cost of all employee salaries as a percentage of council-controlled recurring income (CCRI) should be between fifty eight percent and sixty two percent. In addition, the total cost of salaries of employees on post grades peromnes 1 to 4 (DoE, 2009:6), as a percentage of total personnel expenditure in the institution, should not be more than six percent. The government gazette (DoE, 2009) was circulated for comment in 2009 but subsequently not implemented by the Department of Education as a guideline to universities in South Africa. This implies that institutional councils and finance committees may resolve on a ratio that is unique to their institution. This is particularly relevant within the context of financial sustainability and the need for the institution to offer competitive remuneration and employee benefits to academic staff.

The introduction of DHET (2015:1-30) will generate much discussion among education stakeholders and yield invaluable inputs. The implementation of DHET (2015:1-30) is still in its infancy. Education leaders may only be able to assess the effect of this intervention on the challenge to attract and retain black academic staff, in the medium to long term, i.e. in five to 10 years' time.

### **6.4.4 Data on post-school education and training in South Africa**

The Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) in the DHET collates relevant information regarding academic staff from each of the HE institutions in South Africa (DoE, 2013). Within the context of this particular study, pertinent information has been extracted pertaining to Wits, Unisa and UP.

The number of academics employed at Unisa, Wits and UP in 2013 is reflected in Table 6.1 below (DoE, 2013). The right-most column reflects the ratio of academic staff to students. The question that arises is whether the number of students per academic in a distance education or residential institution, from a workload point of view, is reasonable. This could imply the need for a generic workload allocation model in higher education that is consulted amongst academics and is relevant, transparent, fair and defensible. The

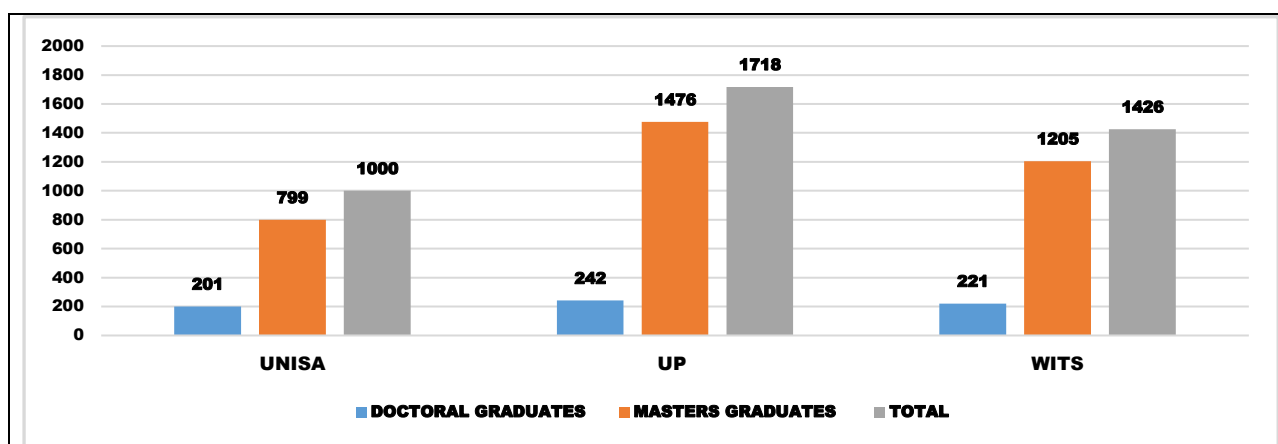
experiences by academic staff in terms of their workload were probed in the quantitative and qualitative study, reported in Chapter 8 of this dissertation.

**TABLE 6.1: NUMBER OF ACADEMIC STAFF PER ACADEMIC LEVEL**

Institution	Junior lecturer	Lecturer	Senior lecturer	Associate professor	Professor	Total number of academics	Number of students	Ratio of academics to students
Unisa	100	499	526	226	278	1 629	355 240	1:218
UP	47	352	358	171	201	1 129	57 553	1:51
Wits	20	420	282	220	148	1 090	31 134	1:29

Source: DoE (2013:5-10)

The number of master's and doctoral graduates per institution in 2013 is reflected in Graph 6.1 below (DoE, 2013:10-15). The data at the selected institutions may have been influenced by the workload of academics, their competency, skill and experience as well as the turnaround time for academics to respond to student queries. This implies that the total work experience of academics or relevant institutional factors might contribute to the graduate output rate.

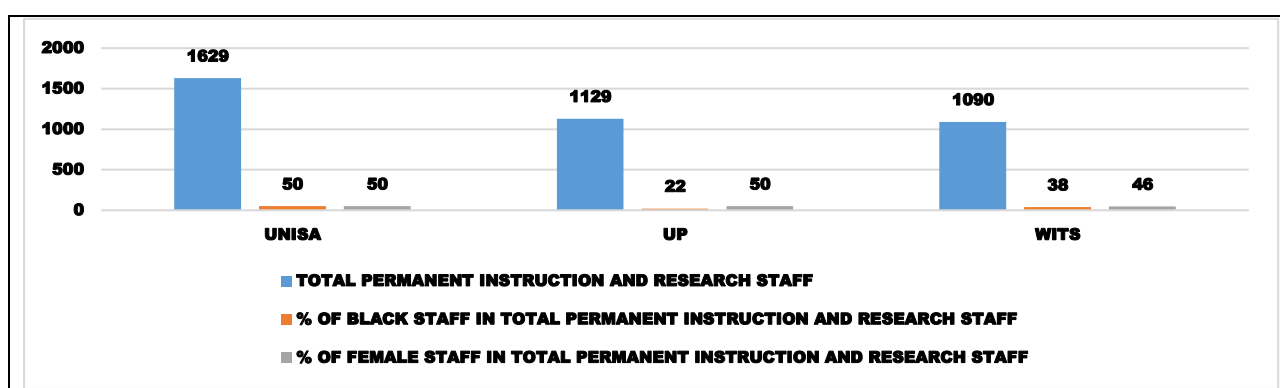


**Graph 6.1: Number of master's and doctoral graduates per selected institution**

Source: DoE (2013:10-15)



Staffing in public (higher education) HE institutions in 2013 is reflected in Graph 6.2 below (DoE, 2013). Black staff includes all African, coloured and Asian staff that are employed permanently as academics. In terms of statutory imperatives, each of the selected institutions is accountable for meeting equity targets and is required to provide regular feedback to the Department of Higher Education and Training in terms of progress towards the ideal staff profile (DoE, 2013). The Minister for Higher Education and Training established a transformation oversight committee in 2013 to consider the equity-related challenges in specific universities where appreciable progress is not being made within a reasonable period.



**Graph 6.2: Staffing at the selected institutions**

Source: DoE (2013:1-15)

In 2013, black academic staff and female academic staff at Unisa, represented 50% equally of the total number of academic staff respectively. In 2013, black academic staff and female academic staff at UP represent 22% and 50% of the total number of academic staff respectively. In 2013, black academic staff and female academic staff at Wits represent 38% and 46% of the total number of academic staff respectively (DHET, 2013). In terms of the general household survey 2015 (Stats SA. 2015:1-195), blacks and females represent 91.6% and 51.2% of the population respectively.

The cited data suggests that Unisa may be more successful than Wits and UP in attracting black academic staff who are young and inexperienced. On the other hand, UP and Wits may be more successful than Unisa in attracting senior academic staff, who are generally white and who are within the academic profession for a long period of service. The

intensity of organised labour involvement in each of the institutions may be a contributing factor in terms of the current equity profile of the institution (Horwitz et al., 2005:4-32).

The way in which the institution conveys its commitment to a diverse academic complement may also contribute to its equity and gender profile (Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2000). It is also possible that the historical practices at each institution may have an influence on attracting an academic from a particular racial grouping.

Academics per institution by temporary employment status in the category of instructional or research professionals in 2013 are reflected in Table 6.2 below (DoE, 2013). The estimated ratio of one permanent academic in relation to the number of temporary academics is highlighted in terms of relevance to the academic concern of excessive workload and the institutional concern of financial sustainability.

**TABLE 6.2: TEMPORARY ACADEMICS AT EACH INSTITUTION**

Institution	Permanent academics	Temporary academics	Estimated ratio of temporary to permanent instruction and research staff
Unisa	1 629	5 658	1 permanent academic : 3 temporary academics
UP	1 129	3 771	1 permanent academic : 3 temporary academics
Wits	1 090	4 032	1 permanent academic : 4 temporary academics

Source: DoE (2013:1-15)

It is clear that the institution must deliver a service of an acceptable standard to students and it should be mindful that the cost of employment of a temporary academic staff member is significantly lower than that of a permanent academic staff member. At the same time, employment of temporary academic staff as a norm would result in employment relationships not being continuous. This may influence service delivery and an environment conducive to academic work.

The quantum of research output per institution in 2013 is highlighted in Table 6.3 below (DoE, 2013). Institutions with a high number of academics with doctoral thesis are research active. This is evident in Table 6.3 if one considers the ranking of each university within the South African HE system compared to the number of academic staff with masters and doctoral thesis.

**TABLE 6.3: RESEARCH OUTPUT AT THE SELECTED INSTITUTIONS**

Institution	Permanent academics	Estimated ratio of temporary to permanent instruction and research staff	% of total academics that have a master's degree as the highest qualification	% of total academic staff that have a doctoral thesis as the highest qualification	Per capita research publication output units in South African higher education	Research output ranking amongst universities in South African higher education
Unisa	1 629	1 permanent academic : 3 temporary academics	30%	39%	0.63	12 <sup>th</sup>
UP	1 129	1 permanent academic : 3 temporary academics	29%	51%	1.24	4 <sup>th</sup>
Wits	1 090	1 permanent academic : 4 temporary academics	38%	41%	1.19	5 <sup>th</sup>

Source: DoE (2013:1-15)

The continued increase in productivity (see table 6.3) could be attributed to a number of factors namely -

- an increase in the number of researchers with a doctoral thesis;
- the ability of institutions and researchers to attract research funding from various sources locally and abroad;
- improved infrastructure; and
- the incentive funding from the DHET in the form of a research output subsidy (DoE, 2013:5).

Factors that may compromise research publication are -

- an increased focus on quantity and less on quality;
- an increase in salami publishing (see Schein & Paladugu, 2001:655-661) where authors publish more than one article from work that should have resulted in only one article; and

- an increase of predatory journals that exist mostly for financial gain (see Beall, 2012:179).

It appears that Unisa might be investing resources towards elevating its research output ranking from its 12<sup>th</sup> position in the national HE sector. This is aligned with the institution's vision to be the best African university in terms of, amongst others, academic excellence (see Unisa, 2013a).

In addition, the researcher noted that the total cost of employment of a permanent academic is significantly higher than that of a temporary academic. To cope with the academic workload and manage personnel-related expenditure, institutions may employ additional temporary academic staff (Anderson et al., 2002). This trend may result in continuous staff movement since the term of a temporary contract expires after a fixed time and not at the mandatory retirement age (Arulkumaran, 1999:361-370). The attrition rate of temporary academics may have a negative effect on the mentorship of young permanent academics (Ilevbare, 2011:197-206). In addition, the profile of the academic being sought in a temporary capacity may not be easily available. Once appointed, the temporary academic would first be orientated into the environment. It would thus be after a reasonable period that the value-add from the temporary academic would be experienced by peers and line management. In the meantime, the permanent academic may continue to experience the effect of the high workload and long working hours in trying to manage academic deliverables. These factors may compromise the retention of the permanent member of the academic staff.

The DHET requires institutions to compile an annual report on matters of strategic importance (RSA, 1997b). In addition, each of the selected institutions has implemented specific documents to govern the attraction and retention of academic staff. Ideally, these documents should align to institutional imperatives articulated in their strategic framework.

## **6.5 HUMAN RESOURCE-RELATED POLICIES: UNISA, UP AND WITS**

Each of the selected institutions was requested to provide a list of additional documents relevant to the research study. Each institution provided documents that were available and as closely related as possible to the request that was submitted. Some documents

were not available because they either did not exist, were still in draft stage and therefore not for public consumption, or were not finalised as a result of a non-functioning collective bargaining unit where policies are negotiated before being approved by institutional council. Management uses policies, amongst others, to steer employee behaviour towards the achievement of the institutional strategy. Towards achieving maximum institutional effect, policies should therefore enhance coherence between interdependencies in the institution as well as between the institution and external stakeholders (DHET. 2013b). The coherence contributes towards institutional influence through consistent practices by employees and facilitates horizontal and vertical co-ordination.

### **6.5.1 University of South Africa (Unisa)**

Unisa is a comprehensive open distance learning (ODL) institution with an office in all provinces in South Africa (Unisa, 2013a). The main campus is located in Tshwane (Pretoria) in Gauteng, a province in South Africa. The researcher identified the following documents from Unisa that were relevant to the research study.

#### **6.5.1.1 Strategic Plan: 2016-2030**

The key features that informed the Strategic Plan comprised the vision to be -

- the leading African university;
- a trend-setting comprehensive university;
- a cutting-edge open distance e-learning institution;
- a quality student experience;
- an institution of choice;
- contextually relevant and an optimised centre of learning;
- a transformed and diverse university attuned to national development;
- a leader in HE management and good governance; and lastly
- committed to high performance and innovation (Unisa, 2015c).

The mode of instruction by the institution within the South African HE sector is unique thus allowing for a student population of approximately 400 000 (Unisa, 2013:4). The researcher found that Unisa might need to implement sound systems towards providing a quality experience to its students consistently. In addition, an e-learning institution implies that all academic staff be technologically literate and all students have access to technology to access the student material (Unisa, 2015d). The profile of academics in generation Z, as opposed to the baby boomers and generations X and Y, are most inclined towards the use of technology (Delcampo et al., 2011). The researcher found that all academics might need to sharpen their information technology skills to provide a quality student experience. Should an institution progress from a print mode of operation to provide a service to students, to an electronic mode or a blended mode, it is possible that resistance may be experienced by senior academics, particularly if they are quite settled in their print mode of operation. This might require a change management intervention, so as not to have a negative effect on the retention of senior academics (Unisa, 2015e).

The number of students at Unisa has grown exponentially over the years without a corresponding increase in the number of academic staff to provide a service to the students. This implies a significant effect on the academic: student ratio (which at the time of the study was 1:218 (see table 6.1). This particular ratio may have a negative impact on the retention of academic staff (Unisa, 2015g).

#### **6.5.1.2 Annual Report 2013**

At the time of the publication of the Annual Report 2013, approximately 50% of academics at Unisa were black staff members. There has been a steady increase in the proportionality of black academics at Unisa from 2009 to 2013 with a steady decrease in the proportionality of white academics at the institution for the same period (Unisa, 2013a). In addition, the majority of academics in 2013 were South African (90.7%), (see Unisa, 2013a:41). In 2013, the proportionality of academics in employment from outside South Africa, has increased slightly from 4.0% in 2012 to 4.3% in 2012 (Unisa, 2013a:44).

To give effect to its vision to be a leading research-intensive institution, Unisa acknowledges the elevated research output by academics. A range of lucrative research incentives have been implemented at the institution. The recipients of research-related

awards are communicated to all employees through the intranet. Qualifying academics may be afforded research and development leave to complete research outputs or the opportunity to complete their doctoral thesis within two to three years on a full-time basis while their responsibilities are managed by an academic on a temporary contract. Notwithstanding the research-related incentives that are available to qualifying academics, it remains a challenge to attract and retain academic staff (Unisa, 2013a:44).

The institution places a premium on the performance of academics who contribute towards the institution becoming a high-performing institution and aligns individual performance to employee reward. The effective management of the academics' performance may highlight areas of development. In their drive to retain talented employees, Unisa has prioritised the professional development of academics. Towards this end, the institution offers a range of opportunities to an academic, ranging from conference exposure that enables an academic to remain intellectually active in scholarly circles to presentation of papers at conferences, succession planning, career conversations and mentorship (Unisa, 2013a:44).

To intensify the approach to attract and retain academics, Unisa has adopted a streamlined recruitment strategy that is responsive to the profile of the different generational groupings. Multiple and targeted recruitment channels, such as the newspaper and social media, which appeal to generational groupings, are considered to attract experienced, talented and skilled academics. The institution is committed to the internal career progression of academics and prioritises internal appointments as far as possible (Unisa, 2013e:1-16).

### ***6.5.1.3 Policy on the Recruitment, Selection, Appointment and Related Matters for Permanent Employees***

Unisa advertises vacant academic positions externally in print or electronic media towards obtaining a wide pool of suitably qualified candidates on post levels peromnes 5 to 19 (Unisa, 2013e). Peromnes is a job evaluation system that is used by Unisa; the system identifies job grades (Gregg, Jewell & Tonks, 2012:89-122). Unisa resorts to a headhunting process through officially approved recruitment agencies only if suitable candidates cannot be found through the external recruitment drive. The employer obtains

a competitive advantage in its recruitment drive through the optimal use of technology, and has implemented an e-recruitment process that invites prospective candidates to apply online for vacant academic and support positions. The abovementioned policy guides the selection process in terms of duly constituted committees that must be convened to process the applications that have been received. The quality assurance of the entire process is monitored by an experienced HR official on the committee to ensure the transparency of a credible appointment process (Unisa, 2013e). The researcher found that the governance of the recruitment, selection and appointment process as outlined in the policy is sound in principle. However, the ultimate outcome of a policy intervention will determine the quality of the decisions made in terms of the policy.

#### **6.5.1.4 *Minimum Criteria for Academic Appointments and Promotions***

On 5 November 2015, the Executive Committee of Senate approved college-specific criteria as a revision to the Guidelines for Minimum Criteria for Appointment and Promotion of Academic Employees (Unisa, 2015f). In considering proposed revisions to the 2013 criteria, the Executive Committee of Senate took into account the unique dynamics in each college in terms of appointment and promotion criteria. The underlying principle to the revisions of criteria for the appointment and promotion of academics, was the alignment of the appointment and promotion guidelines to the job description, talent management provisions, employment equity and the performance management system so that the message being conveyed by the employer is consistent to the academic (Unisa, 2015f:1-10)

The abovementioned guidelines for minimum criteria highlight that, although an academic who applies for appointment or promotion must meet the minimum criteria, he or she does not have a right to be appointed or promoted. The researcher found the criteria to be transparent and defensible. The minimum criteria distinguish between appointments from outside the university and appointments and promotions from within. The rationale for the distinction is to attract professionals who have not necessarily been working in a HE environment and who may therefore not meet the minimum criteria for the various areas of evaluation. The effect of this distinction may influence the retention of existing academic staff in terms of employee morale if appointments are made from outside the institution



when academics internally qualify. One may also reason that the revisions to the minimum criteria for appointment and promotion may be received favourably by academics in view of the unique dynamics of each college. The acceptance and approval by academic staff and labour unions may be compromised, however, if the content of the approved guidelines is not sufficiently communicated. The void that is created when pertinent information is not communicated creates unnecessary fear and mistrust in the workplace between academics and line managers, and poses a challenge to the retention of talented academics. Notwithstanding the challenges inherent in the workplace to attract and retain academics, Unisa has implemented the Talent Management Strategy towards integrating with other pertinent institutional strategies (Unisa, 2013d).

#### **6.5.1.5 Talent Management Strategy**

The Unisa Talent Management Strategy (TMS) is aligned to the Human Resource Strategy to give effect to institutional imperatives (Unisa, 2013d). The TMS outlines four pillars to be attraction, retention, development and deployment. Within each of the four pillars, the strategy deals with enablers to the impediments that are experienced by employees within the workplace. The enablers that are of relevance to the academic are competitive remuneration and employee benefits, relevant work-life effectiveness initiatives and development opportunities, including those interventions that are required for an academic to remain intellectually active in scholarly circles. This includes conference exposure, presentation of research papers at conferences and mentorship programmes (World Bank, 2017).

#### **6.5.1.6 Employer Value Proposition**

The Employer Value Proposition (EVP) model seeks to describe the mix of institutional culture, employee benefits, remuneration and career-related opportunities that are available at Unisa to an employee in exchange for his or her knowledge, skills, experience and commitment. The EVP outlines competitive employee rewards, talent development, a positive institutional culture, a sound governance framework as well as performance and recognition opportunities as the key factors influencing the attraction and retention of talented employees (SHRM, 2011; see 1.1.3). These five factors are related to a framework, which integrates the HR strategy, the TMS and the reward strategy. The

integrated framework flows from the institutional strategy, which is embedded within the institutional culture statement of 12 statements (see Unisa, 2011) that promote a nurturing and supportive work environment. The attraction, retention and developmental interventions in the TMS embedded within the EVP appear to be aligned to the objectives of DHET (2015) to retain talented black academic staff.

If the diagrammatic employer value proposition (EVP) (SHRM, 2011) of Unisa is scrutinised (see Unisa, 2016b), the researcher notes that the highest level of governance in the diagram is the institutional strategy. Although universities are not government institutions and need to maintain their independence, they are dependent on government for funding which contributes to their financial sustainability. The absence of a link from a national education level to the institutional level suggests that the institutional strategy is not influenced by national education priorities and operates in isolation. This very same link may be crucial to the financial sustainability of the institution, especially within the current challenges facing higher education in South Africa (see HESA, 2014). In addition, the EVP model does not include the effect of a credible institution on the attraction and retention of talented employees. This dimension would typically incorporate the effect of the institutional brand, ethical leadership and the sound management of all resources, especially financial resources on the management of talented employees (see Unisa, 2013d). The credibility of an institution may have an influence on the attraction and retention of academic staff (Bussin, 2014). The researcher argues that the EVP model may need to be marketed vigorously through a detailed implementation plan. In addition, the EVP model does not highlight the advantage that can be obtained from an integrated network of institutional strategies, namely the HR strategy, the TMS and reward strategy. Lastly, no mention is made in the EVP of how frequently the document would be reviewed to remain relevant in the dynamic higher education sector.

#### **6.5.1.7 Rewards Strategy**

The Unisa Rewards Strategy is aligned to the reward model positioned by WorldatWork in 2015 (WorldatWork, 2015) with six reward dimensions, namely remuneration, employee benefits, work-life effectiveness, talent development, performance management and, lastly, recognition. The rewards strategy appears to be embedded within the institutional

culture and finds expression in its alignment to the institutional and HR strategies. The purpose of the reward strategy is to have a positive influence on the attraction and retention of talented employees (Unisa, 2016c).

On closer examination of the EVP and reward strategy, the researcher found that the interrelatedness and interdependency between the institutional EVP and the reward strategy are not clearly articulated. The effective marketing of the reward strategy to have an influence on the attraction and retention of skilled and knowledgeable employees may also need to be elaborated. No mention is made in the reward strategy of the challenges facing higher education to sustain a competitive reward strategy from an affordability point of view and the pressure on employers to reduce escalating HR costs associated with performance-related remuneration (DoE, 2009).

The importance of an employee understanding the influence of his/her individual performance on the performance of the institution is not highlighted in the reward strategy. The researcher noted that the absence of performance indicators at portfolio, department and directorate level in the institution may have a negative effect on the achievement of becoming a high-performing institution as it would pose a challenge on measuring the performance of the institution. The researcher highlights that, if an employee appreciates the influence of his/her performance on that of the institution, this may motivate the employee to remain with the institution for a long period.

#### **6.5.1.8 Council Indicators**

The Unisa Council has identified specific indicators in the academic sector against which institutional performance is measured, including undergraduate student performance, postgraduate student and research performance, a people dimension, a service delivery dimension, the sustainability of the institution and enhancing stakeholder relations (Unisa, 2013b:1-10). The report highlights that the overall performance score has increased from 6.12 (2011) to 6.21 (2012) and remains below the point it was in 2010 (6.40) out of a maximum score of 10. In addition, the total number of National Research Foundation- (NRF-) rated academic staff has increased from 95 (2010) to 124 (2012). The proportion of male to female NRF-rated academics was on average 60% to 40% respectively over

this period. NRF-rated academics are dominated by whites at 77% while 23% are black academic staff.

The performance of Unisa is measured against a number of crucial variables, including research output, student throughput rates and service delivery. There is however an absence of performance indicators at all portfolio, department and directorate levels. The researcher argues that Unisa should be concerned with the low 23% of black NRF-rated researchers, especially within the challenge to improve the number of senior black academics (Booyesen, 2007:47-71). The institution might therefore prioritise the investment of resources towards a supportive environment that would enable black academics to meet the criteria for higher NRF-rating.

#### **6.5.1.9 Human Resource Plan**

While the institution addresses concerns by employees in the most recent health survey (see Unisa, 2015e), the employer would need to plan effectively for the number of human resources to give effect to its institutional vision over the medium to long term (Unisa, 2015d). The HR plan proposes a strategy to replace the aging cohort of senior academics in the institution. Interventions that are necessary in the medium to long term include reviewing applicable policies to cater for scarce gender and racial groupings in the workplace. In addition, supportive mechanisms are considered to improve the number of academics with masters and doctoral thesis (Unisa, 2015a; Unisa 2015g).

The researcher noted that Unisa acknowledges that the pool of talented academics, particularly black staff, is limited (see Booyesen, 2007; Tettey, 2006; Potgieter, 2002), adding to the competition between universities to attract a talented academic. The researcher further noted that the intention by Unisa is to link the HR plan to other related strategies; however, the HR plan provides limited information on obtaining advantage from an integrated governance framework, which is responsive to the attraction and retention of talented black academic staff. The HR plan also does not refer to the risks associated with medium to long-term planning given the dynamic nature of the HE sector; plans may very quickly become outdated. The researcher noted that the possible limitations in the HR plan may affect the retention of talented black academic staff.

#### **6.5.1.10 Workload Allocation**

The review of the academic workload framework was necessitated by escalating student numbers and, as a result, higher workload allocations (Unisa, 2015b). This in turn, appeared to be influencing the attraction and retention of academic staff. The workload allocation framework highlights that the allocation of workload per academic in a school is aligned to a process depending on the workload generated by student intake in the institution and the qualifications managed by the school. For this reason, the head of the school in consultation with the Executive Dean is afforded the opportunity to allocate workload within the principles of academic freedom, equity as well as transparency in planning and consultation.

The researcher noted that there did not appear to be a generic workload allocation framework in higher education that an institution could use as a basis to implement an institutional workload framework. However, the Unisa model appears to be based on sound principles, which support the professional priorities of an academic. The researcher noted that the effect of the principles adopted in the model (see Unisa, 2015b) may only be tested during the implementation. The emphasis would be on the consultation of the workload allocation before implementation to highlight the priority attached to equitable workloads and transparency of the process. The researcher acknowledges that even with adequate consultation, there may still not be support for the workload model within a department, particularly if workload is excessive.

#### **6.5.1.11 Integrated Performance Management System**

Unisa aims to give effect to its vision to be a high-performing institution and a leader in higher education on the African continent through effective performance management of academic staff (Unisa, 2013d). The integrated performance management system (IPMS) highlights an alignment to the management of talent inherent in academic staff and gives effect to the awarding of monetary and non-monetary performance incentives subject to affordability. The IPMS is a policy that is subject to negotiation in the institutional bargaining forum.

The researcher noted that the policy emphasises the alignment of individual performance to performance at directorate, departmental, portfolio and institutional level to optimise

institutional effect. This may encourage academic staff not to work in silos but to appreciate the benefits of networks between academic staff. Collaborations may encourage and elevate research output between senior and junior academics as well as between racial groupings. The necessity for senior academics to nurture the potential in junior academics, particularly black staff, has been incorporated into the performance management system to ensure accountability (Allen, Eby & O'Brien, 2008:343-357; Ilevbare, 2011:197-206).

Mentorship is a willing partnership between a mentor and mentee who are compatible (Chantiri, 2010:14). The researcher deduced that the institutional retention strategy should be adapted to a local level within a department with chairs of departments being held accountable for termination of employment of academics, particularly black staff, which could have been avoided. This implies that chairs of departments would regularly assess and respond to the intention by an academic to leave the institution. If accountability is delegated to the lowest level, the university may consider appointing a member of senior management whose sole responsibility would be to manage the plan to ensure the transformation of the institution in terms of applicable statutes and policies. The approach to the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly blacks, would then be holistic and integrated with each academic being accountable (DHET, 2015).

#### **6.5.1.12 Human Resource Training Policy**

The purpose of this policy (see Unisa, 2014) is to promote and nurture a culture of continuous and lifelong learning within the workplace, which will influence employee and institutional performance (Unisa, 2013b). The policy gives effect to training needs that are also identified during the management of an employee's performance and talent profile (Unisa, 2013d). These needs are reflected in the employee's personal development plan, which is finalised between the employee and his or her line manager at the beginning of each performance cycle. The equitable opportunity to access training initiatives is emphasised in the policy as well as compliance to a governance process that screens training applications in terms of prescribed criteria (Unisa, 2014). Fairness and transparency underpin the screening process. The institution conducts regular skills audits

to determine skills gaps at institutional level and the change in employees' skills that has been brought about by the investment in the training of employees (Unisa, 2014).

The researcher noted that the governance of employee training is sound in principle. The fairness, transparency and consistency of the policy can only be tested in its application among academic members of staff. In addition, the policy does not highlight the benefit of on-the-job training as well as coaching and mentorship to encourage continuous learning in the workplace. Such an environment may inspire academic staff towards the attainment of master's and doctoral thesis (Petit, 2004; Bussin, 2014).

#### **6.5.1.13 *Vision-Keepers Support Programme***

Unisa aims to support the development of highly competent and confident young researchers to strengthen research and scholarship at Unisa. This is against the background of the challenge to attract and retain talented young academics and in line with an institutional imperative to increase innovative research and research capacity. In addition, the programme supports transformation of the research group and would ultimately increase the number of NRF-rated researchers at Unisa. The Vision-Keepers programme (see Unisa, 2016a) stipulates specific conditions for an application, including possession of a doctoral thesis at the time of submitting an application. Preference is given to academics from designated groupings as identified in the Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 (RSA, 1998a). A maximum of two applications are permitted from a department. Colleges where applications are approved would need to factor the programme into their workload allocation (Unisa, 2016a).

The researcher highlights that the Vision-Keepers programme may support the increase of research capacity at an institution, particularly an increased number of young black academic staff. However, the document provides limited information and is not aligned to an overarching research-related strategy in academe or at an institutional level. Due to the limited information available in the document, the researcher deduced that practice might not be fully documented in the policy document. This poses a potential risk to the employer in that it compromises accountability if an intervention does not succeed. The absence of a comprehensive strategy does not allow one to appreciate fully the effect of the programme on the challenge to attract and retain black academic staff. The document

also does not provide a sound governance framework in its implementation, which may pose an audit risk.

#### **6.5.1.14 Unisa: Academic Qualification Improvement Programme**

Unisa secured funding from the Department of Higher Education and Training in 2012 to enable qualifying academics who are not in possession of a doctoral thesis to complete the qualification on a full-time basis over a three-year period. The initiative is in support of increasing the number of academics at Unisa who are in possession of a doctoral thesis as well as attracting and retaining talented academics (Unisa, 2013d). In view of the limited funds that are available, only academics who meet specific criteria are approved to participate in the Academic Qualification Improvement Programme (AQIP). In total, 154 academics have participated in the AQIP since its inception in 2013: 108 black and 46 white academic members of staff (Unisa, 2015a).

During the absence of the academic who participates in the AQIP, a replacement is appointed on a fixed-term contract basis, to manage the full workload of the academic. On commencement of the AQIP, the academic signs a contract, which outlines the conditions of his or her participation. Should the academic not complete the qualification within the stipulated time frame or terminate employment before completion of the doctoral thesis, he or she would be required to pay back proportionally the investment made in him or her for the duration of his or her participation in the AQIP (Unisa, 2015a).

Universities within South Africa are financially challenged in view of the pressure not to increase student fees and demands related to the insourcing of currently outsourced services (DoE, 2009). The financial effect is in addition to existing concerns regarding affordability of current services offered to academic staff and students. For its financial sustainability, the AQIP is fully dependent on external funds because the intervention cannot be sustained with internal institutional funds. Should the external funds not be available and given the constraints facing universities to maintain affordable reward-relative incentives, the opportunity for a qualifying academic through AQIP may not easily be sustained by the institution (DoE, 2009).



#### **6.5.1.15 11Cs + 1**

In 2011, the Principal and Vice-Chancellor approved a culture statement and marketed it at the institution as the 11Cs + 1 (Unisa, 2011). The aim of the culture statement, which combined 12 concepts, namely communication, conversation, conservation, community, connection, care, collegiality, commitment, co-operation, creativity, consultation and courage, is to encourage all Unisa employees to practice the essence of the 12 concepts consistently in the performance of their duties (Unisa, 2011). The researcher deduced that the ultimate aim of the 11Cs + 1 was to create an inclusive institutional culture that is supportive and embraces diversity. The healthy culture may contribute towards the attraction and particularly retention of black academic staff (Wits, 2015a; Ellison, 2004; Larrison, Brousseau, Kling & Sweet, 2007:361-381).

#### **6.5.1.16 Institutional Health Survey 2015**

An institutional health survey is a proactive measure to address employee concerns timeously (Botha et al., 2011:1-12). The questions that were posed by Unisa attempted to determine whether the culture within the institution was conducive to retention. The results of the 2015 survey were communicated to Unisa employees in mid-2016 and highlighted concerns that the institutional structure did not encourage optimal performance, policies were not applied fairly, managerial styles were disempowering, ineffective performance management and minimal communication between stakeholders (Unisa, 2015e).

The researcher noted that each stakeholder who was affected by a poor rating was required to collaborate towards interventions to improve the negative employee experience. In addition, it is possible that interdependent policies and strategies that were affected by the institutional health index might have needed to be reviewed. The researcher noted that the effort made by the employer to address employee concerns articulated in the 2015 survey may result in more positive feedback at the next implementation of the organisational health survey in 2018.

#### **6.5.1.17 Exit Report**

Exiting employees at Unisa cite the tension created by the poor relationship with their line manager and more lucrative employment offers, particularly in the private sector, as the

main reasons for leaving the institution (Unisa, 2015c). Unisa should therefore consider the valuable information that is gained during exit interviews and probe the underlying reasons why talented employees are leaving the institution (Bernard, 2012:278-299; Cook & Jagers, 2005; Masango & Mpofu, 2013:883-895).

The researcher deduced that the analysis of the exit report might be considered a reactive solution to the attrition rate. This is in comparison to measuring proactively the intention to leave by an existing employee or conducting retention interviews before an employee terminates employment. The employer may want to address the concerns by academics, particularly black staff, timeously, before their concern translates into actual termination of employment (Bussin, 2013a; Mondaq, 2013; Mshana & Manyama, 2013:88-90).

## **6.5.2 University of Pretoria**

UP is a residential university located in Tshwane (Pretoria) within Gauteng, a province in South Africa. A list of documents was requested from UP for the purposes of analysis during the research study. The documents specified below were provided by UP.

### **6.5.2.1 *Annual Report 2013***

The vision of UP is to be a leading research-intensive university (UP, 2013a). Towards this end, UP has committed itself to sustaining networks that strengthen the research capacity and partnerships of the university. In addition, UP has prioritised the rewarding of academic excellence and intellectual innovation towards elevated research output. Towards this end, UP is focussing on the professional development of academics, specifically as regards improving their qualifications. The institution has embarked on a targeted recruitment drive to search actively in South Africa and abroad for talented academics from designated groups.

Although each institution provides institutional information in its Annual Report, there does not appear to be a uniform standard for reporting. This implies that the information that is found in one annual report may not be reported by another institution. Consequently, institutions appeared to be reporting specific information only. Information that has to be submitted to the DHET is reported directly by the institution. It is possible that institutions may be providing information in the annual report, which is available in the public domain

and which projects the best image of the institution. A positive image and institutional brand may affect the attraction of talented academic staff; hence, the need to analyse institution-specific documents that are available from the institution, within the context of the research study.

#### **6.5.2.2 Strategic Plan 2025**

The academic vision of UP is to be a leading research-intensive university in Africa with international credibility by 2025. In addition, UP has prioritised excellence in teaching and learning, increased access, throughput and diversity (UP, 2011). This implies that the institution aims to place its teaching and learning offerings, research output and community engagement interventions on the international stage aligned to global academic standards. To achieve international recognition, UP would need to respond to areas of research and development critically required by developing nations on the African continent. These areas are, amongst others, education, energy use, the management of health systems and hospitals as well as sustainable rural development.

Towards the investment of resources, specifically in research, UP recognises that its academic staff would need to be in possession of a doctoral thesis. This implies that the institution would need to provide a supportive environment for academics who are not in possession of a doctoral thesis to attain the qualification as soon as possible. In addition, junior academic staff would need to be developed through a range of developmental interventions to replace the aging cohort of senior academic staff (Metcalf et al., 2005; Tettey, 2006). UP acknowledges the challenges associated with the attraction of talented academics and reports that a differentiated and flexible approach is needed to manage the demands of teaching and learning, research and community engagement. The researcher deduced that flexibility might entail the academic member of staff being sensitive to the language needs and literacy levels of students and adjusting his or her teaching style (Cooper, 2007; Dockel, 2003; Salkowitz, 2008). A supportive environment may contribute towards students completing their studies and possibly being attracted to the academic profession as a possible career.

### **6.5.2.3 Recruitment and Selection Policy**

UP is committed to the principles of fairness, transparency and consistency in terms of recruitment and selection to enable the most effective person-job-institution fit (UP, 2012d). The policy makes provision for the presence of labour unions as observers to the selection process. In addition, UP is committed to a goal of attracting and retaining excellent academic and support staff. Towards this end, the strategy involves the active recruitment of academic staff through a range of national, regional and international networks, a flexible HR policy and an environment conducive to working. This implies that information and communication technology (ICT) will be deployed as a strategic resource and would require a significant monetary investment in upgrading and maintaining ICT network systems.

UP has committed itself to advertising vacant positions internally and externally as widely as possible to attract a wide pool of academics and to advance a diverse workforce and employment equity imperatives (Rose, 2006; Brand, 2008:205-222). In support, HR scrutinises the wording of advertisements to ensure that it does not compromise the attraction of suitably qualified applicants. Where applications are not forthcoming, the institution resorts to headhunting suitable applicants through the services offered by recruitment agencies. Monitoring of compliance to the recruitment and selection policy during the active recruitment and selection process is delegated to the HR department, particularly those HR officials who participate in the actual process. The recruitment of academics is managed by academic selection committees supported by experienced HR officials (Madia, 2011:19-24; Metcalf et al., 2005).

UP emphasises that the appointment and promotion of academic staff will not be considered where minimum requirements have not been met. Where these have been met, UP highlights that the most suitable candidate from the pool of qualifying candidates will be recommended for appointment. This implies that the recommendation will not be influenced by affirmative action principles if the most suitable candidate is not a black applicant. The promotion of academics at UP is managed by way of a policy where qualifying academics have to meet minimum criteria for consideration by a committee within the faculty (UP, 2012c).

It appears that the length of a probationary period after appointment differs between the selected institutions. The minimum probation period for academic staff at UP is 24 months at Unisa it is six months and at Wits it is 12 months. The probation period can be extended if an academic has a development need that requires close supervision. The UP policy does not mention the importance of a supportive and nurturing line manager to assist a new academic to settle into the department and to assume his or her official responsibilities. A new employee may find orientation into the department more useful than the orientation intervention into the institution. It is possible that the lack of a supportive environment may influence the ultimate retention of a new academic (Bussin, 2013a).

The recruitment and selection policy also outlines the process of evaluation for the promotion of academics. UP emphasises that academics who apply must meet the minimum requirements for promotion as outlined for each academic level, although it does not justify automatic promotion. Academics who are on probation do not qualify for promotion. Specific documentation must be submitted by qualifying academics when applying for promotion. The review committee follows a structured process in confirming the final list of academics who are recommended for promotion (UP, 2012d).

UP emphasises the importance of ethical conduct during the recruitment and selection process for appointment or promotion. Participants in the process who are related to any of the applicants in a manner that will influence their participation, must withdraw themselves from the process to ensure transparency and fairness (Brand, 2008:205-222).

#### **6.5.2.4 *Framework for the Evaluation of Teaching***

In establishing a framework for the evaluation of teaching, the framework for the evaluation of teaching makes reference to the recruitment and selection policy in terms of the minimum appointment and promotion criteria for academic staff (Unisa, 2013b). In addition, reference is made to a framework for the evaluation of research output. The academic is required to present evidence when he or she is being evaluated for his or her teaching competency (UP, 2013b).

Since the areas of specialisation in each faculty differ in terms of the specific industry, the criteria that are outlined are presented as guidelines within the context of a diverse student

body with varied needs. This implies that the academic would need to be flexible in his or her teaching approach in responding to the needs of the diverse student body. This may include adapting one's teaching style to the level of literacy of the students. The diverse needs of students also imply that the criteria for the evaluation of teaching may differ between faculties in the same institution.

#### **6.5.2.5 Performance and Development Management**

UP is committed to strategically positioning the institution in the national and international sphere and acknowledges that the empowerment of academics is a tool towards this end. The computerised Performance and Development Management System (PDMS) is used for the management of academic performance, and incorporates the performance appraisal, personal development plan and the job description of the position occupied by the academic (UP, 2012a). UP acknowledges the role that line managers play in the effective management of employees' performance and has therefore prioritised the training of all line managers in the principles of employee performance. The PDMS determines the output for individual performance and prepares academics, through performance over an entire spectrum of variables, for promotional opportunities. The PDMS is underpinned by a procedure where the academic and his or her line manager agree on deliverables for the period of review and engage regularly during the period to ensure a discussion of challenges and support needed as well as whether goals are still achievable. Annual performance bonuses are allocated for exceptional performance within a specific guideline and are subject to affordability. Salary increases are allocated to academics based on satisfactory performance and are also subject to affordability. The process towards this end is based on a consulted guideline (UP, 2012a).

The researcher noted that the policy does not mention financial sustainability of monetary incentives in view of the challenges facing universities to maintain affordable employee reward interventions (DoE, 2009). In addition, the policy also does not refer to the alignment of the individual to institutional performance (Bussin, 2013a; Van Dijk, 2008:385-395). The standard that constitutes exceptional performance is also not defined within the policy. This implies that the absence of specific criteria that define varying levels of performance may compromise the credibility and success of the performance

management system. This might lead to misaligned developmental needs being identified and, inadvertently, an inappropriate investment in financial resources allocated to employee development. The researcher noted the importance attached to the training of line managers in managing the performance of academic staff effectively; this in turn may contribute to the retention of staff.

#### **6.5.2.6 *Human Resources Development Policy***

UP is committed to an environment that encourages continuous learning towards the achievement of its strategic goal of retaining, developing and utilising skills at the institution. The Human Resources Development policy identifies the collective responsibilities of the line manager and the employee towards the development of the employee in a structured process governed by the performance management of the employee (UP, 2015a). Although the policy does not focus on the specific responsibility of the line manager, the researcher noted that the nurturing role of the line manager and his or her influence on the development of the employee is crucial. In addition, the researcher also noted that, where a line manager is not performing a supportive developmental role, the retention of the employee may be compromised and result in an intention to leave the institution (Ilevbare, 2011:197-206; Masango & Mpofo, 2013:883-895).

#### **6.5.2.7 *Staff Development Portfolio***

UP emphasises education, training and development as mainstream activities for growth and sustainability. Development opportunities assist employees in their professional development and contribute to institutional efficiency and effectiveness. UP highlights that employees are also assisted to align their personal development goals with those of the institution. UP identifies a number of development interventions ranging from the orientation of new employees to internal and external training interventions. The orientation of new staff members is compulsory for all newly appointed academic and support members of staff. To support the academic in his or her career at UP, mentorship has been institutionalised within the academic fraternity (UP, 2015b).

The researcher therefore deduced that UP is obtaining the competitive advantage that mentorship can yield in terms of retaining talented academics. The staff development portfolio does not mention the introduction that new academics receive to research and community engagement responsibilities. It is possible to assume that appointees might possess the necessary knowledge. The need for the institution to sensitise academics at their orientation of their research-related responsibilities is particularly necessary in view of the institutional vision to be a leading research-intensive institution on the African continent as well as an international academic partner (UP, 2013a).

Towards elevating employee qualifications and particularly achieving the doctoral thesis, UP encourages its employees to further their studies. Within this context, employees may pay a reduced tuition fee and sign a formal contract in terms of compulsory service to the institution for a defined period to ensure that the institution receives service from the employee in lieu of the monetary investment made in him or her (UP, 2015b). The researcher deduced that there is, to some extent, a supportive environment for the academic to achieve the doctoral thesis. This in turn would enable the academic to be research-active and contribute to the vision of being a leading research-intensive institution internationally. In the process, the academic may be influenced to remain with the institution (CLC, 2003; Vermeulen, 2007:272-274).

#### **6.5.2.8 Human Resources Development Policy**

The Human Resources Development Policy identifies criteria against which applications for training and development are measured before approval is granted (UP, 2015a). The alignment of the training application to statutory obligations as well as the employee's employment equity status is allocated the highest score, followed by relevance of the application to job-specific skills and lastly, career and strategic effect of the application. In addition, the process that an employee must follow to access institutional training funds is clearly outlined in the human resources development policy.

The transparency of the training approval process and the implementation of equitable practices in the approval process of training applications, are crucial to the credibility of human resources development at UP. The policy does not refer to a review of the skills of the employees or a regular skills audit, particularly in view of the significant monetary



investment that is made in the area of training and development of employees. In view of the challenges facing universities to ensure financial sustainability, the pressure on institutions to extract return on the monetary investment made in an employee through training and developmental interventions, may be increasing (Subramony, 2008:778-788; Bussin, 2013b).

#### **6.5.2.9 Policy on Academic Professional Development: Teaching and Learning**

UP aims to make a positive impression on the quality of teaching and learning and to support teaching excellence at the institution. Towards this end, the institution acknowledges its responsibility to address the professional development needs of its academic teaching staff (UP, 2012c). The skills development needs that are identified by the line manager during the performance management process should flow into the training and development of academic staff. This implies that the professional development process would be ongoing and would require academics to attend appropriate interventions to elevate their teaching skills to respond effectively to a diverse group of students (Bussin, 2014; Datta & Iskandar-Datta, 2014:1853-1866).

#### **6.5.2.10 Staff Academic Development Grant Programme**

UP acknowledges that the research productivity of HE institutions is closely related to the proportion of academic staff who have doctoral thesis. Towards this end, the institution has prioritised monetary support to academics to finalise completion of the higher degree for which they are registered (UP, 2012e). The approval entails financial resources to support lecturing replacements for the teaching commitment of the academic who has applied, for a specified period of time, with the understanding that this time will facilitate completion and submission of the thesis. Other conditions that are attached to the approval are the academic being within two or three years of submission of his or her research thesis towards the doctoral or master's degree, and the applicant must be on the level of junior lecturer at the time of his or her study. The approval that may be granted is restricted to a maximum of 12 months to avoid disruption to the teaching responsibility of the institution. In addition, for practical reasons, a replacement academic must be available for the application to be considered. The academic development grant programme may be compared to the Unisa AQIP intervention (see 6.5.1.14) although the

latter is more generous in terms of a two- to three-year period of absence to complete the doctoral thesis.

The support by the employer towards an academic who participates in the programme caters for the teaching commitments of the academic. The researcher was unable to obtain a similar policy document for support in the area of research and community engagement at UP. In addition, the academic development grant programme is restrictive in the sense that it is only open to junior lecturers and not all academic levels (UP, 2012e). The reason for this may be the financial resources that are available as well as the need by the institution to empower junior academics, particularly black staff, towards their retention (DHET, 2015; DoE, 2009).

#### **6.5.2.11 *Exit Interviews: Policy and Procedure***

UP conducts interviews on a voluntary basis with employees who have terminated their employment through resignation to identify underlying problems that are compromising retention (UP, 2012b). The analysis conducted by UP is presented to senior management annually. The policy and procedure comprise a one-page document that specifically points to interviews with employees who have resigned and not employees who may have terminated their employment for other reasons such as normal retirement, early retirement or ill health. This implies that not all exiting employees are interviewed. This may be a limitation to the employer as each employee's experience is unique and may yield valuable information. The employee's experience may add value to existing retention mechanisms or highlight an intervention, which is not in place already and which may be responsive to employees. The limited information in the one-page policy does not highlight the alignment of the exit strategy to the overarching human resources or institutional strategy. In addition, the researcher noted that the policy does not align to the strategic importance of exit interviews in terms of managing the retention of talented academics. The exit interviews policy does not refer to an institutional health survey or retention interviews that may be regarded as more proactive interventions by the employer as opposed to exit interviews that may be regarded as reactive (Unisa, 2015e; Wits, 2015a).

### **6.5.3 University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)**

The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) is a residential university that is located in Johannesburg, South Africa. A list of documents was requested from Wits. The documents specified below were made available by the institution.

#### **6.5.3.1 Annual Report 2013**

The institution has reported on the progress that has been made towards becoming the leading research institution on the African continent (Wits, 2013). The professional development of academic staff has been prioritised towards elevated research output. The outcome of this prioritised approach is highlighted through the international ranking of the institution in the 201 to 300 world ranking list. Neither UP nor Unisa appears in the top 500 listing. Wits ranks in the top 1% of the world in 23 fields of study. The institutional publication record shows a very high level of international collaboration. A substantial percentage (44.8%) of all articles published by Wits academics in international journals has at least one international co-author and 80% of publications are in international journals (Wits, 2013:6).

To maintain its credibility by its peers, Wits has identified the need for a transformed environment conducive to working for academics, especially after assessing the results of a climate survey. The results identified the lack of representation of African academics from South Africa, academics at senior levels, systemic discrimination and racism, inconsistent application of policies and practices and a disempowering working environment that favours the white minority (Bernard, 2012:278-299; Blanchard, 2007). In response, Wits has developed a comprehensive culture plan towards remedying the issues of concern by employees. Wits reports that it has also made substantial progress towards achieving equity and the development of greater diversity in its pool of productive researchers (Booyesen, 2007:47-71; Cassim, 2005:653-665). In addition, the institution has implemented a sound governance structure, including an integrated HR framework, aimed at having a positive influence on attracting and retaining academics. The framework includes the alignment to the talent management of academic staff (DHET, 2013b). The implementation of the sound governance structure followed from the challenge being experienced by the university to fill vacant academic positions in specific disciplines where

more lucrative employment offers are available in the private sector (Holtom, Mitchell & Lee, 2003:231-291; Kerr-Phillips & Thomas, 2009:1-10). Wits has conceptualised its vision of being a research-intensive institution in a strategic framework that informs all institutional policies.

### **6.5.3.2 Vision 2022 Strategic Framework**

Wits published a positioning document with seven strategic thrusts, which articulate the vision and strategic choices that will be necessary from 2012 to 2022 to assert itself as an internationally leading research-intensive institution (Wits, 2011b). Towards this end, Wits is committed to increasing the proportion of international staff to 40% of the total staff complement. It is possible that the proportionality of international academics in the total academic staff complement may influence the morale and career progression of South African academics at Wits if talent is sourced from external before internal qualifying candidates are given the opportunity to progress into applicable posts. This in turn may affect the retention of internal talented employees within the institution (Wits, 2015d). Towards retaining experienced, skilled and knowledgeable academics, Wits is committed to institutionalising the TMS and nurturing the talent inherent in its employees, particularly the academic staff. This implies training line managers in their developmental role over academic staff in their area of responsibility. The institution also acknowledges the need to attract and retain prolific researchers, especially in view of its strategic vision (Botha et al., 2011:1-12; Nienaber & Bussin, 2009). In addition, the importance of an environment conducive to working, which encourages elevated research output is prioritised. Wits therefore committed itself to reviewing the performance management system, reward and recognition systems at the institution in terms of its effect on the attraction and retention of academics who contribute towards the strategic framework. In the strategic vision document, Wits acknowledges the advantage that the institution could obtain if it exploits the use of technology in finding innovative ways of engaging academic staff towards excellence (Salkowitz, 2008; Smola & Sutton, 2002:363-38 Tomlinson, 2002:534-551; 2). Between 2012 and 2015, the institution reflected on its progress towards its strategic vision and documented its progress in an integrated report (Wits, 2015b).

### **6.5.3.3 *Integrated Report***

In the Wits Integrated Report, the institution reaffirmed its commitment to being a research-intensive institution in Africa and firmly embedded in the international top league universities by 2022 (Wits, 2015b). Wits reviewed the effect of the mass mobilisation of students to reduce student fees and the insourcing of currently outsourced services on the Wits Vision 2022 of the institution (Wits, 2015d, DoE, 2009). Wits reflected on the seven pillars it had committed to in Vision 2022 and the extent to which interventions towards those pillars may need to be adapted to accommodate the recent dynamics in higher education. The seven pillars articulated in the integrated report, are academic excellence, research and knowledge leadership, innovation and social leadership, an IT-knowledgeable university, extensive partnerships, excellence in governance, management and support services. Wits highlights that while an HE system could enable increased access by students, it should not compromise on quality. The institution envisions that in the near future, there could be a political and intellectual struggle between increased access and elevated quality in education (DHET, 2015; Tiemo & Arubayi, 2012:210-213). The researcher deduced that should this struggle materialise, it will place additional pressure on academic staff to provide a service to students. This may have a negative effect on the current challenge to attract new academics and retain existing academics (Wits, 2012b).

### **6.5.3.4 *Strategic Plan for Research 2012-2017***

The university strives to elevate its research performance by 2017 towards the goals articulated in Vision 2022 to be an internationally leading research-intensive university in Africa (Wits, 2012b). The vision is aligned to the World Bank's criteria (see World Bank, 2017) on what distinguishes a world-class university. This implies that the research focus by Wits would need to be communicated sufficiently on an ongoing basis to all academics and be incorporated into all levels of institutional performance, including the academic performance agreements. In addition, the investment of institutional resources should be aligned to all interventions that support the research focus; thus implying an integrated approach to the strategic vision. Wits confirms the institutional values attached to high research output, namely independent enquiry and trust, academic freedom, institutional

autonomy, international engagement, intellectual excellence and integrity, social engagement and responsiveness (SHRM, 2011).

#### **6.5.3.5 2013 Strategy towards Global Top-League Status**

Wits aspires to be a leading research-intensive university firmly embedded in the top 100 global universities by 2022 (Wits, 2011b). Towards this end, the institution has interrogated each of the seven strategic thrusts (see Wits, 2015d) in Vision 2022 from a global competitiveness point of view. The institution articulates the details of the plan towards achieving this commendation and realises the importance of aligning the investment of resources to each aspect of the plan. Wits is committed to attracting, developing and retaining distinguished research-intensive scholars by offering a supportive working environment that promotes intellectual discourse. In addition, Wits is committed to increasing the number of high-impact research networks and collaborations towards achieving research excellence (Wits, 2011b).

The sharpened focus on research output places a responsibility on an academic to elevate his or her performance and to collaborate with peers in terms of research-related projects. Maintaining a balance between the pressure of elevated research output, possibly a demanding workload and personal commitments could be a challenge for an academic and might take its toll on his or her level of engagement (Cawood, Yilmaz, Musingwini & Reznichenko, 2008:153-179). In addition, the increased workload may affect the retention of the academic, especially if a lighter workload in the same subject field together with a more lucrative remuneration offer, is available in the private sector. The emphasis on research output also implies that the institution may have an effective performance management system in place that is linked to monetary and non-monetary aligned rewards (Gunkel, 2006). The monetary investment that is made when attracting a high-performing academic implies that the employer would prioritise an environment conducive to working to secure his or her retention, as far as possible.

#### **6.5.3.6 Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy**

Wits has committed itself to a sound, transparent and ethical recruitment and selection process (Wits, 2011a). The institution uses social media to reach a bigger pool of

applicants, particularly from the younger generation, who are technologically inclined (Madia, 2011:19-24). Where an internal candidate is not successful in his or her application for an advertised post, Wits provides feedback to the academic towards his or her development (Moser, 2005:188-195). This implies that the institution may maintain a database of the qualifying candidates who are unsuccessful in their application. Such candidates may be considered in future for suitable vacancies, especially if the process is open to headhunting.

In the recruitment, selection and appointment policy, Wits acknowledges the effect of an accurately worded advertisement to attract experienced and skilled employees, especially if the vacancy requires a scarce skill. In addition, the brand of the institution contributes to the appeal of the advertisement, especially if the institution is stable and credible. Wits recruits academic staff that give expression to the achievement of the seven strategic thrusts (see Wits, 2012b) articulated in its vision. This includes the recruitment of academics with an impressive international portfolio (Wits, 2011a). Towards being a leading research-intensive institution in Africa and an international competitor, Wits argues that at least 40% of its staff complement should be sourced internationally (Wits, 2011a). Wits places a premium on the recruitment of high-performing academics (Pillay et al., 2008:308-323). This implies that an international and external applicant may receive preference over an internal academic who is talented. Should this practice be the norm, it may affect the morale of existing South African academics. Alternatively, it may inspire academics who are not research-active to elevate their productivity (CLC, 2004).

#### **6.5.3.7 Performance Management Policy**

After Wits has recruited talented academics, it becomes crucial to manage the performance of the employee to retain him or her for as long as possible (Wits, 2010b). In the Performance Management Policy, Wits acknowledges the competence required of the line manager to manage the performance of the talented academic and to provide a supportive environment that nurtures the talent in the employee. Employees must also be able to appreciate the influence of their individual contribution on the achievement of institutional deliverables.

Towards a more effective performance management system that does not operate in silos, Wits has implemented integrated performance scorecards at each level in the institution cascading down to the level of the employee (Franzsen, 2003:131-138; Parsons & Slabbert, 2001:74-81). However, more effective management of individual performance is a priority for Wits. Since 2012, there has been an impasse between Wits management and labour unions regarding the credibility of performance management of academic staff; since then performance management is not implemented. The employer is committed to creating an environment that promotes research excellence in line with the vision articulated in Vision 2022. Wits therefore places a premium on academic performance that equates to elevated research output. Since Wits aligns performance management to providing the necessary incentives to employees, academics who produce quantity and quality research outputs are rewarded to influence their engagement and ultimately, their retention (Rothmann & Jordaan, 2006:87-96; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004:293-315).

#### **6.5.3.8 Staff Development Policy**

Wits is committed to the professional development of all academics through effective orientation into the workplace (Wits, 2006b). In the staff development policy, Wits emphasises the importance of institutionalised mentorship and coaching in the ongoing professional development of all academics, particularly the younger generation and acknowledges that academic staff may be at varying stages of their professional development and therefore have specific needs (Illebare, 2011:197-206; Srinivasen, 2011:82-90). The employer is particularly sensitive and responsive to the diverse needs of academics who come from different cultural backgrounds. Wits has prioritised professional development programmes aimed at enhancing the teaching, research and community engagement skills of academic staff and enabling academics to complete their higher degrees within specific conditions. Wits further acknowledges that employees may not necessarily be retained at the institution purely as a result of developmental initiatives; hence, the need for an integrated approach, including a focus on employee wellness, to secure the retention of their skills (DHET, 2015). The possibility of an excessive academic workload could compromise the retention of a talented academic. This implies the need



for a scientific model to determine a reasonable academic workload at the institution (Wits, 2010a).

#### **6.5.3.9 Norms, Principles and Guidelines for Academic Workloads**

Wits is committed to the principles of equity, balance, output, transparency, consultation, career development and staff capacity, facilitation of interdisciplinary activities, developing skills and capacity within a discipline and the affirmation of the role of the head of a school, in the workload model (Wits, 2010a). Since the academic environment is continually changing, Wits emphasises in the guidelines that the workload model should be subject to consultation of relevant role players, particularly academics. This implies that the workload model may be applied differently within each college since student intake, professional qualifications being managed by the college and academic capacity differ between colleges in the academic sector at Wits (Wits, 2012a).

#### **6.5.3.10 Academic staff performance expectations**

Since Wits aims to be among the top 100 universities globally by 2022, the employer acknowledges that performance at individual and institutional level would need to be improved (Wits, 2012a). In 2010, Council approved a Performance Management Policy (Wits, 2010b) outlining the rationale for performance management and the principles underpinning the management of individual performance. At institutional level, the performance that is expected in terms of the seven strategic thrusts (see 6.5.3.2) articulated in Vision 2022 is cascaded down to each academic level to enable the realisation of institutional performance at individual level. At each academic level, the strategic thrust is expanded to outline the activities that should be required by the academic, the expected outcomes and the sources of evidence that the academic would need to produce to highlight that the performance standard has been achieved (Wits, 2012a).

Integral to the achievement of institutional performance are knowledgeable, skilled and experienced academic staff who produce sufficient research outputs of good quality to enhance the research agenda nationally and internationally. The institution acknowledges the positive influence of institutionalised mentorship and coaching of junior academic staff

by senior academic staff (Bussin, 2014; Chantiri, 2010). This implies that mentorship must be implemented formally to ensure accountability but not rigidly so that it becomes an extra task to be performed (Metcalf, Rolfe, Stevens & Amar, 2005:89-101). The blended model must be aligned to best practices to gain the desired effect of attracting and retaining talented academic staff, particularly black staff. In addition, Wits aligns the outcome of the performance management process to monetary awards and salary increases (Bussin, 2014; WorldatWork, 2011a). The rationale is that individual performance should have institutional effect.

Wits therefore acknowledges the importance of a fair, transparent and defensible performance management system, which is consulted amongst employees (see Bussin, 2013b). The line manager and employee must agree on performance standards at the beginning of the performance cycle. Regular engagement is required between both parties in terms of progress towards agreed-upon deliverables and the support that may be needed by the employee. Wits notes that performance management is a development tool first before it is used for rewarding an employee (see Parsons & Slabbert, 2001). This implies that performance management should precede a development or training intervention as the developmental need that an employee has would be identified during the performance management process (see Purcell et al., 2009). The researcher deduced that effective performance management may influence retention and limit the need for exit interviews with academics who terminate their employment with the institution.

#### **6.5.3.11 Exit interviews**

All employees who terminate their employment for whatever reason are offered the opportunity by Wits to participate in an exit interview or to record the reasons for leaving the institution on a prescribed form, should the employee not be comfortable with an interview in person (Wits, 2006a). The HR department assesses the feedback by exiting employees to identify trends that might be compromising the attraction and retention of employees (Kupperschmidt, 2000:65-76). The HR department initiates an appropriate intervention within the provisions of the relevant institutional policy if an existing employee reports a serious allegation during the exit interview. The feedback from exit interviews may provide insight into areas that are compromising the institutional retention strategy.

Table 6.4 below provides a summary of the analysis of the institutional documents from Unisa, UP and Wits, highlighting pertinent aspects that affect attraction and retention of academic staff.

**TABLE 6.4: SUMMARY: ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL DOCUMENTS AT UNISA, UP AND WITS**

EVP Dimension	Unisa	UP	Wits
<p><b>1. Credible institution</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2015 Academic Ranking of World Universities top 500 universities ranking - no.</li> <li>• Emphasis to be <b>the</b> leading university on the African continent - no specific emphasis on research intensity.</li> <li>• Total number of academics = 1 629.</li> <li>• Total number of students = 355 240.</li> <li>• % of black and female academics = 50/50% respectively.</li> <li>• % of academic staff who have doctoral thesis = 39%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2015 Academic Ranking of World Universities top 500 universities ranking - no.</li> <li>• Strong emphasis on research output to be leading research-intensive institution.</li> <li>• Total number of academics = 1 129.</li> <li>• Total number of students = 57 553.</li> <li>• % of black and female academics = 22/50% respectively.</li> <li>• % of academic staff that have doctoral thesis = 51%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2015 Academic Ranking of World Universities top 500 universities ranking - Wits was rated in the category 201-300.</li> <li>• Wits subscribes to international criteria in striving to remain an internationally recognised institution.</li> <li>• Emphasis on increasing the number of international academics.</li> <li>• Strong emphasis on research output to be leading research-intensive institution internationally.</li> <li>• Wits prioritises quality in its academic offerings as opposed to quantity, particularly with research output.</li> <li>• Total number of academics = 1 090.</li> <li>• Total number of students = 31 134.</li> <li>• % of black and female academics = 38/46% respectively.</li> <li>• % of academic staff that have doctoral thesis = 41%.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Shanghai JiaoTong Academic Ranking of World Universities 2015 places four South Africa universities in the category of 201-500 in the world (Shanghai Ranking Consultancy, 2015).</li> <li>• In addition, the World Bank characterises the South African HE system as a mid-level performer in terms of knowledge production (World Bank, 2017).</li> <li>• Globally, Africa's proportion of publication output is declining although South Africa is still the dominant producer on the continent (Tettey, 2006).</li> <li>• However, as is the case with information and communication technology connectivity, South Africa's lead is being eroded, particularly by North Africa (Gillwald, 2010:79-88).</li> </ul>		

EVP Dimension	Unisa	UP	Wits
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The selected institutions in this research study have prioritised the vision of being leading research institutions (Unisa, 2013a:52; UP, 2013a:2; Wits, 2013a:1). This implies that academics may need to prioritise their research deliverables over their teaching and community engagement responsibilities.</li> <li>The outcome of a sharpened research focus on academic staff was probed in during the qualitative study and is reported on in Chapter 8 of this dissertation.</li> </ul>		
<b>2. Sound governance framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamlined recruitment strategy that uses multiple channels.</li> <li>Optimal use of technology to elevate effectiveness of recruitment drives.</li> <li>The recruitment strategy could be reviewed to be more responsive to generational and gender-specific applicants.</li> <li>Workload allocation document in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamlined recruitment strategy.</li> <li>Does not highlight the risks associated with a specific policy.</li> <li>The recruitment strategy could be reviewed to be more responsive to generational and gender-specific applicants.</li> <li>The exit interview policy is one page in length and not sound in terms of a governance framework.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamlined recruitment strategy.</li> <li>The recruitment of prolific researchers is prioritised to give effect to institutional vision.</li> <li>The recruitment strategy could be reviewed to be more responsive to generational and gender-specific applicants.</li> <li>Wits exploits the use of technology in all its processes towards being more efficient and effective.</li> <li>Wits will review the workload model by 2020.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Competitive employee rewards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee value proposition (EVP) emphasises an integrated framework. However, it is a one-size-fits all model and no link to the national and international influence on higher education.</li> <li>The reward strategy emphasises monetary and non-monetary rewards but there is no link to the EVP.</li> <li>Alignment of academic performance to rewards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment of academic performance to performance bonuses for a select group.</li> <li>The affordability of monetary rewards is not mentioned in the applicable policies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Losing academics to the private sector where the remuneration is more lucrative.</li> <li>Wits will review the link between performance management and employee rewards aligned to institutional effect, in 2018.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Healthy institutional culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culture statement in place.</li> <li>2015 institutional health index survey highlighted poor managerial quality and leadership concerns.</li> <li>Exit interviews institutionalised.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on orientation into the workplace - consistent positive impression of the employer since application towards advertisement.</li> <li>The exit interview policy and procedure is one page in length and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The institution is in the process of implementing a project plan addressing the health survey systemic issues.</li> </ul>

EVP Dimension	Unisa	UP	Wits
		<p>very limited from a principled and process point of view.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No institutional health survey available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on international academics may influence the morale of South African academics in the institution.</li> <li>Supportive environment emphasised to encourage elevated research output and research-related collaborations and networks.</li> <li>Wits prioritises technology to engage with academics.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Professional development</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritises the career pathing of internal academics through the recruitment process.</li> <li>Talent management strategy (TMS) is aligned to interdependent strategies.</li> <li>The TMS mentions institutionalised Academic Qualification Improvement Programme (AQIP) and Vision-Keepers Support Programme (VKSP) to support attainment of masters and doctoral thesis.</li> <li>Professional development prioritised - formal Human Resources Training Policy.</li> <li>The institution provides a supportive environment to achieve qualifications particularly the masters and doctoral thesis.</li> <li>Probation period after appointment is 6 months - may be extended if the employee has a development need.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment that the most suitable candidate will be appointed after minimum criteria have been met.</li> <li>Mentorship has been institutionalised.</li> <li>Institutional support to attain masters and doctoral thesis only open to junior lecturers, not all academic levels.</li> <li>Ongoing professional development of academic staff.</li> <li>Ongoing enhancement of academic skills to adapt to student needs and to encourage continuous learning.</li> <li>Emphasis on the collective responsibility of the line manager and academic in the career management process.</li> <li>Emphasis on the nurturing role of the line manager affecting the academic.</li> <li>Applications to attend skills development interventions are analysed against specific criteria during a transparent process.</li> <li>The institution provides a supportive environment to achieve the doctoral thesis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on talent management of an academic.</li> <li>Wits has prioritised the professional development of academics.</li> <li>Aims to institutionalise mentorship between senior and junior academics.</li> <li>Emphasis on the developmental and nurturing role of line managers in supporting junior academics.</li> <li>The skills and leadership style of the line manager has a huge influence on the retention of an academic. Invests in the development of line management to mitigate the risk of high staff attrition due to poor line management.</li> <li>Support to academics to complete their doctoral thesis.</li> <li>Probation period after appointment is 12 months.</li> </ul>

EVP Dimension	Unisa	UP	Wits
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Probation period after appointment is 2 years.</li> </ul>	
<b>6. Performance and recognition opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS) policy.</li> <li>• Minimum criteria for academic appointments that are college-specific. A distinction is drawn between criteria for internal and external appointments.</li> <li>• Minimum criteria for academic appointments that are college-specific: the distinction between internal and external appointments may have a negative effect on internal academics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal Integrated Performance Management System (IPMS) policy.</li> <li>• No link between institutional and individual performance.</li> <li>• Minimum criteria for academic promotions that are college-specific.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal performance management policy.</li> <li>• There is a need to sensitise new academics of the sharpened focus on research output and the need to have a doctoral thesis.</li> <li>• There is alignment between the performance of the institution and performance by the academic.</li> <li>• Formal performance management is on hold since 2012 until 2017 in view of an impasse between management and labour unions regarding concerns in the implementation of the performance management of academic staff.</li> <li>• Performance bonuses are awarded to qualifying academics. It is not clear which criteria is being used to award performance bonuses given the impasse between management and organised labour in terms of the official performance management system.</li> <li>• Definition of different levels of performance is not highlighted in the applicable policy.</li> <li>• Research collaborations/networks are encouraged to elevate research output.</li> <li>• The skills of the line manager are crucial towards effective performance management of the academic.</li> </ul>

## 6.6 CONCLUSION

Legislative imperatives governing the HE sector provide a framework within which institutional strategic and operational plans should be aligned. There appears to be consensus among education role players regarding the specific challenges facing higher education to attract and retain academics. The main challenges identified were an untransformed sector (see 6.4.1; 6.4.4), a limited pool of young academics to replace the aging cohort of senior academics (see 6.4.2; 6.4.3.1; 6.5.1.9), an unsupportive working environment that does not nurture development (see 6.5.1.11; 6.5.3.7), and remuneration not being lucrative compared to the private sector and public service (see 6.5.1.2; 6.5.1.17; 6.5.3.2). In addition, academic concerns range from an excessive academic workload (see 6.4.4; 6.5.1.10), academic autonomy being threatened (see 6.5.3.4), an increasing administrative workload (see 6.5.1.10), and an ineffective policy framework (see 6.2; 6.3). These were found within the context of a sharpened focus on elevated research output and the emphasis on an academic being in possession of a doctoral thesis.

There appears to be an increasing emphasis on the development of line managers, which points to their leadership and managerial skills possibly contributing to the exit of academics from the profession. Institutions also emphasise the need to become more electronically inclined than before in all processes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness and to appeal to the younger generations (i.e. generations X, Y and Z) in the workplace (see 6.5.1.1; 6.5.3.1). The selected institutions appeared to be in support of a transparent, consistent and fair recruitment and selection process of academic staff (see 6.5.1.2; 6.5.1.3; 6.5.2.3; 6.5.3.6). The negative effect of any inconsistency, such as deviation from the policy, will affect the institutional culture negatively. The selected institutions seemed to support a regular assessment of the institutional culture to determine whether it embraces or inhibits the retention of talented academics. Initiatives towards this end include implementing a collaborative value system (see 6.4; 6.5.1.6; 6.5.3.4), hosting networking workshops (see 6.5.1.6; 6.5.2.1; 6.5.2.3) and implementing colleague sensitivity workshops (see 6.5.1.15) regularly to improve institutional culture.

Since a significant gap is created with senior academics retiring and limited succession planning in place, universities have to consider strategic interventions that are



focused on mentoring and coaching younger academics to encourage a career in academe. The mentorship partnership should ideally be a blend between a formal and informal arrangement within a governance structure to ensure accountability. Within this context, universities may consider re-hiring retired high-performing research-active academics to support the development of young talented academics (see 6.5.1.4; 6.5.1.5; 6.5.6.11). The possibility of extending the retirement age to seventy years to retain the scarce skill of senior professors could also be explored by institutions while maintaining a focus on achieving employment equity targets (see 6.3; 6.4.2; 6.4.4).

The DHET has not formally guided universities in terms of a ratio of HR costs in relation to council-controlled recurring income. This in turn allows institutions to implement institution-specific financially sustainable ratios to manage the affordability of their reward-related offerings to academic staff. This also implies that lucrative remuneration for all employees in a university staff within DHET funding may not be sustainable. The DHET has responded to the challenge to attract and retain academics through a framework that attempts to staff South African universities (see 6.4.3.1).

The SSAUF (see 6.4.3.1) is in its infancy stage in terms of implementation, thus implying that the strategy can only be tested when one assesses its effect. Universities may need to consider additional funding opportunities to support targeted interventions to keep the academe an attractive career option. This includes market-related remuneration that is comparable to the private sector and public service. In addition, employee benefits should be responsive to generational and gender-segmented groupings in the workplace.

It would appear that some practices pertaining to academics, such as the interim arrangement for performance management while an impasse between management and labour unions is a reality, are not formally documented particularly at UP and Wits (see 6.5.3.7). This might imply less bureaucracy than is currently the case but may also introduce additional areas for conflict if role players cannot be held accountable in terms of an official policy. The factors highlighted in the literature review (see chapters two to five) as well as the analysis of policy documents in chapter six, informed the content of the quantitative and qualitative survey instruments that were used and which is reported on in chapter eight of this doctoral thesis.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

# **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapters of this dissertation outlined the theoretical framework for the attraction and retention of talented academics, particularly black staff. This was done through an analysis of literature and of statutory and policy-related documents in the field of the research study. Pertinent concerns from the analysis were incorporated into the survey instruments that were used to collect data on the views and perceptions of the research participants (see Annexure C). This chapter focusses on the research design and methodology of the case study. The research design supports the successful implementation of the case study (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007; Fouche & de Vos, 2005b; Babbie & Mouton, 2010). The research methodology highlights the tools and data collection methods that were used during the research process to achieve the objectives of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2006:74).

This chapter begins with an explanation of the research paradigm that was applicable in this study. Then follows detail of the conceptual framework, a discussion of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms and an explanation of the development of the survey questionnaire and interview schedule. In addition, the rationale for the sample that was selected for the case study is also explained. The process that was followed to achieve approval for research ethical clearance from the University of South Africa (Unisa), the University of Pretoria (UP) and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) is also highlighted to contribute towards a credible research study.

### **7.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

A research study begins with the identification of a research problem, identification of research questions and objectives and the selection of an appropriate research design (Babbie, 2016). Furthermore, a paradigm is essentially a worldview, a whole framework of beliefs, values and methods within which research takes place. It is this worldview within which researchers work that is important to consider. Rossman and Rollis (2003:31-60) identify two primary macro research paradigms:

**Positivism** adheres to the view that only 'factual' knowledge gained through observation (the senses), including measurement, is trustworthy. In positivism studies, the role of the researcher is limited to data collection and interpretation through an objective approach, and the research findings are usually observable and quantifiable (Babbie, 2008:349).

**Interpretivist** is associated with qualitative research (Babbie, 2008:187; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012:140). It is used to obtain an understanding of a word from an insider perspective. Critical humanism (see Saunders et al., 2012:119) is a subtype of the interpretive paradigm (Saunders et al., 2012:106-135). In the critical humanism approach, the researcher involves people studied during the research process. Data obtained this way is used for social change.

The present research study adopted a mixed methods approach using data collection instruments associated with both the quantitative and qualitative macro research paradigms. The researcher was able to probe deeper into specific aspects of the implementation of the survey questionnaire during the implementation of the interviews towards obtaining richer data (see Saunders et al., 2012:154). The pertinent aspects from the analysis of literature, statutory and policy-related documents informed the finalisation of the survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was implemented from a secure online platform, namely LimeSurvey, and enabled academics to respond anonymously on a voluntary basis. The findings of the survey are presented in Chapter eight.

The first part of the study comprised the analysis of literature, which is reflected in Chapters 2-5. This is followed by an analysis of statutory and policy-related documents as reported on in Chapter 6. This was followed by one-to-one interviews with a selection of at least ten academics each at Unisa, Wits and UP. In the process that followed, emergent ideas and themes were identified in the data received during implementation of the survey and interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006:77-101; Saldana, 2015:1-240). The management of knowledge in this manner led to data being transformed into information, then knowledge and finally wisdom (Chenail, 2012:248; Vaismoradi, Turuden & Bondas, 2013:398-405).

### **7.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT AND PROCESS**

A rigorous process was involved to ensure the validity and reliability of the survey questionnaire through the researcher's doctoral supervisors, informal pilot study, statistician and the formal pilot study.

#### **7.3.1 Quantitative study**

Prior to the data collection phase (as reported in Chapter 8), the survey questionnaire was refined through a rigorous process of pilot testing at Unisa. The pilot test (see Saunders et al., 2012:264) enabled the researcher to assess the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument and of the data that was to be collected, and to refine the survey questionnaire.

##### ***7.3.1.1 Implementation of the pilot study***

The researcher followed a systematic process before the survey questionnaire was implemented in the pilot study.

###### ***7.3.1.1.1 Review by the researcher's supervisors at Unisa***

The themes that were raised in the analysis of literature as well as the analysis of statutes, policies and related documents as reported in Chapter 6, formed the basis of the draft survey questionnaire. The content of the final survey questionnaire that was used in the data collection as well as the phrasing of the actual questions was reviewed by the researcher and her supervisors to ensure alignment with findings in chapters' two to five. The rationale for this review was to maximise question appropriateness and examine the extent to which the questions covered the research focus areas (see Saunders et al., 2012:396). The supervisors' suggestions comprised the rephrasing of specific questions to be less ambiguous and more accurate as well as shortening the length of a question to read more easily. These efforts contributed directly to enhancing the content validity of the measurement instrument (DeVellis, 2003:50). The researcher applied the recommendations from the supervisors and made the necessary revisions to the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2012:451-452).

###### ***7.3.1.1.2 Review by a sample of academics at Unisa***

Towards further refinement of the survey questionnaire, the researcher approached one academic on each level from outside the College of Economic and Management

Sciences (CEMS) at Unisa to respond to the survey questionnaire. Their feedback enabled the researcher to consider possible practical difficulties with the completion of the questionnaire. In their responses, the five academics indicated that all questions were relevant to the academic plan in higher education and the length of the questionnaire was reasonable in terms of completion time (Babbie, 2016:145-151). No amendments were therefore suggested.

#### *7.3.1.1.3 Review by the statistician at Unisa*

In preparation for the set-up of the survey questionnaire and actual collation of data, a survey statistician at Unisa reviewed the structure of the questionnaire. The purpose of the review was to check question format and the expected data outcome (Saunders et al., 2012:402). This was then reconciled with the aims of the research study. The statistician also reviewed response coding and the use of discreet categorical response options and Likert-types, including mid-point labelling (see Saunders et al., 2012:475). Following advice by the statistician, the researcher changed the sequence of the response choices to read more eloquently from left to right, namely from "strongly disagreed" progressing to "strongly agreed" as opposed to vice versa. This sequence is also proposed by Saunders et al. (2012:451-452) as it facilitates ease of interpretation with higher ratings associated with levels of agreement.

#### *7.3.1.1.4 Formal implementation of the pilot study at Unisa*

The final version of the survey questionnaire, which is accessible on the audit trail CD (see Annexure C), was used to implement the pilot study. The sampling frame for the final pilot study comprised 331 permanently employed academics in CEMS at Unisa. A random sample of 60 academics (18.1% of the 331) was selected from this frame as the target group to pilot the survey questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2012:451). Fink (2009:289-329) indicates that a pilot study of 10 respondents is typically considered to be sufficient. The response rate will give an indication of the expected response rate, to obtain a sense of reliability of the data albeit limited, to provide limited test data so that one can check whether the proposed analyses will work and to determine how long the questionnaire will take to complete (Saunders et al., 2012:356). In addition, the aim of a pilot study is also to determine the clarity of the instructions, which (if any) of questions are unclear or ambiguous, where the respondent might feel uneasy about answering and whether the layout is clear and attractive (Saunders et al., 2012:280).

The pilot study yielded 12 responses (20%). The response from the academics in the informal and formal pilot study showed that no changes were necessary to the format and content of the survey questionnaire. In addition, respondents indicated that the completion time was between 15 and 20 minutes, which was deemed to be reasonable (Baruch, 1999:421-438). Since no changes were necessary to the survey questionnaire, this allowed for the merging of the responses from the pilot study with the final data set, permitting a comparison of the two datasets to justify data stability and convergence (Saunders et al., 2012:526).

#### *7.3.1.1.5 Summary of pilot study at CEMS (Unisa)*

- total number of academics                      331
- random sample                                      60 (18.1%)
- valid responses received                        12
- response rate                                        20.0%

#### **7.3.1.2 Formal stage of the fieldwork**

At the time of the present study in 2017, there were 26 universities in South Africa. Since it was not practically possible to cover all the universities in this research study, three were purposively selected for the research, namely Unisa, UP and Wits. The three universities are located in Gauteng, one of the nine provinces of South Africa and also the economic hub of South Africa (see CoJ, 2017). Since the researcher is an employee at Unisa, using this particular institution as part of the research study was a logical choice. Being based in Pretoria, access to UP and Wits was enhanced and enabled the case study to be conducted with less difficulty.

At the time of data collection, the researcher was a student at the Department of Public Administration and Management within CEMS at Unisa. For this reason, this particular College was selected as the basis for the research sample. The equivalent colleges or faculties at UP and Wits were part of the complete sample. Provided below is the number of academics in the College or Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences / Commerce, Law and Management (CLM) in each of the participating institutions as at 31 August 2015.

University	Number of academics in the college/faculty of economic and management sciences or the faculty of commerce, law and management
Unisa	329
Wits	348
UP	172

Source: DoE (2013:1-15)

### **7.3.1.3 Units of analysis, observation and sampling**

A specific sample size was not pre-determined for this study. Given that response rates in web-based questionnaires are usually low (Odom, Giullian & Totaro, 1999:27-34; Solomon, 2001), it was decided that the accessible sample from a complete coverage of the final sampling units would define the sample size. The unit of analysis is the 'who' or the 'what' that is being analysed for the study. In the context of the present research study, the unit of analysis was the academic at Unisa, Wits and UP. The unit of observation was the entire entities that were under scrutiny. In this particular research study, the units of observation were Unisa, Wits and UP.

The overall sampling design employed a three-stage non-probability sampling approach as follows:

- a purposive selection of three universities (listed above) as the first stage;
- a purposive selection of CEMS at Unisa and its equivalent college or faculty in each of the other two selected universities as the second stage; and
- a complete coverage of academic staff in the selected college or faculty as the third stage.

Due to cost considerations and time constraints weighed against heterogeneity of faculties or colleges in the selected universities, it was decided to limit the sample in each university to one faculty or college. The CEMS was selected since the researcher was performing this particular research study as a student through the same college at Unisa.

### **7.3.1.4 Finalising the survey questionnaire: Themes and survey items**

The design of a survey questionnaire is an essential part of the research process since this is where the data is generated (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:159-160). Because different types of surveys require different types of questionnaires, the researcher had

to keep in mind the type of data that would be generated by the questions and the statistical techniques that would be used to analyse them. The researcher paid specific attention to the relevance of the questions and the alignment thereof to concerns raised by academics as found when reviewing the literature and applicable statutory and policy-related documents. In addition, the researcher considered the appearance of the questionnaire in its appeal to respondents, the logical flow of the questions, accurate wording of the questions and the expected time of completion of the questionnaire.

The themes that were identified may be categorised broadly from the point of entry of the academic into the institution to possible termination of employment, as follows:

- Recruitment and selection
- Retention
- Promotion
- Workload
- Workplace culture
- Performance management
- Training and development
- Remuneration
- Turnover intention
- Additional comments

While the survey questionnaire consisted of predominately closed-ended questions with specific choices, there were a few open-ended questions enabling the respondents to provide additional input that might not have been catered for in the closed-ended questions. The advantage of open-ended questions is that difficult questions can be answered completely and sufficiently, the respondents' perceptions are exposed enabling them to provide unique answers tailor-made to suit their personal experience (Babbie, 2008:297). The disadvantage of open-ended questions is that the quantity of information can vary between respondents; uneducated respondents may find open-ended questions tricky to respond to, which makes numerical analysis complicated (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:161). A courtesy meeting was arranged with



the Executive Dean of the relevant colleges or faculties prior to the commencement of the pilot study to make him or her aware of the research study and to convince him or her to encourage the academics to participate in the research study. The survey questionnaire was then subjected to pilot testing to determine its reliability. Based on the data obtained from the implementation of the survey questionnaire during the pilot study, the researcher was able to finalise the survey questionnaire in preparation for the case study.

#### **7.3.1.5 Implementation of the survey questionnaire**

On 1 March 2016, the formal survey questionnaire was administered to all academics at the CEMS at Unisa, the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at UP and the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management at Wits. The majority of the questions in the survey instrument were closed-ended with a few open-ended questions. Data obtained from closed-ended questions are easier to analyse than data obtained from open-ended questions (Babbie, 2008:297). A Likert-type scale is used with regard to closed-ended questions, and captures the intensity, direction, level or potency of each variable (Neuman, 2003:191).

The services of a statistician and an online technical expert were secured through the College of Economic and Management Sciences at Unisa to ensure that the survey questionnaire was set up electronically from a secure online platform to enable effective participation by respondents from each of the selected institutions. The survey required respondents at Unisa, UP and Wits to respond within a stipulated time frame. The response rate was monitored on an ongoing basis. Follow-ups were made to academic staff to elevate the response rate. Since the questionnaire was administered anonymously, it would not be possible to know which academics had responded already. Therefore, an iteration of the survey questionnaire to all academic staff indicated that if the academic had responded previously, the email could be ignored. Alternatively, the academic was encouraged to respond by a stipulated revised deadline. A detailed record was kept of the anonymous responses that were received from the survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire is attached as Annexure A.

#### **7.3.1.6 Data analysis**

When the respondents participated in the online survey, the responses were captured automatically on the electronic database. The final data consisted of feedback from a

sample of 174 respondents (20.50%). Since no revisions were necessary to the survey instrument after the pilot study, the 12 responses that were received from the pilot study were combined with the 174 responses to produce a final sample of 186 responses (22.7% (see page 214)).

Frequency tables (categorical data) were cross-tabulated by total sample, current academic level, years employed on current academic level, gender, racial group, nationality and life stage grouping (see HESA, 2011; Macky et al., 2008). Descriptive statistics (continuous data) were cross-tabulated by the selected variables and included the mean, median, minimum, maximum and standard deviation (SD) (see Saunders et al., 2012). While the racial grouping was a primary focus of the present research study, the other variables were added for interest. In addition, two sets of significance tests were prepared to investigate differences between race groups. For categorical data, the chi-square test was compiled and for ordinal or scale data, the Kruskal-Wallis test was compiled (McCrum-Gardner, 2008:38-41; Pallant, 2005:286-297).

Quantitative research aims for large numbers of cases and the analysis of results is usually based on statistical significance (Saunders et al., 2012:503). Quantitative analysis is the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations that are involved in quantitative research, reflect (Babbie, 2004:282-396).

#### **7.3.1.7 Data interpretation**

The data was analysed in line with the research objectives of this study. In addition, the findings were cross-referenced with the themes raised during the analysis of the literature and of statutory and related policy documents. Where possible, the analysis of one question was also cross-referenced to respondents' feedback to other questions that was interdependent in the quantitative study, to obtain a richer finding than simply considering the feedback to a question in isolation.

#### **7.3.1.8 Administrative contact person**

Each executive dean identified a contact person at his or her college or faculty who provided administrative support to the researcher. The researcher collaborated with the administrative contact person to finalise the logistical arrangements for the

interviews, maintaining communication with the relevant executive dean and obtaining institution-specific documents.

### **7.3.2 Qualitative study**

The interviews followed after the implementation of the survey questionnaire. The researcher was able to probe specific feedback that was received from respondents during the implementation of the survey questionnaire, during the subsequent interviews. The probing of interviewees resulted in more detailed explanations being provided and this enabled the researcher to enhance the richness of the data that had been collated. Each interview was scheduled electronically for a maximum period of one hour. Where interviewees continued to share their experience after the official interview had ended, the researcher continued to record their experience as part of the interview process.

#### **7.3.2.1 Background**

In view of the accessible sample size, 10 interviews were arranged with a select profile of academics at each of the selected institutions. At least two academics from each level, gender and racial grouping were approached to participate as interviewees. The researcher was dependent on the feedback from academics. The introductory email by the executive dean of the relevant college or faculty at each of the selected institutions, supported the researcher to obtain a sample of interviewees. The researcher subsequently scheduled appointments electronically with academics who were willing to participate.

The eventual sample of 32 interviewees comprised 11 professors, 6 associate professors, 8 senior lecturers, 5 lecturers and 2 junior lecturers. The sample comprised 16 whites and 16 blacks. From a gender point of view, the sample comprised 14 females and 18 males.

The Executive Deans at Wits and UP volunteered the assistance of an administration officer to finalise the logistical arrangements for the interviews and to assist with access to the empirical institutional documents that were sought for the analysis that, at that stage, would be reported in Chapter 6. The results of the quantitative study were used to probe the interviewees and to delve deeper into the actual challenges facing the selected institutions to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff. This

included probing the culture within the academic department and the influence of this culture on the attraction and retention of academics. The researcher also probed the importance of institutionalised mentorship and coaching on the retention of low-level academics (i.e. academics on the level of junior lecturer and lecturer), particularly black staff. These topics were included in the interview guide, which is accessible on the audit trail CD (see Annexure C).

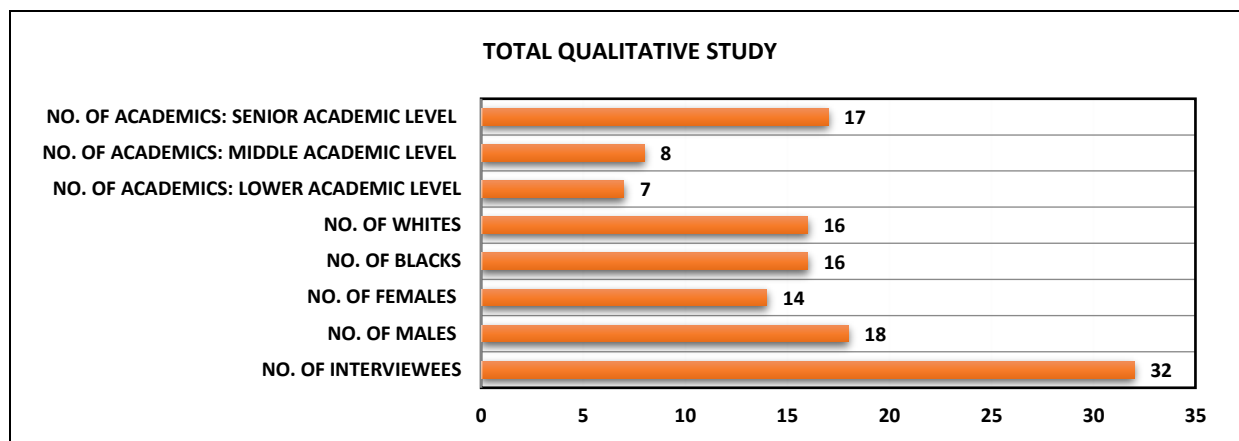
### **7.3.2.2 Sample for the qualitative study**

As it would not have been feasible to interview all academics at the selected colleges or faculties at Unisa, Wits and UP, a sample of 10 academics at each of the selected institutions was interviewed based on their academic level, gender and racial grouping (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:164; Brynard & Hanekom, 2006:54; Maree & Pietersen, 2007:172; Strydom, 2005:223-224).

The benefit of using a sample is to save costs and time (Bergman, 2008:70; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007:531). The experience of the junior-level academic might differ significantly from the senior-level academic who is seasoned in terms of the core academic responsibilities of research output, teaching and community engagement. For the purpose of this study, the researcher isolated race as an independent variable that could have a significant effect on the findings.

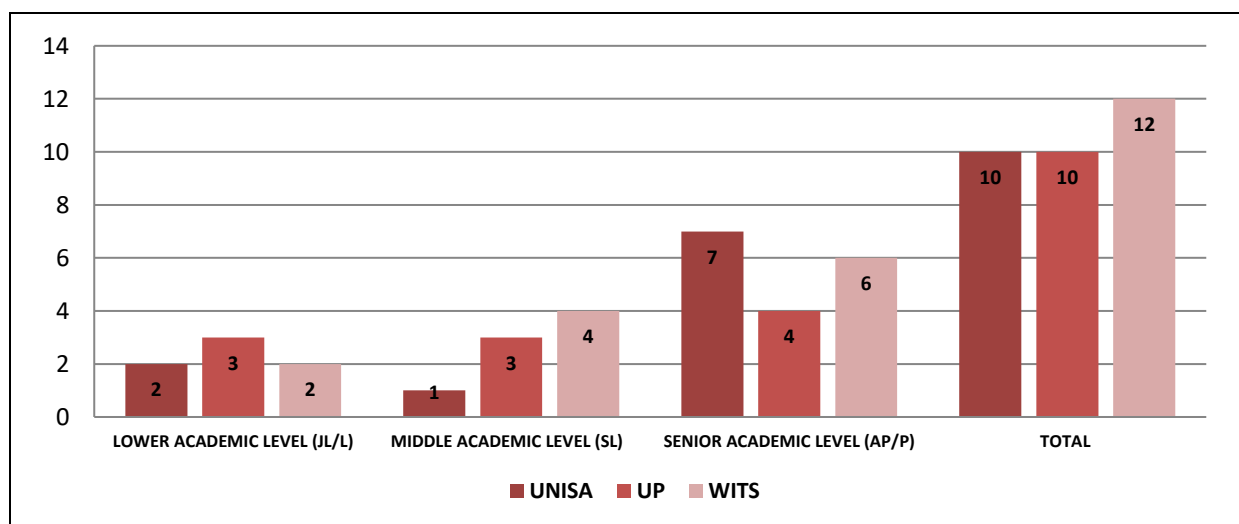
### **7.3.2.3 Profile of the interview sample**

Graph 7.1 depicts the total number of interviewees per academic level, racial and gender grouping.



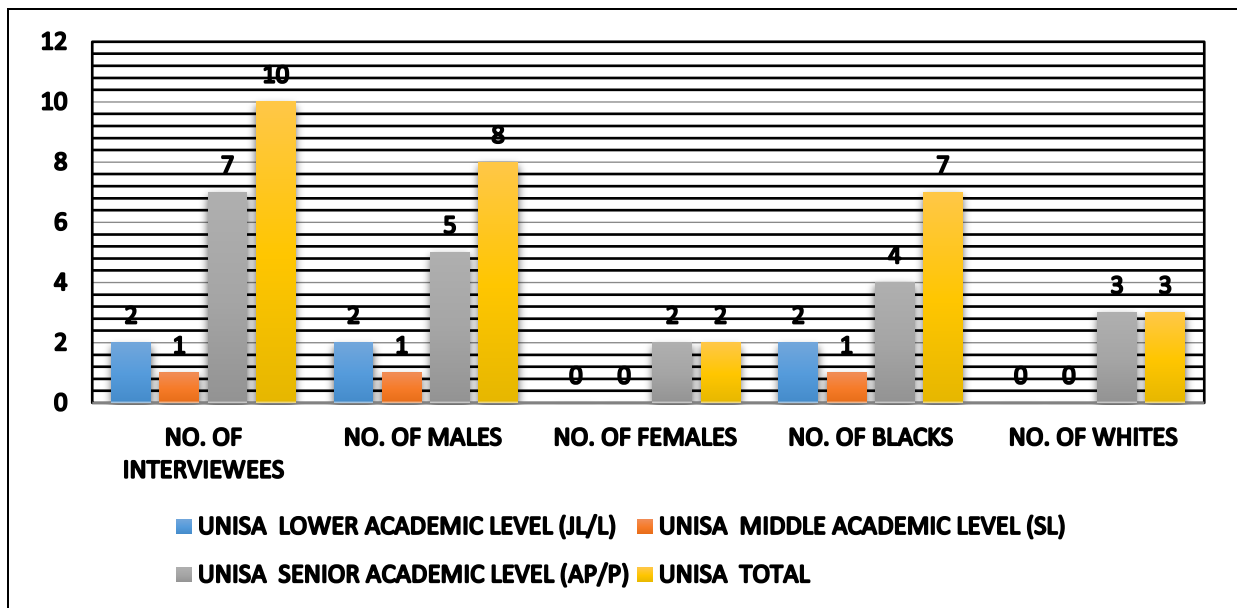
**Graph 7.1: Number of interviewees in total per academic level, racial and gender grouping**

Graph 7.2 depicts the total number of interviewees per academic level at Unisa, UP and Wits.



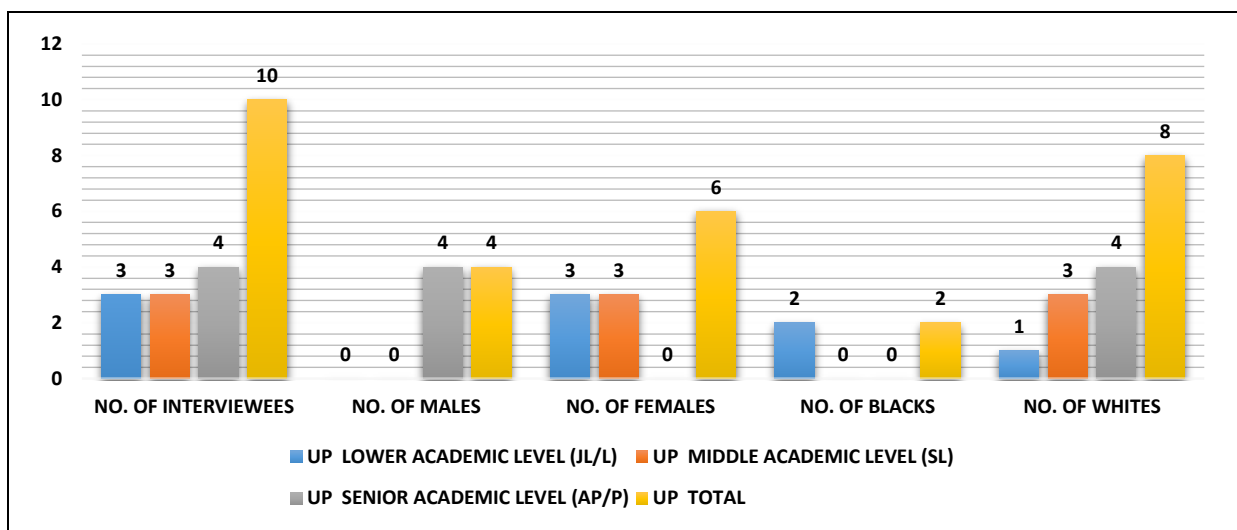
**Graph 7.2: Number of academics per level at Unisa, UP and Wits**

Graph 7.3 depicts the total number of interviewees at Unisa per academic level, gender and racial grouping.



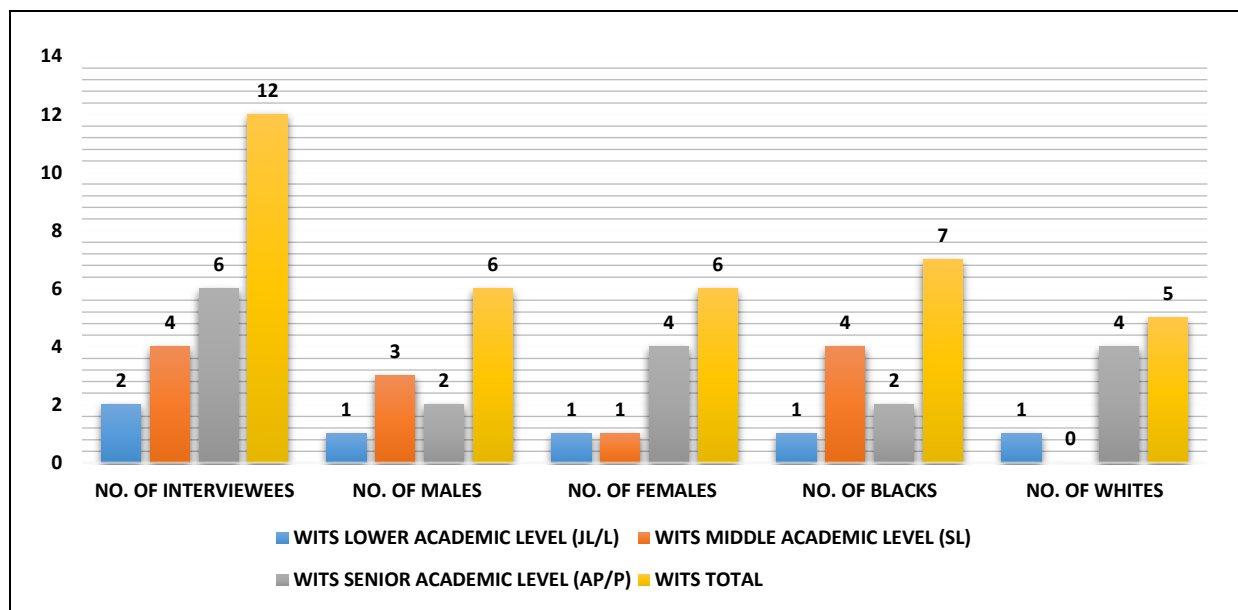
**Graph 7.3: Total number of interviewees per academic level, gender and racial grouping at Unisa**

Graph 7.4 depicts the total number of interviewees at UP per academic level, gender and racial grouping.



**Graph 7.4: Total number of interviewees per academic level, gender and racial grouping at UP**

Graph 7.5 depicts the total number of interviewees at Wits per academic level, gender and racial grouping.



**Graph 7.5: Total number of interviewees per academic level, gender and racial grouping at Wits**

#### **7.3.2.4 Interview schedule**

The interview schedule was refined on conclusion of the data collection phase and is attached to this dissertation as Annexure B. The researcher did not restrict interviewees in their responses provided that answers were within the context of the research study.

#### **7.3.2.5 Implementation of the interview schedule**

The interviewee was required to complete the consent form to participate voluntarily in the interview. The interview was then conducted on a one-to-one basis with the interviewee indicating his or her consent for the use of a digital recorder. Detailed notes were kept of the interview, including questions that were posed to the academic as well as the responses that were provided. Notes were also kept of the researcher's observation of body language and suggestions by the interviewee during the interview that were relevant to the specific question and research study. Interviewees were often quite expressive of academic matters such as their opposition to lowering the minimum appointment and promotion academic criteria. A common quotation by interviewees in response to this particular matter was "under no circumstances". The digital recording enabled the researcher to transcribe the discussion accurately into written notes. The researcher assessed that saturation point had been reached when the

information that was provided by the academics tended to repeat itself (see Fusch & Ness, 2015:1408-1416).

The limitation of the qualitative approach includes the inherent danger in qualitative research of 'selective perception' where the researcher observes only things that support his or her theoretical conclusions (Babbie, 1998:298). There is no way to look into the inner thoughts of an individual to determine the true effect of life experiences. The researcher has to judge the views of the interviewee based purely on the information that he or she shares. Any gaze into the social construct of an individual is filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity. Within this context, the researcher understood that there could be no objective observations (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:12).

#### **7.3.2.6 Data processing**

Prior to the start of the interviews, the researcher received training on ATLAS.ti. The use of the ATLAS.ti manuals enabled the researcher to improve her ATLAS.ti proficiency at her own pace. The data that was collated during the interviews was captured on ATLAS.ti.

#### **7.3.2.7 Data analysis**

Qualitative research involves small samples of people, studied by means of in-depth methods (Saunders et al., 2012:169). Qualitative analysis is the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships (Babbie, 2004:282-396). The qualitative data that was captured in ATLAS.ti was analysed through cross-referencing to the analysis of literature, statutory and related policy documents. In addition, the researcher triangulated the interviewee feedback with the results of the survey questionnaire. Specific patterns and themes were identified in support of the research objectives articulated in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. The researcher also monitored the emergence of new trends of thought that interviewees volunteered, which informed the recommendations by the researcher reflected in Chapter nine of this dissertation.

### **7.4 SECONDARY DATA**

The researcher requested the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) data from each of the selected institutions, including the names, surnames, academic levels and



email addresses of the academics in the selected college or faculty. In addition, institutional policies and/or reports pertaining to the attraction and retention of academics, particularly black staff, were sourced. Wits and UP provided limited policy-related documents due to information possibly affecting their competitiveness within higher education. More detailed information was available from Unisa because the researcher is also an employee at Unisa. The selected institutions were also guided by the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information (PoPI) Act, which guides which fields of employee information can be provided by an employer for use during a research study. As an example, the institutions were not able to provide the performance ratings of the academics although ethical clearance was in place.

## **7.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

The researcher aimed to elevate the reliability and validity of the study by ascertaining the dependability, consistency, truthfulness or correctness of feedback throughout the research study (Delpont, 2005:165-166).

### **7.5.1 Survey questionnaire**

The survey questionnaire was administered to all academic staff in the selected sample at Unisa, UP and Wits.

#### **7.5.1.1 Reliability of the study**

If a study is deemed reliable, the researcher would arrive at the same conclusions if the study were to be repeated to the same object (Babbie, 2004:141). Researchers choose different approaches, as outlined below, to determine the reliability of the information from the implementation of a survey questionnaire.

##### **7.5.1.1.1 Test-retest method**

At times, it may be appropriate to make the same measurement more than once. In the present study, the researcher required respondents in the pilot study to complete the survey questionnaire in order to test the reliability of the information. Subsequently, the survey questionnaire was responded to as part of the official case study. The results of the two surveys were compared, which highlighted that respondents reported similar information thus elevating the reliability of the survey instrument.

#### 7.5.1.1.2 *Split-half method*

It is always good to make more than one measurement of any subtle or complex social concept, such as prejudice or organisational culture. If the researcher had used the split-half method, she could have split the number of respondents into two groups and implemented the survey questionnaire to the two groups separately. Each set should provide a good measure of prejudice against the subject variable being measured and should correspond in the way the researcher classify the respondents to the study. However, if the two sets of items measure people differently, that again points to a problem in the reliability of how the researcher is measuring the variable.

#### 7.5.1.1.3 *Using established measures*

Another way to help ensure reliability in getting information from people is to use measures that have proved their reliability in previous research although this does not guarantee the reliability of such measures. In the present research study, the researcher did not use established measures.

#### 7.5.1.1.4 *Reliability of research workers*

It is also possible for measurement unreliability to be generated by research workers, interviewers and coders (see Saunders et al., 2012:304). To minimise unreliability in this area, feedback can be independently coded by several coders as opposed to using one person (Saunders et al., 2012:358). The feedback that generates disagreement should be evaluated carefully and resolved.

### 7.5.1.2 **Validity of the study**

**Validity** is a term describing a measure that accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure (Babbie, 2004:143). In the present research, the researcher defined the key constructs highlighted in the survey questionnaire as accurately as possible to minimise ambiguity and eliminate confusion. In addition, the researcher subjected the survey questionnaire to an informal and formal pilot test. The feedback that was received was used to refine the survey questionnaire (Delport, 2005:188).

#### 7.5.1.2.1 *Face validity*

Particular empirical measures may or may not conform to our common agreements and our individual mental images concerning a particular concept (Babbie, 2008:198).

Two researchers might disagree about the adequacy of measuring worker morale by counting the number of grievances filed with the union but they would surely agree that the number of grievances has something to do with morale. If experts and respondents within this particular research study assessed whether the instrument measured the particular constructs and characteristics that it intended to measure, this would contribute to face validity (see Babbie, 2008).

#### *7.5.1.2.2 Predictive validity*

The measurement of predictive validity is based on an external criterion (DeVellis, 2003:51; Babbie, 2008:186). For example, the validity of the matric results is shown in its ability to predict the academic success of university students. The validity of a written driver's test is determined, in this sense, by the relationship between the scores people get on the test and their subsequent driving records. The feedback by respondents to the survey questionnaire during the pilot study may be used as an indicator of the feedback during the actual case study although it is not a guaranteed outcome (Saunders et al., 2012:100; Babbie, 2008:87).

#### *7.5.1.2.3 Construct validity*

A review of the specific items of the scales by the experts and the researcher also contributed to construct validity. The researcher defined the key constructs highlighted in the survey questionnaire as accurately as possible to minimise ambiguity and to eliminate confusion. In addition, the researcher subjected the survey questionnaire to an informal and formal pilot test. The feedback that was received was used to refine the structure of the survey questionnaire (Delpont, 2005:188).

#### *7.5.1.2.4 Content validity*

Furthermore, the experts also assessed to which extent the measurement instrument was representative of the content area being measured, and as such addressed content validity (see Babbie, 2008:185; Saunders et al., 2012:404; DeVellis, 2003:28). The content of the final survey questionnaire that was used in the data collection as well as the phrasing of the actual questions was reviewed by the researcher and her supervisors to ensure alignment with data reported in previous chapters. The rationale for this review was to maximise question appropriateness and to examine the extent to which the questions covered the research focus areas. The supervisors' suggestions

included the rephrasing of specific questions to be less ambiguous and more accurate as well as shortening the length of the survey question to read more easily. These efforts contributed directly to enhancing the content validity of the measurement instrument (DeVellis, 2003:50). The researcher reviewed the recommendations from the supervisors and made the necessary revisions to the questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2012:451-452).

### 7.5.2 Interview schedule

The qualitative study was focused on conducting interviews with a sample of academic staff in terms of a specific profile at each of the selected institutions. Many qualitative researchers avoid the terms **validity** and **reliability** and use terms such as credibility, trustworthiness, truth, value, applicability, consistency and confirmability, when referring to criteria for evaluating the scientific merit of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:283-329).

**Rigour** in qualitative research refers to dissatisfaction with uncertainty, inaccurate answers, with unprecise measurements and with the spread between the plus and the minus the margin of error (Saunders et al., 2012:250). The trustworthiness of the data becomes significant towards finalising the outcome (Saunders et al., 2012:362). **Trustworthiness** refers to the extent to which the qualitative data was dependable, consistent, stable, predictable and reliable through the application of a few verification techniques (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:277; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011:416; Delpont & Roestenburg, 2011:177). In the present study, the researcher attended to four central factors of trustworthiness in as far as data from the interviews was obtained, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:100; Mertens, 2005:256-259).

**Credibility** refers to the match between how respondents construct reality and how it is presented in the research study (Saunders et al., 2012:187). In the present study, the researcher elevated the rate of credibility by staying in the interview field until data saturation took place. The credibility of the data describes the 'truth value' of the findings and reflects the confidence that the findings reflect the "truth" in the context of inquiry (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:100). Credibility in a qualitative study can be elevated through the actions outlined below:

→ ***Prolonged engagement and persistent observation***

The researcher remained in the research field with pertinent questions until she was comfortable that the feedback provided by interviewees was saturated. The researcher consistently pursued interpretations in different ways, in conjunction with a process of constant and tentative analysis (see Neuman, 2003; Reichertz, 2015; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The researcher looked for multiple influences, searching for what counts and what does not count within the parameters of the research study.

→ ***Peer review and debriefing***

Two or more researchers debate various issues in a research project and eventually come to a reasoned consensus about these issues (Babbie, 2008:510). In the context of the present research study, the content of the survey questionnaire, the research process and methodology were debated continuously by the expert statisticians and the academic supervisors.

→ ***Member checks***

The researcher probed deeper when interviewees' responses were vague or confusing. Where necessary, a follow-up interview was held to confirm that the experience and perception of the interviewee had been accurately transcribed (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

→ ***Referential adequacy***

**Referential adequacy** refers to archiving a portion of the data for analysis after developing preliminary findings to test the validity of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Audio- and videotaping of interviews may be used to document the findings in a research study (Babbie, 2008:24).

In this particular research study, the researcher created an audit trail by finalising a CD with a hyperlinked agenda, for future reference (see Annexure C). Since audiotaping provides a good record but may be obtrusive to the interviewee, the researcher ensured that all interviewees signed a consent form regarding the confidentiality of their feedback.

→ ***Triangulation***

Researchers triangulate according to paradigms and methodologies (Babbie, 2008:148). Triangulation or the use of multiple methods is a plan of action that raises the researcher above the personal biases that stem from single methodologies (Saunders et al., 2012:177). By combining methods and investigators in the same study, observers can partially overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigator or method (Babbie, 2008:148). In the context of the present study, the researcher used the mixed methods approach to minimise personal bias and elevate reliability and validity of the research study.

→ ***Minimising subjectivity, clarifying researcher bias***

As a human resource official, the researcher is skilled in terms of arranging and conducting interviews with employees and was therefore able to keep a professional distance from the data being shared by the interviewees. This minimised the effect of biasness by the researcher, which could have compromised the quality of raw data provided by the interviewees.

The researcher is also an employee in the Department of Human Resources at Unisa and at the time of the study interacted with academics within the institution on a range of official matters. Within the context of the interviews, it was possible that the researcher might have engaged with an academic with whom she was familiar in an official capacity. The researcher understood the importance of professionalism and adherence to the institutional Code of Ethics in the execution of the research study (Babbie & Mouton, 2010:277).

→ ***Adequate preparation by the researcher***

The researcher scheduled interviews electronically with interviewees, at their convenience and on a date and time and at a venue that suited their schedules. The logistical arrangements for the interviews were finalised in advance. Each interviewee was afforded the opportunity to remain anonymous and signed the confidentiality certificate. The interview was recorded and transcribed later. The researcher thanked each interviewee through an email on conclusion of the interview process.

→ ***Cross-checking codes***

The researcher assigned a code to each new theme that emerged during the analysis of the transcribed feedback. The data was saturated when no new themes could be identified and coded. The researcher then analysed each code and grouped codes that were related to create meaningful information that could be analysed.

→ ***Checking transcripts***

The researcher tested the accuracy of the content of the data in the transcript against the recorded interviews. The transcripts together with the signed confidentiality certificate from each interviewee were filed for future reference.

→ ***Audit trail***

Computer-aided software, namely SPSS and ATLAS.ti were used to assist in compiling and analysing the data obtained from the survey questionnaire and interview schedule respectively. The interview transcripts were transcribed in MS Word and captured on ATLAS.ti for the purpose of coding. The data on ATLAS.ti pertaining to this research study, which included the survey questionnaire data was compiled into a hyperlinked agenda. The researcher then made a back-up copy of the CD for audit purposes and future reference.

**Transferability** refers to the extent to which findings can be applied to different contexts and different respondents (Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Mertens, 2005:256-259). The following strategies were applicable to enhance the transferability of data:

→ ***Thick description***

Since transferability in a qualitative study depends on similarities between sending and receiving contexts (see Babbie, 2012:187), the researcher collected sufficiently detailed descriptions of data in context and reported these, with sufficient detail and precision, to enable all judgements about transferability to be made by the reader.

→ ***Purposive sampling***

In contrast to random sampling that is used in quantitative studies (see Babbie, 2008; Saunders et al., 2012:266), qualitative research seeks, through purposive sampling, to maximise the range of specific information that can be obtained from and about that

context, by purposely selecting locations and informants that differ from one another. In the context of the present study, the researcher interviewed samples of academics at similar colleges or faculties at the three institutions.

**Dependability** refers to the assurance that if the study were to be repeated in the same context with the same respondents, the responses would still be similar (see DeVellis, 2003). In an inquiry audit, an auditor examines documentation of critical incidents and a running account of the process of the inquiry (Babbie, 2008:31). The auditor, in determining the acceptability of the documentation, attests to the dependability of the inquiry (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:100; Mertens, 2005:256-259).

**Confirmability** aims to demonstrate a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of the study are shaped by the interviewees and not by the researcher's interest, bias or motivation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:185). An audit trail should be left to enable the auditor to determine whether the conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources and whether they are supported by the inquiry. In the context of the present research study, the audit trail included reviewing various sources of data, e.g. raw data, data reduction and analysis products, data reconstruction and synthesis products, process notes, material relating to intentions and dispositions and instrument development information (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

## 7.6 MANAGEMENT OF POTENTIAL RISKS

In preparing for the administration of the survey questionnaire and the conducting of the interviews, the researcher identified specific risks that might have compromised the response and participation rate. The researcher implemented specific interventions to mitigate the identified risks.

A disengaged attitude by academics in the selected college or faculty was identified by the researcher as a potential risk. The researcher noted that this particular attitude may influence the rate of participation in the research study. The researcher approached the executive dean of the relevant college or faculty timeously to encourage the selected sample at their institution to participate in the research study.

The researcher also noted that the excessive workload of academic staff may influence the rate of participation in the research study. In addition, possible language barriers and cultural differences between the participating academic and the researcher may



influence the research study. The researcher ensured that the survey questionnaire was written in English. Where a language barrier complicated an interview, the researcher rephrased the question to suit the level of understanding of the interviewee. Although provision had been made for the use of a translator, there was ultimately no need to use one during the interviews.

Availability of the profiled academics for scheduled electronic appointments also caused delays if official work commitments cut across at short notice. The researcher approached the sample of interviewees through email to schedule appointments at their convenience.

The researcher was allowed three months executive development leave at Unisa to make appreciable progress towards the finalisation of the doctoral thesis in terms of the relevant policy. The researcher applied to the Management Committee for the required three-month leave period timeously. This was approved in January 2016. During these three months, the researcher conducted the fieldwork and concluded the drafting and review of the remaining chapters of the research study.

## **7.7 APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL RESEARCH CLEARANCE**

A research study involving humans in any institution requires that ethical clearance be obtained from the participating institution to avoid ethical boundaries being compromised resulting in, amongst others, an invalid research study and the participants feeling violated in terms of their right to privacy (Saunders et al., 2012:41).

Each institution has unique protocols in terms of approving applications for ethical research clearance. The prescribed processes at Unisa, UP and Wits were followed to obtain ethical clearance for the research study. The finalisation of the process at UP and Wits was dependent on approved ethical clearance from Unisa.

The researcher was required to submit the required documentation first to the ethical clearance committee of the Department of Public Administration at Unisa. Once it had been recommended by the departmental committee, the application escalated to the CEMS ethical clearance committee from where, once recommended, the application was submitted to the Research Permission Sub-committee of the Senate Research and Innovation Higher Degrees Committee (SRIHC) for approval. The SRIHC at Unisa granted ethical research clearance approval on 19 August 2015. The UP Ethics Clearance Committee granted approval on 2 September 2015. The Wits Ethics

Clearance Committee granted ethical research clearance on 9 October 2015. The data collection phase was implemented between February and March 2016.

## **7.8 LIMITATION OF RESEARCH STUDY**

The three selected institutions are located in Pretoria and were accessible to the researcher who is also based in Pretoria. Although there are 26 universities in South Africa, this research study was limited to a case study at three South African universities. As such, the recommendations in Chapter 9 of this dissertation cannot be generalised to the South African HE sector.

The sample was clustered within a faculty in each of the selected institutions. Thus, the sample did not take into account heterogeneity in faculties or colleges or intra-faculty or college heterogeneity within each selected institution. As such, the recommendations in Chapter 9 cannot be generalised to the selected institution, but are restricted to the relevant college or faculty from where the accessible sample was obtained.

The researcher applied the necessary research protocols and followed up at reasonable intervals with the accessible sample to obtain the highest possible response rate. However, with web-based surveys the response rate is generally low (Saunders et al., 2012:421). The researcher therefore exercised caution in not generalising the findings of the quantitative and qualitative data to be reflective of academia in the selected institutions but to reflect the views of the respondents and interviewees only.

The author had no access to classified documents; therefore, no reference to such information is made in this dissertation.

The survey database was constructed to protect the anonymity of all respondents. As a result, the feedback was not broken down per university and analysed but was seen as a complete dataset of the population. Within the context of this particular research study, other variables were seen as a priority, such as the racial grouping of the academics.

## **7.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter documented the research design and methodology that were followed in conducting the case study at Unisa, UP and Wits. The review of the literature

highlighted specific themes (see 2.2.4). In addition, the analysis of statutory documents and policy-related documents from the selected institutions highlighted similar themes (see 6.6.6). These themes were categorised into codes with specific questions that needed to be posed to the respondents and interviewees. Where feedback from respondents needed to be probed, this was accomplished in the interviews to obtain in-depth feedback from the interviewees (see 8.8.9). Ultimately, the feedback from interviewees was categorised into themes, which contributed towards the recommendations reflected in Chapter nine.

The process to obtain ethical clearance from the selected institutions was followed meticulously within the context of surveying the views of respondents and interviewees. Towards enhanced research protocol, all communication with participants in the case study was restricted to email and digital recordings to enable a sound audit trail of the research study. The mixed methods approach enabled the researcher to collect, analyse and integrate both qualitative and quantitative data within the study, which provided better insights into the feedback received.

The process was sound towards credible research findings within limitations. The process that was followed to refine the survey questionnaire and interview schedule provided a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon. In addition, the content of the survey questionnaire was informed by the themes that were consistent during the analysis of literature as well as during the review of the statutory and policy-related documents.

The sound research design and methodology flowed into the implementation of the case study at the selected institutions. The findings enabled the researcher to present pertinent recommendations in Chapter nine of this dissertation aligned to the research questions of this study.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **ANALYSIS OF DATA OBTAINED FROM THE SELECTED INSTITUTIONS**

#### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this research study was to address a challenge in the South African HE sector, namely to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff. Towards this end, Chapters two to five focused respectively on reporting what has been published on recruitment and selection, retention, training and development and remuneration, as HR functions. In addition, current statutory and policy provisions regulating the attraction and retention of academics at three South African universities were analysed and reported on in Chapter six. The analysis of this was used to refine the survey questionnaire and interview instruments that were first subjected to pilot testing with a select sample of academics at CEMS at Unisa. The process involved in pilot testing the survey instruments was outlined in Chapter seven. The final survey instruments were used during the implementation of the case study at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits), University of Pretoria (UP) and University of South Africa (Unisa).

The data obtained from the survey at the selected universities was analysed and the findings are presented in this Chapter. Specific areas were identified in the analysis of the findings of the survey questionnaire, which required further probing during the interviews at the selected institutions. The mixed methods research methodology was used to determine the experiences of 32 academics at the selected universities in the College of Economic and Management Sciences at Unisa, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at UP and the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management at Wits, in terms of specific areas that were highlighted during the literature review and analysis of empirical documentation.

Research protocol was maintained during the implementation of the survey questionnaire and the interviews, and an audit trail of the relevant documents was compiled. Human beings struggle to relate to vast amounts of unstructured data (Bazeley, 2013:125-450) hence the need to create order in the data to enable effective

analysis and interpretation (Reichertz, 2015:123-136; Saldana, 2015:10-240). Computer-aided software, namely ATLAS-ti (Archer, 2013) and SPSS (Pallant, 2005) was therefore used to assist in compiling and analysing the data obtained from the survey questionnaire and the interviews. The findings were compared to the main themes identified in the review of literature reported on in Chapters two to five and the analysis of statutory and policy documents reported on in Chapter six to identify common themes. Based on the findings of this case study in the selected institutions from a select sample of academics, specific recommendations will be made in Chapter nine for consideration on how the attraction and retention of academics, particularly black staff, could possibly be enhanced.

## **8.2 DATA COLLECTION AT THE SELECTED INSTITUTIONS**

Prior to the implementation of the case study, all academics in the selected faculties or colleges at the three institutions received an introductory email from the researcher making them aware of the upcoming implementation of the survey questionnaire and pertinent details attached to it. This step is also recommended by Saunders et al. (2012:454) with the aim to maximise response rates. In addition and towards ethical research protocol, the researcher met in person with each executive dean of the relevant faculty or college at the selected institution. This was done through a scheduled electronic appointment to introduce herself and the scope of the survey questionnaire that was to be implemented. Each executive dean of the relevant college or faculty was also approached to support the research by way of an email to all academics within the relevant college or faculty. In that email, the researcher was introduced to the selected academic environment and academics were encouraged to participate in the case study.

The data collection process was implemented at the selected institutions on 1 March 2016 from a secure online platform, namely LimeSurvey. At the time of the implementation of the survey questionnaire, there were -

- 172 permanently employed academic staff in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at UP;
- 348 permanently employed academic staff in the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management at Wits and

- 331 permanently employed academics in the College of Economic and Management Sciences at Unisa; giving 851 academic staff targeted as part of the survey.

Participation in the survey was voluntary and participants had the option of exiting the survey at any point if they did not feel comfortable to continue.

After the implementation of the survey to the 851 academic staff, 31 academics from the selected institutions responded through email that they were out of office for an extended period and would therefore not be able to respond to emails. The accessible sample at the selected universities was therefore 820. The limitation of using web-based surveys is that, notwithstanding its implementation through the medium of technology, some recipients may not be technologically literate and the decision not to respond is made much quicker than to respond (Archer, 2003:1-5; Baruch, 1999:421-437). In addition, it is likely to be very difficult to obtain a representative sample of the population from which the researcher can generalise (Saunders et al., 2012:455).

On 1 March 2016, protest action resumed at the Pretoria Unisa campus after one month. On the same day, the situation of unrest on the main campus returned to normal at Wits and UP. At 19:00 on Tuesday 1 March 2016, 54 responses had been received from academics at the three institutions. On Thursday 3 March 2016, the researcher encouraged all academics through email to respond to the survey questionnaire in view of the fact that their participation might have been disturbed by the protest action on 1 March 2016. Where academics had already responded, the researcher expressed appreciation in the same email. At 16:00 on Friday 4 March 2016, 120 academics had responded.

Unisa was disrupted again on Friday 4 March 2016 due to protest action related to the *#feesmustfall* campaign. The researcher was mindful that, since academics at Unisa were not permitted to enter the campus to access their computers and the Internet, it might have affected their ability to respond to the survey. In view of this, a final reminder was sent to all academics on Monday 7 March 2016 at 06:00, indicating a closing date of Wednesday 9 March 2016 at 16:00. At the time of closure of the survey, 174 respondents had participated. Together with the 12 respondents who had participated in the pilot study, 186 academics had participated in the survey equivalent to a 22.7% response rate. Since the response rate to web-based surveys is generally low and

given the fact that the researcher had made every effort to obtain the highest possible response rate, the results from the quantitative data analysis cannot be generalised beyond the respondents at the selected institutions (Saunders et al., 2012:455).

In summary, the final response rate of 22.7% was obtained through a structured process as indicated below.

#### **Data collection phase at Unisa, UP and Wits**

• Sample frame in data collection phase	851
• Less: number of academics who were not accessible	31
• Accessible sample frame	820
• Valid responses during data collection phase	174
• Plus: valid responses from the pilot study mentioned in Chapter 7	12
• Responses available for analysis	186
	(174+12)
• Final response rate	22.7%

### **8.3 ANALYSIS OF THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

In the analysis of data, the **SD** (SD) refers to the degree of variation of the feedback from the respondents. The **Mean** refers to the average rating of the specific category of respondents being considered, while **n** refers to the number of participants in the sample. The Likert-type scale used ranged from strongly disagree at (1) to strongly agree at (5).

The data obtained from the quantitative survey was analysed and summarised by Means of **frequencies** (categorical data) and **descriptive statistics** (continuous data). For each question, the sample (n=186) was furthermore disaggregated by current academic level and gender and racial group with the aim to investigate variation in the data across these selected groups. As a particular focus in this study, **hypothesis testing** was employed to identify significant differences between racial groups. For categorical data, the **chi-square test** of independence was conducted and for ordinal or scale data, the Kruskal-Wallis test was used (Pallant, 2005:286-297).

#### **8.3.1 General characteristics**

The analysis of literature, statutes and policies in previous Chapters refers to the experiences of the younger or more seasoned academic. It was therefore decided to

collapse responses. The feedback from the junior lecturer and lecturer was combined to represent feedback from the lower academic level, the senior lecturer represented the middle academic level and the associate professor and professor combined represented the senior academic level.

The response from the African, Asian and coloured respondents were combined to reflect the response from black respondents in line with the provisions of the Employment Equity Act (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1998a). As far as the life stage group is concerned, the categories of at-home single, young independent single and mature single were combined into the column indicting **single**, the young couple and mature couple were combined into the category **couple**, the single-parent family and young family were combined into the category **family (young/single)**, the mature family was categorised as **family (mature)**, and the golden nest and left-alone categories are combined into the **golden nest** category meaning the employees in the most senior age group. The statistics in each Table is disaggregated in terms of race and gender.

### 8.3.2 Academics at Unisa, UP and Wits

Table 8.1 reports the percentage distribution of academics on the lower, middle and senior academic levels.

**TABLE 8.1: PERCENTAGE OF ACADEMICS PER LEVEL**

A.2 What is your current academic level?	Racial Group		(n=186)
	Black (n=66)	White (n=120)	
Lower academic level (Junior Lecturer/Lecturer)	54.5%	23.3%	34.4%
Middle academic level (Senior Lecturer)	30.3%	39.2%	36.0%
Senior academic level (Associate Professor/Professor)	15.2%	37.5%	29.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*A.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (2).

The lower academic level constituted 34.4% of the sample, the middle academic level constituted 36.0% of the sample while the senior academic level constituted 29.6% of the sample. The accessible sample was not representative of the proportionality of academics at each level in the selected college or faculty at the three institutions. From a racial group point of view, the proportional distribution of black academic staff was



slightly skewed towards the lower and middle academic levels while the proportion of white academic staff was highest at the middle academic towards the senior academic level.

### 8.3.3 Appointment of academic staff

Table 8.2 reflects the academic level at which the respondents were initially appointed at their current institution. This is different from their current level at the same institution.

**TABLE 8.2: INITIAL APPOINTMENT LEVEL**

A.1 At which academic level were you initially appointed at your current university?	Racial Group		(n=186)
	Black (n=66)	White (n=120)	
Lower academic level (junior lecturer/lecturer)	65.2%	57.5%	60.2%
Middle academic level (senior lecturer)	25.7%	26.7%	26.3%
Senior academic level (associate professor/professor)	9.1%	15.8%	13.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note: \*A.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (1)**

In Table 8.2, 65.2% of black respondents were appointed at a lower academic level, 25.7% were appointed at a middle academic level and 9.1% were appointed at a senior academic level at their current institution. On the other hand, 57.5% of white respondents were appointed at a lower academic level, 26.7% were appointed at a middle academic level and 15.8% were appointed at a senior academic level at their current institution. The highest proportion of black and white respondents was appointed at a lower academic level. This observation is consistent with the prescribed appointment criteria per academic level that allows for career progression from the lower to the middle and higher academic levels. Based on the analysis of empirical documents as reported in Chapter 6, it would not be possible to be appointed at a senior academic level unless the incumbent were in possession of the requirements that are prescribed by the selected institution in terms of qualification, research output and academic experience.

### 8.3.4 Years of service

Table 8.3 reports on the number of years that the respondent was employed at the current academic level.

**TABLE 8.3: NUMBER OF YEARS EMPLOYED AT CURRENT ACADEMIC LEVEL**

A.3 For how long have you been employed on your current academic level?	(n=186)	Racial Group		Academic Level		
		Black (African, coloured and Asian) (n=66)	White (n=120)	Lower academic level (n=64)	Middle academic level (n=67)	Senior academic level (n=55)
Up to 3 years	39.2%	50.0%	33.3%	40.6%	43.2%	32.7%
3-8 years	35.0%	37.9%	33.3%	48.4%	29.9%	25.5%
More than 8 years	25.8%	12.1%	33.3%	10.9%	26.9%	41.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	99.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*A.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (3)

In Table 8.3, the highest proportion of black respondents, namely 50% is employed in their current academic level for "up to 3 years" followed by 37.9% in the "3-8 years" category, and 12.1% in the category of "more than eight years". The white respondents were equally proportionate between the three categories. The proportion of responses by black respondents in the "up to 3 years" and "3-8 years" categories is consistent with the analysis of policy and related documents reported on in Chapter 6 and the analysis of Tables 8.1 and 8.2. This implies that, at the time of this research, black respondents were in the early stages of establishing a career in academe with notable progression to "3-8 years" of employment. If the proportion of black respondents were to be highest in the category "more than 8 years", the length of employment would imply that black staff in the sample were making significant strides in reaching senior academic levels. This also implies that white respondents were in the middle and senior academic levels and had made significant strides in their academic career path. It may also imply that a respondent has been in the same post for 8 years without any progression to more senior academic levels.

Table 8.4 reports on the number of years that a respondent had been employed in his or her entire academic career.

**TABLE 8.4: NUMBER OF YEARS EMPLOYED IN ENTIRE ACADEMIC CAREER**

A.4 For how long have you been employed as an academic in your entire academic career?	n=186	Racial Group		Academic Level		
		Black (African, coloured and Asian) (n=66)	White (n=120)	Lower academic level (n=64)	Middle academic level (n=67)	Senior academic level (n=55)
Up to 7 years	35.5%	51.5%	26.7%	53.1%	41.8%	7.3%
7-15 years	33.9%	40.9%	30.0%	45.3%	31.3%	23.6%
More than 15 years	30.6%	7.6%	43.3%	1.6%	26.9%	69.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note: \*A.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (4)**

In terms of black respondents, 51.5% had been employed for their entire academic career for a maximum of 7 years, while 40.9% had been employed for "7-15 years". In terms of the white respondents, 26.7% had been employed for a maximum of 7 years, 30.0% had been employed for "7-15 years" and 43.3% had been employed for "more than 15 years". The highest proportion of blacks was in the "up to 7 years" category while the highest proportion of whites was in the "more than 15 years" category. A of 69.1% of respondents in the senior academic level had been employed for more than 15 years while the lower academic level reports the highest proportionality of 53.1% in the "up to 7 years" category.

The results in Table 8.4 are consistent with the rationale for the research study as articulated in Chapter one, namely that participating black academics had been within the profession for a relatively short period of time compared to white academics (see 1.1.2). The highest proportion of white respondents had been employed in their academic career for more than 15 years implying that they were senior academics that were steadily moving towards retirement. This also aligned to concerns about the aging professoriate and an inadequate succession pool of academics highlighted in Chapter 1 of this dissertation (see 1.1.2).

### 8.3.5 Gender

Table 8.5 reports on the gender of the respondents in terms of their academic level.

**TABLE 8.5: GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS**

A.5 Are you male or female?		(n=186)	Racial Group		Academic Level		
			Black (African, coloured and Asian) (n=66)	White (n=120)	Lower academic level (n=64)	Middle academic level (n=67)	Senior academic level (n=55)
Gender	Male	44.1%	50.0%	40.8%	43.7%	37.3%	52.7%
	Female	55.9%	50.0%	59.2%	56.3%	62.7%	47.3%
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*A.5 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (5)

In the overall sample, females dominated at 55.9% over males at 44.1%. The proportionality of black males and females in the sample was equal while white females were dominant at 59.2% over white males at 40.8%. Female respondents were in the majority at the lower (56.3%) and middle (62.7%) academic levels while males dominated the senior academic level (52.7%).

### 8.3.6 Race

Table 8.6 reports on the racial group of the respondents at each academic level.

**TABLE 8.6: RACIAL GROUP OF RESPONDENTS AT EACH ACADEMIC LEVEL**

A.6 To which of the following racial groups do you belong?		(n=186)	Academic Level		
			Lower academic level (n=64)	Middle academic level (n=67)	Senior academic level (n=55)
Racial group	Black	35.5%	56.3%	29.9%	18.2%
	White	64.5%	43.7%	70.1%	81.8%
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*A.6 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (6)

In the overall sample, white respondents dominated the sample at 64.5%. At the lower academic level, the proportionality of blacks was higher at 56.3% than whites at 43.7%

while whites dominated the middle and senior academic levels at 70.1% and 81.8% respectively. The statistics in Table 8.6 are aligned to relevant statutes and the Employment Equity Act (Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1998a).

### 8.3.7 Nationality

Table 8.7 reports on the nationality of the respondents.

**TABLE 8.7: NATIONALITY OF RESPONDENTS**

A.7 What is your nationality?	(n=186)	Lower academic level (JL/L) (n=64)	Middle academic level (SL) (n=67)	Senior academic level (AP/P) (n=55)	Black (n=66)	White (n=20)
South African-born SA citizen	83.3%	85.9%	89.5%	72.7%	75.8%	87.5%
Foreign-born SA citizen	6.5%	6.3%	1.5%	12.7%	4.5%	7.5%
Foreign-born non-SA citizen	10.2%	7.8%	9.0%	14.5%	19.7%	5.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*A.7 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (7)

South African-born citizens dominated the sample in Table 8.7 at 83.3% as well as each academic level by more than 70.0% per level. Approximately 27.2% of the senior academic respondents were foreign-born citizens. This implies that institutions might experience a need to recruit seasoned academics from outside the South African borders due to limited availability of resources within the country. The proportionality of blacks who were foreign-born non-SA citizens was 19.7%. The analysis of policy documents reported on in Chapter 6 highlighted a principled approach that career pathing opportunities should be available within the institution to retain internal experienced, skilled and qualified employees; failing which, the institution tends to source the talent required external to the institution, including foreign nationals (see 6.6.1).

### 8.3.8 Life stage group

Table 8.8 reports on the life stage groups of the respondents at the three academic levels.

**TABLE 8.8: LIFE STAGE GROUP**

A8. Please select the category that best describes your life stage group - please note that you must select only one option listed below.	(n=186)	Lower academic level (JL/L) (n=64)	Middle academic level (SL) (n=67)	Senior academic level (AP/P) (n=55)	Racial group	
					Black (n=66)	White (n=120)
At-home single	3.7%	6.2%	4.5%	0	9.1%	0.8%
Young independent single	9.7%	21.9%	6.0%	0	16.7%	5.8%
Mature single	5.4%	4.7%	4.5%	7.3%	3.0%	6.7%
Young couple	14.5%	12.5%	20.9%	9.1%	12.1%	15.8%
Mature couple	4.3%	1.6%	1.5%	10.9%	7.6%	2.5%
Single-parent family	3.8%	6.2%	1.5%	3.6%	7.6%	1.7%
Young family	37.5%	37.5%	44.8%	29.1%	36.4%	38.3%
Mature family	12.4%	3.1%	9.0%	27.3%	4.5%	16.7%
Golden nest	6.5%	3.1%	6.0%	10.9%	1.5%	9.2%
Left alone	2.2%	3.1%	1.5%	1.8%	1.5%	2.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100%	100.0%	100.0%	100%

**Note:** \*A.8 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (A), while the number indicates the number of the question (8)

For purposes of the present study, the "young family" category is defined as "married or living together (at place of residence) with a partner or significant other, have at least one dependent child under 13 years (own or other)". In addition, the "young couple" category was defined as "up to 49 years old, no dependent and married, living (at place of residence) with a partner or significant other". Further, a mature family was defined as "married or living with a partnership or significant other (at place of residence), no dependent children under 13 years (own or other) with at least one dependent child over 13 (own or other)".

The highest proportion of respondents were from academics in the "young family" category (37.5%, followed by respondents in the "young couple" category (14.5%) and respondents in the "mature family" category (12.4%). The three academic levels were dominated by respondents in the "young family" category at 37.5%, 44.8% and 29.1% respectively. This was also reflective in the feedback from a racial point of view in Table 8.8). This suggests that the respondents were predominantly young with children (possibly in primary to high school) or more advanced in age with children possibly in high school or at university. The top three selected categories comprised predominantly white respondents, particularly in the "mature family" category.

In analysing the survey data, the researcher linked the analysis to the research objectives, analysis of literature and statutory, policy and related documents in previous Chapters of this dissertation as well as the analysis of the qualitative study that follows later in this Chapter (see 8.8.9).

## **8.4 ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS PERTAINING TO RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

Research objectives one to five as outlined in Chapter one of this dissertation were dealt with in previous Chapters (see 2.2.3, 3.3.2, 4.4.2, 5.5.2). This section deals with the results pertaining to research objective 6, which relates to the factors that attract an individual to the academic profession. This section is also aligned to Chapter two (see 2.2.3) pertaining to recruitment and selection as HR functions.

### **8.4.1 Reward elements**

In addressing the research objective, respondents were firstly asked to consider five reward elements that are generally appealing to job applicants and then to rank them from most appealing (rank of 1) to least appealing (rank of 5). The five elements were remuneration (e.g. salary), employee benefits (e.g. pension), performance and recognition initiatives (e.g. research incentives), development and career opportunities (e.g. attendance at conferences), and work-life balance initiatives (e.g. flexible working hours). Table 8.9 reports the average ratings obtained from the sample for the various aspects. The overall sample ratings were disaggregated by current academic level and gender, race and life stage group. The lower the rating, the more appealing the element was perceived to be.

Table 8.9 provides a summary of the responses towards the five dimensions. On average, respondents ranked remuneration as most appealing (Mean=2.25; SD=1.48), followed by work-life balance initiatives (Mean=2.52; SD=1.39). Least appealing were performance and recognition initiatives (Mean=3.61; SD=1.14). However, it is notable from the SDs that there was a significant degree of variation by respondents regarding their selection of remuneration. The three academic levels highlighted the same preference for the top two reward elements, namely remuneration and work-life balance. Females tended to prefer work-life balance initiatives (2.27) slightly over remuneration (2.32). This might be attributed to the balance required in terms of their domestic and child-rearing responsibilities (Rose, 2008; Bussin, 2014). Black

respondents ranked remuneration highest (1.87), followed by work-life balance (2.73), development and career opportunities (3.12), performance and recognition opportunities (3.58) and lastly, employee benefits (3.72). White respondents ranked work-life balance initiatives highest (2.36) followed by remuneration (2.47), employee benefits (3.21), development and career opportunities (3.33) and lastly, performance and recognition opportunities (3.63). There was a great deal of alignment between the reward element preferences of white and black respondents, e.g. black respondents ranked remuneration first and work-life balance initiatives second while white respondents ranked work-life balance initiatives first and remuneration second.

**TABLE 8.9: SUMMARY OF THE REWARD ELEMENT PREFERENCES BY RESPONDENTS**

	RANKING	Total sample n	A2. Current academic level			A5. Gender		A6. Racial group			A8. Life stage grouping					
			Lecturer	Senior Lecturer	Professor	Female	Male	African	Asan/ Coloured	White	Single	Couple	(young/ single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest	
B1.1.1 [Rank] Reward element appealing to job applicants: Remuneration	Mean	<b>1</b>	<b>2.28</b>	1.92	2.33	2.53	2.32	2.16	1.78	1.96	2.47	2.03	2.23	2.22	2.39	2.69
	SD		1.48	1.33	1.49	1.59	1.45	1.52	1.25	1.25	1.56	1.38	1.46	1.47	1.53	1.78
B1.1.2 [Rank] Reward element appealing to job applicants: Employee benefits	Mean	<b>4</b>	<b>3.37</b>	3.56	3.48	3.02	3.38	3.35	3.48	3.96	3.21	3.94	3.03	3.43	3.09	3.00
	SD		1.28	1.26	1.21	1.33	1.23	1.35	1.30	1.15	1.26	1.47	1.27	1.09	1.35	1.21
B1.1.3 [Rank] Reward element appealing to job applicants: Performance and recognition initiatives	Mean	<b>5</b>	<b>3.61</b>	3.44	4.00	3.33	3.71	3.48	3.53	3.62	3.63	3.34	3.83	3.68	3.70	3.25
	SD		1.14	1.15	.95	1.22	1.07	1.22	1.30	1.06	1.11	1.00	1.22	1.23	.97	.93
B1.1.4 [Rank] Reward element appealing to job applicants: Development and career opportunities	Mean	<b>3</b>	<b>3.28</b>	3.22	3.21	3.36	3.32	3.18	3.15	3.08	3.33	2.86	3.31	3.39	3.43	3.13
	SD		1.27	1.30	1.17	1.37	1.29	1.25	1.17	1.44	1.27	1.09	1.23	1.27	1.38	1.54
B1.1.5 [Rank] Reward element appealing to job applicants: Work/life balance initiatives	Mean	<b>2</b>	<b>2.62</b>	2.86	1.99	2.76	2.27	2.83	3.08	2.38	2.36	2.83	2.60	2.29	2.39	2.94
	SD		1.39	1.42	1.17	1.43	1.38	1.35	1.37	1.20	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.32	1.41	1.61

Tables 8.10 to 8.14 focus on the response to each of the reward elements. Table 8.10 reports on the extent to which respondents rated remuneration appealing to job applicants at their institution.



**TABLE 8.10: RESPONSE TO REWARD ELEMENT: REMUNERATION**

B1.1 The following reward elements in my institution would be very appealing to job applicant - remuneration													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL/L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP/P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	2.25	1.92	2.33	2.53	2.32	2.16	1.87	2.47	2.03	2.23	2.22	2.39	2.69
<b>SD</b>	1.48	1.33	1.49	1.59	1.45	1.52	1.25	1.56	1.38	1.46	1.47	1.53	1.78

**Note: \*B1.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (1.1)**

Overall, the mean score was 2.25 with the senior academic level suggesting that, in the current study, remuneration was somewhat appealing to the job applicants. The mean of 1.92 was lowest amongst the three different academic levels suggesting that remuneration was most appealing to a lower academic level that enters a profession, thereafter to the middle academic level and least appealing to the senior academic level. The mean score of 1.87 by black respondents was lower than that of 2.47 for white respondents suggesting that remuneration might be influencing the attraction of the black applicant more than the white applicant. From a life-stage group perspective, remuneration was scored lowest by the single category of respondents (1.38) implying that remuneration influences the decision of a job applicant most in the single category and least in the golden nest category.

Table 8.11 reports on the extent to which respondents rated employee benefits (typically referring to pension, medical aid, leave provisions) appealing to job applicants at their institution.

**TABLE 8.11: RESPONSE TO REWARD ELEMENT: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

B1.1 The following reward elements in my institution would be very appealing to job applicant: employee benefits													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL / L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP / P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	3.37	3.56	3.48	3.02	3.38	3.35	3.72	3.21	3.94	3.03	3.43	3.09	3.00
<b>SD</b>	1.28	1.26	1.21	1.33	1.23	1.35	1.23	1.26	1.47	1.27	1.09	1.35	1.21

**Note: \*B1.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (1.1)**

In Table 8.11, the mean score of 3.02 by senior academics for employee benefits was the lowest score amongst the three academic categories implying that participating senior academics rated employee benefits most appealing at their institution. The mean score for male and female respondents was somewhat similar. White respondents appeared to rate employee benefits lower (3.21) than black respondents (3.72) suggesting that whites rated employee benefits slightly more appealing than their black colleagues. As far as this reward element is concerned, the difference between the racial groups was not overly significant. The mean of 3.00 by the golden nest category is consistent with the mean score of 3.02 by the senior academics (similar age group) thereby supporting the response by senior academics in Table 8.11 that employee benefits at their institution would be most appealing.

Table 8.12 reports on the extent to which respondents rated performance and recognition initiatives appealing to job applicants at their institution.

**TABLE 8.12: RESPONSE TO REWARD ELEMENT: PERFORMANCE AND RECOGNITION**

B1.1 The following reward elements in my institution would be very appealing to job applicants: performance and recognition													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL/L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP / P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>N</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	3.61	3.44	4.00	3.33	3.71	3.48	3.58	3.63	3.34	3.83	3.68	3.70	3.25
<b>SD</b>	1.14	1.15	0.95	1.22	1.07	1.22	1.18	1.11	1.00	1.22	1.23	0.97	0.93

**Note: \*B1.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (1.1)**

The overall mean score of 3.61 suggests a move away from being somewhat neutral at 3.00 towards least appealing. The mean of the middle academic level of 4.00 was highest compared to the 3.33 of the senior academics being the lowest. All academic categories rated performance and recognition initiatives higher than 3.00 which highlighted a trend towards the "least appealing" option. This trend was consistent amongst gender and racial groups. The mean at 3.25 by the golden nest category of respondents in terms of performance and recognition initiatives was lowest amongst the life stage categories suggesting a somewhat neutral position.

Table 8.13 reports on the extent to which respondents rated development and career opportunities as appealing to job applicants at their institution.

**TABLE 8.13: RESPONSE TO REWARD ELEMENT: DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

B1.1 The following reward elements in my institution would be very appealing to job applicant: development and career opportunities													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL / L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP / P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	3.26	3.22	3.21	3.36	3.32	3.18	3.12	3.33	2.86	3.31	3.39	3.43	3.13
<b>SD</b>	1.27	1.30	1.17	1.37	1.29	1.25	1.31	1.27	1.09	1.23	1.27	1.38	1.54

**Note: \*B1.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (1.1)**

The mean scores of 3.21 and 3.22 for the middle and lower academic level were somewhat consistent with the senior academic level at 3.36. The middle academic level was lowest at 3.21 indicating a neutral response of how appealing development and career opportunities would be to job applications. The mean score of 3.12 by black respondents was more inclined a neutral position of 3.00 as opposed to the white mean score of 3.33; however, the difference was not viewed as overly significant. The Mean of the single life stage group was lowest at 2.86, which is an indication of this group finding the development and career opportunities at their institution more appealing for job applicants than other life stage groups. The Mean score of 3.18 by male respondents was towards a neutral position than the 3.32 of the female respondents.

Table 8.14 reports on the extent to which respondents rated the appeal of work-life balance initiatives to job applicants at their institution.



**TABLE 8.14: RESPONSE TO REWARD ELEMENT: WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

B1.1 The following reward elements in my institution would be very appealing to job applicant: work-life balance													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL / L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP / P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	2.52	2.86	1.99	2.76	2.27	2.83	2.73	2.36	2.83	2.60	2.29	2.39	2.94
<b>SD</b>	1.39	1.42	1.17	1.43	1.38	1.35	1.29	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.32	1.41	1.61

**Note: \*B1.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (1.1)**

The overall mean score was 2.52 with the middle academic level lowest amongst the three academic groups at 1.99. This suggested that work-life balance initiatives were perceived to be appealing to job applicants. Females preferred this reward element more than males. White respondents preferred this reward element more than black respondents although the difference between the racial groups as far as this reward element is concerned, was not overly significant. The life stage group "family (young/single)" rated work-life balance initiatives most appealing at a Mean score of 2.29. This could be attributed to the personal responsibilities of this particular group and the need for a balance between their personal and professional commitments.

#### **8.4.2 Application medium**

In question B1.2 on the questionnaire, respondents were required to rate the medium where vacant positions are publicised. The medium tends to influence the attraction of the candidate to academe. The ranking was from 1 to 4 where 1 was the most preferred way to find a vacant position and 4 the least preferred medium. In question which is reported on in Table 8.15, the respondents indicated their preference towards applying for a vacant position advertised in a newspaper.

**TABLE 8.15: MEDIUM: NEWSPAPER**

B1.2 I prefer to apply for vacant positions through the following mediums: newspaper													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL / L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP / P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	2.78	3.13	2.96	2.18	2.92	2.61	2.89	2.77	3.17	2.77	2.95	2.26	1.94
<b>SD</b>	1.11	1.02	1.02	1.11	1.10	1.11	1.12	1.08	1.04	0.97	1.10	1.10	1.06

**Note: \*B1.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2)**

The overall mean score for this question (see Table 8.15) was 2.78 with the senior academic level at 2.18 the lowest amongst academic level groups thereby suggesting somewhat of a preference towards applying for vacancies following advertisements in the newspaper. This is consistent with the mean score of 1.94 by the life stage group, the golden nest. The lower academic level had the highest mean score of 3.13 amongst academic groups implying a preference away from applying for vacant positions advertised in a newspaper. The difference in the mean score between the black racial group (2.89) and the white racial group (2.77) was not overly significant. This is consistent with the lowest mean score of 3.17 amongst the life stage group "single".

In question B1.2.2, reported on in Table 8.16, respondents were required to rate their preference for the use of the intranet where the vacant position was published. The ranking was from 1 to 4 where 1 was the most preferred and 4 the least preferred medium.

**TABLE 8.16: MEDIUM: INTRANET**

B1.2 I prefer to apply for vacant positions through the following medium: intranet													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL / L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP / P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	2.46	2.30	2.40	2.71	2.42	2.50	2.33	2.51	2.60	2.31	2.31	2.78	2.69
<b>SD</b>	1.01	1.02	1.02	0.96	1.03	0.98	1.05	0.99	0.98	1.11	1.00	0.95	0.87

**Note: \*B1.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2)**

The overall mean reported in Table 8.16 was 2.46, which suggested a move away from the use of the intranet as the most preferred medium for advertising vacant posts. The mean of the lower academic level (2.30) was the lowest between the three academic levels and highest at the senior academic level. This suggests that respondents at the lower academic level preferred the use of the intranet more than did respondents at the senior academic level. The preference amongst black respondents to use the intranet to find advertisements in order to apply for vacancies was slightly higher than amongst the white respondents although not overly significant. The mean of 2.31 of the life stage group "couple" was lowest with "family (mature)" the highest at 2.78. This suggests that in the family (mature) category, the "couple" category preferred the intranet most.

In question B1.2, reported on in Table 8.17, respondents were required to rate their preference for the use of the Internet to find an advertisement to apply for a vacant position. The ranking was from 1 to 4, where 1 was the most preferred and 4 the least preferred medium.

**TABLE 8.17: MEDIUM: INTERNET**

B1.2 I prefer to apply to vacant positions through the following mediums: internet													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower academic level (JL / L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP / P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	1.71	1.70	1.58	1.87	1.65	1.78	1.84	1.62	1.46	1.69	1.81	1.65	1.94
<b>SD</b>	0.88	0.92	0.74	0.96	0.79	0.98	0.94	0.78	0.66	0.87	0.95	0.78	1.06

**Note: \*B1.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2)**

The overall mean score indicated in Table 8.17 was 1.71. The mean score of the middle academic level was the lowest amongst the academic level groups at 1.58 and the senior academic level was the highest at 1.87. This suggests that the middle academic level had a bigger preference for the use of the Internet than the lower academic level and the senior academic level. The mean scores of females (1.65) and whites (1.62) suggested that females and whites preferred the use of the Internet more than males (1.78) and blacks (1.84). The mean score of 1.46 of the single life stage group as the lowest amongst the life stage groups was somewhat consistent with the response from the academic levels.

In question B1.2 reported on in Table 8.18, respondents were required to rate their preference for the use of social media to find advertisements to apply for a vacant position.



**TABLE 8.18: MEDIUM: SOCIAL MEDIA**

B1.2 I prefer to apply for vacation positions through the following mediums: social recruiting tools													
		Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group		Life Stage Group				
		Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Female	Male	Black (African/ Coloured/Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (Young/Single)	Family (Mature)	Golden Nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	3.05	2.88	3.06	3.24	3.00	3.11	2.95	3.11	2.77	3.23	2.94	3.30	3.44
<b>SD</b>	0.99	0.97	1.03	0.96	1.00	0.99	0.85	1.03	1.00	0.94	1.02	0.97	0.81

**Note: \*B1.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2)**

In Table 8.18, it is shown that the overall mean score was 3.05, which suggested a general preference away from the use of social media to find advertisements to apply for vacancies. This reaction was most dominant amongst the golden nest life stage group (mean score of 3.44), whites (3.11), males (3.11) and the senior academic level (3.24). A mean score of 2.88 was lowest amongst the lower academic level in comparison to the highest mean score of 3.24 from the senior academic level. This was somewhat consistent with the analysis of feedback from the life stage group. The difference between the rankings of black respondents (2.95) and white respondents (3.11) was not overly significant. The analysis of Table 8.18 suggested that the younger generation of academics tend to prefer the use of social media to find advertisements to apply for vacancies while the more senior generation had a preference for the traditional method of recruitment, namely through the newspaper.

Table 8.19 depicts a summary of the overall mean score for each of the identified mediums in question B.2. The lowest mean score was that for a preference for the Internet while the highest mean score was that for the use of social media to find advertisements for vacancies. The latter suggests that overall, the respondents preferred the use of the Internet (1.71) to find advertisements for vacancies over the use of the intranet (2.46), newspapers (2.78) and social media (3.05).

**TABLE 8.19: SUMMARY IN TERMS OF RESPONSES TO THE DIFFERENT RECRUITMENT MEDIUMS**

	<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Intranet</b>	<b>Internet</b>	<b>Social media</b>
<b>Mean score (question b1.2)</b>	2.78 (3)	2.46 (2)	1.71 (1)	3.05 (4)

### **8.4.3 Recruitment process**

Table 8.20 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that they were appointed after a formal advertisement and interview process.

**TABLE 8.20: FORMAL ADVERTISEMENT PROCESS**

<b>B1.3 I was appointed after a formal advertisement and interview process</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	14.1%	6.0%	18.2%	12.1%	12.5%	16.3%	7.3%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	79.6%	92.5%	81.8%	86.4%	84.2%	83.7%	95.0%
<b>% Undecided</b>	6.3%	1.5%	0.0%	1.5%	3.3%	0%	86.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	4.20	4.54	4.24	4.34	4.30	4.22	4.48
<b>SD</b>	1.31	0.86	1.32	1.18	1.18	1.25	1.06

**Note: \*B1.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3)**

The proportionality of respondents at each academic level as well as from a racial point of view were overwhelmingly in agreement as reported in Table 8.20 that they were appointed after a formal advertisement, application and interview process. This trend was also consistent with feedback from a mean score and racial point of view. The mean score of female respondents was 4.22, and for males, it was 4.48, which suggests a move away from agreement towards strongly in agreement. The analysis of literature in Chapter two (see 2.2.3.1.1) identified the need for a sound recruitment and selection process that is defensible, fair, consistent and transparent. The absence of a sound governance process could have a negative influence on the morale of existing academics within the institution especially if the remuneration at which new academics are appointed is higher than the average remuneration of the department. Remuneration higher than the average of the department may be offered if the institution wants to secure the recruitment of the new academic to the institution especially if the academic is talented and a scarce skill in the applicable field.

Table 8.21 reports on the proportionality of agreement by each academic level towards being given sufficient time to prepare for the recruitment interview.

**TABLE 8.21: SUFFICIENT TIME TO PREPARE FOR INTERVIEW**

B1.4 I was given sufficient time to prepare for my interview							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	6.3%	3.0%	3.6%	6.1%	3.3%	4.8%	3.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	89.1%	94.0%	92.7%	93.9%	90.8%	91.4%	92.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	4.6%	3.0%	3.7%	0.0%	5.9%	3.8%	3.7%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	4.33	4.49	4.38	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.50
<b>SD</b>	0.99%	0.77%	0.80%	0.92	0.84	0.88	0.83

**Note: \*B1.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (4)**

Respondents at the three academic levels were overwhelmingly in agreement that they were given sufficient time to prepare for their recruitment interview. The trend was consistent with feedback from both racial groups. The overall mean scores of 4.4 and 4.5 from female and male respondents respectively were also a strong move away from general agreement to strongly in agreement. Black and white respondents reported a Mean score of 4.40 implying strongly in agreement. Aligned to the analysis of Table 8.20, a sound recruitment process would provide shortlisted candidates with sufficient time to prepare for the interview to enable interviewees to present themselves optimally. This in turn would afford the panel the opportunity to make an informed recruitment decision (see 2.2.3.2.2).

Table 8.22 reports on the proportionality of agreement by the three academic levels towards being given the opportunity to add information before the interview ended.

**TABLE 8.22: OPPORTUNITY TO ADD INFORMATION BEFORE END OF INTERVIEW**

B1.5 I was given the opportunity to add information before the interview ended							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	14.1%	6.0%	10.9%	12.1%	9.2%	7.7%	13.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	81.2%	86.5%	80.0%	78.8%	85.0%	83.7%	81.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	4.7%	7.5%	9.1%	9.1%	5.8%	8.7%	4.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	4.06	4.33	3.98	4.10	4.17	4.18	4.07
<b>SD</b>	1.22	0.96	1.03	1.13	1.06	0.98	1.19

**Note: \*B1.5 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (5)**

In Table 8.22 it is reported that respondents were consistently in agreement across the three academic levels that they had been given the opportunity to add information before the interview ended. The mean score for feedback from female respondents was 4.18, and for males, it was 4.07 also suggesting general agreement. From a racial response point of view, 78.8% of black respondents were in agreement and 12.1% in general disagreement. The SD for the black response (1.13) was slightly higher than the 1.06 for feedback from white respondents.

The interview process generally is tense for the interviewee, which might result in him or her not performing optimally in relation to the expectations of the interview panel. As the interview progresses, candidates tend to relax, especially if the interview panel is trained in conducting interviews (Egan, 2013). A sound interview process is also

enhanced if the secretariat of the panel is sufficiently trained in the management of the entire recruitment process (Brand, 2008:207). If candidates are afforded the opportunity to add additional information that might have been omitted during the interview, due to, amongst others, their own nervousness, the availability of the opportunity could result in a more holistic assessment of the candidate, which could contribute to an informed academic appointment.

Table 8.23 reports on the proportionality of agreement by the three academic levels towards being appointed within a reasonable time after the advertisement closed.

**TABLE 8.23: APPOINTMENT WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME**

B1.6 I was appointed within a reasonable time after the advertisement closed							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	129	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	31.3%	28.3%	16.4%	19.7%	29.2%	26.9%	24.5%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	59.3%	67.2%	69.1%	72.7%	60.8%	67.3%	62.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	9.4%	4.5%	14.5%	7.6%	10.0%	5.8%	13.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.52	3.69	3.73	3.87	3.48	3.65	3.62
<b>SD</b>	1.46	1.36	1.22	1.32	1.35	1.36	1.35

**Note: \*B1.6 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (6)**

The mean score for each academic level reflected in Table 8.23 consistently moves away from being undecided towards agreement. The proportionality of disagreement at the lower and middle academic levels is significant in that it comprises more than 25% of the responses in that category. Of the black respondents, 7 out of 10 and of

the white respondents, 6 out of 10 agreed that they were appointed within a reasonable time after the advertisement had closed.

The proportionality of responses in disagreement amongst academic levels and racial and gender groups suggests that, at the time of this research, there were inefficiencies in the recruitment process so that an unreasonably lengthy time followed after appointment. The analysis of literature in Chapter two (see 2.2.3.1.2.2) highlighted the need for the recruitment process to be sound. This in turn contributes towards the attraction of the academic into the profession. There is a limited pool of academic talent from which all institutions are drawing (Bussin, 2014). To attract and recruit the best candidate, possible inefficiencies in the approval process of a recommended candidate must be addressed. Delays in the approval process might also suggest bureaucratic processes internally and institutional role players, including HR officials, who are not sufficiently trained in the compilation of submissions, do not have a work ethic to expedite matters, and delegated approval authorities who are not electronically knowledgeable. If appointment processes are unreasonably lengthy and not streamlined, the potential black or white appointee might respond to advertisements by other institutions and if successful, accept another post while the response from the first interview is still pending.

#### **8.4.4 Performance of duties**

Table 8.24 reports on the proportionality of agreement at each academic level in terms of performing the duties specified in the advertisement.

**TABLE 8.24: ALIGNMENT BETWEEN ACTUAL DUTIES AND ADVERTISED DUTIES**

B1.7 I am performing the duties specified in the advertisement							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	9.3%	9.0%	12.7%	7.6%	11.6%	8.7%	12.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	75.1%	85.0%	85.5%	77.2%	84.2%	84.6%	78.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	15.6%	6.0%	1.8%	15.2%	4.2%	6.7%	9.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.94	4.10	3.84	4.00	3.93	4.01	3.91
<b>SD</b>	1.01	1.02	1.03	1.00	1.03	0.98	1.07

**Note: \*B1.7 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (7)**

At least 75% of respondents at each academic level reported in Table 8.24 were in agreement that they were performing the duties specified in the advertisement with a Mean score per level centred on agreement. The proportionality of disagreement per academic level at a minimum of 9.0% suggests that a portion of respondents might have been experiencing a misalignment between the content of the advertisement and their official duties. The proportion of respondents at the lower academic level (15.6%) who were undecided is also somewhat concerning given that they would be employed for a relatively short period of time. This is compared to the proportion of respondents who are undecided at the middle (6.0%) and senior academic levels (1.8%).

The alignment between what is advertised and the duties that the academic actually performs implies a sound value chain with potential for return on investment (Pillay et al., 2008:308-323). Should this alignment be compromised, the newly appointed academic will become frustrated in the workplace at possible false advertising by the employer, which will contribute to the intention to leave the institution prematurely



(Rosser, 2004:285-309). The credibility of the employer will also be compromised. Interviewees voiced their frustration at joining their institution only to be taken aback by the strong emphasis that was placed on research output when their strength was clearly on teaching students. They indicated that the emphasis on research output in career progression was not sufficiently conveyed in the advertisement of academic positions. Their discomfort was translating into frustration as they felt that their strength in the teaching and community engagement dimensions was not being exploited in the academic project (see 2.2.3.1.5.1).

Table 8.25 reports on the proportionality of agreement by the three academic levels in terms of performing the duties outlined in the job description.

**TABLE 8.25: ALIGNMENT BETWEEN ACTUAL DUTIES AND DUTIES IN THE JOB DESCRIPTION**

B1.8 I am performing the duties outlined in my job description							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	9.4%	10.4%	9.1%	7.6%	10.8%	6.7%	13.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	79.7%	82.1%	87.3%	80.3%	84.2%	86.6%	78.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	10.9%	7.5%	3.6%	12.1%	5.0%	6.7%	8.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.91	4.03	3.98	3.96	3.96	4.06	3.87
<b>SD</b>	0.99	1.09	0.91	1.0	1.01	0.88	1.13

**Note: \*B1.8 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (8)**

There was general agreement across academic levels and gender and racial groups as reported in Table 8.25 that they were performing the duties outlined in their job

description with the mean score hovering around 4.00. The mean score of the male and female respondents was at 3.87 and 4.06 respectively.

Linked to the analysis reflected in Table 8.25 and Chapter two (see 2.2.3.1.5.1), the alignment between the content of the advertisement, the key performance areas (KPAs) of the official job description for the post and the duties that the academic was actually performing affected the achievement of institutional imperatives. This alignment is therefore a sound value chain implying the need for integration between stakeholders who are responsible for the compilation of job descriptions, alignment of the job description to the institutional academic plan and publication of the advertisement.

Table 8.26 reports on the proportionality of agreement at the academic levels that respondents' positions added value to their department.

**TABLE 8.26: VALUE ADD OF POST**

<b>B1.9 My position adds value to my department</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	1.7%	2.0%	1.2%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	90.7%	100.0%	100.0%	93.9%	98.3%	95.1%	98.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	4.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.6%	0.0%	2.9%	0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	4.56	4.49	4.62	4.60	4.53	4.54	4.57
<b>SD</b>	0.85	0.50	0.49	0.67	0.63	0.70	0.57

**Note: \*B1.9 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (9)**

The mean score of each academic level reflected in Table 8.26 was a move away from agreement towards strongly in agreement. The middle and senior academic levels were 100% in agreement. This type of response was also consistent across gender and racial groups. The SD across academic levels and racial and gender groups was also consistently below 1.0 implying minimal variation in the response amongst respondents. An academic who can acknowledge the alignment between the contributions he or she is making professionally in the institution and the achievement of institutional academic imperatives implies that line managers are succeeding in helping employees to understand the influence of their personal contribution to the achievement of institutional deliverables (see 4.4.3.2).

Table 8.27 reports on the proportionality of agreement by the three academic levels that the appointment criteria for academic positions should be lowered.

**TABLE 8.27: LOWERING OF APPOINTMENT CRITERIA**

<b>B1.10 The appointment criteria for academic positions should be lowered</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	68,8%	73.2%	85.4%	65.2%	80.8%	78.8%	70.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	23.5%	14.9%	9.1%	21.2%	13.3%	14.4%	18.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	7.7%	11.9%	5.5%	13.6%	5.9%	6.8%	11.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.38	2.06	1.69	2.40	1.88	2.01	2.12
<b>SD</b>	1.28	1.17	0.94	1.22	0.97	1.06	1.31

**Note: \*B1.10 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (10)**

As reported in Table 8.27, more than two thirds of respondents from the three academic levels disagreed that the appointment criteria for academic positions should be lowered. The proportionality of disagreement was highest at the senior academic level with a mean score for that particular category at 1.69 implying a move from strongly disagree to disagreement. This analysis was also supported by a SD of 0.94 from the senior academic level. 23.5% of respondents at the lower academic level were in agreement. A mean score of 2.38 for the lower academic level suggested a move from disagreement towards being undecided, with a SD of 1.28 suggesting a great deal of variation in the responses from this particular category. The mean score in the gender groups was somewhat aligned towards disagreement. From a racial group point of view, black respondents reported a higher proportionality of agreement at 21.2% than whites at 13.3%. This implies that the proportionality of black respondents might view the lowering of the appointment criteria at an academic level as a factor that could influence their academic progress and hence their retention within the profession.

The feedback from all academic levels was consistent with the analysis of literature reported in Chapter 2 (see 2.2.3.1.5.1) as well as the feedback obtained during the interviews. Interviewees were opposed to the lowering of appointment criteria. Interviewees emphasised the importance of appointment criteria that are benchmarked in the academic profession. This implies that if there is minimal support to lower current benchmarked academic criteria, the employer must implement support mechanisms, including mentorship and coaching developmental interventions, to retain the recruited academics, particularly black staff.

Interviewees highlighted strong agreement that appointment criteria should not be lowered as it would affect the credibility of the profession. Instead, interviewees suggested that mentorship programmes be institutionalised. Interviewees also highlighted personal experiences of how mentorship had supported their own development from junior to senior academic levels. The criteria used to group mentors and mentees as well as the need for all role players to attend formalised training before mentorship commences, was emphasised by respondents during the interviews. In addition, interviewees suggested that mentorship cannot be enforced in academe but is a social responsibility of senior academics that would assist towards keeping the appeal of the academic profession. In terms of the approval of mentorship

programmes, interviewees suggested that monetary rewards should be aligned to the mentorship programme thereby encouraging the institutionalisation of mentorship.

Table 8.28 reports on the proportionality of agreement by the three academic levels that their department fills vacant positions with internal qualifying candidates as far as possible.

**TABLE 8.28: FILLING OF VACANCIES WITH INTERNAL CANDIDATES**

B1.11 My department fills positions with internal qualifying candidates as far as possible							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	21.9%	29.8%	36.4%	18.2%	35.0%	30.8%	26.9%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	50.0%	41.8%	29.1%	43.9%	39.1%	41.4%	40.3%
% Undecided	28.1%	28.4%	34.5%	37.9%	25.9%	27.8%	32.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	3.36	3.04	2.84	3.35	2.96	3.06	3.13
SD	1.15	1.11	1.01	1.00	1.16	1.10	1.12

**Note:** \*B1.11 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (11)

The proportionality of agreement by the junior academic level reported in Table 8.28 was highest at 50%. However, there was also a significant percentage of lower-level academics (28.1%) who were undecided or in disagreement (21.9%). 36.4% of the respondents at senior academic level disagreed with the statement while 34.5% were undecided and 29.1% in agreement. The mean score amongst academic levels and racial and gender groups hovered around 3.00 suggesting general indecision.

The general feedback obtained from the survey questionnaire suggested that respondents might not necessarily have been aware of the internal process that was followed in terms of filling vacant positions. This implies that there might not necessarily have been any inconsistencies but poor communication within academe contributes unnecessarily to a negative academic experience. Recruitment and appointment processes earn credibility within an institution if employees notice that consistent criteria are used to govern processes. It is also possible that internal processes are not transparent, fair, consistent and defensible hence an inconclusive feedback from respondents. If institutions have a tendency to fill posts with internal qualifying candidates, they create a career path for the academic within the institution (Larsson et al., 2007:361-381). This focus by the institution will contribute to the retention of academics, particularly black staff. The analysis reported in Chapter two identified the need for institutions to utilise the talent inherent in employees within the institution with regard to elevated competitiveness (see 2.2.3.2.2).

The culture within the institution is negatively affected when employers consistently appoint candidates from outside a college or faculty or the institution when qualified internal candidates have applied. This suggests a misalignment between the vocal commitments of the employer to support the academic plan and the actual actions of the employer. In addition, institutional culture has a negative effect on the career path of the academic within the institution. Within this context, academics who qualify for appointment may start to lose faith in the credibility of the employer if they are overlooked for appointment above external qualifying candidates. This would then translate into an intention to leave (see 2.2.3.1.1).

Table 8.29 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether they underwent a written psychometric test as part of the recruitment process.

**TABLE 8.29: PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING AT RECRUITMENT**

<b>B1.12 I underwent a written psychometric test as part of the recruitment process</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	20.3%	22.4%	16.4%	19.7%	20.0%	19.2%	20.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	57.8%	58.2%	54.5%	57.6%	56.6%	58.7%	54.9%
<b>% Undecided</b>	21.9%	19.4%	29.1%	22.7%	23.4%	22.1%	24.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.59	3.36	3.45	3.60	3.40	3.45	3.49
<b>SD</b>	1.26	1.07	1.03	2.38	1.08	1.08	1.19

**Note: \*B1.12 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (12)**

At least 50% of respondents from each academic level and each racial and gender group reported in Table 8.29 agreed that they had undergone a written psychometric test as part of the recruitment process. The proportionality of respondents who disagreed or who were undecided across academic levels is also significant. The mean score across academic levels was a minimum of 3.30, suggesting a general tendency to move away from being undecided towards general agreement. The mean score of 3.60 by black respondents was slightly more towards agreement than that by whites (3.40) although the difference was not significant. The response from a gender point of view was somewhat aligned in terms of the Mean score.

The analysis of literature as reported in Chapter two (see 2.2.3.2.2) highlighted the value that could be gained from interviewees being subjected to a psychometric test before appointment. Such testing would assist to determine their profile and anticipated level of job fit within the position and culture of the institution. The results of the

psychometric test could support an informed appointment decision and enable a more successful person-job fit, which would contribute towards retention.

Table 8.30 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether the institutional values and culture provide a good fit with their personal values.

**TABLE 8.30: FIT BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL VALUES AND PERSONAL VALUES**

<b>B1.13 The institutional values and culture provide a good fit with my personal values</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	20.3%	22.4%	16.4%	9.1%	14.2%	10.6%	14.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	57.8%	58.2%	54.5%	83.3%	80.0%	84.6%	76.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	21.9%	19.4%	29.1%	7.6%	5.8%	4.8%	8.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.59	3.36	3.45	3.60	3.40	3.45	3.49
<b>SD</b>	1.26	1.07	1.03	1.19	1.08	1.08	1.19

**Note: \*B1.13 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (13)**

At least 50% of the three academic levels agreed that the institutional values and culture provided a good fit with their personal values. The Mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently a move away from being undecided towards agreement. The SD of 1.26 was highest for the junior academic category. In view of the challenges to retain black academic staff, the researcher expected a higher proportionality of disagreement from the lower academic level and black racial group. It is possible that the question may not have been sufficiently specific by indicating to which values were being referred.



The data suggested that respondents in general were not experiencing a misalignment between their personal values and the values of the institution. New appointments were introduced initially to the institutional value and culture statement through the institutional brand, and thereafter through the recruitment and selection process, including the process of orientating new employees into the institution. The effect of the value statement on each aspect of the recruitment and selection process was significant in relation to the appointment experience and retention of the new recruit (see 2.2.3.2.2).

Table 8.31 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether they were in the correct job role that fitted their profile (experience, skill, qualification and career goals).

**TABLE 8.31: ALIGNMENT BETWEEN JOB ROLE AND PERSONAL PROFILE**

<b>B1.14 I am in the correct job role that fits my profile (experience, skill, qualification and career goals)</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (APP)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	12.0%	7.3%	9.1%	14.2%	3.0%	1.3%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	73.4%	85.0%	85.5%	83.3%	80.0%	97.0%	98.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	9.4%	3.0%	7.2%	7.6%	5.8%	0%	0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.80	3.99	4.15	4.05	3.93	4.00	3.93
<b>SD</b>	1.13	0.98	0.91	0.99	1.02	0.96	1.10

**Note:** \*B1.14 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (14)

While there was a minimum of 85% agreement by the middle and senior academic levels as reported in Table 8.31, the lower academic level recorded 73.4%

proportionality of agreement, the highest undecided rate of 9.4% and a high proportion of disagreement at 17.2%. This again implied a need for talent management interventions at the lower academic levels for black and white staff. The SD of 1.13 was highest in the lower academic group suggesting a variation of responses in this category. Overall, the mean score was a move away from undecidedness towards agreement.

The response from the lower academic level reflected in Table 8.31 suggests a misalignment between the expectations of the respondents and their actual experiences. The value add of the psychometric test reported in Table 8.29 was highlighted again in relation to the analysis reported in Table 8.30. The proportionality agreement from the black respondents (83.3%) was similar to that of white respondents (80.0%). The analysis of interview data highlighted a concern by interviewees that their impression of academe reflected somewhat of a balance between teaching, research and community engagement-related responsibilities. However, the experiences of interviewees in academe proved to be somewhat of an adjustment into the existing institutional culture when they realised the increasing emphasis that was placed on research output. Where institutions have adopted a medium- to long-term vision of being the leading research institution nationally or on the African continent, the sharpened focus on research output was adding to a stressful academic experience (see 6.6.5.3.5).

Together with increasing student numbers and the burden of coping with administrative or managerial responsibilities that do not support the academic plan directly as well as the experience of a lack of work-life effectiveness, academics now have to find the time to produce research outputs. Where the workplace does not support flexible working hours, academics might be frustrated that their core deliverable cannot be achieved. This in turn might contribute to academics not publishing journal articles or completing their master's or doctoral thesis. This might put pressure on academic staff whose main passion was in favour of teaching and community engagement as opposed to research. In this context, an academic is likely to feel conflicted and might question whether he or she is correctly placed in the new academic role where the emphasis is on being research-intensive.

#### 8.4.5 Summary

Respondents indicated that remuneration was the most appealing reward factor influencing recruitment of academics (see 2.2.3.1.2.5), followed by work-life balance initiatives (see 2.2.3.1.5.1) and then performance and recognition interventions (see 2.2.3.3). Females tended to prefer work-life balance initiatives slightly over remuneration possibly due to the flexibility of working hours that is needed to manage their maternal responsibilities of child rearing (see 2.2.3.1.5.1). It also appeared that remuneration might be influencing the black academic applicant marginally more than the white academic applicant (see 2.2.3.3). In addition, remuneration appeared to influence the single category academics most compared to academics in the golden nest category (see 2.2.3.1.2.4). The senior academic level appeared to place a premium on employee benefits possibly in view of pending retirement (see 2.2.3.1.5.1).

In terms of the recruitment medium, most preferred to apply for a vacant academic post. There appeared to be a preference for the use of the Internet (see 2.2.3.1.5.1) followed by the traditional newspaper (see 2.2.3.1.5.1) and then social media (see 2.2.3.1.5.1). It also appeared that a sound governance process in terms of recruitment was generally followed in terms of feedback from each academic level and racial and gender group (see 2.2.3.1.2.2). Respondents generally quoted a positive experience in terms of support to prepare adequately for the interview (see 2.2.3.2.2) and to achieve optimal performance during the interview. However, there appeared to be concern in terms of efficient finalisation of the selection process resulting in timeous appointment considering the length of time from the advertisement to the actual appointment of the academic (see 2.2.3.2.1). It also appeared that the use of psychometric testing to support the selection decision by the recruitment panel, was not being optimised (see 2.2.3.2.2).

Respondents generally found alignment between their job description and the advertised KPAs (see 2.2.3.1.2.2). In addition, respondents agreed that they were performing the duties outlined in their job description and adding value to the department, implying a line of sight had been established to appreciate the effect of the performance of the academic on the achievement of departmental goals (see 2.2.3.1.4.1). There was a strong objection to appointment and promotion criteria being lowered in response to the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff (see 2.2.3.1.5.1). It appeared that the advertisement of vacant posts may not be

sufficiently communicated internally. Should this be done it would support the development of internal talented academics who may qualify in terms of the advertised requirements (see 2.2.3.2.1).

## 8.5 ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS PERTAINING TO RETENTION IN ACADEME

This section deals with the results pertaining to research objective eight as articulated in 1.1.6, in particular the effect of specific dimensions, namely promotion, workload and workplace culture, on the retention of the academic in the profession. This section is also aligned to Chapter three of this dissertation (see 4.4.6.2.1).

### 8.5.1 Promotion

Table 8.32 reports on the proportionality of agreement by respondents that the promotion requirements in their department are fair.

**TABLE 8.32: FAIRNESS OF PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS**

B2.1.1 Promotion requirements in my department are fair							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	42.2%	38.9%	21.8%	31.8%	36.7%	36.6%	32.9%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	40.7%	38.8%	61.8%	42.4%	48.3%	43.3%	50.0%
% Undecided	17.1%	22.3%	16.4%	25.8%	15.0%	20.1%	17.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	2.92	2.94	3.53	3.10	3.10	3.04	3.20
SD	1.26	1.07	1.23	1.19	1.23	1.17	1.27

**Note:** \*B2.1.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.1.1)

The proportionalities of respondents at the lower and middle academic levels who disagreed as reflected in Table 8.32 were 42.2% and 38.9% respectively, which was significant in relation to the 21.8% from the senior academic level. The Mean score amongst the junior and middle academic levels was towards undecidedness with the senior academic level generally towards agreement. Racial groups reported the same mean score, 3.10, suggesting a slight move away from being undecided towards agreement. In addition, there was no significant difference in the proportionality of agreement and disagreement between black and white respondents.

It would appear that the respondents at the lower and middle academic levels had experienced that promotion requirements in their department were not entirely fair as opposed to the senior academic level which tended to agree that promotion requirements were fair. It is also possible that within departments, promotional criteria were too high. Should such practices prevail, the culture within the department would also be negatively affected with line management not earning the respect of academics. Since promotion of academics is aligned to monetary benefit, not being promoted timeously affects the growth of the academic from a remuneration point of view.

The interviews reported on in Chapter eight of this dissertation (see 8.8.9) highlighted that while remuneration played a crucial role in attracting the academic towards the profession, it was seemingly of lesser importance in retaining him or her. However, promotion is extremely important to an academic in terms of his or her progression to more senior academic levels in the profession. If the requirements for promotion were not perceived to be fair by academics, this would affect a key factor that academics value.

Table 8.33 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels whether promotion criteria between colleges and faculties at their university were consistent.

**TABLE 8.33: CONSISTENCY OF PROMOTION CRITERIA BETWEEN COLLEGES AND FACULTIES**

B2.1.2 Academic promotion criteria between colleges / faculties in my university are consistent							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (APP)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	51.6%	50.7%	52.7%	54.5%	50.0%	49.1%	54.9%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	20.3%	22.4%	20.0%	15.2%	24.2%	22.1%	19.5%
% Undecided	28.1%	26.9%	27.3%	30.3%	25.8%	28.8%	25.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	2.48	2.57	2.51	2.45	2.58	2.55	2.49
SD	1.28	1.05	1.15	1.18	1.14	1.11	1.22

**Note:** \*B2.1.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.1.2)

The respondents reported on in Table 8.33 disagreed across academic levels and racial and gender groups that academic promotion criteria between colleges and faculties at their university were consistent. It is noteworthy that black and white academic respondents had similar experiences. The Mean scores were also consistent in terms of disagreement towards being undecided. The proportion of agreement across academic levels was consistently less than 25%.

In the qualitative study (see 4.4.6.2.2), interviewees indicated the negative effect that inconsistent criteria between colleges and faculties were having on the morale of academics in their department. A degree of consistency in terms of promotion criteria across disciplines was suggested (see 4.4.6.1.7). At the time of the present research, interviewees reported experiencing the inconsistency as unfair. At the same time, interviewees acknowledged that promotion criteria might be influenced by the professional standards in a specific industry but they were still of the view that the

inconsistency between colleges and faculties in terms of promotion criteria was not managed transparently, fairly and defensibly. The effect of low morale amongst academics as well as the value that academics place on performance and recognition initiatives, has a significant effect on their retention.

Table 8.34 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether promotion opportunities are awarded equally within departments. This is further disaggregated by race and gender.

**TABLE 8.34: EQUAL AWARDING OF PROMOTION OPPORTUNITIES**

<b>B2.1.3 Promotion opportunities are awarded equally in my department</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	32.8%	43.3%	21.8%	31.8%	34.1%	32.7%	34.2%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	31.2%	31.4%	52.7%	27.3%	43.4%	34.6%	41.5%
<b>% Undecided</b>	36.0%	25.3%	25.5%	40.9%	22.5%	32.7%	24.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.89	2.75	3.33	2.88	3.03	2.93	3.01
<b>SD</b>	1.18	1.13	1.17	1.19	1.18	1.11	1.27

**Note: \*B2.1.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.1.3)**

As reported in Table 8.34, the proportion of respondents who disagreed was at the middle academic level (43.3%) compared to the lowest proportion of disagreement at senior academic level (21.8%). Less than one third of respondents at the lower and middle academic levels agreed with the statement compared to 52.7% of senior academics. More than one third of respondents at the lower academic level (36.0%) were undecided. The mean score across the academic levels and racial and gender

groups was just a move away from disagreement towards being undecided. The feedback by black and white racial groups was quite similar at 31.8% and 34.1% respectively.

The degree of undecidedness and disagreement reported in Table 8.34 particularly amongst the lower and middle academic levels suggested that promotional opportunities, promotional processes or the results of promotional processes may not be communicated sufficiently within departments. The failure to communicate sufficiently on a matter of academic importance could contribute to a negative academic experience. On the other hand, respondents might have experienced inconsistencies in the actual management of the process, which could compromise the integrity of line management, the governance of the process and the culture within the department.

Table 8.35 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether promotional posts take long to be filled.



**TABLE 8.35: LENGTH OF TIME TO FILL PROMOTIONAL POSTS**

B2.1.4 Promotional posts take long to be filled							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	29.7%	19.4%	27.2%	30.3%	22.5%	22.1%	29.3%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	42.2%	46.3%	58.3%	39.4%	53.3%	46.1%	51.2%
<b>% Undecided</b>	28.1%	34.3%	14.5%	30.3%	24.2%	31.8%	19.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.09	3.42	3.47	3.10	3.47	3.35	3.29
<b>SD</b>	1.22	1.02	1.17	1.11	1.13	1.06	1.24

**Note:** \*B2.1.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.1.4)

At least 40.0% of the respondents at each academic level agreed that promotional posts take long to be filled. The proportionality of agreement by white respondents at 53.3% was significantly higher than that of black respondents at 39.4%. The Mean score for the middle and senior academic level was just a move away from being undecided towards agreement. The SD of 1.24 amongst male respondents was higher than the 1.06 of female respondents suggesting a higher degree of variation amongst male respondents.

Although promotional opportunities are important to all academic levels, it is particularly important to an academic in the senior level in terms of his or her profile and the recognition from peers in the profession. Aligned to the analysis reflected in Table 8.23 where it was indicated that challenges might be experienced in being appointed within a reasonable time after the advertisement had closed, similar delays might be experienced in the finalisation of promotional processes. This might be the

result of bureaucratic processes and role players not being sufficiently trained and empowered in performing each aspect of the HR function. In addition, delegated authorities may not be accessing their emails regularly to provide input into the draft recordings of promotion panel proceedings and approval hierarchies might be unnecessarily long and cumbersome (3.3.2.4.4.1). This would not add value to the ultimate appointment of the promoted academic in the shortest time possible. The analysis of the interview data (see 8.8.9) also highlighted the value that academics place on a sound governance framework towards their retention and the ultimate academic experience.

## 8.5.2 Workload

Table 8.36 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether they were over-burdened by administrative tasks.

**TABLE 8.36: ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS**

<b>B2.2.1 I am over-burdened by administrative tasks</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	18.7%	22.4%	21.8%	30.3%	15.8%	16.3%	26.8%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	68.8%	71.6%	72.7%	54.6%	80.0%	74.0%	67.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	12.5%	6.0%	5.5%	15.1%	4.2%	9.7%	6.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.86	3.82	3.84	3.55	4.01	3.88	3.79
<b>SD</b>	1.19	1.21	1.12	1.32	1.05	1.08	1.28

**Note:** \*B2.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.1)

More than two thirds of respondents at each academic level were in agreement that they were over-burdened by administrative tasks (see 3.3.2.4.4.2). The tendency of the mean score across academic levels and gender and racial groups was consistently strong in terms of agreement. 80% of the white respondents were in agreement compared to 54.6% of the black respondents. This was possibly because black respondents are predominantly on the lower academic levels (see 3.3.2.4.4.5). The analysis presented in Chapter 3 (see 3.3.2.4.4.6) also identified the increasing administrative workload as a frustration to academics which had a negative effect on their retention. The analysis of the interview data (see 8.8.9) also highlighted that academics were under severe pressure to produce research articles and finalise their master's or doctoral qualifications in line with the sharpened focus on research output by institutions (see 6.6.5.2.1). At the same time, the number of students at the three selected institutions had increased in support of the national social and education agenda (see NPC, 2011; DHET, 2-15), which implies a heavier academic teaching load.

The frustration experienced by academics as a result of the burden of administrative tasks affects their retention in the profession negatively. Some interviewees who disagreed that administrative tasks were a concern, highlighted that some academics may not have sound work ethics in terms of planning and organising their workload given the advantage of flexible working hours to manage all deliverables (see 6.6.4.4).

Table 8.37 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether respondents had adequate time to do research.

**TABLE 8.37: RESEARCH TIME**

<b>B2.2.2 I have adequate time to do research</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	68.7%	68.7%	56.4%	59.1%	68.3%	70.2%	58.5%
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	21.9%	29.9%	34.6%	33.3%	25.8%	24.1%	34.2%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	9.4%	1.4%	9.0%	7.6%	5.9%	5.7%	7.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	68.7%	68.7%	56.4%	59.1%	68.3%	70.2%	58.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.28	2.24	2.69	2.61	2.25	2.26	2.55
<b>SD</b>	1.28	1.32	1.25	1.35	1.23	1.19	1.40

**Note:** \*B2.2.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.2)

More than two thirds of respondents on the lower and middle academic levels reported on in Table 8.37 disagreed that they had adequate time to do research. However, the proportionality of disagreement at senior academic level was significantly lower at 56.4% than other academic levels, with agreement at 34.6%. The mean score at the lower and middle academic levels was consistent towards disagreement but the mean score at the senior academic level was more towards undecidedness. The difference in terms of proportionality of disagreement of 59.1% by black respondents compared to 68.3% by white respondents. This could possibly be attributed to the difference in post levels between racial groups.

Table 8.37 suggests significant disagreement amongst all academic levels in terms of adequate time to do research with the proportionality of disagreement higher on the lower and middle academic levels than the senior academic level. The result also correlated with the analysis of literature reported on in Chapter 2 (see 2.2.2) as well as

the interview data (see 8.8.9). Interviewees complained that the appeal of the academic profession is being compromised by the sharpened focus on being a research-intensive institution. In addition, interviewees added that the institution did not have supporting mechanisms in place to assist the academic with excessive workloads. Feedback from senior respondents also indicated that academics may need to exercise a more disciplined work ethic to manage their time more effectively. The analysis reported in Table 8.37 is aligned to Table 8.36 in terms of being overburdened by administrative tasks and Table 8.44 where it is reported that respondents indicated the need for flexible working hours.

Table 8.38 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether they had adequate time to do teaching.

**TABLE 8.38: TIME FOR TEACHING**

<b>B2.2.3 I have adequate time to do teaching</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	28.2%	19.4%	21.8%	16.7%	26.7%	24.0%	21.9%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	70.3%	79.1%	61.9%	78.8%	66.7%	74.1%	67.0%
<b>% Undecided</b>	1.5%	1.5%	16.3%	4.5%	6.6%	1.9%	11.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.44	3.61	3.44	3.72	3.38	3.53	3.46
<b>SD</b>	1.19	0.97	0.94	0.98	1.06	1.01	1.08

**Note: \*B2.2.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.3)**

In comparison to the analysis presented in Table 8.36, in Table 8.38, it is indicated that the senior academic level reported a lower proportionality of agreement in terms of

adequate time to do teaching compared to the lower and middle academic levels than the other academic levels. There is a significant difference between the proportionality of agreement by black and white respondents at 78.8% and 66.7% respectively. It is worth noting that senior academic staff, particularly professors, were more inclined to do research (and find time for it) than to teach. This is evident if one combines the data in Tables 8.36 and 8.37.

The proportionality of disagreement was highest at the lower academic level, namely 28.2%. The mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently away from being undecided towards agreement. The SD of 1.19 in the lower academic level suggested a greater degree of variation amongst the responses at this particular level than the other academic levels.

Interviewees at the lower and middle levels indicated that the excessive teaching loads resulted in them having to prioritise this dimension in order to meet deadlines at the expense of research output. On the other hand, interviewees at the senior academic level placed more emphasis on research output with a smaller teaching load. Interviewees found the lack of clarity of how workload was allocated to the different academic levels, to be frustrating and demotivating. It is possible that mentorship of academics may support a better understanding of workload allocation. From the point of view of interviewees, there appeared to be inconsistencies in the work allocation process between academic levels.

The feedback reflected in Table 8.38 and the interviews suggested that a scientific workload model, which is consulted amongst academics and in support of the academic plan, is required within the academic sector of the institution. The model would determine the allocation of academic resources per college or faculty as well as the allocation of work per academic. The model should be based on the principles of fairness, consistency, transparency and defensibility (Bussin & Huysamen, 2004; Cloete & de Coning, 2011). This implies that the lack of sound models would compromise forming a sound academic governance framework, which academics identified as a key dimension in the employer value proposition (see 3.3.2.1). The implementation of such models would also enhance the credibility of the institution amongst peer institutions. Interviewees placed a premium on the credibility of the institution to which they were attracted or where they had a passion to remain.

Table 8.39 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether they had adequate time for community engagement.

**TABLE 8.39: TIME FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

B2.2.4 I have adequate time to do community engagement							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	62.5%	56.8%	38.2%	45.5%	57.5%	60.6%	43.9%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	28.1%	28.4%	27.3%	37.9%	22.5%	24.0%	32.9%
<b>% Undecided</b>	9.4%	14.8%	34.5%	16.6%	20.0%	15.4%	23.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.47	2.42	2.80	2.83	2.40	2.37	2.78
<b>SD</b>	1.22	1.20	1.01	1.18	1.14	1.12	1.17

**Note:** \*B2.2.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.4)

The proportionality of disagreement reflected in Table 8.39 was higher at the lower and middle academic levels while the proportionality of agreement was consistent amongst the three academic levels. The proportion of undecidedness at the senior academic level of 34.5% was significant in relation to the response at the lower and middle academic levels. The mean score of black staff (2.83) tended towards being undecided while the white response (at 2.40) tended towards disagreement. The male mean score tended towards being undecided while the females tended towards disagreement.

Less than one third of the respondents at each academic level agreed that they had adequate time for community engagement. The responses reported in Table 8.39 are consistent with Tables 8.36 and 8.37, the analysis of literature in Chapter three (see

3.3.2.4.4.2) and the feedback from interviewees during the interviews. It was noted that the emphasis on research output was strongest at the senior academic level compared to the middle and lower academic level. Within this context, the need for a consulted scientific workload model might be necessary to address academic concerns.

Table 8.40 provides a summary of the mean scores that were relevant for Tables 8.37 to 8.39.

**TABLE 8.40: SUMMARY REGARDING ADEQUATE TIME FOR ACADEMIC COMMITMENTS**

	<b>I have adequate time to do research</b>	<b>I have adequate time to do teaching</b>	<b>I have adequate time to do community engagement</b>
<b>Overall mean score (questions B2.2.1-2.2.4)</b>	2.39	3.50	2.55
<b>Analysis of overall mean score</b>	Slight move away from disagreement towards undecidedness	Significant move away from undecidedness towards agreement	Significant move away from disagreement towards undecidedness

Table 8.41 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether respondents had adequate resources such as equipment, time and funding to perform their official responsibilities.



**TABLE 8.41: ADEQUATE RESOURCES**

<b>B2.2.5 I have adequate resources to perform my official responsibilities as an academic</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	26.5%	35.8%	23.7%	27.3%	30.0%	30.7%	26.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	68.8%	59.7%	58.2%	69.7%	58.4%	61.5%	63.4%
	4.7%	4.5%	18.1%	3.0%	11.6%	7.8%	9.8%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>SD</b>	3.45	3.25	3.35	3.52	3.23	3.27	3.45

**Note:** \*B2.2.5 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.5)

More than 50% of respondents reported on in Table 8.41 across the three academic levels were in agreement while the middle academic level reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 35.8%. The SD of the middle academic level of 1.26 also suggested a great deal of variation in terms of the responses. The lower academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 68.8%. Black respondents reported a higher proportionality of agreement at 69.7% than whites at 58.4% though this was not significant. The mean score of males at 3.45 was higher than that of females at 3.27, which implies that males were slightly more inclined towards agreement than females as reflected in Table 8.41.

The availability of resources was cited as a concern in Chapter three (see 3.3.2.4.4.5) and to a lesser degree in the interviews. Adequate resources would support the achievement of the deliverables in the academic plan (see DHET, 2015). If there is an inadequate budget from within the institution to procure the resources that academics

require to perform optimally, it may be necessary for management to consider generating third-stream income to enable academics to meet their academic goals.

Table 8.42 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether their line manager distributes work evenly among their team.

**TABLE 8.42: EVEN DISTRIBUTION OF WORK IN TEAM**

B2.2.6 My line manager distributes work evenly among our team							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	42.2%	37.3%	32.8%	43.9%	34.2%	41.3%	32.9%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	51.6%	52.3%	49.1%	50.0%	51.6%	49.0%	53.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	6.2%	10.4%	18.1%	6.1%	14.2%	9.7%	13.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.94	3.03	3.07	2.84	3.09	2.88	3.18
<b>SD</b>	1.41	1.31	1.25	1.39	1.27	1.34	1.29

**Note:** \*B2.2.6 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.6)

Table 8.42 reflects significant proportionality of agreement between the academic levels but also a consistent proportionality of disagreement. The senior academic level reported the lowest proportionality of disagreement and agreement, with 18.1% undecided. The SD of 1.41 in the lower academic level suggests a great deal of variation in the scoring in this particular category.

It is somewhat consistent that the lower academic level (predominantly populated by black academics) reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 42.2% with black respondents disagreeing at 43.9%. This also implies that there was a perception of unfairness amongst respondents regarding the line manager allocating work

amongst academics. Should such perceptions not be addressed in the work environment, they could contribute to an unhealthy institutional culture and less than optimal academic experience, which would challenge the retention of academics. The analysis of the interview data reported in 8.8.9 also identified serious challenges in the working relationship between academics and their line manager. The analysis of policy and related documents in Chapter six (see 3.3.2) also highlighted exiting employees mentioning the poor quality of line managers. In essence, the exiting employees indicated that they were leaving because of the line manager and not the institution (see 6.6.5.3.12).

Table 8.43 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether they are given the space by their line manager to work at their own pace provided they meet quality standards and deadlines.

**TABLE 8.43: WORKING AT INDIVIDUAL PACE**

<b>B2.2.7 I am given the space by my line manager to work at my own pace provided that I meet quality standards and deadlines</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	20.3%	14.9%	5.4%	22.7%	9.1%	18.3%	8.5%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	67.2%	82.1%	81.8%	65.2%	83.4%	75.0%	79.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	12.5%	3.0%	12.8%	12.1%	7.5%	6.7%	12.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.64	3.79	3.95	3.45	3.95	3.69	3.90
<b>SD</b>	1.29	1.16	0.80	1.25	1.00	1.19	1.01

**Note:** \*B2.2.7 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.7)

More than two thirds of respondents were in agreement as reflected in Table 8.43 with the middle and senior academic levels reporting high response rates of 82.1% and 81.8% respectively. The senior academic level reported the lowest proportionality of disagreement at 5.4%. From a racial group point of view, 65.2% of black respondents were in agreement and 22.7% in disagreement. 83.4% of white respondents were in agreement and 9.1% in disagreement. The mean score of 3.95 among the senior academic level and white respondents was the closest response towards agreement.

The dimension reported on in Table 8.43 related to the professional relationship between the academic and his or her line manager provided deliverables were at the required standard. The proportionality of disagreement by the lower academic level at 20.3% suggested that there might have been friction in the relationship between the respondents and their line managers. Interviewees appeared to appreciate the level of accountability that would be attached to being given freedom within one's area of work. The proportionality of disagreement by black and white respondents at 22.7% and 9.1% respectively was significant. This might imply that academics at the lower levels, particularly black staff, require more supervision, mentorship and coaching than white respondents. Together with 12.1% of black respondents who were undecided, this may suggest that there was tension in the working relationship between the academic and the line manager. Should this be the case, it may translate into intention to leave the institution (see 6.6.5.1).

Table 8.44 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that they were more productive when there was a balance between their professional and personal responsibilities.

**TABLE 8.44: BALANCE BETWEEN PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

B2.2.8 I am more productive as an employee if there is a balance between my professional and personal responsibilities							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (APP)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	9.4%	1.5%	1.8%	6.1%	3.4%	2.9%	6.1%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	87.5%	97.0%	85.5%	89.4%	90.9%	93.2%	86.6%
% Undecided	3.1%	1.5%	12.7%	4.5%	5.7%	3.9%	7.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	4.30	4.54	4.20	4.34	4.35	4.50	4.17
SD	1.02	0.68	0.73	0.91	0.81	0.79	0.86

**Note:** \*B2.2.8 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.8)

More than 85.0% of respondents across academic levels were in agreement, as reported in Table 8.44. The mean score per academic level and each racial and gender group was a minimum of 4.00, which implies general agreement towards strongly in agreement. The SD by the lower academic level of 1.02 suggests variation in their responses. Respondents acknowledged without much hesitation that an imbalance between them meeting their professional and personal commitments would affect their productivity as an academic. This implies that the workplace should be supportive of the employee maintaining such a balance (see 5.5.4.2).

Table 8.45 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that flexible working arrangements would support academics with personal responsibilities.

**TABLE 8.45: FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

<b>B2.2.9 Flexible working arrangements would support dual career couples and employees who have additional personal responsibilities, to perform at a higher level</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	7.8%	3.0%	9.1%	7.6%	9.1%	5.7%	6.1%
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	89.1%	94.1%	85.5%	89.4%	90.0%	93.3%	85.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	3.1%	3.0%	7.3%	3.0%	5.0%	1.0%	8.5%
<b>% Undecided</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	4.42	4.57	4.24	4.30	4.47	4.60	4.20
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	0.99	0.70	0.94	1.31	0.81	0.85	0.88
<b>SD</b>	7.8%	3.0%	9.1%	7.6%	9.1%	5.7%	6.1%

**Note: \*B2.2.9 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.2.9)**

The analysis reported in Table 8.44 has a logical flow into the analysis reflected in Table 8.45. The proportionality of agreement at all academic levels was a minimum of 85%. The mean score across academic and racial and gender groups is a minimum of 4.00 (agreement) with the exception of the golden nest life stage category at 3.94. The highest SD is in the golden nest category at 1.24 suggesting a great deal of variation in the responses by this group. The responses reflected in Table 8.45 are consistent with the analysis of literature in Chapter three (see 5.5.4.2) as well as the feedback from the interviews.

The mean score in the couple and family (young or single) categories was at a minimum of 4.50 suggesting a strong move towards strongly in agreement. In these categories, the need for flexible working arrangements are preferred, as reported by respondents, in view of commitments with their children. In certain contexts, academics may also be responsible for the well-being of members of the extended family, which

might include additional financial commitments for the staff member. Interviewees acknowledged the need for flexible working hours but within a structured process underpinned by accountability. Interviewees suggested that high performers should be afforded more flexibility in terms of working hours as opposed to academics who require more supervision.

Interviewees emphasised the use of technology to maintain contact with one's line manager and students. However, some interviewees also placed a premium on regular contact with peers in the workplace to engage in person on matters of academic importance. The analysis of literature reported on in Chapters three and five (see 3.3.2.3 and see 5.5.4.2 respectively) highlights that, while monetary rewards may play a role in influencing the level of motivation of an employee in the workplace, non-monetary rewards, such as work-life balance initiatives may also enhance the competitiveness of the institution. In addition, flexible working hours may support academics with responsibilities attached to child rearing or extended families. However, flexible working hours would not necessarily support an effective mentoring relationship between a novice researcher and a developing academic since the networking cannot be implemented if the latter is working from home.

### **8.5.3 Workplace culture**

Questions B2.3.1 to B2.3.24 related to dynamics within the workplace that may influence the workplace culture. Table 8.46 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether the respondents have a good working relationship with their line manager.

**TABLE 8.46: WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH LINE MANAGER**

B2.3.1 I have a good working relationship with my line manager							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	14.1%	7.5%	10.9%	12.1%	10.0%	5.7%	6.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	76.6%	80.6%	78.2%	75.8%	80.0%	93.2%	85.4%
<b>% Undecided</b>	9.3%	11.9%	10.9%	12.1%	10.0%	1.1%	8.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.91	3.99	3.91	3.82	3.98	3.81	4.10
<b>SD</b>	1.11	0.93	1.11	1.15	0.99	1.15	0.87

**Note: \*B2.3.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.1)**

While more than two thirds of respondents reported general agreement (see Table 8.46), there was some disagreement at the lower academic level (14.1%). The proportion reporting undecidedness and disagreement at each academic level was not significant to suggest a definite challenge being experienced between the academic and his or her line manager. Overall, the mean score was significantly close to agreement with males reporting a mean score of 4.10 and females a score of 3.81. The SD of 1.11 for the lower and senior academic levels suggested variation in terms of the responses by these academic levels.

A healthy working relationship between the academic and his or her line manager is supportive of a healthy institutional culture. The responses in the survey questionnaire rejected what the analysis of literature indicated, namely that staff resign because of the nature and quality of line management (see 6.6.5.3.12). During the interviews, respondents were probed in terms of the quality of their relationship with their line



manager. In view of the sensitivity of the information that respondents were sharing, they first enquired whether the interview was going to be confidential although the interview consent and confidentiality agreement had already been signed at that stage (see 2.2.3.1.4.2). The researcher assured them of anonymity and the confidentiality of the information being shared, within the necessary research ethical provisions.

Black and white interviewees highlighted the effect of tense relationships with line managers on their productivity. Some black academics quoted subtle racism practices by the line manager in the workplace. This was a push factor out of the institution towards an environment more conducive to working in another HEI. Academics who quoted such experiences were still passionate about the academic plan (see 6.6.5.3.1). Some black academics also indicated that the tense relationship with the line manager or peers influenced them positively in that it spurred them on to succeed despite adversity.

Interviewees were also probed regarding the role of a mentor, which the line manager might be playing in the workplace, particularly for junior black academics. Due to the tense nature of the relationship with the line manager, interviewees emphasised that mentorship and coaching should be institutionalised formally with mentors being trained sufficiently. Interviewees added that the line manager would not necessarily be the academic's mentor as the partnership is determined by specific criteria that result in optimal nurturing of the developing academic (see 4.4.6.1).

Table 8.47 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether their line manager accepts the inputs they make.

**TABLE 8.47: ACCEPTANCE OF INPUTS**

<b>B2.3.2 my line manager accepts the inputs I make</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	10.5%	12.8%	19.7%	10.0%	14.4%	6.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	75.1%	74.7%	72.7%	68.2%	77.5%	75.0%	82.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	7.7%	14.8%	14.5%	12.1%	12.5%	10.6%	11.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.83	3.85	3.76	3.60	3.91	3.68	3.99
<b>SD</b>	1.18	1.06	1.10	1.24	1.03	1.19	0.97

**Note:** \*B2.3.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.2)

At least 70% of respondents across the three academic levels were in agreement, as reported in table 47. White respondents reported a higher proportionality of agreement at 77.5% compared to 68.2% of black respondents. The proportionality of disagreement at the lower academic level of 17.2% and proportionality of undecidedness at the middle and senior academic levels of 14.8% and 14.5% respectively may be significant in terms of pointing to a strained relationship between the respondent and his or her line manager.

Black and white interviewees indicated that there was general tolerance in the workplace by line managers to avoid racial tension and involvement by labour unions. While line managers might accept the inputs that are made, some black respondents who were employed mostly at the lower and middle academic levels, were not entirely convinced of the line manager's sincerity. The feedback from interviewees possibly

hinted at a tense working environment that was not conducive to optimal productivity (see 3.3.2.4.2).

Table 8.48 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of whether their line manager cares for their professional well-being.

**TABLE 8.48: PROFESSIONAL WELL-BEING**

B2.3.3 My line manager cares for my professional well-being							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	12.0%	14.5%	16.7%	13.3%	18.3%	7.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	71.9%	71.7%	69.1%	68.2%	72.5%	71.1%	78.0%
<b>% Undecided</b>	10.9%	16.3%	16.4%	15.1%	14.2%	10.6%	14.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.81	3.79	3.65	3.67	3.78	3.66	3.88
<b>SD</b>	1.23	1.04	1.19	1.20	1.13	1.21	1.06

**Note:** \*B2.3.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.3)

From the point of view of the academic, the extent to which he or she is convinced that his or her line manager cares for his or her professional well-being would reflect in the support provided by the line manager towards academic progress. The proportionality of agreement across academic levels reported in Table 8.48 suggests there was a tendency towards agreement by respondents. However, the combination of the proportion of responses at each academic level that either disagreed or were undecided, suggests that the respondents were unsure about whether the line manager supported their professional well-being. The mean score of the senior academic level was lowest at 3.65 although it was a move towards agreement. The

response from a racial point of view was somewhat consistent in terms of agreement, disagreement and undecidedness. The SD of 1.23 at the lower academic level suggests a higher degree of variation in terms of responses than the other academic levels.

Based on the above, it would appear that respondents were leaning towards agreement but there appears to be an element of undecidedness whether their line manager was in support of their academic growth. This might be indicative of a poor relationship between parties, a lack of communication and an absence of a nurturing environment in the workplace. Some interviewees confirmed that minimal engagement took place with line managers thus contributing to a relationship where parties did not actually know or trust each other.

Table 8.49 reports on the perception of academic levels about whether their line manager cares for their personal well-being.

**TABLE 8.49: PERSONAL WELL-BEING**

B2.3.4 My line manager cares for my personal well-being							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	20.4%	16.5%	18.2%	21.2%	13.3%	18.3%	9.8%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	64.1%	62.7%	61.8%	57.6%	72.5%	67.3%	75.6%
<b>% Undecided</b>	15.5%	20.8%	20.0%	21.2%	14.2%	14.4%	14.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.59	3.58	3.53	3.44	3.62	3.51	3.65
<b>SD</b>	1.16	1.17	1.21	1.23	1.15	1.24	1.09

**Note:** \*B2.3.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.4)

In Table 8.48, respondents reported a higher degree of agreement across academic levels in terms of their line manager caring for their professional well-being than in Table 8.49 in terms of their line manager caring for their personal well-being. Less than two thirds of the black and white respondents agreed, as reported in Table 8.49, with 21.2% of black respondents in disagreement. A significant proportionality of respondents was undecided. The mean score across academic and racial and gender groups was a strong move away from undecidedness towards agreement.

It is significant that black respondents reported a proportionality of 57.6% in agreement while white respondents reported a higher proportionality of 72.5% in agreement. The difference may suggest a culture in the workplace where black respondents were not entirely sure whether the line manager had an interest in their personal well-being. Evidence of a line manager caring for an academic's personal well-being is somewhat of a personal choice stemming from a nurturing mind-set to develop the academic staff member holistically. The emphasis on output in the work environment tends to prioritise professional deliverables within agreed deadlines with the focus away from the personal challenges that the academic might be facing at the same time. Interviewees emphasised the positive effect that a caring culture in the workplace had on the achievement of deliverables.

Table 8.50 reports on the experience of the academic levels in terms of whether the line manager is easily accessible.

**TABLE 8.50: ACCESSIBILITY OF LINE MANAGER**

<b>B2.3.5 My line manager is easily accessible</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	14.1%	14.9%	16.3%	12.1%	16.6%	17.3%	12.2%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	75.0%	77.6%	69.1%	78.8%	71.7%	72.1%	76.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	10.9%	7.5%	14.6%	9.1%	11.7%	10.6%	11.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	11.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.86	3.82	3.73	4.07	3.73	3.68	3.96
<b>SD</b>	1.10	1.01	1.08	1.06	1.05	1.09	1.00

**Note: \*B2.3.5 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.5)**

At least two thirds of respondents at each academic level and in each gender and racial group were in agreement, as reported in Table 8.50. The Mean score was consistent across all groups towards agreement, with the black respondents slightly at 4.07. The proportionality of disagreement of 16.6% among white respondents was higher than 12.1% amongst black respondents. This may be attributed to the black respondents who were at the lower academic level at the time of this research, and who required additional guidance and hands-on supervision from the line manager. The responses reported in Table 8.50 point to the relationship between the line manager and the respondents, the managerial competence of the line manager and the need by the respondents for leadership from the line manager.

Interviewees indicated that accessibility by line managers included the line manager's response through emails, and was not restricted to one-to-one engagement in person. Experiences were quoted where line managers were very accessible, nurturing and

supportive. On the other hand, interviewees also indicated that line managers often failed to respond to emails or was not approachable. The effect of the quality of line management on the retention of the academic was emphasised in the literature review reported on in Chapter three (see 3.3.2.4.4.4).

Table 8.51 reports on the experience of the academic levels in terms of whether the institution communicates sufficiently on matters of academic importance. This is further disaggregated in terms of race and gender.

**TABLE 8.51: COMMUNICATION OF ACADEMIC MATTERS**

<b>B2.3.6 My university communicates sufficiently on matters of academic importance</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	20.4%	25.4%	25.5%	25.8%	22.5%	20.1%	28.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	65.6%	65.6%	58.2%	60.6%	65.0%	68.3%	57.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	14.0%	9.0%	16.3%	13.6%	12.5%	11.6%	14.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.59	3.48	3.44	3.51	3.50	3.57	3.43
<b>SD</b>	1.15	1.09	1.00	1.17	1.03	1.03	1.14

**Note: \*B2.3.6 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.6)**

As reported in Table 8.51, less than two thirds of respondents per academic level were in agreement - with the senior academic level the lowest at 58.2% and the highest in terms of proportionality of disagreement at 25.5%. The Mean score of the lower and middle academic level at 3.59 and 3.48 respectively was towards agreement. However, the mean score of the senior academic level was comparatively lower at 3.44. It is possible that, while the senior academic level acknowledged that

communication of a general nature was sufficient, they might have experienced a gap in terms of communication on matters specifically of academic importance, particularly research-related items that appealed to the senior academic level. The SD of 1.17 from black respondents suggests a higher degree of variation amongst their responses compared to the 1.03 from white respondents.

While sufficient time may be devoted to the academic plan, academics may often not know the latest academic developments or challenges that prevail in terms of academic priorities due to the communication tools within the institution not being used optimally (see 6.6.5.1.15). Academics may have preferences in terms of the modes of communication and specific times when institutional information is accessed. On the other hand, given the excessive workload of the academic, the volume of information being shared via email to academics may be overwhelming, resulting in recipients not reading emails and thus not being empowered. This would imply the need for the institution to have a strategic communication and marketing plan in place, which aims for maximum reach and regularly assesses its effect. The timing of communication to members of academe would need to consider the nature of other academic matters that may be priority at any particular point in time (see 6.6.5.1.7).

Table 8.52 reports on the proportionality of experiences by academic levels in terms of staff meetings being held regularly in their department.



**TABLE 8.52: REGULAR STAFF MEETINGS**

B2.3.7 There are regular staff meetings in my department							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	25.4%	21.8%	16.7%	24.2%	26.9%	14.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	68.7%	68.6%	60.0%	71.2%	63.3%	62.5%	70.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	14.1%	6.0%	18.2%	12.1%	12.5%	10.6%	14.5%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.78	3.57	3.51	3.74	3.53	3.52	3.76
<b>SD</b>	1.08	1.14	1.09	1.05	1.12	1.14	1.05

**Note:** \*B2.3.7 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.7)

The mean score across academic levels suggests a move towards agreement. At the same time, the proportionality of disagreement and undecidedness on each academic level is significant. The middle academic level reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 25.4% with the highest SD of 1.14, suggesting a high degree of variation amongst responses. The SD of 1.14 amongst female respondents was also higher than 1.05 for male respondents. The senior academic level reported the lowest proportionality of agreement at 60%.

Table 8.52 suggests that there might be concerns by academics regarding the frequency of staff meetings in the department. The frequency of staff meetings and the content of agenda items give evidence of the quality of communication in the workplace and the promotion of a healthy workplace culture.

The perceptions by respondents in terms of whether staff meetings were held regularly, again might have been influenced by poor communication. There could be a poor

practice of scheduling meetings spontaneously as the norm as opposed to being scheduled electronically in advance in the diaries of academics on dates or times that are convenient. If the same day of the week and time are used for the regular staff meeting, it may become the norm, which could influence the attendance of and participation by academics (see 6.6.5.1.16).

Table 8.53 reports on the proportionality of experiences by academic levels in terms of whether they can speak openly in their staff meeting without fear of victimisation.

**TABLE 8.53: PARTICIPATION IN STAFF MEETING**

<b>B2.3.8 I can speak openly in my staff meeting without fear of victimisation</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	25.0%	25.3%	20.0%	27.3%	21.6%	25.0%	21.9%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	59.4%	58.2%	65.5%	63.6%	59.2%	56.7%	65.9%
<b>% Undecided</b>	15.6%	16.5%	14.5%	9.1%	19.2%	18.3%	12.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.47	3.36	3.49	3.47	3.41	3.31	3.60
<b>SD</b>	1.22	1.24	1.27	1.36	1.18	1.23	1.24

**Note: \*B2.3.8 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.8)**

As reported in Table 8.53, less than two thirds of respondents were in agreement with at least one quarter at the lower and middle academic levels in disagreement. The senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 65.5% compared to the lower and middle academic levels at 59.4% and 58.2% respectively. This may be attributed to the respondents' level of maturity and skill in managing workplace dynamics. The SD of 1.36 amongst black respondents was the highest and

suggested a higher degree of variation in terms of the black responses than white responses. The mean score was consistent across academic levels and racial and gender groups away from being undecided towards agreement.

During the interviews, reported in Chapter eight, black and white interviewees emphasised the need for the interview to be confidential even after signing the confidentiality agreement, for fear of the limiting effect on their career should they share their negative experiences freely. After assuring such interviewees of the research protocols that were being maintained, they shared their personal experiences of subtle discrimination in their workplace. White interviewees acknowledged the tense atmosphere in the workplace, and added that it was somewhat normal given the history of the country. The analysis of interview data reported in Chapter eight confirmed that interviewees were not necessarily free in staff meetings to escalate concerns or share an alternate, less popular, point of view. Some black interviewees highlighted their experience of always having to fit into the workplace culture towards acceptance by white colleagues thus a need to prove themselves continually worthy of being academics. Black academics found the pressure to be counter-productive and resorted to keeping a low profile while networking with academic peers, which affected their academic output positively.

Subtle discriminatory practices, including bullying, appeared to exist in the workplace though this might not be true. This is notwithstanding the implementation of transformation-related policies in the institution. Interviewees suggested that the more academics engage across racial groups about matters of academic importance, the greater the possibility of finding common areas of interest. If collaboration between members of staff on matters of academic importance could be encouraged and mentorship be institutionalised, this may influence research output. Interviewees also suggested purposively group mentors and mentees across racial lines to encourage inter-racial collaboration.

Table 8.54 reports on the proportionality of experiences by academic levels where they might be occasionally excluded from relevant decision-making in their department.

**TABLE 8.54: EXCLUSION FROM DECISION-MAKING**

<b>B2.3.9 I am occasionally excluded from relevant decision-making in my department</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	40.6%	50.7%	40.0%	45.5%	43.3%	44.2%	43.9%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	40.6%	31.4%	50.9%	36.4%	42.5%	41.4%	39.0%
<b>% Undecided</b>	18.8%	17.9%	9.1%	18.1%	14.2%	14.4%	17.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.00	2.78	3.24	2.90	3.03	2.98	3.00
<b>SD</b>	1.26	1.19	1.12	1.31	1.16	1.21	1.20

**Note: \*B2.3.9 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.9)**

In Table 8.54, the mean score of approximately 3.0 across academic levels and racial and gender groups suggests a general response of undecidedness. This suggests that respondents might have been experiencing exclusion from decision-making. These dynamics were probed further during the interviews. The analysis of interview data reflected in Chapter eight (see 8.8.9.6) identified concerns by some black interviewees that, although they had made valuable input into departmental decision-making, the contribution did not filter into the final decision by line management. Within this context, some black interviewees at the lower academic level explained the need to prove themselves continually to their academic colleagues towards acceptance. The researcher noted that the survey item was somewhat ambiguous as the Meaning of term 'occasionally' is relative.

On the other hand, some white interviewees added that the practice of apartheid in South Africa continues to influence their relationship with black counterparts to an

extent despite the best attempts of the white interviewee to network in the workplace. Foreign-born academics who were interviewed cautioned South African academics not to allow the effects of apartheid of the past to continue to influence academic engagement in the present or the future as they had noted that South Africa has immense academic resources, talent and potential.

Table 8.55 reports on the proportionality of experiences by academic levels who had been subjected to racism in their department. This is further disaggregated in terms of race and gender.

**TABLE 8.55: RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE**

B2.3.10 I have been subjected to racism in my department							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	59.4%	65.7%	72.7%	54.6%	71.7%	63.5%	68.3%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	23.4%	28.3%	18.2%	27.3%	21.7%	24.1%	23.2%
<b>% Undecided</b>	17.2%	6.0%	9.1%	18.1%	6.6%	12.4%	8.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.47	2.46	2.18	2.61	2.26	2.41	2.34
<b>SD</b>	1.32	1.37	1.19	1.37	1.25	1.28	1.34

**Note: \*B2.3.10 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.10)**

The mean score reflected in Table 8.55 consistently across academic levels and racial and gender groups is indicative of general disagreement, with some respondents possibly being undecided. The SD of 1.37 is highest amongst the middle academic level and black respondents, suggesting a higher degree of variation amongst responses in that particular category. Generally, the proportionality that disagreed at

any academic level was higher than those that agreed. This suggests that, at the time of this research, racism might not have been practiced actively in the workplace.

The responses by interviewees towards questions that had a racial inclination were somewhat cautious in view of the sensitivity of the matter. Racism was perceived as being subtle with interviewees indicating that reporting it was career limiting. However, interviewees tended to agree that the discriminatory practices in the workplace, blatant or subtle, were not beyond remedy. It called for principled intervention in terms of commitment towards a caring workplace, a nurturing institutional culture, promoting the academic plan as most important in all scenarios. In addition, implementing a sound governance structure that supported not just an equitable workplace but one that promoted a transformed institution was deemed necessary (see 6.6.4.1). While the negative perception of discrimination amongst affected academics prevailed, this may have an influence on the retention of academics, particularly black staff.

Table 8.56 reports on the proportionality of experience by academic levels on the extent to which academic colleagues collaborate with each other and work as a team.

**TABLE 8.56: ACADEMIC COLLABORATION**

<b>B2.3.11 My academic colleagues collaborate with each other and work as a team</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	20.4%	17.9%	14.6%	24.2%	14.1%	11.5%	25.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	68.7%	71.6%	56.3%	66.7%	65.9%	73.1%	57.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	10.9%	10.5%	29.1%	9.1%	20.0%	15.4%	17.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.48	3.60	3.42	3.44	3.55	3.65	3.32
<b>SD</b>	1.15	1.00	0.81	1.20	0.90	0.88	1.12

**Note: \*B2.3.11 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.11)**

The proportionality of agreement at senior academic level as reflected in Table 8.56 was lowest at 56.3% with a significant proportion of 29.1% who were undecided. This may be attributed to senior academics tending to work alone although, at the time of this research, joint research projects were not uncommon. There was a higher proportion of agreement amongst black than among white respondents, although not significant with a higher proportion of whites who were undecided. There was also a higher proportion of blacks who disagreed at 24.2% as opposed to the 14.1% of white respondents. The mean score amongst academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistent towards agreement.

The value-add from institutionalised mentorship was raised in survey item B3.2.1.4. Some interviewees indicated that academic collaboration was quite limited given the tense working environment (see 4.4.6.1.4). Other interviewees provided examples of constructive engagement between junior and senior academics across racial barriers

towards elevated research output. The extent to which flexible working hours are permissible in the workplace should not compromise workplace peer engagement and institutionalised mentorship, which is necessary for academic development (5.5.4.2).

Table 8.57 reports on whether staff opportunities are offered equally in the department at all academic levels.

**TABLE 8.57: EQUAL STAFF OPPORTUNITIES**

B2.3.12 Staff opportunities are offered equally in my department							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	25.4%	12.7%	25.8%	15.0%	18.3%	19.5%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	60.9%	59.7%	70.9%	54.5%	68.4%	62.5%	64.6%
<b>% Undecided</b>	21.9%	14.9%	16.4%	19.7%	16.6%	19.2%	15.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.58	3.33	3.69	3.36	3.62	3.50	3.55
<b>SD</b>	1.24	1.16	0.90	1.25	1.03	1.04	1.23

**Note:** \*B2.3.12 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.12)

As reflected in Table 8.57, senior academics reported the highest proportionality of agreement in comparison to the other academic levels while the middle academic level reporting the highest proportionality of disagreement in comparison to the other academic levels. The proportionality of black respondents at 25.8% who disagreed was significantly higher than whites at 15.0%. The mean score by black respondents was 3.36, which is a move away from undecidedness, while white respondents were at 3.62, which is significantly towards agreement. The SD of 1.25 for black respondents



was highest in comparison to the SD for white respondents, suggesting a greater degree of variation amongst black than white respondents.

In terms of statutory provisions referred to in Chapter six (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1998a), skills development is an equitable opportunity amongst employees. A clear differentiation is made between the development of skills associated with statutory provisions compared to research-related development where funds are generated through academics with high research output. Elevated research output translates into more personal development funds, which results in the attendance of more academic conferences, thus creating more opportunities for research-related collaboration. Research output funds are generated through productive academics themselves and accrue to the academic who publishes research findings.

Should the distribution of workplace skills development funds not be transparently and fairly distributed between all academics in a department, it could result in a tense working environment. Emphasis is therefore on equitable opportunities to employees in a manner that is defensible, transparent, fair and consistent. Any deviation from the ethical management of resources will have a negative effect on the workplace culture and compromise the retention of the academic (see 3.3.2.4.4.6).

Table 8.58 reports on whether the line manager carries out his or her responsibilities with integrity.

**TABLE 8.58: PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES WITH INTEGRITY**

<b>B2.3.13 My line manager carries out his/her responsibilities with integrity</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	15.7%	13.5%	16.4%	18.2%	13.4%	17.3%	12.2%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	64.1%	71.6%	70.9%	62.1%	72.5%	67.3%	70.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	20.2%	14.9%	12.7%	19.7%	14.1%	15.4%	17.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.70	3.79	3.64	3.56	3.78	3.64	3.80
<b>SD</b>	1.24	1.07	1.14	1.24	1.11	1.21	1.07

**Note: \*B2.3.13 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.13)**

In table 8.58, the mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups suggests a strong move towards agreement. The black response of 18.2% who disagreed as opposed to the 13.4% of whites who disagree is also significant. The lower academic level reported 64.1% agreement with 15.7% in disagreement and 20.2% who were undecided. This might suggest incidences in the workplace where respondents, particularly at the lower academic levels, were experiencing their line managers to be unethical and possibly not being held accountable for their conduct.

Interviewees confirmed that line managers who were unethical in their professional role, were often poor role models to junior academics. This emphasises again the importance of sound institutionalised mentorship. If line managers are not performing their duties with integrity, their conduct may affect the smooth functioning of the workplace. It is possible that the academic member of staff who is being supervised may also lack integrity in his or her professional conduct while the line manager acts

in a professional way. This would also affect the quality of the professional working relationship. Aligned to the analysis reported in Table 8.30, the ability to thrive as a lower-level academic in a culture that conflicts with one's personal values, is likely to be compromised.

Table 8.59 reflects a report on whether academic staff can rely on professional input from colleagues in their department.

**TABLE 8.59: COLLEGIAL SUPPORT**

<b>B2.3.14 I can rely on professional input from colleagues in my department</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	10.9%	10.5%	10.9%	12.1%	10.0%	8.6%	13.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	78.2%	79.1%	76.4%	77.3%	78.3%	78.9%	76.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	10.9%	10.4%	12.7%	10.6%	11.7%	12.5%	9.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.91	3.81	3.76	3.86	3.83	3.88	3.77
<b>SD</b>	1.12	0.94	0.86	1.06	0.94	0.93	1.05

**Note: \*B2.3.14 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.14)**

More than two thirds of the respondents reflected in table 8.59 were in agreement in consistent proportions. The mean score was consistent towards agreement across academic levels and racial and gender groups. The mean score of 3.91 was highest for the lower academic level with also the highest SD of 1.12, implying a great deal of variation in the scoring of the respondents at this particular academic level.

The combined proportionality of disagreement and indecision responses at each academic level suggests that some respondents may not have experienced a

workplace supportive of academic collaboration. These dynamics were probed further during the interviews where it was suggested that junior academics should be paired with senior academics, across racial groups within a structured mentorship process, to encourage academic collaboration.

Table 8.60 reports on the experience of academic levels in terms of the extent to which they are able to work flexible working hours.

**TABLE 8.60: FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS**

<b>B2.3.15 I am able to work flexible working hours</b>													
	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Gender group</b>		<b>Racial group</b>		<b>Life stage group</b>				
		<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Black (African / coloured / Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>Couple</b>	<b>Family (young / single)</b>	<b>Family (mature)</b>	<b>Golden nest</b>
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	3.67	3.73	3.57	3.71	3.63	3.71	3.49	3.78	3.54	3.69	3.69	3.74	3.69
<b>SD</b>	1.11	1.12	1.10	1.12	1.12	1.09	1.10	1.07	1.36	1.11	0.99	1.14	1.14
<b>% Dis-agreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	18.3%	17.2%	20.9%	16.4%	19.2%	17.1%	24.2%	15.0%	11.4%	2.9%	3.9%	4.3%	12.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	72.6%	70.3%	73.1%	74.5%	71.2%	74.4%	60.6%	79.2%	85.7%	97.1%	92.2%	91.4%	68.6%
<b>% Undecided</b>	9.1%	12.5%	6.0%	9.1%	9.6%	8.5%	15.2%	5.8%	2.9%	0%	3.9%	4.3%	18.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*B2.3.15 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.15)

The mean score reflected in Table 8.60 across academic levels and gender and racial groups is a move away from undecidedness towards agreement, in varying degrees. At least 70% of respondents tended to agree with the middle academic level reporting the highest disagreement proportion at 20.9%. The couple, family (young or single) and family (mature) recorded a mean score towards 3.7, which was a move towards agreement.

The analyses reported in Tables 8.8 and 8.14 highlighted that many academics have young families thus implying the responsibility of raising young children amid a demanding academic role. Interviewees expressed the benefit of flexible working hours as it supported their primary caregiver role and support towards an extended family while enabling them to meet academic responsibilities. Younger academics belonging to generations Y and Z who did not have dependents at the time of this research, supported flexible working hours to attend to personal lifestyle preferences such as going to a gym before work. This particular generation of interviewees also highlighted that line managers did not always appreciate that academics can work from remote locations and meet their deliverables; thus emphasising the trend towards the workplace being a virtual space (see 5.5.4.2).

Academics who were interviewed mentioned that on days when they did not have a consulting, managerial or teaching responsibility, they preferred to finalise their workload at home in an uninterrupted space rather than be office-bound. However, their line manager insisted that they still had to go to the office as it was difficult to supervise an academic otherwise. The interviewees indicated that they were disturbed in the office by students who either did not make appointments or who came to see them as a result of unforeseen institutional matters. Within this context, the interviewees suggested that their line managers should be more amenable to flexing working arrangements within a sound process that achieves the necessary deliverables. It appears that by insisting that an academic work in the office at all times, the line manager was trying to manage a poor-performing academic with hands-on supervision and a one-size-fits-all approach at the expense of a well-performing academic who was in need of flexible working hours.

At the time of the research, interviewees suggested that where flexible working arrangements were an informal arrangement, it might not be managed in a transparent and fair manner; hence, their suggestion that not only should more flexibility be

considered but the flexible arrangement itself should be governed by a consulted policy that accommodates the personal and professional needs of academics. Interviewees indicated that the inability to work flexible hours and working long hours consistently were taking a serious toll on their marriage and, in some cases, had resulted in divorce. Some interviewees said that, if the extended hours did not ease in the near future, they would be leaving academe for the private sector (see 5.5.4.2).

Table 8.61 reports on the extent of agreement of academic levels in terms of whether they had adequate administrative support to finalise their research outputs.

**TABLE 8.61: ADEQUATE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

<b>B2.3.16 I have adequate administrative support to finalise my research outputs</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	45.2%	64.2%	43.6%	45.5%	55.0%	61.6%	39.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	40.7%	20.9%	36.3%	42.4%	26.7%	21.1%	46.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	14.1%	14.9%	20.1%	12.1%	18.3%	17.3%	14.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.86	2.40	2.82	2.84	2.58	2.46	2.96
<b>SD</b>	1.31	1.09	1.16	1.25	1.15	1.11	1.25

**Note: \*B2.3.16 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.16)**

In table 8.61, 64.2% of respondents at the middle academic level were in disagreement and reported a 2.40 mean score, which implied a slight move away from disagreement towards undecidedness. The lower and senior academic levels reported a stronger move away from disagreement towards undecidedness through a Mean score of 2.86

and 2.82 respectively. The SD of 1.31 at the lower academic level suggested a higher degree of variation amongst the respondents' scores.

The analysis reported in Table 8.61 is linked to Tables 8.35 to 8.38 and Chapter three (see 3.3.2.4.4.2). Interviewees highlighted the excessive workload with minimal administrative support as a significant push factor to finalise their research output. They added that academics often leave the profession for less stressful working environments, possibly even with a pay cut. Interviewees highlighted the need for a scientific model that was consulted with academics towards equitable workload distribution. Interviewees suggested that a generic framework could exist in higher education, which institutions could subsequently adapt for internal use. It was further suggested that the allocation of human resources to a department must be done as scientifically as possible and be aligned to, amongst others, the workload of the department.

Table 8.62 reports on the extent of agreement by academic levels that labour unions support the academic priorities.



**TABLE 8.62: LABOUR UNIONS SUPPORT**

<b>B2.3.17 Labour unions support the academic priorities</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	23.5%	25.4%	25.4%	18.2%	28.4%	19.2%	31.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	35.9%	29.9%	34.6%	36.4%	31.6%	40.4%	24.4%
<b>% Undecided</b>	40.6%	44.7%	40.0%	45.4%	40.0%	40.4%	43.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.09	2.90	3.04	3.16	2.94	3.17	2.79
<b>SD</b>	1.20	1.09	1.15	1.11	1.15	1.10	1.17

**Note: \*B2.3.17 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.17)**

The mean score in Table 8.62 was consistently around undecidedness across academic levels and racial and gender groups. Each academic level reported a minimum proportionality of 40% for the undecidedness dimension. Since the purpose of labour unions is to represent the interests of their constituents (see 6.6.3), the proportion of the academics who were undecided is significant. This might imply that labour unions might not be quite successful in convincing academics of the union's efforts in support of the academic plan. This might also imply that respondents were not sure whether labour unions actually represented their interests in institutional bargaining forums. This might be a result of negotiated agreements that were implemented but which were not entirely supportive of academic concerns in the workplace. At the time of this research, there might also have been a gap between the work of the labour union and the quality and frequency of the feedback that academics needed but might not have been receiving at that stage.

Some interviewees indicated that, at the time of this research, labour unions were not functioning in their institution due to the breakdown in their relationship with management and as a result of the concerns in South African higher education at that stage. While institutions were forced to close due to protest action, at the time of this research and instability prevailed, access to higher education would be compromised thus affecting the achievement of academic deliverables. The *#FeesMustFall* campaign and the insourcing challenge refer to the demand by students for free education and permanent employment of employees where services were outsourced respectively. Interviewees were not convinced that labour unions support academic priorities when they shared their experience of how the *#FeesMustFall* campaign and the insourcing challenge were being managed. In the broader context, the instability within HEIs may influence the throughput rates and enrolment of future students (DoE, 2009; DHET, 2015). The instability may also influence the credibility of institutions (CLC, 2004). Interviewees indicated that academics placed a large premium on the stability and credibility of institutions (see 8.9.3).

Table 8.63 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of whether their employer prioritised matters of academic importance.

**TABLE 8.63: PRIORITISING ACADEMIC MATTERS**

<b>B2.3.18 My employer prioritises matters of academic importance e.g. professional development opportunities</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	18.7%	22.4%	16.3%	13.6%	22.5%	14.4%	25.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	64.1%	55.2%	58.2%	63.6%	56.7%	65.4%	51.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	17.2%	22.4%	25.5%	22.8%	20.8%	20.2%	23.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.55	3.36	3.45	3.59	3.37	3.58	3.29
<b>SD</b>	1.22	1.10	0.94	1.14	1.07	0.95	1.24

**Note: \*B2.3.18 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.18)**

The proportionality of agreement in Table 8.63 was highest at the lower academic level (64.1%) with the middle academic level reporting the highest proportion of disagreement at 22.4%. At least 25% of the senior academic level was undecided. The Mean score was consistent across academic levels and racial and gender groups moving away in varying degrees from undecided towards agreement. The mean scores for the female group and for the white racial group were 3.58 and 3.37 respectively compared to the 3.29 for the males and 3.59 for the black respondents. This suggests that females and white respondents were more inclined towards agreement. 63.6% of black respondents agreed that the employer prioritises matters of academic importance compared to 56.7% of white respondents.

The analysis suggests that respondents were not entirely sure whether their employer was committed to the academic plan. The uncertainty might have been a result of the employer not living up to the vocal commitments made by the employer in terms of

matters of academic importance e.g. professional development opportunities, especially if respondents consider decisions that affect the academic sector negatively. In addition, there might have been a perceived break in communication between senior academic leaders and institutional leaders on matters of academic importance due to possibly poor leadership capability (see 4.4.6.1.8). Further, bureaucratic processes and the lack of resource support to the academic sector might have been contributing factors. Interviewees emphasised the premium they placed on the integrity of institutional leadership particularly towards academic priorities. They added that the credibility of an institution is enhanced by capable leadership.

#### 8.5.4 Psychological contract within workplace culture

Table 8.64 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of whether their employer had made promises to them.

**TABLE 8.64: PROMISES BY EMPLOYER TO EMPLOYEE**

B2.3.19 To what extent has your employer (implicitly or explicitly) made promises to you?							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>1 (not at all)</b>	9.4%	9.0%	9.1%	7.6%	10.0%	6.7%	12.2%
<b>2 (to a limited extent)</b>	14.1%	4.5%	18.2%	12.1%	11.7%	13.5%	9.8%
<b>3 (to a reasonable extent)</b>	32.8%	41.8%	36.4%	43.9%	33.3%	38.5%	35.4%
<b>4 (to a great extent)</b>	25.0%	37.3%	29.1%	21.2%	35.8%	30.8%	30.5%
<b>5 (to a very great extent)</b>	18.7%	7.4%	7.2%	15.2%	9.2%	10.5%	12.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.30	3.30	3.07	3.23	3.23	3.25	3.21
<b>SD</b>	1.20	1.00	1.07	1.12	1.10	1.04	1.16

**Note:** \*B2.3.19 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.19)

In Table 8.64, the mean score for each academic level is at a minimum of 3.00. This score is consistent with the mean score for all respondents across all groups. The SD of 1.20 is highest among the lower academic level suggesting a greater variation in scoring in that particular category. The data suggests that respondents were of the view that their employer had made significant promises to them, implicitly or explicitly. An example could be that the employer had promised employees performance-related remuneration but after employees had excelled, affordability concerns prevented the employer from fulfilling the promise. This would imply that the employer had a psychological contract with the academic, which he or she is expecting the employer to deliver.

Based on the review of literature in Chapter three (see 3.3.2.2.2), promises made by the employer could have been part of advertisements to recruit academics into vacant positions. In addition, the manner in which material was conveyed at the introduction and orientation into the workplace might also have been tinged with promises by the employer, which were absorbed into the employee's reality. Throughout the employment of the academic, the employer might inadvertently have been making promises to the employee through its policies and practices towards a certain standard of return on investment. The emphasis on high-performing institutions implies an undertaking made by the employer towards the employee, namely that if he or she performed to a standard of excellence, he or she would receive a monetary reward. Should there be financial sustainability concerns within the institution, which require resources to be re-allocated in the interest of institutional priorities and which are not necessarily academic in nature, employees might lose faith in the credibility of the employer.

Table 8.65 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of how well their employer fulfils its commitments to them.

**TABLE 8.65: FULFILMENT OF COMMITMENTS BY EMPLOYER TO EMPLOYEE**

B2.3.20 Overall, how well does your employer fulfil its commitments to you?							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>1 (not at all)</b>	12.5%	3.0%	7.3%	6.1%	8.3%	4.8%	11.0%
<b>2 (to a limited extent)</b>	9.4%	23.9%	7.3%	18.2%	11.7%	13.5%	14.6%
<b>3 (to a reasonable extent)</b>	42.2%	34.3%	41.8%	43.9%	36.7%	38.5%	40.2%
<b>4 (to a great extent)</b>	23.4%	32.8%	40.0%	19.7%	38.3%	39.4%	22.0%
<b>5 (to a very great extent)</b>	12.5%	6.0%	3.6%	12.1%	5.0%	3.8%	12.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.14	3.15	3.25	3.14	3.20	3.24	3.10
<b>SD</b>	1.15	0.96	0.93	1.03	1.00	0.91	1.14

**Note: \*B2.3.20 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.20)**

The mean score per academic level at a minimum of 3.10 suggests a favourable perception by the respondents towards the employer fulfilling its commitments to the respondents. The senior academic level reported the highest mean score of 3.25. White respondents responded slightly more favourably than blacks at a mean score of 3.20. The proportionality of whites at 38.3% compared to black respondents at 19.7% who agreed to a large extent that overall, the employer fulfils its commitments to the employee, is significant. This suggests that the black respondent might have had a concern towards the employer. These dynamics were probed further during the interviews. The highest proportionality of black respondents was at 43.9% where they agreed to a reasonable extent. Females responded more favourably than males at a mean score of 3.24.

The overall response by respondents reflected in Table 8.65 was favourable. However, since none of the mean scores was 4.00 or higher, it is suggested that respondents were not entirely convinced that their employer had fulfilled its commitments towards them. The analysis of literature in Chapter three (see 3.3.2.4.2) highlighted the importance of institutional health surveys or retention surveys to determine gaps in the EVP of the employer that might be contributing towards employees' intention to leave. Interviewees mentioned the credibility that their employer had lost as a result of unethical leadership or consistent unfair practices. Interviewees placed a high premium on sound governance and a trustworthy employer towards their retention.

Table 8.66 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of whether their employer lived up to its promises to them.

**TABLE 8.66: FULFILMENT OF PROMISES BY EMPLOYER TO EMPLOYEE**

<b>B2.3.21 In general, how well does your employer live up to its promises to you?</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>1 (not at all)</b>	7.8%	3.0%	7.3%	4.6%	6.7%	2.9%	9.8%
<b>2 (to a limited extent)</b>	12.5%	28.4%	12.7%	18.2%	18.3%	16.3%	20.7%
<b>3 (to a reasonable extent)</b>	37.5%	34.3%	40.0%	39.4%	35.8%	36.5%	37.8%
<b>4 (to a great extent)</b>	31.3%	26.9%	36.4%	25.8%	34.2%	39.4%	20.7%
<b>5 (to a very great extent)</b>	10.9%	7.5%	3.6%	12.1%	5.0%	4.8%	11.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.25	3.07	3.16	3.20	3.13	3.27	3.02
<b>SD</b>	1.07	0.99	0.96	1.00	0.99	0.89	1.12

**Note:** \*B2.3.21 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.21)

Overall, the mean scores in Table 8.66 suggest that respondents were not negative in their response but were also not overly positive. The trend in all academic levels and in all racial and gender groups was towards a rating of 4 with the lower academic level and black respondents at a minimum of 3.20. The SD of 1.12 for male respondents suggested a high variation in terms of the scoring in that category.

The use of institutional health surveys and exit interviews as well as surveys that target the intention to leave the institution would likely support the employer to determine the perception that the employee has towards the institution. The results may also reflect how healthy the culture in the institution was at the time of this research. This implies that any negative perception could be addressed through timely remedial interventions by the employer (see 3.3.2.4.3).

Table 8.67 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of the extent to which they have made promises to the institution.

**TABLE 8.67: EMPLOYEE PROMISES TO THE EMPLOYER**

<b>B2.3.22 To what extent have you made promises (implicitly or explicitly) to the institution?</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>Not at all</b>	10.9%	4.5%	7.3%	7.6%	7.5%	3.8%	12.2%
<b>2</b>	7.8%	10.4%	5.5%	7.6%	8.3%	6.7%	9.8%
<b>3</b>	37.5%	37.3%	36.4%	36.4%	37.5%	38.5%	35.4%
<b>4</b>	35.9%	40.3%	43.6%	34.9%	42.5%	44.2%	34.1%
<b>A very great extent</b>	7.8%	7.5%	7.3%	13.6%	4.2%	6.7%	8.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.22	3.36	3.38	3.41	3.28	3.43	3.17
<b>SD</b>	1.08	0.93	0.97	1.07	0.95	0.87	1.12

**Note:** \*B2.3.22 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.22)



In table 8.67, it is reflected how, through a consistent Mean score of a minimum of 3.22 across academic levels and gender and racial groups, respondents acknowledged that they had made promises to the institution. The acknowledgement was higher at the middle academic level (3.36) and highest at the senior academic level (3.38) with the SD at the lower academic level the highest at 1.08 suggesting a high degree of variation in terms of the responses in this category.

Respondents would recall promises that they had made to the employer through their performance-related agreements pertaining to academic deliverables and agreements pertaining to the confidentiality of discussions that were held. In addition, respondents made promises in appointment letters that were acknowledged or used memoranda of agreement that were entered into between the academic and the employer. As an example, a respondent would have committed in writing to excellent performance towards achieving a high-performing institution (see 5.5.4.4.1).

Table 8.68 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of how well they were fulfilling their commitments to the institution. The retention of academics, particularly black staff, may be influenced if black staff perceive they have not fulfilled their commitments to the institution.

**TABLE 8.68: FULFILMENT OF COMMITMENTS MADE BY EMPLOYEE TO THE EMPLOYER**

B2.3.23 Overall, how well have you fulfilled your commitments to the institution?							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (APP)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>Not at all</b>	1.6%	0%	1.8%	0%	1.7%	0%	2.4%
<b>2</b>	1.6%	6.0%	0%	4.6%	1.7%	1.0%	4.9%
<b>3</b>	14.1%	16.4%	10.9%	16.7%	12.5%	13.5%	14.6%
<b>4</b>	57.8%	58.2%	65.5%	59.1%	60.8%	67.3%	51.2%
<b>A very great extent</b>	25.0%	19.4%	21.8%	19.7%	23.3%	18.3%	26.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	4.03	3.91	4.05	4.00	4.03	4.03	3.95
<b>SD</b>	0.78	0.77	0.70	0.70	0.76	0.61	0.91

**Note:** \*B2.3.23 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.23)

The mean score in Table 8.68 is consistent towards a rating of 4.0. The Mean score of the senior academic level is the highest at 4.05. Overall, respondents were of the view that they had delivered on their promise made in the psychological contract. The responses might have been biased in that the respondents might have been subjective in their responses. On the other hand, the employer would be judging whether the academic had actually delivered on his/her commitments to the institution. The employer would gauge this through effective performance management of the academic and an assessment of performance indicators at departmental, college or faculty level, portfolio level up to institutional level. Deliverables in the performance agreement must therefore be aligned to institutional imperatives. Non-alignment would imply poor performance management within the institution and a wasteful investment of valuable resources. This in turn would compromise the financial sustainability of the institution trying to retain black academic staff, which, in turn, would affect the

possibility of providing the necessary supportive mechanisms that have a financial effect (DoE, 2009).

Table 8.69 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of how well they had fulfilled their promises to the institution.

**TABLE 8.69: EMPLOYEE FULFILMENT OF PROMISES MADE TO THE EMPLOYER**

B2.3.24 Overall, how well have you fulfilled your promises to the institution?							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>Not at all</b>	3.1%	0%	1.8%	1.5%	1.7%	0.0%	3.7%
<b>2</b>	1.6%	3.0%	0%	3.0%	0.8%	0.0%	3.7%
<b>3</b>	21.9%	25.4%	16.4%	22.7%	20.8%	23.1%	19.5%
<b>4</b>	51.6%	55.2%	60.0%	54.6%	55.8%	62.5%	46.3%
<b>A very great extent</b>	21.9%	16.4%	21.8%	18.2%	20.8%	14.4%	26.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.88	3.85	4.00	3.86	3.93	3.91	3.89
<b>SD</b>	0.88	0.72	0.75	0.82	0.77	0.61	0.97

**Note:** \*B2.3.24 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (2.3.24)

Employment promises would generally entail informal commitments made to the employer by the employee. The responses in Table 8.69 was consistent with the analysis of information reported in Table 8.68. Respondents generally acknowledged (Mean score consistently towards 4.00) that they had substantially fulfilled their promises to the institution which, unlike a commitment, would not necessarily have been recorded in writing between stakeholders. The extent to which a promise has been fulfilled can only be tested when the promise has translated into a formal commitment (Sutton & Griffin, 2004:493-514; Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2008:4-31).

### 8.5.6 Summary

It appeared that respondents at the lower and middle academic levels were experiencing that promotion requirements in their department were not entirely fair as opposed to the senior academic level who did not have the same experience. Respondents generally reported on the perceived negative effect of inconsistent promotion criteria between colleges and faculties at their institution and on their retention in academe. There appeared to be concerns associated with the equal awarding of promotional posts to qualifying academics suggesting that unfair practices might be compromising a sound promotional process. Aligned to the concern that advertised vacant posts generally take very long to be filled, it appeared that the same concern existed for the filling of vacant promotional posts.

Respondents were overwhelmingly in agreement in terms of their perception that the excessive workload - which was exacerbated by the pressing need to manage administrative non-academic-related matters - severely affected their retention. There appeared to be a need for additional support to manage the administrative responsibilities. The time concerns resulted in academics experiencing little to no work-life balance and created challenges in terms of their personal commitments and conducting research, teaching and fulfilling community engagement commitments. Respondents were acutely aware that the research output was crucial for promotional purposes in academe. The lower and middle academic levels also pointed to inadequate time for teaching responsibilities in view of the excessive workload. It appeared that the principles underpinning the workload model were not communicated sufficiently to all academics in the workplace and the application of the workload model was not fair, consistent and transparent.

Respondents appeared to experience uneven distribution of the workload by the line manager to academics in the department pointing to an unhealthy workplace culture. Respondents experienced sufficient space to complete their work but again voiced a need for more flexible working hours to manage their professional and personal responsibilities.

There appeared to be tense professional relationships between line managers and respondents in certain environments. This became evident after the interviews had been finalised. Subtle discriminatory practices in the workplace, including racist

practices to the perceived disadvantage of the black academic, were reported on during the interviews. This was particularly concerning at the lower academic level where close supervision, mentorship and coaching as well as on-the-job training by the line manager are crucial for the retention of the academic and his or her progression to more senior academic levels. The feedback also pointed to line managers requiring additional training in terms of ethical performance of their duties as well as managing employees and their needs towards optimal performance. Generally, it appeared that line managers were easily accessible to the reporting academic but the culture within the workplace was far from ideal.

Respondents and interviewees indicated that their employer communicated sufficiently on matters of institutional importance; however, there was room for improvement in terms of communication on matters of academic importance. Regular staff meetings in the workplace might have been taking place; however, the agenda and time allocated could be optimised to influence academic morale, empowerment of lower-level academics, building networks between academics at the same and different levels that support academic collaboration, influencing mentorship and coaching within the department and limiting racial tension in the workplace.

Feedback generally pointed to labour unions not being very effective in promoting the academic agenda. In addition, line managers, particularly white members of staff, appeared to be experiencing discomfort associated with black lower-level academics approaching labour unions prematurely to resolve workplace disagreement before the matter could be resolved internally. Based on the consistent feedback from the respondents and interviewees, there appeared to be a misalignment between what the commitments and promises of the employer were and what was delivered upon. The misalignment would have affected workplace morale and trust in the employer, thereby affecting retention.

## **8.6 ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS PERTAINING TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

This section pertains to matters related to training and development, which emanate from utilising performance management as a developmental tool. This section is also aligned to research objective seven as articulated in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

### 8.6.1 Performance management

Table 8.70 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether the application of the performance rating scale at their university is fair.

**TABLE 8.70: APPLICATION OF PERFORMANCE RATING SCALE**

B3.1.1 The application of the performance rating scale in my university is fair							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	48.4%	47.8%	36.4%	42.4%	45.8%	46.2%	42.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	31.3%	29.8%	34.5%	34.9%	30.0%	30.7%	32.9%
<b>% Undecided</b>	20.3%	22.4%	29.1%	22.7%	24.2%	23.1%	24.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.63	2.57	2.91	2.76	2.66	2.67	2.71
<b>SD</b>	1.25	1.25	1.08	1.25	1.18	1.12	1.31

**Note:** \*B3.1.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.1)

The mean score consistently across academic levels and racial and gender groups suggests a response between undecidedness and disagreement in terms of whether the performance rating scale used by their university was fair. The lower and middle academic levels reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 48.4% and 47.8% and SDs at 2.63 and 2.57 respectively, thereby suggesting a higher degree of variation in terms of the responses in these two particular categories. The senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 34.5% with the lowest SD at 1.08 implying not much variation, in comparison, amongst the respondents in that particular category.

Interviewees emphasised that the performance rating scale at their university was not necessarily problematic; however, the application of the rating scale was unfair as it was tinged by the subjectivity of the line manager. At the same time, the minute 0.1 calibrations of the performance rating scale of 1-5 also resulted in it being a 50-point as opposed to a 5-point scale thus implying the scope for subjectivity and irregular practices to influence the academic's score relative also to his or her peer in the same department. Interviewees strongly urged that academic experts should partner with HR professionals to create a performance management system that was unique to the needs of academics. In some institutions, performance management had been put on hold due to a breakdown in engagement between management and labour unions. The need was emphasised for a credible performance management policy to exist. The absence of such policy had an effect on a sound governance framework and the morale of staff. This in turn, compromised employee retention at the institution (see 3.3.4).

Table 8.71 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether academics in their department were assessed by line managers according to the same standard.

**TABLE 8.71: CONSISTENT ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMICS**

<b>B3.1.2 Academics in my department are assessed by our line managers according to the same standard</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	39.1%	43.3%	30.9%	37.9%	38.4%	39.4%	36.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	42.2%	40.3%	47.3%	36.4%	46.6%	43.3%	42.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	18.7%	16.4%	21.8%	25.7%	15.0%	17.3%	20.7%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.88	2.82	3.11	2.85	2.96	2.88	2.96
<b>SD</b>	1.21	1.24	1.03	1.12	1.22	1.18	1.17

**Note: \*B3.1.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.2)**

The responses reflected in Table 8.71 is aligned to the analysis reported in Table 8.70. The proportionality of agreement was highest among the senior academic level (47.3%) while the proportionality of disagreement was highest among the middle academic level (43.3%). The spread of responses between agreement and disagreement across academic levels was somewhat consistent with a significant proportion of all respondents who were undecided. The mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently a move away from being in disagreement (2.0) towards being undecided (score of 3.0).

Interviewees highlighted how performance reviews were used by line managers to vent the latter's frustration about conflict or areas of disagreement in the workplace, thus implying that the eventual performance rating was not necessarily a true assessment of the academic's performance in terms of actual deliverables (see 4.4.3.6). In addition, interviewees added that performance management was somewhat non-existent in



their institution due to a breakdown between labour unions and management relating to the unfairness of the existing system. Within this context, the academic was being managed purely against the standards that were agreed upon at the beginning of the year. They added that there was no incentive for exceeding standards.

The analysis of survey and interview data as well as the review of literature reflected in Chapter four, points to line managers not being trained in the principles of effective performance management (see 4.4.3.8). An existing stressful work environment, caused by high student numbers, unprepared students being admitted, and an excessive administrative workload, is aggravated by poor performance management of academics. This may also imply that the performance management system is used to serve self-interests and ulterior motives. Within such a context, convincing employees about the credibility of the actual performance management system and its application will influence the workplace culture, which in turn will affect the retention of all academics, including black staff.

Table 8.72 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether they can decide on some of their own performance objectives.

**TABLE 8.72: FREEDOM TO DECIDE ON OWN PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES**

B3.1.3 I can decide on some of my own performance objectives							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	31.3%	17.9%	10.9%	21.2%	20.0%	22.2%	18.3%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	56.2%	73.1%	72.7%	63.6%	69.2%	66.4%	68.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	12.5%	9.0%	16.4%	15.2%	10.8%	11.4%	13.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.16	3.63	3.71	3.38	3.55	3.43	3.56
<b>SD</b>	1.28	1.01	0.85	1.00	1.13	1.10	1.09

**Note:** \*B3.1.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.3)

From a mean score point of view, the responses reflected in Table 8.72 suggest that respondents generally were moving away from undecidedness towards agreement. The middle academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 73.1%. The lower academic level reported the lowest proportionality of agreement at 56.2% and the highest proportionality of disagreement at 31.3%. The lower academic level comprised predominantly black academic staff. It is possible that they might still require close supervision in their professional development and hence might not have had the flexibility to decide on some of their own performance objectives. On the other hand, the middle and senior academic levels were dominated by white academics who might have progressed in their academic career to the extent that they were afforded a degree of flexibility by their line manager in deciding on some of their own performance objectives.

The ability of the line manager and the academic to engage on performance standards and deliverables augurs well for effective performance management (see 4.4.3.1). Interviewees emphasised the importance of a credible performance management system contributing to a healthy workplace culture within the department. These dimensions were also highlighted in Chapter four of this dissertation (see 4.4.3).

Table 8.73 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels on how empowered academics reported feeling after their performance review.

**TABLE 8.73: EFFECT OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

<b>B3.1.4 I feel empowered after my performance review with my line manager</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	37.6%	40.3%	30.9%	31.8%	39.1%	38.4%	34.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	40.5%	35.8%	40.0%	43.9%	35.9%	35.6%	42.6%
<b>% Undecided</b>	21.9%	23.9%	29.1%	24.3%	25.0%	26.0%	23.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.95	2.85	3.07	3.01	2.89	2.84	3.10
<b>SD</b>	1.30	1.23	1.20	1.29	1.21	1.22	1.27

**Note: \*B3.1.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.4)**

In Table 8.73, it is reflected that the middle academic level reported the highest degree of disagreement at 40.3% while the lower academic level reported the highest degree of agreement at 40.5%. There was at least a 20.0% proportionality of indecision at each academic level which, if combined with the proportionality of disagreement on each academic level, may be significant. The statistics tend to suggest that

respondents may generally have been experiencing the performance review process to be challenging. This was probed further during the interviews.

Where performance management was still being practiced in an institution, interviewees were quite vocal about the anxious performance review sessions in which they participated. Academics cited a build-up of fear and anxiety in preparation for a performance review session. The tense environment that was reported could imply some unfairness in the performance rating of the academic as well as anxiety associated with poor performance by the academic. Line managers also highlighted the effect of poor performing academics lodging complaints with labour unions prematurely before their concerns could be resolved with the line manager. This tendency by academics appeared to generate racial tension, particularly when the line manager and labour union representative were from different racial groups. To avoid having to deal with labour unions, line managers often allocated the minimum rating to a poor performing academic, which generally points to meeting the standard performance. The challenges that were highlighted by interviewees suggested a need for academics, line managers and labour unions to be trained in the principles of performance management (see 4.4.3.4).

Since performance ratings were aligned to monetary reward at UP and Unisa at the time of this research, interviewees expressed that they would comfortably forfeit the monetary reward to avoid the stress of the performance review and injustice with which their performance had been dealt with. Interviewees added that a more consulted performance management system might be suggested by academic subject matter experts in the area of performance management.

Table 8.74 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels to be rewarded purely on their performance as an academic.

**TABLE 8.74: PERFORMANCE-RELATED REWARD**

<b>B3.1.5 I want to be rewarded purely on my performance as an academic</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	12.5%	20.9%	18.1%	12.1%	20.0%	18.2%	15.8%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	70.3%	62.7%	67.4%	74.3%	62.5%	63.5%	70.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	17.2%	16.4%	14.5%	13.6%	17.5%	18.3%	13.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.78	3.58	3.75	3.87	3.58	3.57	3.87
<b>SD</b>	1.02	1.09	1.14	1.00	1.10	1.04	1.11

**Note: \*B3.1.5 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.5)**

Across academic levels and racial and gender groups, the mean scores reflected in table 8.73 were consistent towards agreement. The proportionality of agreement of 70.3% was highest at the lower academic level. The senior academic level reported the highest SD of 1.14 in terms of their response with a proportionality of 67.3% in agreement and 18.1% in disagreement. Black respondents reported 74.3% agreement proportionality compared to 62.5% of white respondents.

All interviewees, particularly black academic staff, emphasised that they were in principle not opposed to the alignment between monetary reward and performance. However, they objected to the alignment if the performance management system was flawed in its application. Interviewees experienced the application of the performance management system to be demotivating, subjective and a push factor out of the institution. Black and white interviewees were adamant that given a supportive and caring workplace culture where the talent in the academic could be nurtured as well as

a sound governance framework for performance management, their performance against academic deliverables could exceed expectations. Interviewees also indicated that monetary incentives for extraordinary performance and exceeding deliverables have to be institutionalised to have a positive effect on the attraction and retention of academics.

The analysis reported in table 8.74 was aligned to the analyses reported in tables 8.70 to 8.73. The credibility of a performance management and recognition system as well as the implementation thereof, is crucial to a positive experience by the academic. Interviewees highlighted the dimensions they regarded as important to their retention, such as a credible institution, professional development opportunities, a healthy workplace culture and competitive rewards. All reward elements within a reward model are interdependent. By implication, therefore, if one dimension is compromised, it would have a ripple effect on the effectiveness of the other dimensions (see 5.5.5.2.3).

Table 8.75 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels to be rewarded purely on their years of service in the institution.

**TABLE 8.75: REWARD RELATED TO YEARS OF SERVICE**

<b>B3.1.6 I want to be rewarded purely on my years of service in the institution</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	51.6%	65.6%	72.7%	54.6%	67.5%	62.5%	63.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	21.8%	13.5%	9.1%	25.8%	20.0%	13.5%	17.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	26.6%	20.9%	18.2%	19.6%	12.5%	24.0%	19.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.61	2.39	2.15	2.53	2.30	2.36	2.44
<b>SD</b>	1.16	1.03	0.93	1.15	1.01	0.99	1.15

**Note: \*B3.1.6 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.6)**

The analyses reported in Tables 8.74 and 8.75 are related. Table 8.74 shows that respondents were somewhat in agreement towards being rewarded purely on their performance. In Table 8.75 and based on the mean score per academic and racial and gender group, it is indicated that respondents generally disagreed towards being undecided. Black respondents recorded a 54.6% disagreement while whites recorded a 67.5% disagreement. The Mean score of senior academics was the lowest of all at 2.15, suggesting a position of disagreement rather than of undecidedness.

The emphasis on performance in the academic sector is aligned to the sharp focus on research output (Wits, 2013). Interviewees commented on the pressure that the research focus as well as the excessive workload was creating on academic staff. Interviewees were generally in agreement that reward should be based on performance but cautioned that the employer should provide a supportive environment conducive to high performance and the nurturing of talent. This implies also that

academics support a reward system aligned solely to their performance, provided that the performance management system and process are transparent, fair, defensible, consistent and empowering (see 4.4.3.6).

Table 8.76 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that they were being rewarded for exceeding their performance targets.

**TABLE 8.76: REWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE**

B3.1.7 I am rewarded for exceeding my performance targets							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	40.7%	34.3%	34.5%	40.9%	34.1%	38.4%	34.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	43.7%	52.2%	49.1%	45.5%	50.1%	47.2%	50.0%
<b>% Undecided</b>	15.6%	13.5%	16.4%	13.6%	15.8%	14.4%	15.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.03	3.18	3.18	3.06	3.13	3.08	3.20
<b>SD</b>	1.31	1.25	1.31	1.34	1.25	1.24	1.35

**Note:** \*B3.1.7 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.7)

From a mean score point of view, the responses reported in table 8.76 were consistently at undecidedness. The middle academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement (52.2%) while the senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of undecidedness (16.4%). There was not a vast difference between the proportionality of agreement (45.5%) and disagreement (40.9%) from black respondents. The SD related to the middle and senior academic levels was the highest at 3.18 implying variation of responses in these categories.



The quantitative results were consistent with the feedback from the interviewees. Many interviewees indicated that the performance management system at their institution was put on hold; hence, there was no system in place at the time of the research to reward an academic for exceeding targets, which respondents found quite frustrating. Interviewees added that, at the time of this research, they were being managed in terms of deliverables that were agreed to at the beginning of the performance cycle. Where a performance management system was in place, interviewees regarded it as being d in its application. In this context, some interviewees did not agree that they were being acknowledged, let alone rewarded, for exceeding their performance targets. They added that the standards in their performance agreement was not thoroughly consulted and agreed upon with their line manager, hence the uncertainty about when an academic actually met and exceeded performance targets. This implies that poor performance management might have been a contributing factor towards employee turnover (see 4.4.3.8).

Table 8.77 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that they were rewarded when they publish research.

**TABLE 8.77: REWARD RELATED TO PUBLICATION OF RESEARCH**

<b>B3.1.8 I am rewarded when I publish my research</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	17.9%	10.9%	13.6%	16.7%	12.5%	19.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	65.6%	59.7%	69.1%	66.7%	63.3%	67.3%	60.9%
<b>% Undecided</b>	17.2%	22.4%	20.0%	19.7%	20.0%	20.2%	19.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.59	3.57	3.76	3.66	3.59	3.69	3.56
<b>SD</b>	1.05	1.00	1.00	0.94	1.04	0.90	1.15

**Note: \*B3.1.8 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.8)**

The highest proportionality of agreement as reflected in table 8.77 was from the senior academic level at 69.1%. This is consistent with the emphasis on research output at that level in terms of career progression and credibility with peers. This implies that the senior academic level may not have an intention to leave academe. It is also significant that the black racial group reported a higher proportionality of agreement at 66.7% compared to the white racial group at 63.3%. The Mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently towards agreement. The proportionality of undecidedness and disagreement at the lower academic level was the same. Males reported the highest SD of 1.15 suggesting a higher variation of responses in this category compared to the female category.

Some interviewees indicated that research output was rewarded through recognition and monetary benefit that was paid into the academic's development fund to initiate more research. Their employers also acknowledged research output through

institutional research awards. Interviewees indicated that payment of the monetary reward for research output into their development fund was sometimes delayed. They added that, since the development funds were meant to encourage further research through the attendance of conferences, seminars and workshops, they did not experience the effect in their personal lives where monetary gain might have helped to enhance the quality of their lives and that of their families. Within this context, they would have preferred having some input into how the monetary reward related to research output has to be spent (see 5.5.4.1).

Table 8.78 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that they have regular one-to-one discussions with their line manager to discuss their performance.

**TABLE 8.78: PERFORMANCE-RELATED DISCUSSIONS**

<b>B3.1.9 I have regular one-to-one discussions with my line manager to discuss my performance</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	45.3%	34.4%	29.1%	31.8%	39.1%	42.3%	29.2%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	39.1%	47.7%	54.5%	54.6%	42.6%	45.2%	48.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	15.6%	17.9%	16.4%	13.6%	18.3%	12.5%	22.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.86	3.12	3.27	3.18	2.98	2.96	3.22
<b>SD</b>	1.28	1.11	1.13	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.15

**Note:** \*B3.1.9 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.9)

In table 8.78, it is indicated that the highest proportionality of disagreement was by the lower academic level at 45.3%. The data suggested that the lower academic level

might have benefitted from performance-related discussions with their line manager as well as mentorship and coaching interventions, which could contribute towards their retention in academe. The highest proportionality of agreement at 54.5% was reported by the senior academic level, where respondents were predominantly white. A professional relationship between an academic member of staff and his or her line manager may have a positive influence on retention.

The analysis reported in table 8.78 is linked to tables 8.70 to 8.77. Interviewees were quite clear that performance-related discussions with their line manager did not occur as frequently as it should. This was largely due to the absence of a performance management system, tension associated with the management of low performers and the involvement of labour unions in the workplace. In problematic situations in the workplace, line managers may opt to engage with the academic through technology (email or social media) to maintain an audit trail of the engagement, should labour tension be a reality (Horwitz, Jain & Mbabane, 2005:4-32). Regular performance-related discussions would logically only be really necessary when there are concerns of poor performance (Subramony, 2008:778-788). Where academics are high performers and on target with their deliverables, it might not be necessary to meet in person on a regular basis but as and when the need arises (see 4.4.3).

Table 8.79 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that their line manager is consistent when he or she does a performance appraisal.

**TABLE 8.79: CONSISTENT PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS**

<b>B3.1.10 My line manager is consistent when he/she does a performance appraisal</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (APP)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	28.2%	26.8%	21.8%	25.7%	25.9%	30.8%	19.5%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	48.4%	52.3%	54.5%	47.0%	54.1%	50.0%	53.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	23.4%	20.9%	23.7%	27.3%	20.0%	19.2%	26.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.13	3.21	3.31	3.12	3.23	3.09	3.37
<b>SD</b>	1.29	1.12	1.18	1.29	1.14	1.26	1.09

**Note: \*B3.1.10 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.10)**

The lower academic level reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 28.2% while the senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 54.5%. The mean score of the senior academic level at 3.31 also suggested a move away from undecidedness towards agreement. The proportionality of disagreement between black and white respondents was somewhat consistent at 25.7% and 25.9% respectively. Whites reported a 54.1% proportionality of agreement, with blacks at 47.0%. If the proportionality of undecidedness were to be combined with disagreement by each academic level, the minimum of 45.0% at each academic level would be significant and may suggest there were concerns in the relationship between the academic and his or her line manager. These dynamics were probed further during the interviews.

Interviewees indicated their frustration with performance management as a result of the inconsistent line manager, the flawed process, an irrelevant performance system

that does not cater for the needs of academics, and subjectivity in the application of the system. Within this context, some interviewees highlighted the tendency for line managers to use the performance management process to manage unresolved conflict in the workplace. Interviewees perceived that performance ratings were decided prior to the interview with subjectivity allegedly entering deliberately into the process. Some interviewees indicated that the inconsistency on the part of the line manager was so damaging that it stifled their academic growth and generated fear when preparing for performance appraisals. Some interviewees identified the inconsistent leadership of their line manager, which had prevailed for some time as a reason to leave the institution. In their employment experience, this had resulted in them resigning from the institution (see 3.3.2.1).

Table 8.80 reports on the preference of academic levels towards a 360-degree appraisal system (cf. Maylett, 2009; see 4.4.3.4) as opposed to a one-to-one performance appraisal system.

**TABLE 8.80: 360-DEGREE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

<b>B3.1.11 I prefer feedback on my performance from my peers, staff as well as my line manager</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	21.8%	17.9%	14.5%	22.7%	15.8%	20.2%	15.8%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	57.9%	56.7%	56.4%	53.1%	59.2%	55.8%	58.6%
<b>% Undecided</b>	20.3%	25.4%	29.1%	24.2%	25.0%	24.0%	25.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.41	3.48	3.47	3.30	3.53	3.45	3.33
<b>SD</b>	1.20	1.04	0.94	1.21	0.99	1.07	1.07

**Note:** \*B3.1.11 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.11)

The proportionality of agreement across the three academic levels reflected in Table 8.80 was in the same range (55-58%). The junior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 57.9% and the highest proportionality of disagreement at 21.8%. The senior academic level reported the lowest proportionality of disagreement at 14.5%, which may have been due to the degree to which academic collaboration took place at the senior academic levels at the time of this research.

Interviewees indicated that there would be value-add from 360-degree performance appraisals as opposed to one-to-one performance feedback. What was emphasised, was that the actual participants in the 360-degree feedback loop had to be chosen by the academic. This would ensure that the role players were in fact knowledgeable about the work ethic and contribution of the academic thus allowing accurate and balanced feedback. Interviewees added that line managers had limited opportunity to address unresolved conflict through performance appraisals if their feedback was part of a broader circle of feedback. Training of all chosen participants in the principles of the 360-degree performance tool is crucial to enable their participation to result in developmental feedback (see 4.4.3.5).

Table 8.81 reports on the preference of academic levels to have more than one formal performance review in a performance cycle.

**TABLE 8.81: FREQUENCY OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS IN A CYCLE**

B3.1.12 I prefer more than one formal performance review in a performance cycle							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	29.7%	38.8%	40.0%	21.2%	44.1%	42.3%	28.1%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	40.6%	41.8%	36.4%	51.5%	33.4%	33.7%	47.5%
<b>% Undecided</b>	29.7%	19.4%	23.6%	27.3%	22.5%	24.0%	24.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.09	2.97	2.87	3.29	2.80	2.82	3.20
<b>SD</b>	1.11	1.13	1.12	1.02	1.13	1.07	1.15

**Note:** \*B3.1.12 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.12)

The mean score across academic levels and gender and racial groups was generally around 3.00, suggesting undecidedness on the part of the respondents. The middle academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 41.8% while the senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 40.0%. The proportionality of agreement of 40.6% by the lower academic level with also the lowest proportionality of disagreement of 29.7% and the highest proportionality of indecision of 29.7% across the three academic levels appeared to suggest that the lower academic level might have perceived more than one formal performance review in a cycle to be beneficial to their academic development. Such engagements present the opportunity for mentorship of lower-level academics (4.4.6.1). Black respondents were predominantly in the lower and middle academic levels at the time of the research. The analysis was consistent with the proportionality of blacks in agreement at 51.5% compared to 33.4% whites. In addition, 44.1% of whites disagreed with more than one performance review in a performance cycle compared to 21.2% black



respondents. The analysis reported in tables 8.70 to 8.80 is consistent with the data reported in table 8.81.

In the selected institutions, performance reviews were either held twice a year or not at all; the latter implies that performance management may not be in existence. Within this context, interviewees indicated that their responses depended on whether performance management was conducted correctly as a developmental tool or by the line manager to demoralise the academic. If more than one meeting per year had to support the development of the academic, there would be support for the frequency to increase. If the current negative experiences as reported continued, interviewees indicated that performance management could be stopped and academics could be managed purely on standard deliverables with no link between performance and reward. The latter was primarily to reduce the stress associated with performance reviews. Interviewees supported a more fair, consistent, transparent and defensible method of performance management primarily as a developmental tool, that would have a positive influence on their retention in academia (see 4.4.3).

Table 8.82 reports on the experience of academic levels in terms of whether their line manager regularly expresses appreciation when they exceed standard expectations.

**TABLE 8.82: APPRECIATION BY LINE MANAGER**

<b>B3.1.13 My line manager regularly expresses appreciation when I go the extra mile</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (APP)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	18.8%	32.8%	23.7%	25.8%	25.0%	28.8%	20.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	62.5%	53.7%	63.7%	53.0%	63.3%	56.8%	63.4%
<b>% Undecided</b>	18.7%	13.5%	12.6%	21.2%	11.7%	14.4%	15.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.52	3.22	3.51	3.29	3.45	3.30	3.55
<b>SD</b>	1.17	1.27	1.18	1.23	1.20	1.26	1.13

**Note: \*B3.1.13 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.13)**

In table 8.82, it is reflected that a higher proportionality of white respondents were in agreement at 63.3% compared to black respondents at 53.0%. The middle academic level reported the lowest proportionality of agreement at 53.7% from the three academic levels. The mean score of the lower and senior academic levels of 3.52 and 3.51 respectively tended to move towards agreement compared to the middle academic level of 3.22, which was somewhat towards undecidedness. The SD of 1.27 in the middle academic level was also the highest across all academic levels and racial and gender groups implying a high degree of variation of responses in this category.

The review of literature in Chapter two highlighted the effect on the departmental culture when line managers acknowledged the extra efforts of their staff. Academics sought a culture that was caring and responsive to going the extra mile without necessarily there being a link between their efforts and monetary gain (see 5.5.4.4). Interviewees added that often academics are not looking for a monetary reward but a

sense of appreciation from the employer when they put in the extra effort. The regular acknowledgement from the line manager created a work environment that was conducive to productivity and was likely to have a positive influence on the retention of the academic.

Table 8.83 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of whether their line manager tried to incorporate their suggestions into the department.

**TABLE 8.83: INCORPORATING SUGGESTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE**

B3.1.14 My line manager tries to incorporate my suggestions into the department							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	23.5%	16.4%	18.2%	21.2%	18.3%	24.0%	13.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	53.1%	56.7%	61.8%	53.0%	59.2%	53.8%	61.0%
<b>% Undecided</b>	23.4%	26.9%	20.0%	25.8%	22.5%	22.2%	25.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.31	3.40	3.49	3.27	3.46	3.29	3.54
<b>SD</b>	1.05	1.02	1.09	1.08	1.04	1.07	1.01

**Note:** \*B3.1.14 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.14)

In table 8.83, it is shown that the senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 61.8%, which may refer to the maturity of engagement and input at a senior academic level. The lower academic level - predominantly black - reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 23.5%, which may point to tension in the relationship between the academic and line manager at the lower academic level. At least 20% of respondents at each academic level were undecided.

The mean score of 3.27 by black respondents was towards undecidedness compared to the mean score of white respondents at 3.46 towards agreement.

Interviewees highlighted the tension in the work environment between academics and their line managers arising from personality conflicts, subtle discriminatory practices and an unprofessional work ethic (poor turnaround times in terms of deliverables; poor quality of work that is produced; and a lack of collegiality, communication, conversation and care amongst academic peers). These factors may affect the workplace culture, which directly affects the retention of academic staff. The tension between the interviewee and his or her line manager on a particular matter could influence the quality of the entire professional relationship (4.4.3.3). Interviewees emphasised the need for line management and senior management to listen to the feedback from academics in terms of the academic plan. It was within this context that senior management tended to decide on academic matters without consultation resulting in decisions that were neither relevant nor practical. Academics emphasised the need for effective communication horizontally (i.e. with his or her peers) and vertically (i.e. with his or her line managers) within the department and institution. This would contribute to a healthy institutional culture within which academics could thrive to reach higher academic levels.

Table 8.84 reports on the perception of academic levels in terms of whether their performance made a positive difference to their department.

**TABLE 8.84: INFLUENCE OF INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE**

<b>B3.1.15 My performance makes a positive difference to my department</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	3.2%	3.0%	1.8%	1.5%	3.3%	1.0%	4.9%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	81.2%	82.1%	92.7%	80.3%	87.5%	87.5%	81.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	15.6%	14.9%	5.5%	18.2%	9.2%	11.5%	13.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.97	3.93	4.13	3.93	4.03	4.04	3.95
<b>SD</b>	0.76	0.77	0.67	0.72	0.75	0.62	0.86

**Note: \*B3.1.15 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.1.15)**

All academic levels reported a proportionality of agreement at a minimum of 80% while the senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 92.7%. All academic levels and all racial and gender categories reported a Mean score of approximately 4.0 towards agreement. The proportionality of black respondents was slightly lower at 80.3% compared to whites at 87.5%. It appears that the senior academic level was most confident about the effect of their performance on their department. This may be due to the emphasis on research output at this academic level and the tangible benefits associated with elevated research output.

The proportion of respondents who were undecided was not significant. This may imply a break in the performance management review and feedback process where academics' performance - particularly achievements - is not communicated by the line manager to the academic. Performing beyond or below the minimum standard might become the norm when no feedback occurs (4.4.3.3). Chapter four identified the

importance of employees realizing the influence of their performance on the achievement of institutional imperatives (see 4.4.3.7). Within this context, feedback from the line manager to the academic, not only in terms of criticism but also when a compliment is necessary, enhances the positive work experience of the academic and contributes to his or her retention in academe. The analysis reported in Tables 8.69 to 8.82 is relevant to the analysis reported in Table 8.84.

## 8.6.2 Training and development

Table 8.85 reports on the academic levels' indication in terms of whether the institution offers attendance at courses, seminars, workshops and conferences.

**TABLE 8.85: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

<b>B3.2.1 My institution offers the following development opportunities: attendance of courses, seminars, workshops and conferences</b>					
	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Racial group</b>	
	<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120
<b>Yes</b>	93.7%	95.5%	98.2%	92.4%	97.5%
<b>No</b>	6.3%	4.5%	1.8%	7.6%	2.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note: \*B3.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.1)**

As reflected in table 8.85, respondents reported overwhelmingly that development opportunities in the form of attendance of courses, seminars, workshops and conferences were offered by their institution. Interviewees appeared to value and prioritise development opportunities in the workplace as a means to support their growth in the academic profession and contribute towards their retention. Interviewees also added that, since attendance at conferences was aligned to research output, they might not have attended a conference recently because they had not produced any research articles recently. However, development opportunities, which were not necessarily research-aligned but in line with the workplace skills plan, were part of the personal development plan of the academic. Based on the data above, access to such opportunities were not limited to academic levels or racial groups.

Table 8.86 reports on the academic levels' indication in terms of whether the institution offers acting and secondment opportunities.

**TABLE 8.86: ACTING AND SECONDMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

<b>B3.2.1 My institution offers the following development opportunities: acting and secondment opportunities</b>					
	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Racial group</b>	
	<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120
<b>Yes</b>	56.3%	49.3%	70.9%	54.6%	60.0%
<b>No</b>	43.7%	50.7%	29.1%	45.4%	40.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note: \*B3.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.1)**

Table 8.86 reflects that the senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 70.9% with the middle academic level at 49.3%. Black respondents reported 54.6% agreement with white respondents at 60%. It is possible that, at the selected institutions, the experience of being appointed to act or to be seconded to a vacant position was occurring especially at the senior academic levels and to a lesser extent at the lower and middle academic levels. However, the existence of acting and secondment opportunities and the consistent application across academic levels and racial groups would enhance academic development towards senior levels and contribute positively to the retention of the academic.

Table 8.87 reports on the academic levels' indication in terms of whether the institution offered the opportunity to deliver academic papers as a development opportunity.

**TABLE 8.87: DELIVERING ACADEMIC PAPERS**

<b>B3.2.1 My institution offers the following development opportunities: delivering academic papers</b>					
	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Racial group</b>	
	<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120
<b>Yes</b>	93.8%	91.0%	100.0%	92.4%	95.8%
<b>No</b>	6.2%	9.0%	0%	7.6%	4.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note: \*B3.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.1)**

All academic levels and racial groups responded overwhelmingly positively, as reported in table 8.87 regarding the opportunity to deliver academic papers to enhance personal development. Interviewees who were passionate about their role as academics placed a high premium on development opportunities that gave rise to new research opportunities rather than monetary gain. The opportunity to network with peers at conferences and to contribute new knowledge to a particular field was the primary passion of senior academics who were interviewed. Their feedback was related to 100% proportionality of agreement. A credible research rating makes an academic very marketable within academe nationally and internationally.

Table 8.88 reports on the academic levels' indication in terms of whether the institution offered the opportunity to be mentored and coached by senior academics.



**TABLE 8.88: MENTORSHIP AND COACHING**

<b>B3.2.1 My institution offers the following development opportunities: mentorship and coaching by senior academics</b>					
	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Racial group</b>	
	<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120
<b>Yes</b>	62.5%	56.7%	74.5%	62.1%	65.0%
<b>No</b>	37.5%	43.3%	25.5%	37.9%	35.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*B3.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.1)

In table 8.88, it is reflected that the middle academic level reported the lowest proportionality of 56.7% with the senior academic level at the highest with 74.5%. At least 60% of black and white respondents confirmed the existence of mentorship and coaching opportunities within their institution. The review of literature reported in Chapter four identified mentorship and coaching of junior academics, particularly black staff, by senior academics as a major intervention to influence the retention of academics (see 4.4.6.1.4). Interviewees also confirmed the need for mentorship and coaching to be institutionalised as opposed to an informal practice, which involves only a few academics. To give effect to this and to enhance accountability, it might be necessary to include the responsibility of mentorship as a deliverable in the performance agreements of academics. Interviewees also suggested rewarding senior academics through monetary gain for time invested in formal mentorship and coaching (see 4.4.6.3).

The review of literature reported in Chapter 4 (see 4.4.6.3) also identified a possible gap within HEIs in that retired professors who are still active in terms of research output, are not approached to mentor young, talented academics, particularly black staff (Bussin, 2013a; Chantiri, 2010). Interviewees suggested that the retirees could be screened in terms of specific criteria that are aligned to their productivity in the last three years before retirement. Qualifying retirees who are appointed to mentor could enter into mutually beneficial agreements with the institution where the employer provides the facilities for the retiree to pursue research collaboration while the retiree

formally mentors young academics with a monetary award from the institution. Interviewees emphasised the need for such interventions to be governed within a policy framework and for the process of selecting retirees to be fair and consistent. The analysis reported in Table 8.77 is aligned to the findings reported in Tables 8.27 and 8.45.

Table 8.89 reports on an indication by the academic levels in terms of whether the relevant institution offered the opportunity for managerial development.

**TABLE 8.89: MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT**

<b>B3.2.1 My institution offers the following development opportunities: managerial development</b>					
	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Racial group</b>	
	<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120
<b>Yes</b>	46.9%	40.3%	78.2%	53.0%	54.2%
<b>No</b>	53.1%	59.7%	21.8%	47.0%	45.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note: \*B3.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.1)**

78.2% of the senior academic level responded that, at the time of this research, their institution offered managerial development opportunities. The lowest proportion of agreement, namely 40.3%, came from the middle academic level. The proportionality of disagreement at the lower academic level (53.1%) and middle academic level (59.7%) could be a push factor out of the institution. From a racial point of view, the feedback was somewhat balanced between black and white respondents, hence not a significant difference. Interviewees highlighted that, while development opportunities existed, they were not keen to pursue a managerial career path as it consumed time away from their passion to conduct research. At the same time, assuming managerial positions in academe may be rewarded through monetary allowances thus incentivising academics to progress to chairs of departments or directors of schools.

Table 8.90 reports on an indication by the academic levels in terms of whether the institution offered the opportunities for academic collaboration.

**TABLE 8.90: OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACADEMIC COLLABORATION**

<b>B3.2.1 My institution offers the following development opportunities: academic collaboration</b>					
	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Racial group</b>	
	<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120
<b>Yes</b>	75.0%	74.6%	89.1%	71.2%	83.3%
<b>No</b>	25.0%	25.4%	10.9%	28.8%	16.7%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*B3.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.1)

In table 8.90, it is reported that at least 75% of respondents across the three academic levels indicated that there were opportunities for academic collaboration in their institution with the senior academic level reporting the highest proportionality of agreement at 89.1%. Black respondents reported a lower proportionality of 71.2% compared to white respondents at 83.3%. This may be attributed to the opportunities for academic collaboration at a senior academic level, which is predominantly white.

Interviewees supported flexible working hours towards managing professional and personal commitments but added that there was still a need for academics to meet formally and informally in the workplace on a regular basis to collaborate academically. The value gained from peer engagement supports the development of an academic (CIPD, 2012; Edwards, 2008:2-10). In addition, the subtle tension in the workplace that was reported by interviewees as a result of interpersonal conflict, may be contributing to academics not embracing opportunities for academic collaboration (see 4.4.3.8).

Table 8.91 reports on an indication by the academic levels in terms of the institution offering support to complete masters and doctorate qualifications.

**TABLE 8.91: MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL SUPPORT**

<b>B3.2.1 My institution offers the following development opportunities: institutional support to complete masters and doctorate qualifications</b>					
	<b>Current academic level</b>			<b>Racial group</b>	
	<b>Lower academic level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle academic level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior academic level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>White</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120
<b>Yes</b>	85.9%	86.6%	96.4%	84.9%	91.7%
<b>No</b>	14.1%	13.4%	3.6%	15.1%	8.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note:** \*B3.2.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.1)

At least 85% of respondents in each academic level responded positively, as reported in table 91. Black respondents reported a slightly lower response at 84.9% than whites at 91.7%. The emphasis on research output within higher education requires employers to invest resources in academics completing their master's or doctorate qualifications (Wits, 2012b). The compulsory support from the institution was deemed necessary in view of the challenges that interviewees highlighted. Interviewees indicated that institutional support included paid leave for academics for up to 3 years to complete their qualification, as well as peer supportive networks.

Interviewees indicated that in their institution, professional and support staff were also incentivised to complete their master's and doctoral studies through monetary rewards on completion of the qualification as well as research and development leave within a structured policy framework. The review of literature reported in Chapter five identified an increase in research output within the institution where academics were in possession of a master's or doctor's degree. This implies that if institutional support is available to complete the master's and doctor's degree, academics may be able to support research-related objectives much sooner (see 6.6.5.3.4).

Table 8.92 reports on the feedback from academic levels in terms of whether academics in previously disadvantaged groups were offered support programmes.

**TABLE 8.92: SUPPORT PROGRAMMES**

<b>B3.2.2 Academics in previously disadvantaged groups are offered support programmes</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	19.4%	9.0%	28.8%	8.4%	18.3%	12.2%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	56.2%	61.2%	71.0%	37.9%	75.8%	57.7%	68.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	26.6%	19.4%	20.0%	33.3%	15.8%	24.0%	19.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.56	3.57	3.85	3.10	3.96	3.51	3.83
<b>SD</b>	1.15	1.22	0.95	1.20	0.94	1.15	1.08

**Note:** \*B3.2.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.2)

Table 8.92 shows that the lower academic level reported the lowest proportionality of agreement at 56.2% as well as the highest proportionality of undecidedness at 26.6%. It is significant that black respondents reported a lower proportionality of agreement at 37.9% than whites at 75.8%. Senior academics reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 71%. The mean score across academic levels and gender groups was consistently towards agreement. However, the mean score in the black respondent group was inclined towards undecidedness at 3.10. It would appear that the two racial groups had different experiences in response to the survey item, as reflected in table 8.92. This was probed further during the interviews.

Black interviewees highlighted the need for a more nurturing workplace to enable all academics, particularly blacks to excel. This included the institutionalisation of mentorship and development programmes. In addition, black interviewees highlighted the positive influence of a diverse culture on their retention. White interviewees added

that from a resource allocation point of view within the department, there was an equitable and fair spread with limited room for complaints. White interviewees added that it was required from previously disadvantaged academics to utilise the available resources to the maximum benefit of their development as academics. It appeared therefore that white interviewees perceived support mechanisms to refer to available resources. On the other hand, black interviewees viewed more effective talent management interventions including institutionalised mentorship and coaching as well as a healthy workplace culture, to be a gap in their work experience.

Table 8.93 reports on the feedback from academic levels in terms of whether their line manager supported their ongoing professional development.

**TABLE 8.93: LINE MANAGER SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

B3.2.3 My line manager supports my ongoing professional development							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	14.1%	7.5%	12.7%	15.2%	9.2%	12.5%	9.8%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	75.0%	77.6%	70.9%	72.7%	75.8%	76.0%	73.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	10.9%	14.9%	16.4%	12.1%	15.0%	11.5%	17.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.72	3.82	3.65	3.70	3.75	3.68	3.80
<b>SD</b>	1.00	0.95	0.93	1.05	0.92	0.96	0.96

**Note:** \*B3.2.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.3)

The mean scores across academic levels and racial and gender groups reflected in table 8.92 were consistently towards agreement. Black respondents reported a 72.7% proportionality of agreement with white respondents at 75.8%. Based on the analysis

of data, it seems black and white respondents agreed that their line manager supported their professional development. Interviewees emphasised the role of the line manager in nurturing the development of the talent inherent within an academic. Chapter four identified a need for line managers to support the development of academics on an ongoing basis towards their retention in the profession (see 4.4.3.8).

Table 8.94 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels on the tendency of the line manager to encourage new and better ways of doing things constantly.

**TABLE 8.94: CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE APPROACH**

B3.2.4 My line manager constantly encourages new and better ways of doing things							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	20.3%	20.9%	23.7%	24.2%	20.0%	21.2%	22.0%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	56.3%	67.2%	56.3%	59.1%	60.8%	60.5%	59.7%
% Undecided	23.4%	11.9%	20.0%	16.7%	19.2%	18.3%	18.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	3.44	3.52	3.42	3.47	3.44	3.45	3.48
SD	1.14	1.16	1.12	1.27	1.06	1.15	1.12

**Note:** \*B3.2.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.4)

Each academic level reported a minimum of 50% proportionality of agreement with the middle academic level reporting the highest proportionality of agreement at 67.2%. The Mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently away from undecidedness towards agreement. The proportionality of agreement by black respondents was at 59.1% compared to the 60.8% from white respondents. This



is a minimal difference. The SD of 1.27 was the highest from the black respondents implying a high degree of variation in this particular category. There appeared to be consensus amongst the three academic levels and among the racial groups that the line manager did encourage new and better ways of doing things.

The influence of the line manager on the development and retention of academics is significant, especially if line managers are creative, innovative and proactive in their management style (Botha, Bussin & de Swardt, 2007:47-71). His or her management style could influence academics to adopt a similar approach in their academic work. Interviewees emphasised that line managers were not necessarily mentors or role models. Often, when line managers had stagnated as academics, professional jealousy crept into the workplace engagement between the line manager and the high-performing academic. Within this context, the line manager may not encourage new and better ways of doing things. Interviewees added that the strained relationship between the academic and the line manager could have a negative effect on the retention of talented academics, particularly black staff (see 4.4.3.8).

Table 8.95 reports on proportionality of agreement among academic levels towards a willingness to go the extra mile in performing their job.

**TABLE 8.95: EXCEEDING CONTRACTUAL DELIVERABLES**

B3.2.5 I am very willing to go the extra mile in performing my job							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	0%	0%	3.6%	0%	1.7%	0%	2.4%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	95.3%	92.5%	90.9%	98.5%	90.0%	96.2%	89.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	4.7%	7.5%	5.5%	1.5%	8.3%	3.8%	8.5%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	4.39	4.28	4.22	4.47	4.20	4.37	4.22
<b>SD</b>	0.58	0.60	0.71	0.53	0.66	0.56	0.70

**Note:** \*B3.2.5 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.5)

In table 8.95, it is reflected that at least 90.0% of respondents at each academic level were in agreement with the lower academic level. Blacks reported the higher proportionality of agreement at 98.5% compared to whites. The proportionality of blacks who were in agreement at 98.5% was higher than the 90% of white respondents. Females reported a 96.2% proportionality of agreement compared to males at 89.1%. The mean score was generally at a minimum of 4.0, implying general agreement towards strongly in agreement. The SD at the senior academic level was highest across academic levels at 0.71.

Notwithstanding the challenges within the workplace ranging from instability within higher education to labour union tension, a poor relationship with the line manager, absence of a supportive academic network and an unhealthy institutional culture, respondents and interviewees were generally very positive to exceed the requirements

of their contractual agreements with their line manager to influence the client positively and add value to the academic profession (see 4.4.4).

Table 8.96 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of the extent to which line managers discuss the career path and career goals with respondents.

**TABLE 8.96: CAREER CONVERSATIONS**

B3.2.6 My line manager discusses my career path and goals regularly with me							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	43.8%	37.4%	23.6%	36.4%	35.0%	35.6%	35.3%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	42.2%	38.8%	49.1%	40.9%	44.2%	44.2%	41.5%
<b>% Undecided</b>	14.0%	23.1%	27.3%	22.7%	20.8%	20.2%	23.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.91	3.00	3.31	3.05	3.05	3.03	3.10
<b>SD</b>	1.29	1.09	1.02	1.20	1.13	1.13	1.18

**Note:** \*B3.2.6 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.6)

In table 8.96, it is shown that the senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 49.1% with the lower academic level reporting the highest proportionality of disagreement at 43.8%. This feedback from respondents in the lower academic level was significant since career discussions form an integral part of managing the talent inherent in academics. This emphasises the need for coaching and mentorship, which in turn, may influence the retention of the lower-level academic. The mean score at the lower academic level was 2.91, which suggests a move away from disagreement towards undecidedness. The SD in the lower academic level was

the highest at 1.29 suggesting a high degree of variation in the responses in this particular category. There was a minimal difference in terms of the proportionality of agreement between black and white respondents.

The analysis reported in table 8.96 is linked to table 8.78. In the absence of regular performance review discussions, the opportunity for regular discussions regarding an employee's career path and goals would be somewhat limited. It is possible that line managers and respondents may not be communicating sufficiently in the workplace, which leads to misunderstandings and a lack of trust. Interviewees highlighted that opportunities to engage were at a minimal in view of the excessive workload and academics working within flexible routines. Effective management of the workplace with conflicting priorities is a skill required of line managers. To encourage effective communication in the workplace, both parties would need to make an effort to engage each other.

The absence of engagement could suggest that academics in the present research were working in an environment that did not have a common vision. This could imply that academics were unable to understand the influence of their performance on that of the institution, department, college or faculty, portfolio and the institution. If an academic experiences difficulty in realizing the value that his or her contribution brings to the institution, this challenge may have a negative effect on their retention.

Table 8.97 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether line managers expose respondents to training in preparation for a promotional post.

**TABLE 8.97: TRAINING FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT**

<b>B3.2.7 I receive training to prepare me for a promotional post (succession planning)</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	50.1%	47.7%	52.7%	48.5%	50.8%	51.9%	47.5%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	32.8%	17.9%	25.5%	27.3%	24.2%	24.1%	26.9%
<b>% Undecided</b>	17.1%	34.4%	21.8%	24.2%	25.0%	24.0%	25.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.69	2.60	2.58	2.71	2.58	2.58	2.68
<b>SD</b>	1.21	1.05	1.18	1.21	1.08	1.07	1.23

**Note:** \*B3.2.7 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.7)

The Mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups suggests general disagreement towards undecidedness. At least 48% of black and white respondents disagreed that they were exposed to succession planning in preparation for a promotional post. Black male respondents as well as the lower academic level reported a SD of 1.23 and 1.21 respectively suggesting a high degree of variation in their responses. There was a minimal difference in terms of the proportionality of agreement between the black and white respondents. It appeared that succession planning was not being implemented effectively in the sample frame at the time of this research. It is possible that training was not directed from the top. The interview data identified a weakness in the practice of university management i.e. mentorship, namely job shadowing, job rotation, job stretching (when an employee is exposed to assignments that result in hidden talent being exploited) and coaching. This implies that career conversations, which identify training needs, might not have been taking place between the line manager and the respondent at the time of this research.

Interviewees added that even if they met the requirements for promotion, they could not apply for the promotional post until they were confident that they were adequately prepared for the responsibilities of the higher academic level. The point that was emphasised was that credibility as an academic on each level amongst peers, is extremely important (see 4.4.6.1.7).

Table 8.98 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether parents had been their main influence in terms of their choice of career as an academic.

**TABLE 8.98: INFLUENCE TO ENTER ACADEME**

<b>B3.2.8 My parents were the main influence in terms of my choice of career as an academic</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	60.9%	73.1%	70.9%	62.1%	71.7%	67.3%	69.5%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	26.6%	19.4%	14.6%	27.3%	16.6%	22.1%	18.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	12.5%	7.5%	14.5%	10.6%	11.7%	10.6%	12.2%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.53	2.12	2.20	2.51	2.18	2.38	2.17
<b>SD</b>	1.23	1.21	1.27	1.28	1.20	1.25	1.24

**Note: \*B3.2.8 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.8)**

At least 60% of respondents at each academic level and from each racial group disagreed that their parents had influenced their decision to become an academic. White respondents disagreed that their parents had influenced their career choice at a higher proportionality at 71.7% than blacks at 62.1%. The proportionality disagreement was highest at the middle academic level at 73.1%, while the proportionality of

agreement was highest at the lower academic level at 26.6%. The data identified that the influence of parents reduced with career progression. Parental influence was greatest at the start of the academic staff's career. The proportionality of blacks who agreed that their parents had influenced their career choice at 27.3% was higher than whites at 16.6%. The mean score across academic levels and gender and racial groups was consistently away from disagreement towards undecidedness.

Interviewees indicated that they were influenced during their personal studies by parents, academic relatives or academics in the same or external institutions to enter academe. This feedback was consistent with the analyses reported in tables 8.88 and 8.92 that line managers were not necessarily the respondents' mentor. Mentorship is often embedded in relationships where the academic has admiration for a particular role model (Petit, 2004; Ilevbare, 2011; Bussin, 2013b). Of importance was the suggestion that to have an influence on the attraction of academics, particularly black staff, a more proactive approach should be adopted by the academic profession. This might include identifying potential academics in high school who have the profile of an academic. The profile would comprise -

- having an enquiring mind;
- being able to argue a particular point of view effectively from a principled position;
- being very comfortable to participate in debates; and
- having a passion for community engagement.

As part of a community engagement project, potential academics could be subjected to psychometric testing and nurtured towards the academic profession as opposed to only trying to attract academics from within a limited talent employment pool. It is implied that the latter approach is quite reactive (see 3.3.2.2).

Table 8.99 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that their personal values and the institutional values were the same.

**TABLE 8.99: ALIGNMENT BETWEEN PERSONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL VALUES**

<b>B3.2.9 My personal values and the institutional values are the same</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	18.7%	20.9%	27.3%	18.2%	24.2%	17.3%	28.0%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	53.2%	55.2%	45.4%	53.0%	50.8%	58.7%	42.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	28.1%	23.9%	27.3%	28.8%	25.0%	24.0%	29.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.36	3.42	3.18	3.45	3.28	3.48	3.13
<b>SD</b>	1.15	1.05	1.07	1.03	1.09	0.96	1.21

**Note:** \*B3.2.9 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.9)

Black and white respondents were in agreement at 53% and 50.8% respectively about values as reported in table 8.98. The difference in terms of the proportionality of agreement between black and white respondents was not significant. The proportionality of agreement across the three academic levels at 53.2%, 55.2% and 45.4% respectively was consistent with the mean score ranging from undecidedness towards agreement. The SD of 1.21 was highest for the male responses suggesting a high degree of variation in terms of responses in that category.

The results suggest a perceived conflict between the value system of the respondents and the values of their institutions. This may be attributed to unethical behaviour in the workplace, which appeared to be condoned. Unethical behaviour may extend from maladministration e.g. fraud to a lack of transparency (Brand, 2008:205-222; Stone, 2014). Should this be the case, the behaviour that is condoned could conflict with the published institutional value system (Smola & Sutton, 2002:363-382). The academic



might experience the misalignment as an unhealthy institutional culture and an attack on the credibility of the institution. The ultimate outcome would be the retention of the academic being compromised.

Table 8.100 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels in terms of whether their line manager encouraged ongoing on-the-job learning.

**TABLE 8.100: VALUE OF ON-THE-JOB LEARNING**

B3.2.10 My line manager encourages ongoing on-the-job learning							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (AP/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	17.2%	15.0%	10.9%	16.7%	13.4%	14.4%	14.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	68.7%	70.1%	52.8%	65.2%	64.1%	68.3%	59.8%
<b>% Undecided</b>	14.1%	14.9%	36.3%	18.1%	22.5%	17.3%	25.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	3.59	3.63	3.44	3.57	3.55	3.60	3.51
<b>SD</b>	1.06	1.03	0.86	1.14	0.92	0.97	1.02

**Note:** \*B3.2.10 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.10)

The highest proportionality of agreement at 70.1% was at the middle academic level. The highest proportionality of disagreement at 17.2% was at the lower academic level. The senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of undecidedness at 36.3% and the lowest proportionality of agreement at 52.8%. The professional development of all academics is compulsory with an academic's development fund growing as a result of research output (Badsha & Cloete, 2011). Within the academic sector, on-the-job learning would include multi-skilling and mastering new technological software in terms of student support. A proactive approach is suggested

in terms of learning where academics take the lead in empowering themselves before engaging in formal skills development. This approach would suggest ongoing learning and, hence, continuous development.

A senior academic who was interviewed also suggested that, while mentorship and coaching on a one-to-one basis by seasoned academics within the profession was highly necessary. Academics should also be open to be mentored by the works of credible published authors. This suggestion implied that, in order to remain a relevant and credible academic, one action may be that an academic has to find the time to read the latest journals in one's field of expertise. The theories and new knowledge that are shared, shape the academic's perspective and add value to his or her approach to his or her subject material. Within this context, published authors could inadvertently mentor academics, particularly black staff. However, the interviewee acknowledged that hands-on mentorship that is institutionalised would be most effective in terms of managing the talent inherent in academics, particularly young black staff.

Table 8.101 reports on the proportionality of agreement by respondents in terms of whether their line manager regularly attended training courses.

**TABLE 8.101: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OF LINE MANAGER**

B3.2.11 My line manager regularly attends training courses							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (APP)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	17.2%	25.4%	27.2%	19.7%	25.0%	21.2%	25.6%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	43.7%	40.3%	23.6%	45.5%	31.7%	37.5%	35.4%
% Undecided	39.1%	34.3%	49.2%	34.8%	43.3%	41.3%	39.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	3.34	3.18	2.85	3.27	3.04	3.17	3.10
SD	1.10	1.04	0.97	1.11	1.02	1.06	1.06

**Note: \*B3.2.11 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.11)**

The mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was towards undecidedness or a slight move away towards agreement. Black respondents reported a higher proportionality of agreement at 45.5% than whites at 31.7%. The senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of undecidedness at 49.2% and the lowest SD of 0.97 suggesting a low degree of variation in terms of the responses in that category. The lower academic level reported the highest proportionality of agreement at 43.7%.

The proportion of respondents who were undecided may suggest that the line managers' attendance of courses is not transparently shared with academics in the department. Hence, academics were not aware of whether the line manager attends courses. It is also possible that academics did not see the outcome of training in the managerial style of the line manager thereby suggesting poor line managers. Training needs that are identified during performance management as an academic and/or line

manager as well as career conversations translate into attendance of courses (see 4.4.5). It is possible that, if line managers do not attend relevant training as often as is necessary to improve their managerial skills, this may have a negative effect on the supervision of their staff, which may ultimately affect the retention of talented academics.

Table 8.102 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that they would benefit from being mentored.

**TABLE 8.102: BENEFITS OF MENTORSHIP**

B3.2.12 I would benefit from being mentored							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (A/P/P)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	6.2%	9.0%	49.0%	12.1%	24.2%	16.3%	24.4%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	86.0%	79.1%	31.0%	83.3%	58.3%	73.1%	59.7%
% Undecided	7.8%	11.9%	20.0%	4.6%	17.5%	10.6%	15.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	4.16	3.88	2.76	4.13	3.40	3.80	3.45
SD	0.93	0.91	1.12	0.97	1.12	1.04	1.24

**Note:** \*B3.2.12 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (3.2.12)

The highest proportionality of agreement in table 8.102 was by the lower academic level at 86% with a Mean score of 4.16 suggesting agreement towards strongly in agreement. The black racial group reported 83.3% proportionality of agreement compared to 58.3% from the white group. The middle academic level reported a 79.1% proportionality of agreement. The lower and middle academic levels comprised predominantly black academics. The senior academic level, predominantly white

academics, reported a 31% proportionality of agreement. Males reported a 59.7% proportionality of agreement, which was lower than the 73.1% by females.

This feedback from respondents emphasised the value that black academics place on institutionalised mentorship and coaching to advance their professional development as academics. The response from the senior academic level that they would not necessarily benefit from personal mentorship was largely due to their seniority in the academic profession. The analysis reported in Table 8.101 was consistent with Tables 8.87, 8.91 and 8.92 in terms of support towards academic development.

Interviewees at a senior level acknowledged their role in terms of mentoring lower-level academics not just as an informal arrangement in the workplace but also as part of an institutionalised process. Interviewees at the lower and middle academic levels emphasised the need for structured mentorship in the workplace. This would include informed criteria to pair off mentees and mentors. Interviewees also suggested that the partnering of mentorships should be considered across racial groups to encourage a rich academic collaboration. The analysis of empirical documents in Chapter six identified the use of talented retired academics who are still prolific researchers to mentor academics, particularly black staff (see 6.6.5.1.5).

### **8.6.3 Summary**

From the survey and interviews, there appeared to be deep concerns associated with the relevance of the performance management instrument to the academic environment, the inconsistent application of the performance management instrument, very tense performance appraisal sessions and performance management discussions, concerns surrounding the link between performance management and performance-related monetary rewards. Communication between the academic and his or her line manager appeared to be strained with line managers in need of expressing appreciation for any act of excellence through formal or informal Means of recognition in the workplace. Respondents and interviewees appeared to be highly in support of being rewarded purely on their performance. This is possible provided the application of the performance appraisal instrument is sound and fair. Interviewees did voice support for a 360-degree appraisal system (see 8.8.9.7) provided the raters were knowledgeable on the academic's area of work. There appeared to be a need to

educate all role players that performance management is foremost a developmental tool before it is linked to performance-related monetary rewards.

The sharp emphasis on research output was being experienced very negatively by respondents at the lower and middle academic levels, particularly where respondents did not have a master's or doctoral thesis. The excessive workload also appeared to be influencing the respondent's ability to achieve the required research output. Within this context, there was a need for the institution to provide a nurturing workplace environment, including mentorship and coaching support, financial aid and monetary incentives for the timeous completion of higher qualifications. Because the younger generation in the workplace was technologically inclined, it was necessary to provide a workplace that supported the use of technology in finding solutions to challenges.

There also appeared to be an overwhelming need for institutionalised mentorship and coaching to support lower- and middle-level academics to develop the necessary skills to cope with the academic demands. In addition, on-the-job training, career path discussions as well as acting and secondment opportunities were emphasised in the feedback. While it appeared that stretch assignments are possible in the academic environment, job rotation did not seem feasible (see Table 8. 88).

Interviewees indicated that lower-level academics are comparing the EVP for the academic to what is offered in the private sector, and finding the employment package far more lucrative in the private sector. Respondents and interviewees were overwhelmingly in support of skills and professional academic developmental interventions in the workplace.

## **8.7 ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS PERTAINING TO REMUNERATION**

This section relates to research objectives six and seven as alluded to in Chapter one of this dissertation (see 1.1.6). It also relates to the review of literature in Chapter five of this dissertation. A key concern raised in the review of literature was the remuneration that academics were receiving at the time of this study and what they should receive (see 5.5.4.1).

Table 8.103 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that their peers at other universities were being paid better salaries.

**TABLE 8.103: COMPARISON OF ACADEMIC REMUNERATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES**

B4.1 My peers are paid better in other universities							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (APP)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	12.5%	16.4%	21.8%	9.1%	20.8%	17.3%	15.8%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	54.7%	50.8%	36.4%	59.1%	41.6%	50.0%	45.2%
% Undecided	32.8%	32.8%	41.8%	31.8%	37.6%	32.7%	39.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	3.63	3.57	3.29	3.66	3.39	3.54	3.46
SD	1.09	1.02	0.98	1.01	1.01	1.07	1.00

**Note:** \*B4.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (4.1)

The Mean score in table 8.103 for the lower and middle academic levels of 3.63 and 3.57 moves towards agreement. However, the mean score at the senior academic level of 3.29 was still more inclined towards undecidedness than towards agreement. This is consistent with the proportionality of senior academics who were undecided at 41.8%. Black respondents reported a 59.1% proportionality of agreement compared to whites at 41.6%.

The analysis of literature reflected in Chapter five identified remuneration to be a key factor in attracting an academic but not necessarily a dominant factor in retaining him or her (see 5.5.7). Black interviewees indicated that their personal financial commitments often did not allow them to remain in an HEI even though they were passionate about the profession. This included commitments towards their immediate and extended family. Black interviewees tended to compare their remuneration to the private sector and public service rather than to salaries within higher education.

Table 8.104 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that their peers were being paid better in the private sector.

**TABLE 8.104: COMPARISON OF ACADEMIC REMUNERATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR**

B4.2 My peers are paid better in the private sector							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (JL/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (APP)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	3.1%	4.5%	5.4%	0%	6.7%	3.9%	4.9%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	82.8%	86.5%	78.2%	84.8%	81.6%	83.7%	81.7%
% Undecided	14.1%	9.0%	16.4%	15.2%	11.7%	12.4%	13.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	4.38	4.51	4.16	4.45	4.29	4.39	4.32
SD	0.85	0.89	0.96	0.75	0.97	0.89	0.93

**Note: \*B4.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (4.2)**

The proportionality of agreement across academic levels was a minimum of 75% with an almost negligible proportion of responses highlighting disagreement. The senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of undecidedness at 16.4%. The Mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently at agreement towards strongly in agreement.

Interviewees remarked that they would earn more than twice their remuneration in the private sector for equivalent experience, skill and qualification. At the same time, they added that the working hours in academia was more reasonable and compatible to their personal commitments. On the other hand, interviewees at a senior academic level emphasised that academics are allowed participate in private academic work



within a structured governance framework provided that their academic deliverables were on track. Interviewees added that, although the institution may take a portion of their private academic earnings since the work is being done with the institutional brand being influenced, the amount that remained was still more than generous. Interviewees however added that lower-level academic staff, who are predominantly black, are more focussed on teaching and community engagement activities in comparison to research; the work allocation and workload does not create the opportunity to perform additional private work (Milkovich et al., 2014:313).

Interviewees were also concerned about academics who often complained about their remuneration but they said they urged such academics to compare their full employment package with their counterparts in the private sector before they complained. While the remuneration may not be entirely comparable, the stability of the position and the range of competitive employee benefits were far more competitive in higher education than in the private sector. Interviewees were however concerned at the ongoing protest action in higher education at the time of this research, and the damage it was doing to the credibility of HEIs. Interviewees who had worked in the private sector before joining the profession urged academics to familiarise themselves with the pressure of the working environment in the private sector which is driven by profit first, before they elect to leave academe for the private sector (see 5.5.4.1).

Table 8.105 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels towards the possibility that their peers might be paid better in the public service.

**TABLE 8.105: COMPARISON OF ACADEMIC REMUNERATION WITH PUBLIC SERVICE**

B4.3 My peers are paid better in the public service							
	Academic Level			Racial Group		Gender Group	
	Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)	Middle Academic Level (SL)	Senior Academic Level (APP)	Black (African, Coloured, Asian)	White	Female	Male
n	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)	4.7%	4.5%	5.4%	0%	7.5%	4.8%	4.9%
% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)	67.2%	64.2%	63.7%	74.2%	60.0%	64.4%	65.8%
% Undecided	28.1%	31.3%	30.9%	25.8%	32.5%	30.8%	29.3%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean (1-5)	4.08	4.03	3.85	4.20	3.86	3.99	4.00
SD	0.96	0.97	0.95	0.82	1.00	0.95	0.98

**Note: \*B4.3 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (4.3)**

The proportionality of undecidedness, disagreement and agreement across academic levels as reflected in table 8.105 was consistent. Compared to the analysis reported in table 8.104 and a comparison of Mean scores between tables 8.103 and 8.105, it would appear that respondents compare their remuneration first to the private sector, then the public service and lastly to higher education. The Mean score in table 8.105 across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently towards agreement. No black respondents disagreed, as reported in table 8.105; however 25.8% were undecided. The SD of 0.82 was lowest across all groups suggesting a low degree of variation amongst black respondents (see 5.5.5.2.2).

Table 8.106 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels that their pay increases when they work harder.

**TABLE 8.106: ALIGNMENT OF REMUNERATION TO DEDICATION**

<b>B4.4 My pay increases when I work harder</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (J/L/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (AP/P)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	67.2%	76.2%	76.4%	65.2%	77.5%	75.0%	70.7%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	17.2%	13.4%	14.5%	19.7%	12.5%	15.4%	14.7%
<b>% Undecided</b>	15.6%	10.4%	9.1%	15.1%	10.0%	9.6%	14.6%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.09	1.93	2.04	2.22	1.90	1.96	2.09
<b>SD</b>	1.16	1.13	1.07	1.18	1.07	1.16	1.08

**Note: \*B4.4 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (4.4)**

At least two thirds of respondents reflected in Table 8.105 disagreed that their pay increases when they work harder. The white respondents reported a higher proportionality of disagreement at 77.5% compared to blacks at 65.2%. The SD in the black respondent category at 1.18 was the highest suggesting a higher degree of variation in terms of responses in that particular category. The Mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups was towards, at or slight away from disagreement.

The review of literature in Chapter five highlighted a trend in competitive institutions nationally and internationally to move away from service-based pay to performance-based pay. This implies that institutions would receive return on the investment that it makes into the academic (see 5.5.5.2.3). In addition, remuneration and employee benefits should be managed in a consistent, fair, transparent and defensible manner to have a positive influence on the retention of talented employees. The analysis

reflected in table 8.105 suggests that all academic levels disagree that the progression of their salary is commensurate with their individual performance. This may suggest that there are limited or no monetary incentives linked to elevated academic performance. Performance-aligned monetary incentives would ensure that academics whose performance is consistently high over a period of years would be higher up in the salary range than a lower-performing peer. This would be possible on condition that the performance management system is sound and acknowledges excellent performance. Interviewees highlighted that the performance management system in their institution was either flawed or on hold due to labour union tension (see table 8.86).

Table 8.107 reports on the proportionality of agreement by academic levels' that they have adequate time to attend to personal commitments.

**TABLE 8.107: TIME FOR PERSONAL COMMITMENTS**

B4.5 I have adequate time to attend to personal commitments													
		Current academic level			Gender group		Racial group		Life stage group				
		Lower academic level (JL/L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP/P)	Female	Male	Black (African / coloured / Asian)	White	Single	Couple	Family (young / single)	Family (mature)	Golden nest
<b>n</b>	186	64	67	55	104	82	66	120	35	35	77	23	16
<b>Mean</b>	3.06	3.06	3.00	3.13	2.97	3.17	3.21	2.98	3.11	3.29	2.84	3.26	3.19
<b>SD</b>	1.16	1.21	1.21	1.06	1.11	1.22	1.19	1.13	1.25	1.23	1.14	0.96	1.11
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	18.3%	39.0%	40.3%	32.8%	42.4%	31.7%	33.3%	40.0%	34.3%	34.3%	44.2%	30.4%	31.3%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	72.6%	48.5%	44.8%	50.9%	45.2%	51.2%	53.1%	45.0%	51.5%	60.0%	39.0%	52.1%	50.1%
<b>% Undecided</b>	9.1%	12.5%	14.9%	16.3%	12.4%	17.1%	13.6%	15.0%	14.3%	5.7%	16.9%	17.4%	18.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Note: \*B4.5 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (4.5)**

The mean score reflected in table 8.107 across academic levels and racial and gender groups was consistently around undecidedness or a slight move towards agreement. Less than 50% of respondents at the lower and middle academic levels were in agreement. Black respondents reported a 53.1% proportionality of agreement with less than 50% of whites in agreement. This proportionality of agreement by black respondents will have a positive effect on their retention. The young family life stage category reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 44.2% and the female category reported a higher disagreement proportionality at 42.4%. The mature family life stage category reported a 52.1% proportionality of agreement with the male group at 51.2%.

The data reflected in Table 8.107 is consistent with Tables 8.12, 8.44 and 8.59 with regard to the need by academics for flexible working hours. In addition, interviewees highlighted the effect of the excessive academic workload on their personal lives. The review of literature in Chapter five highlighted the need that academics have for more work-life balance in view of an excessive workload (see 5.5.4.2).

Table 8.108 reflects the responses from respondents in terms of how important each dimension was to an academic within the institution where one was most important. Based on the overall Mean scores per dimension as depicted in Table 8.108, the reward dimensions were ranked as follows in order of priority and is highlighted in red in Table 8.108, namely:

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Remuneration                         | <b>2.76</b> |
| 2. Work-life balance                    | <b>3.22</b> |
| 3. Development and career opportunities | <b>3.37</b> |
| 4. Employee benefits                    | <b>3.51</b> |
| 5. Performance opportunities            | <b>3.62</b> |
| 6. Recognition opportunities            | <b>4.52</b> |

The survey item (B4.5) pertained to the academic's current experience implying their preference for a reward item in terms of their retention in the institution and not during their attraction to the institution. The feedback from respondents in terms of the overall Mean score prioritised remuneration, followed by work-life balance and then development and career opportunities. The analysis of literature as reflected in Chapter three however, suggests that remuneration was of less importance during

retention than during the attraction of an academic. What was suggested in Chapter four, was that development and career opportunities followed by work-life balance initiatives were of more importance during retention (see 3.3.3.3).

The conflicting feedback from respondents to the survey item (B4.5 compared to the analysis of literature was probed further during the interviews. Interviewees confirmed confidently that remuneration was not as important during retention as it was during their attraction to an academic institution. They added that academic development opportunities at their institution were most influential in terms of their retention. The feedback from interviewees (see 8.8.9.5) was consistent with the analysis of literature (see 3.3.2.4.4).

In view of the conflicting feedback between the analyses of literature and feedback from interviewees and the response to the survey item, the researcher concluded that respondents may not have interpreted the question correctly in that it referred to their preference for a reward item at their institution (implying an influence on the respondents retention) and not during their attraction to the institution.

**TABLE 8.108: RATING OF REWARD ELEMENTS**

No.	Mean / Std. Deviation	Overall	Current academic level			Gender		Racial group	
			Lower academic level (JL/L)	Middle academic level (SL)	Senior academic level (AP/P)	Female	Male	Black (African, coloured, Asian)	White
B4.6 Remuneration	Mean	2.76 (1)	2.55	2.72	3.05	2.85	2.65	2.77	2.75
	SD	1.94	1.89	1.84	2.09	1.97	1.89	1.96	1.94
B4.6 Employee benefits	Mean	3.51 (4)	3.38	3.81	3.31	3.47	3.56	3.70	3.43
	SD	1.54	1.58	1.53	1.48	1.52	1.57	1.67	1.46
B4.6 Performance opportunities	Mean	3.62 (5)	3.77	3.79	3.25	3.74	3.48	3.56	3.71
	SD	1.49	1.51	1.44	1.49	1.53	1.44	1.50	1.47
B4.6 Recognition opportunities	Mean	4.52 (6)	4.36	4.72	4.45	4.55	4.48	4.18	4.70
	SD	1.39	1.44	1.38	1.34	1.36	1.43	1.38	1.38
B4.6 Development and career opportunities	Mean	3.37 (3)	3.52	3.12	3.51	3.39	3.34	3.24	3.44
	SD	1.48	1.51	1.40	1.53	1.46	1.51	1.53	1.47
B4.6 Work-life balance initiatives	Mean	3.22 (2)	3.44	2.85	3.42	3.00	3.50	3.58	2.98
	SD	1.85	1.82	1.79	1.91	1.81	1.87	1.85	1.78
n			64	67	55	104	82	66	120

Note: \*B4.6 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (4.6). The order of preference namely from 1 to 5 is highlighted in red.



### **8.7.1 Summary**

It appeared that remuneration was more important during the phase when an academic is being attracted to the profession than during the retention phase. Academics preferred better remuneration above working more flexible hours and professional development opportunities. It appeared that respondents did not interpret the survey item to relate to retention but interpreted it rather to relate to attraction. This was probed further during the interviews where interviewees were quite confident that more flexible working arrangements and professional development opportunities, including mentorship and coaching initiatives, were preferred above remuneration. Respondents appeared, however to be comparing their remuneration and related monetary benefits with the lucrative remuneration package that is offered by the private sector nationally and abroad.

### **8.8 ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS PERTAINING TO TURNOVER INTENTION**

The challenge facing higher education to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff, requires proactive measures rather than a reactive approach by management.

Table 8.109 reports on feedback from academic levels on whether they often look for alternate employment opportunities.

**TABLE 8.109: RATING OF REWARD ELEMENTS**

<b>B5.1 I often look for alternate employment opportunities</b>							
	<b>Academic Level</b>			<b>Racial Group</b>		<b>Gender Group</b>	
	<b>Lower Academic Level (JL/L)</b>	<b>Middle Academic Level (SL)</b>	<b>Senior Academic Level (APP)</b>	<b>Black (African, Coloured, Asian)</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
<b>n</b>	64	67	55	66	120	104	82
<b>% Disagreement (disagree + strongly disagree)</b>	53.1%	59.7%	60.0%	51.5%	60.9%	60.6%	53.6%
<b>% Agreement (agree + strongly agree)</b>	25.0%	26.8%	30.9%	31.8%	25.0%	26.0%	29.3%
<b>% Undecided</b>	21.9%	13.5%	9.1%	16.7%	14.1%	13.4%	17.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Mean (1-5)</b>	2.67	2.43	2.40	2.65	2.39	2.44	2.59
<b>SD</b>	1.22	1.38	1.40	1.33	1.29	1.31	1.36

**Note: \*B5.1 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (5.1).**

### **8.8.1 Analysis**

Overall, the Mean score across academic levels and racial and gender groups suggested disagreement in response to the survey item (B5.1) with a slight tendency away towards undecidedness. The senior academic level reported the highest proportionality of disagreement at 60% and the highest proportionality of agreement at 30.9%. At least 50% of black and white respondents disagreed at 51.5% and 60.9% respectively. The proportionality of disagreement suggested that generally respondents were not often looking for alternate employment opportunities. A few interviewees mentioned that they were looking to leave the institution for another HEI or looking to join the private sector. Reasons cited by interviewees were more lucrative remuneration in the private sector, a tense working relationship with the line manager, a need for a more supportive and nurturing working environment, including mentorship and coaching interventions and a need for work-life balance (see 3.3.2.4.4.4).

Table 8.110 reports on the main reason cited by respondents if they were to leave their institution at that point. The yellow block identifies the reason most frequently chosen in that category. The green block identifies the reason chosen second most frequently. Across the academic level and across gender or racial groups, a common reason was respondents' dissatisfaction with their personal remuneration. The second most common reason that was also consistent across academic levels and gender groups was respondents indicating that there were more lucrative prospects in the academic sector abroad. Black respondents cited an unhealthy culture in their department as the second reason while whites reported the non-competitive remuneration as the second most frequently chosen reason.

**TABLE 8.110: REASON FOR TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

		Sample	Current Academic Level			Gender		Racial Group	
		n	Lower Academic Level	Middle Academic Level	Senior Academic Level	Female	Male	Black	White
B5.2 If you were to leave your current position, what would be the main reason for this decision?	I have a poor working relationship with my line manager	10	5.5%	3.9%	13.9%	8.6%	4.9%	3.8%	9%
	I am not satisfied with my personal remuneration	35	30.9%	17.6%	25.0%	17.3%	34.4%	30.2%	21.3%
	I am not satisfied with my current academic level	11	10.9%	9.8%		6.2%	9.8%	5.7%	9%
	The institution is financially unstable	11	5.5%	5.9%	13.9%	9.9%	4.9%	5.7%	9%
	The culture in my department is unhealthy	15	12.7%	9.8%	8.3%	12.3%	8.2%	11.3%	10.1%
	There is a more progressive career path in the same institution but within another College / Faculty	7	7.3%	5.9%		4.9%	4.9%	5.7%	4.5%
	There are better prospects in another institution within the South African higher education sector	18	7.3%	17.6%	13.9%	14.8%	9.8%	17%	10.1%
	There are better prospects in another institution within the South African private sector	7	3.6%	5.9%	5.6%	3.7%	6.6%	7.6%	3.4%
	There are better prospects in another institution within the South African public service	3	1.8%	2.0%	2.8%	1.2%	3.3%	3.8%	1.1%
	There are better prospects in the academic sector abroad	25	14.5%	21.6%	16.7%	21.0%		9.4%	22.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>89</b>
	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Note: \*B5.2 = reference to the questionnaire. In all tables reporting on the questionnaire, this will indicate the section in the questionnaire (B), while the number indicates the number of the question (5.2).

### **8.8.2 Analysis**

It appeared that, at the time of this research, the lower and middle academic levels might have been considering alternate employment but not the senior academic levels. This is consistent with the finding that the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff, relates to the lower academic levels. More lucrative remuneration in the private sector, more lucrative academic prospects abroad and an unhealthy workplace culture were put forward as reasons for intending to leave the academic profession.

### **8.9 ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW DATA**

Although the researcher was guided by a set of questions that were predetermined and standardised, she did not restrict interviewees to the questions but allowed them to share their relevant academic-related concerns. A semi-structured interview was thus employed along with prompts and probes to explore the interviewees' points of view further, whilst ensuring certain aspects were addressed. The researcher explored in depth particular areas for which there were no conclusive outcomes in the survey data collection phase (Saunders et al., 2012:374-375).

Data saturation takes place during interviews when the researcher was no longer receiving new information. Qualitative research is an iterative process that moves between data collection and analysis, which enables a researcher to determine when saturation is reached (Francis, Johnstone, Robertson, Glidewell, Entwistle, Eccles & Grimshaw, 2010:1229-1245; Saunders et al., 2012:402). Since interviewees were still sharing pertinent information after the tenth interview at Wits, the researcher extended the number of interviews to 12 while data saturation had been reached after 10 interviews at UP and Unisa.

The interview questionnaire was used as the basis for the interview. The researcher encouraged the interviewees to share their experiences as academics within the scope of this research study and in a safe space. Each interviewee signed a confidentiality agreement and consent form formally giving their consent to participate in the research study before the interview commenced. A tape recorder was used to record the discussion only if the interviewee was comfortable with the instrument being used. The researcher consulted relevant literature to prepare adequately for each interview using effective interview techniques (Egan, 2013; Saunders et al., 2012:374-408).

The academics who responded positively to the request for an interview were scheduled electronically in terms of their availability at a venue that was convenient to the academic. At Unisa, the interviews were managed on different dates in March 2016 and held at the Unisa main campus in Pretoria where the Department of Public Administration and Management is based. At UP, the interviews were scheduled on two separate dates at the main campus in Hatfield, Pretoria where the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences is based. At Wits, the interviews were scheduled on five separate dates to accommodate the academics who responded positively to the interview request. The interviewees were based at three different campuses ranging from the Wits main campus in the Johannesburg city centre to the Wits Parktown campus and the Wits Business School in the Johannesburg extended area.

This section briefly outlines the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the analysis of the results of this study. The approach taken by the researcher to establish trustworthiness and credibility is outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Trustworthiness involves:

- **credibility** - describes the 'truth value' of the findings and reflects the confidence that the findings reflect the 'truth' in the context of the research;
- **transferability** - provides a chain of reasoning that shows how the findings have applicability in other contexts;
- **dependability** - describes the processes used to show that the findings are consistent and can be repeated; and
- **confirmability** - aims to demonstrate a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of the study are shaped by the respondents and not the researcher's interest, bias or motivation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:185:289-329).

The data obtained through the survey was triangulated with the feedback obtained from the interviews to determine its credibility. An audit trail of the empirical work was captured or recorded to ensure that the study was dependable. This includes the written field notes, digital voice recordings and unobtrusive measures, such as electronic scheduling of meetings. In addition, raw data was collated, such as the emails to respondents to confirm scheduled appointments or to express appreciation for their invaluable input. The details of interviewees were kept confidential by using pseudonyms. Theoretical notes, such as working hypotheses, concepts and hunches, were recorded in a separate book used solely for the purpose of the research study.

The data obtained during the interviews was analysed using ATLAS.ti. (Archer, 2013:1-50; Archer, 2013:1-40). Sections of text, which were of importance in relation to the research objectives of the study, were highlighted as quotes and linked to a code. Coding provides a Means of purposefully managing, locating, identifying, sifting, sorting and querying data (Saunders et al., 2012:333).

It stimulates and facilitates data analysis (Bazeley, 2013:125). As soon as there were no new patterns but only more examples of the same patterns, coding stopped due to data saturation (Bowen, 2008:137-152; Saunders et al., 2012:266). The codes were then grouped into relevant themes, which entailed breaking a multitude of text into Meaningful sections and then recombining them into groups of concepts and ideas which shared similar characteristics and therefore fitted together (Willig, 2014:147). The themes were closely examined keeping the interviewees and final research product in mind related to the objectives of the research study (Bazeley, 2013:125).

The process that followed in terms of inductive reasoning attempted to identify emergent ideas and themes strongly linked to the data themselves (Braun & Clarke, 2006:77-101; Saldana, 2015:1-240). The management of data in this manner led to data being transformed into information, then knowledge and finally science (Vaismoradi et al., 2013:398-405; Chenail, 2012:248).

The Talent Management Strategy (see 6.6.5.1.5) highlights the attraction, retention, development and deployment pillars. In the academic sector, the deployment pillar would not be feasible in view of the nature of academic responsibilities of research, teaching and community engagement. The feedback from the interviews highlighted specific themes which are captured below within the three remaining talent management pillars.

### **8.9.1 Talent management pillar: attraction and retention**

*The need for a unique academic EVP that attracts and retains academics, particularly black staff*

With the use of ATLAS.ti and subsequent to the coding of the data from the interviews, the following eight interdependent themes (families) emerged, which represented the views of the interviewees on the attraction and the retention of academics. The emphasis is placed on the management of talent within the academic particularly at

the lower levels, through amongst others, institutionalised mentorship and coaching.

The themes are

- the National Higher Education Strategy (see 6.6.5.1.6);
- a credible institution;
- competitive Employee Rewards;
- academic development;
- a healthy institutional culture;
- performance and recognition opportunities;
- a sound governance framework; and
- the academic employee value proposition.

The audit trail for the analysis is provided in a web-page format in the attached CD, which can be viewed employing any web-browser.

Interviewees highlighted their passion to teach and conduct research and community engagement projects. Their passion was to impart knowledge, influence the minds of students and contribute to a knowledgeable society and economic development. While they were mindful of the challenges in academe, they were also passionate about their role as academics. Seasoned academics supported the institutionalisation of mentorship and coaching particularly for young talented academics. Some interviewees suggested that potential academics should be recruited proactively from high schools and universities to broaden the pool of talented academics. Interviewees also hinted that the employer should have a unique EVP in place for academics who perform a unique service to society. By implication, the EVP for professional or support staff would be quite different from the one that was suggested for academics.

### **8.9.2 Talent management pillar: attraction and retention**

*The need for a national higher education strategy to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff*

Some interviewees were of the view that the undue emphasis on a doctoral thesis in academe was unrealistic and counter-productive given that for comparable positions in the private sector, it was viewed as unnecessary.

Interviewees highlighted the misalignment between the national government agenda, national HE agenda and the resource allocation to universities. It was emphasised that



a research-focussed agenda was prioritised without the enabling environment and resources being in place in each university. In addition, insufficient management information existed or was communicated by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) on the transformation of each university.

The DHET needs to allocate additional funding to universities to achieve their mandate (DoE, 2009). The DHET and universities, in particular, need to form partnerships with industry to secure additional funding to further the academic agenda and support community engagement projects. Education leaders may err in using principles from the private sector to manage higher education since the dynamics in both sectors are vastly different. The strategy to manage higher education is therefore significantly different from the management of the private sector (Balfour & Neff, 1993:473-486). There should however be a link between the standards for industry-specific careers, the role players who develop the university curriculum study material and the industry subject matter experts. Interviewees emphasised the alignment that was necessary between the National Development Plan (NPC, 2011), the Higher Education Strategy (DHET, 2013b), institutional strategic and policy imperatives and the academic project towards a credible HE system in South Africa (DHET, 2015). Interviewees also experienced that the DHET did not have a response towards the instability in higher education at the time of the research, specifically the *#FeesMustFall* campaign and the insourcing of outsourced services. This implied a slow response from the DHET to universities during the HE crisis, which might result in universities responding individually. This might, inadvertently, damage the academic plan within an institution as well as the appeal of the academic profession as a career.

### **8.9.3 Talent management pillar: attraction and retention**

*The positive influence of a credible institution on the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff*

Interviewees placed a very high premium on the credibility of an HEI when they considered a future employer. The instability within the HE sector at the time of this research might have been overly influenced by the political agenda in the country at the time while the interests being raised were still valid. Institutions that had to close due to protest action inhibited students from accessing education opportunities or completing their studies towards graduation and employment. The labour unrest

therefore had a much wider effect on students and could influence their employment career and support of their families.

The strategic, budgetary and academic planning processes must be integrated and aligned to institutional imperatives. The interdependency of processes should be factored into planning to enable complementary dimensions towards a sound governance process. The efficiency and effectiveness of planning will enable a sound investment of resources and contribute towards a sustained institution. Interviewees added that where institutions have become financially unsustainable, it was largely due to poor planning resulting in consistent wasteful expenditure. Interviewees emphasised that competitive employee rewards could only be considered within sound financial management projections for the medium to long term.

Bureaucratic processes within the institution extending from lengthy recruitment and selection of academics to cumbersome promotional processes, frequent and lengthy meetings and the delayed payment of developmental funds (associated with research outputs) frustrated academics. This contributed to their intention to leave academe and their termination of employment. Respondents highlighted the need for freedom within the workplace to exercise their responsibilities as opposed to being micro-managed. Interviewees highlighted the need not only for a sound governance framework to regulate processes but also for the framework to be implemented and reviewed regularly for inefficiencies.

Interviewees were vehemently opposed to appointment and promotion criteria being lowered to increase the attraction and retention of academics, particularly black staff. They placed a very high premium on the institution using benchmarked standards to maintain credibility within higher education nationally and internationally. In addition, interviewees highlighted the negative effect of promotion and appointment criteria not being consistent between colleges and faculties within the same institution. Some interviewees suggested the benchmarking of appointment and promotion criteria to comparable standards in the private sector and public service contributing to a credible academic profession and institution.

Interviewees emphasised the importance of institutional leaders and line managers living the institutional value statement consistently to earn the respect of employees. They must maintain contact with and listen to academics, particularly in any academic-

related decision-making. Interviewees also emphasised the negative effect of management implementing policies and decisions, which had a reaction their area of work. These policies and decisions were made by non-academics in isolated forums thus perpetuating the silo effect in the institution. Line management should participate in departmental cultural events and ceremonies to acknowledge the performance and contribution of academics as well as the introduction and welcoming process to receive new appointees. The caring culture within the institution is created by all employees through their behaviour and led by institutional leadership. Sound decision-making by institutional leaders in collaboration with each other contributed to the credibility of the leaders and that of the institution.

Interviewees agreed that it was somewhat reactive to gauge the reasons for employees terminating employment at exit interviews. This was as opposed to a more proactive approach of determining underlying concerns during institutional health surveys or measuring the intention to leave regularly in the institution.

#### **8.9.4 Talent management pillar: attraction and retention**

*The positive effect of competitive employee rewards on the challenge to attract and retain talented academics, particularly black staff*

Seasoned academics who were interviewed still found the employee rewards (remuneration and employee benefits) in academe to be competitive, especially in relation to the remuneration of school teachers. They added that there were sufficient opportunities to engage in private work to augment the academic income. However, interviewees did acknowledge very quickly that academic remuneration was not competitive at all when compared to the private sector and public service. This was a realistic concern, especially for academics who are approaching retirement. In this context, therefore, more lucrative remuneration and the competitiveness of the employment package were push and pull factors. Interviewees emphasised the need for market-related remuneration considering the experience, skill and qualifications of the academic and what the reward in the private sector or public service would be for that talent. Interviewees quickly cautioned line managers not to throw money at the challenge of attracting and retaining academics but to approach the challenge from a sound point of view. The effect of new academics being appointed on higher salaries than existing academics will influence workplace morale. This might solve the

attraction challenge but will also influence the retention challenge negatively. Interviewees encouraged education and institutional leaders to secure more funding that could add to the competitiveness of remuneration and include new employee benefits that were relevant to the academic.

In view of the excessive workload that academics mentioned as a huge concern, flexible working hours was a definite benefit. Flexibility would enable academics to fulfil their personal and professional commitments while working remotely when consulting appointments or teaching commitments were not scheduled for the day. Interviewees were of the view that the life stage group of academics in the workplace predominantly comprised academics with children of varying ages as dependants or additional dependants such as from the extended family. Interviewees emphasised that flexible working arrangements should be structured within a policy framework that is underpinned by the principles of fairness, consistency, defensibility and transparency (see 6.6.5.1.12). When academics could not meet their personal commitments due to a lack of work-life effectiveness, they started to contemplate leaving the profession. This intention might not materialise immediately but continues to build towards a point of actual termination of employment. Academics who work flexible hours must be accountable for their deliverables being produced at a standard that is agreed upon with the line manager and within agreed-upon deadlines. The students' need for one-to-one engagement with the academic must not be undermined in favour of communicating through technology.

The risk of academics working flexible hours is that, unless the line manager schedules time for regular academic collaboration or staff meetings, academics will not network or engage in the workplace with their peers. Interviewees highlighted the value-add from the networking in their own research area as well as its contribution to an environment conducive to working.

While competitive employee rewards nationally and internationally within the HE sector, particularly remuneration, definitely influenced the attraction of the academics into the profession, interviewees emphasised that it was not the primary factor influencing retention. The opportunities for the development of the academic were more important towards his or her progress. Interviewees also highlighted their need for a caring culture within their department and institution as a higher priority than competitive rewards or remuneration.

Interviewees highlighted the need for the employer to present a holistic competitive EVP to academics, which includes remuneration and employee benefits, towards positive attraction and retention of academics. Employers often have a very competitive offering for academics but fail to communicate all aspects of the employee reward sufficiently and on an ongoing basis. Academics who leave the institution may not be fully aware of the rewards offered by the institution. In this context, the employer is paying a huge price for lack of communication since a significant investment would need to be made again into the filling of a vacant position.

### **8.9.5 Talent management pillar: attraction, retention and development**

*The positive influence of academic development interventions on the challenge to attract, develop and retain academics, particularly black staff*

The academic profession has changed significantly in line with new national and international developments. Locally, new HE goals inform the manner in which HEIs must conduct their mandate (DHET, 2013b). The manner in which academics carry out the responsibility of teaching, research and community engagement has to adapt to meet the needs of the new era. This implies a mind shift on the part of academics, which would require an effective change management process within the institution. Amongst others, the emphasis on the use of technology to reach the different generational groups within the diverse student population requires academics to become adept at the use of technology themselves. The emphasis on research output significantly above community engagement and teaching needs to be communicated to academics sufficiently to avoid it being a difficult adjustment on entering the profession. The academic would need to align his or her academic goals to the vision of the institution, particularly where the focus is on elevated research output.

There appeared to be a lack of co-ordination between the interdependent developmental-focussed strategies in the institutions. This implies that the value-add from the implementation of the strategies was not being realised by the academics nor at institution level since it was managed within silos.

Interviewees added that line managers should be continually exposed to training and development to sharpen their managerial skills, remain relevant on how to manage diversity in the workplace, adopt basic mentorship skills and be effective in maintaining

a team within a flexible working environment and healthy institutional culture while managing an excessive workload.

Interviewees emphasised the importance of mentorship being institutionalised as opposed to an informal initiative that is practiced by some academics. Senior academics should be assigned mentees through a structured governance framework which involves accountability, possible rewards for the investment of time, criteria for the pairing of mentors and mentees and training of all stakeholders to enhance the success and effect of it. Successful mentorship of junior academics would support a succession planning strategy within the workplace. The mentorship and coaching of lower-level academics, particularly black staff, would have a positive influence on their attraction but more importantly on their retention. This particular intervention should be part of the broader talent management of the lower-level academics to influence their career path to more senior academic levels. Coaching academics on the job is a useful intervention that may not be exploited sufficiently by line managers. Interviewees, particularly black staff, referred to the positive effect on the morale of a lower-level academic who is mentored by a seasoned senior academic. Interviewees added that stretch assignments (Unisa, 2013d) and job rotation as developmental interventions may be feasible in certain environments. However, the excessive workload and emphasis on the master's and doctoral thesis do not generally allow an academic to participate in stretch assignments or job rotation easily.

Interviewees added that the opportunities in the workplace for skills development should be transparent, consistent, fair and defensible. A high premium was placed on the opportunity to attend academic-related conferences, seminars and workshops where academics collaborate on further research. The exposure to conferences, whether through the presentation of a paper or by absorbing the latest developments in terms of research, was compulsory and not a fringe benefit. It enhances the growth of academics and presents opportunities to network with peers nationally and internationally. Interviewees, however, voiced their concern that the funds arising from their research output were not freely accessible to them for personal use as it was dedicated to the production of more research.

Interviewees highlighted that the employment and induction of new academics into the institution and department are not being used optimally to influence the settling-in experience and retention of the same academic. New recruits are welcomed into a

caring institution and receive an overview of institutional and departmental matters. In addition, the academic might identify a research opportunity especially if collaboration between peers starts during employment and induction. The welcoming experience could also support the institutionalised mentorship and coaching programme.

Interviewees were adamant that the appointment and promotion criteria should not be lowered to accommodate the challenge of attracting academics into the profession. A high premium was placed on the credibility of academics as subject matter experts and the credibility of the academic institution and respect of peers nationally and internationally. Ongoing reading of published research contributes to the academic's credibility and allows him or her to remain relevant within the profession. If academe is to consider the accelerated development of black academics, it must be done in a sound, transparent, defensible and consistent manner. Based on the feedback from interviewees, it appeared that the appointment and promotion requirements at each academic level supported the professional development of the academic.

#### **8.9.6 Talent management pillar: attraction and retention**

*The positive effect of a healthy institutional culture on the challenge to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff*

The emphasis on the research aspect of the institutional academic plan places severe pressure on academics within a new academic role, given the unsupportive academic environment. New academics, who have a passion for teaching and community engagement and who are less inclined towards research, experience difficulty adjusting to the institution when they realise that their career progression is dependent on their research output. This might not be communicated sufficiently in the advertisement or during the welcoming and induction of new academics. Interviewees encouraged line management to create a workplace that was conducive to high research output through additional funding, mentorship and coaching of junior academics, academic networks and a nurturing environment. In an attempt to manage the research-aligned deliverables, academics were concerned that the focus might shift from quality to quantity of research outputs.

In the quantitative study, black respondents alluded to a positive workplace culture with minor challenges (see 3.3.2.3). Interviewees however highlighted the existence of subtle discriminatory practices in the workplace ranging from being excluded from

important decision-making to inequitable practices in terms of opportunities that were available, not willing to share information or knowledge, exclusionary practices in staff meetings and formal processes being compromised by subjectivity. However, black interviewees consistently pointed out the need to work harder than normal to prove themselves amongst their white peers. Acceptance into the workplace culture was not a given. Academics tended to mistrust each other, particularly between racial groups. The experience of having to prove oneself was seen as the norm. The claustrophobic and stifling departmental culture was a push factor out of the institution for some black interviewees who found the experience of having to prove oneself continually, quite exhausting. Talented academics were being lost to the private sector not necessarily as a result of more lucrative job offers but because the culture in the workplace was stifling.

The implementation of institutional health surveys at regular intervals would support the identification of problem areas. Interviewees identified a need for academics and employees in general to be educated in terms of the difference between a transformed and equitable workplace. Inequitable practices in the workplace that deliberately advantage one group against the other, contribute to an unhealthy institutional culture. Institutional leaders must support a diverse workplace visibly through messages and emails, practices and a sound governance framework that support an inclusive culture. Interviewees added that the diversity of the modern-day workplace was an advantage in terms of the competitiveness of the institution. The size of the institution may disable effective communication (see 3.3.2.4.2); hence, all academics have to communicate purposively with their colleagues or line management to support a healthy departmental culture. Within this context, the historical imbalances and diverse workforce could be embraced towards a rich academic workplace where collegial engagement and collaboration are rife amongst academics.

Previously disadvantaged students might still experience exclusionary practices in higher education (HESA, 2010). Some interviewees had observed the negative manner in which white academics responded to black student-related queries in comparison to queries from white students. However, some of the black interviewees highlighted the positive effect that discrimination has had on them when it encouraged them to persevere beyond their own expectations of themselves (see 3.3.2.2.2). The presence of credible black and female academics in the workplace in leadership



positions had a positive effect on junior academics and served as a form of institutionalised mentorship (see 3.3.2.3).

### **8.9.7 Talent management pillar: attraction and retention**

*The positive effect of performance and recognition opportunities on the challenge to attract and retain black academic staff*

Performance management is primarily a developmental tool but interviewees felt that, if it is not implemented correctly, it could stifle the growth of the academic. Interviewees placed a premium on performance and recognition initiatives and incentives in academe which had a positive influence on the attraction and retention of academics. However, a considerable concern existed with regard to the credibility of the performance management system within the institution. Interviewees complained that a one-size-fits-all system would not work, and recommended that subject matter experts in academe collaborate to develop a performance management system that is aligned to the academic plan and is sensitive to the needs of academics. The involvement of labour unions in the workplace in as far as the promotion of the academic plan was concerned, was not clear to interviewees. Their experience was that the presence of labour unions generated fear in line managers and academics in the workplace. Line managers appeared to be fearful to manage poor-performing academics due to the intimidating presence of labour unions in the workplace.

Interviewees identified the value of a 360-degree appraisal system (see 4.4.3.4) as opposed to being assessed by the line manager. The former involves feedback from peers and employees in horizontal and vertical alignment to the academic. Interviewees however emphasised that they must have some input into the raters that are chosen to be included in the 360-degree appraisal; the raters must know what the academics' targets and deliverables are as well as their work ethic. Interviewees added that there was value-add in the shift from individual performance acknowledgement to team performance in the workplace.

The emphasis on research output should be communicated to academics through the recruitment drive and during welcoming and induction of the new employee. Excellence in research should be incentivised to encourage all academics, particularly the younger generation, to strive towards elevated research output. This implies the need for institutionalised mentorship and coaching to support the emphasis on

research output. The alignment between performance management and monetary reward may be considered provided performance management is implemented with a developmental focus (see 4.4.3.9). Interviews also highlighted that the current link from performance scores to performance bonuses was affecting the morale of academics since the performance management system was flawed. Within this context, it was suggested that the link between the performance management system and monetary rewards be removed and that all academics instead receive a fourteenth cheque; this is within the context that all employees currently receive a thirteenth cheque from the employer. Interviewees added that monetary reward should be aligned to the completion of qualifications in academe particularly the master's and doctor's degree to incentivise academics to strive for higher levels of academic excellence.

The value-add of elevated quality research output to academics should be emphasised through, amongst others, highlighting the international academic-related opportunities that would open up to an academic thus enabling an international career in academe. Interviewees also suggested that teaching, research and community engagement should carry an equal weighting in performance management and workload allocation as this would have a positive effect on the retention of the academic. Interviewees mentioned that in academe abroad, the emphasis was first on teaching, which flowed into research. In South Africa, the emphasis may be first on research and to a lesser extent, on teaching. Interviewees were very vocal about senior academics who must also share the teaching load and the weighting should be equal between the three dimensions (see 3.3.2.4.4.5) as some academics are not inclined towards research but rather towards teaching.

In view of the flawed performance management system, interviewees suggested that academics should merely be managed in terms of agreed-upon deliverables. This would ensure consistency and limited subjectivity. However, these interviewees were unable to motivate how excellence in research, community engagement and teaching should be incentivised. The need for all role players in the performance management chain to be trained in the principles of performance management was emphasised by interviewees to create an environment conducive to working. This feedback was within the context of the discussion that the current performance management process was flawed and hence demotivating (see 4.4.3). Interviewees explained that performance appraisal sessions were especially tense if the relationship between the line manager

and the academic was strained and if performance management was not viewed as a developmental tool by both parties.

### **8.9.8 Talent management pillar: attraction and retention**

*The positive effect of a sound governance framework on the challenge to attract and retain black academic staff*

Interviewees highlighted the need for a sound governance framework to exist in all academic-related matters to ensure transparency, consistency, fairness and defensibility (see 6.6.5.1.13). Interviewees were of the view that, within such a structured environment, institutional leaders would perhaps be overambitious in deciding on too many goals and would then struggle to meet any of the objectives. Interviewees pointed out that the highest academic body in the institution, which deliberates over academic-related matters, should consist of academics and perhaps also be chaired by the most senior academic in the institution as opposed to a member of managerial staff. This immediately implied that there could be a gap between the academic plan and the decisions that are taken at the institutional academic decision-making forum.

The consultation in terms of policies with academic role players before such policies are implemented would contribute towards a healthy institutional culture. In the absence of consultation and engagement, the employer might require the employee merely to comply with the provisions of policies. The instilling of a compliance-driven culture in the institution will not augur well for a healthy institution culture or academic freedom. There must be alignment and integration between policies in the institution to achieve maximum effect on retention thus implying that policy owners must engage each other as well as the intended audience of the policy.

Interviewees emphasised that the excessive workload that academics were experiencing at the time of the research was largely the result of an absence of a scientific model that would allocate workload equitably. In their understanding, the workload model should find expression in the scientific model, which allocates HR cost units to each department within the college or faculty (see 3.3.2.4.4.6). The excessive workload is a major contributing factor towards the loss of academics to the private sector and public service. In addition to the excessive academic workload, academics complained about the effect of poor-quality supervisors and the increasing

administrative workload, on their negative academic experience. The effect of the negative workload was also felt on the quality of family life with a few academics mentioning that their marriages had ended in divorce as a result of the time they spent on marking, teaching or research. Their email was continually open to manage their workload. They were unable to take leave and struggled to meet personal responsibilities. When employees are overworked, they tend to make mistakes in executing their responsibilities (see 3.3.2.4.4.2). Other interviewees found the workload complaint unjustified and pointed to poor work ethic on the part of some academics, saying the academic lacked organisational and planning skills to prioritise the workload.

Interviewees pointed out that the attraction of academics starts at recruitment. Applicants might apply as a result of the brand or credibility of the institution more than the reward of the actual advertised position. Should the recruitment process be inefficient and unsound, it will result in academics not being attracted to the institution. The implementation of a sound policy framework supports the institution in the achievement of imperatives at the highest level.

## **8.10 CONCLUSION**

The feedback from respondents was analysed per question in the survey questionnaire. Where respondents were undecided in their responses, the researcher probed interviewees towards obtaining more clarity in relation to that specific question.

Of major significance in relation to this particular research study, was the observation that it appeared from the selected institutions and sample, that it was not only a challenge to attract young black academics but also young white academics. It therefore appeared that all new junior academic staff, regardless of racial group, were having the same negative experience in the workplace that was compromising their retention. The lower-level academics appeared to view any professional and skills development intervention to which they were exposed from the moment they were appointed in the workplace as crucial to their attraction to and retention in academe.

The feedback from interviewees was triangulated with the analysis of respondents' feedback in Chapter eight. Common themes were an academic EVP, a national HE strategy, a credible institution, a healthy institutional culture, competitive employee benefits, a sound governance framework and performance and recognition

opportunities. However, the dominant theme that emerged as response to the challenge to attract and retain black academic staff, was the talent management of the academic with a specific developmental focus. 'Talent management' refers to the attraction, retention, development and deployment of an employee. The deployment pillar was not feasible in the academic sector. While the interventions in the attraction and retention pillars were emphasised, the development pillar was prioritised by respondents and interviewees. Development-related interventions comprised, amongst others, stretch assignments, institutionalised coaching and mentorship within a nurturing and supportive workplace, attendance of relevant conferences to improve exposure to academic discourse, and encouraging research collaboration, secondment and acting opportunities and succession planning.

This research study is concluded in Chapter nine, where recommendations are presented based on the findings articulated in Chapter eight.

## CHAPTER NINE

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research study was to examine the talent management strategies at selected public HEIs in terms of attracting and retaining black academic staff. This is against the background that there appears to be a gap in terms of the availability of black talent at all academic levels but particularly at the lower and middle academic levels, to succeed the aging cohort of senior academic staff, particularly whites who are retiring and thus leaving the academic profession. With their exit from the academic profession, the retiring senior academic staff leave with valuable institutional knowledge, intellectual capital, a depth of experience and skills that are necessary to respond effectively to societal challenges and assist academe to remain an attractive career option, particularly for the younger generation of academic staff.

Within this context, the main research question was to identify the remedies that could be pursued to attract and retain talented black academic staff strategically. The approach by an institution in identifying such remedies has to be strategic given the limited talent pool within higher education and the national market in South Africa from where all HE employers are sourcing black academic talent. The contribution made by this research to public HR management is a new dimension to talent management as a retention strategy through a sharpened focus on the development of black academic staff.

The research study covered an analysis of literature in terms of recruitment and selection, retention, training and development as well as remuneration, as public HR functions. In addition, relevant empirical documents pertaining to the statutory and policy framework that regulates the talent management of academic staff at the University of South Africa (Unisa), University of Pretoria (UP) and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) were analysed to extract pertinent practices, which affected the purpose of the research study.

The analysis of literature in Chapters two to five and empirical documents in Chapter six informed the research methodology in Chapter seven. The research methodology

was used to identify the gaps during the implementation of the case study at selected public HEIs as reported in Chapter eight, in terms of managing the talent within black academic staff at the same HEIs. The case study was limited to a sample of academic staff, with a specific profile, in a specific college or faculty at Unisa, UP and Wits. Pertinent findings that were identified in relation to the aim of the research study, after the implementation of the case study at Unisa, Wits and UP as reflected in Chapter eight, informed the recommendations that are provided in Chapter nine. The dissertation concludes by providing answers to each of the seven research questions (see 1.1.5).

### **9.1.1 Research question one**

*What has been published on recruitment and selection as a public human resource function?*

The challenges that appear to be compromising the attraction of a potential academic to academe are the range of academic concerns that are being communicated on a public platform, which is inadvertently tarnishing the image of the academic profession as a viable career option. These challenges range from an increasing workload to reduced work autonomy, restricted access to research funds, a new profile of students and non-competitive remuneration. Potential academics are therefore considering the excessive workload, long hours, number of years to reach senior academic levels and non-competitive remuneration in relation to a career option in the private sector for the same knowledge, skills and qualifications, in the private sector. The choice by the potential academic not to enter academe is also influenced by the preferences of the generational and gender talent pool. It appears that the recruitment and selection strategy may not be responsive to these preferences.

Employers appear to manage their attraction strategy in isolation from their retention strategy whereas the successful retention of the academic appears to begin at the attraction phase. In addition, the recruitment strategy should be integrated with the HR strategy, reward strategy and talent management strategy and have a positive effect on the deliverables in the institutional plan. To compete successfully with peer institutions for academic staff from a limited talent pool, it is necessary for the employer to recruit strategically and to find the right people with the right skills for the right jobs first where they are a best fit and can have institutional influence.

It appears that the governance of recruitment and selection, bureaucratic processes that result in long delays of appointments being made and poorly skilled HR officials and line managers, may compromise the sourcing of talented academics to an institution. Line managers are now seen to be an extension of the HR manager. This implies that line managers, particularly academic staff, would need to be empowered to perform this role. The question also arises as to whether these additional responsibilities detract the member of the academic staff from his or her core role of teaching responsibilities, participating in community engagement and conducting research.

The employer value proposition (EVP) is the total packaged offering, namely the healthy organisational climate, the remuneration and employee benefits (reward) offering as well as training and development opportunities by the employer in exchange for the talent, time, skill and experience of the employee. It would appear that the EVP is not communicated effectively outside the institution, which may compromise attracting the talented academic particularly black staff.

Advertisements result from the content of job descriptions that are aligned to the mission of the relevant department. The mission of the department ought to be aligned to the mission of the institution. The challenge to attract a member of the academic staff may also be linked to incorrect job descriptions informing the advertisement, which culminates in the new appointee performing a totally different job from what was advertised.

The recruitment strategy must be focussed on promoting available talent within the institution first before talented employees are sourced externally, to have a positive influence on the morale of qualifying employees and the culture of the workplace.

While there is one school of thought that suggests that appointment and promotion requirements should be lowered to be able to source black academic talent, there is another view that the requirements should be reviewed but not necessarily lowered. Senior academic staff participating in the present research were adamant that the lowering of the appointment and promotion requirements would compromise the credibility of the academic profession locally, nationally and internationally.

It appears that male academic applicants are influenced most by the competitiveness of the remuneration that is offered in an advertised post while female academic



applicants are influenced most by the work-life balance opportunities that are offered by the advertising institution. It is possible that the male academic's preference is influenced by their personal responsibilities as breadwinners to their immediate and/or extended family as well as child-rearing responsibilities.

Psychometric tests, which measure the personality, strengths and weaknesses of candidates who are being interviewed, has regained popularity in recent years. Although the decision by the selection committee to appoint a particular candidate may be influenced by the results of the psychometric test, it is not a scientific measure of an individual's capability but it does provide valuable insight into the psychological profile of the individual (see Swanepoel et al., 2011).

Employers are required to manage the implementation of the recruitment strategy within the financial sustainability of the institution. Towards this end, efficiencies within the process are encouraged. These include using reference checks to avoid making appointment errors and limiting unnecessary delays in the appointment process, which may result in the sourced talent accepting a post at another institution.

The employee's relationship with the employer begins at the onset of the recruitment process and not when the appointment is finalised, thus implying that the retention of the employee actually begins at recruitment.

### **9.1.2 Research question two**

*What has been published on retention as a public human resource function?*

The employer is required to implement a retention strategy that is unique to the internal and external dynamics of the institution. This implies that line managers and HR managers must be sufficiently empowered and conduct their responsibilities in a professional manner, which will have a positive effect on the retention of the talented academic.

The employer is not utilising the opportunity of influencing the retention of the potential new appointee, from the start of the recruitment process. Instead, the employer appears to focus on retention only at appointment. Key factors that may influence the recruitment of talented academic staff are the institutional brand, the financial stability of the institution and the effectiveness of the advertisement process.

Employers employ competitive advantage in relation to peer institutions in terms of retaining talented academic staff if they integrate their internal strategies in a manner that the implementation of the integrated framework has a positive institutional effect.

The focus within HEIs has shifted to sourcing talented academic staff internally first before candidates are approached externally. This implies a dedicated focus on the management of talent within the institution with a specific focus on the development and training of academic staff, including institutionalised mentorship, coaching, job rotation, stretch assignments, succession planning, acting and secondment opportunities, research collaboration, peer networks, attendance at conferences to elevate academic exposure.

Remuneration appears to influence a potential academic to join the academic profession but a competitive reward package, which is integrated within an effective talent management strategy and responsive to generational and gender-segmented workplace groupings, appears to influence the member of the academic staff to remain within the profession. This includes a focus on work-life balance initiatives that support the academic in managing his or her personal commitments taking into account the academic job demands associated with an excessive workload. The competitive reward package also includes a healthy organisational culture, a competitive reward offering packaged to suit unique employee needs, credible leadership and development-related opportunities, such as institutionalised mentorship and coaching. In addition, it appears that remuneration to academic staff is not competitive in relation to the remuneration that is offered by the private sector for the same level of experience, skill, competency and qualifications. The work demands on the member of the academic staff in relation to the workload and changing job role influence the academic to seek more lucrative employment in the private sector.

Employers appear to place much emphasis on the physical employment and performance agreement contract in terms of managing the expectations of the employee and influencing his or her retention. However, employers may need to consider the effect of commitments and promises that have been made to an employee on his or her retention, through the psychological contract that he or she has with the line manager. In addition, any misalignment in terms of the advertised requirements of the post and the key responsibilities of the performance agreement of the employee,

will contribute to a frustrated employee and, possibly, the exit of the employee if the misalignment is not addressed timeously.

There appears to be consensus that the job profile of the academic is changing with the inclusion of administrative responsibilities, which detract from the core responsibility of conducting research, participating in community engagement and performing teaching and learning responsibilities. A workload analysis study that is transparent, consistent, fair and defensible needs to underpin the workload allocation. This will assist academic staff with their administrative responsibilities and enable them to focus on their core academic responsibilities.

The results of organisational health index surveys enable employers to be proactive in terms of implementing remedial measures and possibly influencing employees with the intention to leave to be retained within the institution. Employers may consider the value-add of exit and retention interviews to track the areas of dissatisfaction by employees continually and respond appropriately to address the push and pull factors associated with employee turnover.

### **9.1.3 Research question three**

*What has been published on training and development as a public human resource function?*

The investment of funds in monetary employee rewards must be aligned to having institutional effect. This implies that employee rewards cannot be managed in a vacuum. The employer would need to monitor that the investment yields the desired change in employee behaviour in terms of elevated performance. This also implies that if employees cannot see the influence of their personal performance on the achievement of departmental, portfolio or institutional deliverables, employees may experience that they are not adding value. This might lead to job dissatisfaction contributing to employee turnover.

Line managers who are not sufficiently empowered or who are challenged in the area of managerial ability may not utilise performance management appraisal sessions and career conversations optimally to the benefit of retention. Training and development needs of the talented member of the academic staff are highlighted during performance management. This implies the need for regular refresher training of line managers to

empower them to provide a nurturing, caring and supportive work environment, which has a positive influence on the retention of the talented member of the academic staff.

The management of talent within the academic from an institutionalised mentorship and coaching perspective, at junior or senior level, to empower him or her to produce credible research output, was supported in this research study.

#### **9.1.4 Research question four**

*What has been published on remuneration as a public human resource function?*

Pay for performance by the employee, as opposed to mere service to the employer, underpins the functioning of the workplace, and places the member of the academic staff under pressure to achieve specific deliverables to receive performance-related incentives. This implies however that the performance management system and rating scale must be credible, and processes that govern the awarding of incentives based on performance must be consulted and defensible.

#### **9.1.5 Research question five**

*Which empirical documents have been published in terms of the statutory and policy framework regulating the attraction and retention of talented academic staff?*

Statutory imperatives governing the HE sector provide a transparent, consistent, fair and defensible framework within which institutional strategic and operational plans should be aligned (Republic of South Africa [RSA], 1997b:1-66). Institution-specific policies that pertain to the management of talent in a member of the academic staff respond to a limited extent to the generational and gender preferences of employees (Unisa, 2013a).

There appears to be a gap in policy and practice in terms of an integrated effort by HE leaders to retain competent academic staff. The Staffing South African Universities Framework (SSAUF) was implemented by the DHET in November 2015 (DHET, 2015). A reasonable period of time would need to pass to assess the effect of SSAUF in response to the challenge to attract and retain academic staff. Universities may need to consider additional funding opportunities to support targeted interventions to keep academe an attractive career option. This includes market-related remuneration that is comparable to the private sector and public service (HESA, 2014).

The main challenges include an untransformed sector, a limited pool of young academics to replace the aging cohort of senior academics, an unsupportive working environment that does not nurture development and, remuneration not being lucrative in comparison to the private sector and public service. In addition, academic concerns range from an excessive workload to academic autonomy being threatened, an increasing administrative workload and an ineffective policy framework. This is within the context of a sharpened focus on elevated research output and emphasis on an academic being in possession of a doctoral thesis (Metcalf et al., 2005:227).

The culture within the workplace can be a push factor resulting in talented employees leaving the institution. Hence, a regular assessment of organisational health is required to identify potential gaps and implement the necessary remedial measures (Unisa, 2015e). The development of line managers is crucial to the retention of academic staff (Bussin, 2014; CIPD, 2012; Mkhwanazi & Baijnath, 2003; NPC, 2011).

A significant gap is created by senior academics retiring and limited succession planning in place. Universities may consider re-hiring retired high-performing research-active academics to support the development of younger talented academics. The possibility of extending the retirement age to seventy years to retain the scarce skills of senior professors may also be explored by institutions while maintaining a focus on achieving employment equity targets (DoE, 2013).

The DHET has not formally guided universities in terms of a ratio of HR costs in relation to council-controlled recurring income (DoE, 2009). This allows institutions to implement institution-specific financially sustainable ratios to manage the affordability of their reward-related offerings to academic staff. This also implies that lucrative remuneration for academic staff within DHET funding may not be sustainable (DoE, 2009:1-10).

#### **9.1.6 Research question six**

*What is the most appropriate research method to investigate talent management at Unisa, UP and Wits?*

The researcher used a mixed methods research methodology to implement the case study at Unisa, UP and Wits. This entailed implementing a survey questionnaire to all academics at the college or faculty of Public Administration and Management at Unisa, UP and Wits after rigorous pilot testing of the survey instrument to a sample of

academics had been concluded. The case study was embarked upon only after the reliability and validity of the survey questionnaire had been confirmed. The implementation of the survey questionnaire to respondents identified areas where further probing was necessary. The researcher subsequently finalised the interview schedule based on these areas and pursued interviews with a sample of academic staff at each of the selected institutions. This sample represented an equitable spread of academic level, race and gender. The researcher delved deeper during the interviews specifically where interviewees voiced gaps and possible solutions to the academic challenges that compromise the attraction and retention of academic staff. Through this rigorous process, a common theme, namely talent management with a developmental focus, emerged in the research study, which was responsive to the challenge on how to attract and retain talented academic staff.

### **9.1.7 Research question seven**

*How could the current talent management practices at Unisa, UP and Wits be improved to attract and retain black academic staff effectively?*

#### **9.1.7.1 Employer value proposition**

To respond to research question seven, the researcher provides context by firstly referring to the academic EVP model that is highlighted in Chapter one (see 1.1.3). The EVP points to the integration and alignment of the talent management strategy, HR strategy and reward strategy with the institutional strategy. The researcher focussed specifically on the talent management strategy with three specific pillars that were relevant, namely attraction, retention and development (see 1.1.3). The response to the research question is further targeted at the development pillar within the talent management strategy (see 1.1.3).

Secondly, the researcher highlighted a summary of the feedback from respondents and interviewees during the implementation of the survey questionnaire and interview schedule respectively.

#### **9.1.7.2 Findings**

The findings are aligned to Chapters two to five of this dissertation.

#### *9.1.7.2.1 Recruitment and selection*

In terms of the recruitment medium most preferred to apply for a vacant academic post, there appeared to be a preference for the use of the Internet followed by the traditional newspaper and then through social media.

It also appeared that a sound governance process in terms of recruitment was generally the respondents' experience in terms of feedback from each academic level and across racial and gender groupings. There was a strong objection to appointment and promotion criteria being lowered in response to the challenge to attract and retain talented academic staff.

#### *9.1.7.2.2 Retention*

It appeared that respondents at the lower and middle academic levels experienced promotion requirements in their department to be not entirely fair as opposed to the senior academic level who did not have the same experience. Respondents generally reported on the perceived negative effect of inconsistent promotion criteria between colleges and faculties at their institution, on their retention in academe. Aligned to the concern that advertised vacant posts take very long to be filled, it appeared that the same concern exists for the filling of vacant promotional posts.

Respondents were overwhelmingly in agreement in terms of their perception that the excessive workload, which was exacerbated by the pressing need to manage administrative-related matters, severely affected their retention. It appeared that the principles underpinning the workload model were not communicated sufficiently to all academics in the workplace and the application of the workload model was not fair, consistent and transparent.

Respondents appeared to experience an uneven distribution of the workload by the line manager to academics in the department pointing to an unhealthy workplace culture. Respondents also voiced a need for more flexible working hours to manage their professional and personal responsibilities. Subtle discriminatory practices in the workplace, such as racist practices, to the perceived disadvantage of the black member of the academic staff, were reported during the interviews. There was room for improvement in terms of communication on matters of academic importance. Feedback generally pointed to labour unions not being very effective in promoting the academic agenda.

There seems to be a need for the institution to provide a nurturing work environment for academics, particularly at the lower and middle academic levels, such as mentorship and coaching support, financial aid and monetary incentives for the timely completion of higher academic qualifications.

In terms of respondents' feedback towards their experience of a person-job fit, there appeared to be a need for talent management interventions, such as mentorship and coaching at the lower academic level. In addition, it appeared that the employer might need to consider the misalignment between his or her promises to the employee during recruitment compared to the actual experience of the new appointee. The misalignment appeared to be affecting the retention of new academics, particularly at the lower level.

#### *9.1.7.2.3 Training and development*

There further appeared to be deep concerns associated with the performance management instrument, performance management process and the actual management of performance.

Respondents did not object to being rewarded purely on the basis of their performance provided the performance management process was fair, consistent, defensible and transparent.

Respondents and interviewees were in support of skills and professional academic developmental interventions in the workplace in support of a progressive academic career. There appeared to be a need for talent management interventions, including mentorship and coaching at the lower academic level.

The employer may need to consider the misalignment between his or her promises to the employee during recruitment compared to the actual experience of the new appointee. The misalignment appears to be affecting the retention of new academic staff, particularly at the lower level.

#### *9.1.7.2.4 Remuneration*

Respondents indicated that remuneration was the most appealing reward factor influencing the recruitment of academics followed by work-life balance initiatives and then performance and recognition interventions. Females tended to prefer work-life balance initiatives slightly to remuneration possibly due to the flexibility of working



hours that is needed to manage the maternal responsibilities of child rearing. It also appeared that remuneration might be influencing the black academic applicant marginally more than the white academic applicant.

Remuneration appeared to influence the single category academics the most, compared to academics in the golden nest (see 8.8.3.1) category. The senior academic level appeared to place a premium on employee benefits possibly in view of pending retirement.

Remuneration is more important during the phase when an academic is being attracted to the academic profession than during the retention phase of the talent management strategy (Bussin, 2014; see 8.8.9.4).

#### *9.1.7.2.5 Turnover intention*

Academics find the remuneration and related monetary benefits more lucrative in the private sector nationally and abroad than in higher education.

### **9.1.7.3 Recommendations**

Within the context provided above, the researcher highlights below how the current talent management practices at Unisa, UP and Wits may be improved to effectively attract and retain black academic staff. The response is highlighted in terms of the three pillars of the talent management strategy, namely, attraction, retention and development.

#### *9.1.7.3.1 Talent management of the academic: attraction to academe*

The use of psychometric tests to obtain the most talented candidate during the recruitment process in terms of experience, skills, qualifications, profile and job fit may support an informed appointment decision of a talented employee and enable a more successful person/job fit (see Table 8.29).

Respondents at the lower academic level reported the lowest proportionality of agreement that they were in the correct job role that fitted their profile in terms of experience, skills, qualifications, profile and job fit. This implied a need for talent management interventions at the lower academic levels for black and white academic staff (see Table 8.30).

#### 9.1.7.3.2 *Talent management of the academic: retention in academe*

The feedback from respondents, particularly at the lower and middle academic levels, suggests that, at the time of this research, promotional opportunities were not awarded equally within the relevant department (see Table 8.34). The promotional process in academe would need to be managed fairly, transparently, defensibly and consistently to enable a qualifying academic at the lower or middle academic level to progress to a more senior level provided that promotional requirements have been met and a sound selection process has been followed.

The workload of the academic, particularly with reference to the performance of administrative tasks, affects the ability of the academic to deliver on the core academic responsibilities negatively (see Tables 8.36 to 8.40). There is a need for mentorship and coaching of lower- and middle-level academics to be empowered to manage all responsibilities. There may also be a need for additional administrative support to the academic to enable him or her to focus on academic-related deliverables and his or her development to more senior academic levels.

The proportionality of disagreement by the lower and middle academic levels as reported in Chapter eight (see Table 8.37), namely that they had adequate time to do research, appeared to be a major factor compromising the retention of the academic. It is suggested that the lower and middle academic levels be supported within a nurturing environment through institutionalised mentorship and coaching to cope with the workload demands and still prioritise research output.

The capability and managerial capacity of the line manager would need to be prioritised in terms of his or her influence on the retention of the lower- and middle-level academic. This would include empowering the line manager in terms of his or her role of providing a nurturing and supportive workplace in which the lower- and middle-level academic could be mentored and coached (see Table 8.50).

There is a need for the employer to invest in a supportive and caring workplace culture that encourages academic collaboration across racial and gender boundaries. It is anticipated that a lower- and middle-level academic particularly would thrive in such a culture under the mentorship of more seasoned academic staff. Talent management initiatives would include succession planning, stretch assignments, job rotation, job shadowing and on-the-job coaching (see Tables 8.85 to 8.91; Table 8.108).

At the time of this research, it appeared that an institution of higher learning might be using one EVP to respond to the needs of academic and administrative employees from an attraction and retention point of view, whereas their needs are actually quite different.

#### *9.1.7.3.3 Talent management of the academic: development*

The effective management of the performance of a member of the academic staff will highlight possible areas of training and development. These interventions will contribute towards the elevated performance of the employee. Where there are few to no one-to-one discussions between the line manager and the junior academic, there would be a need for talent management interventions, such as coaching and mentorship (see Table 8.88).

Generally, there is one formal performance review in a performance cycle where the line manager engages with the junior academic (see Unisa, 2013c). However, a significant proportionality of academics at each academic level preferred more than one formal performance review in a performance cycle. It is recommended that more frequent formal performance review sessions be pursued as such review sessions present the opportunity for the line manager to manage the talent in the junior academic effectively towards his or her retention (see Table 8.81).

Respondents' feedback highlighted their preference for institutionalised mentorship and coaching (see Tables 8.88; 8.102).

## **9.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

Since there were 26 universities in South Africa at the time of this research, the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data from three universities only cannot be generalised to the South African HE system. In future research, a wider spread of the sample of the 26 universities might be used for the case study.

The researcher exercised caution in not generalising the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data to be reflective of academia in the selected institutions but to reflect the views of the respondents and interviewees only within the selected college or faculty. In future research, the possibility of obtaining the views of a wider spread of an academic sample within the entire institution might be explored.

The author had no access to classified documents therefore no reference to such information was made in the research study.

The survey database was constructed to protect the anonymity of all respondents. As a result, the feedback was not broken down per university but seen as a complete dataset of the population.

### **9.3 CONCLUSION**

This research study has highlighted the possibility of a number of gaps in the management of the attraction and retention of black academic staff at selected public HEIs in South Africa. The study revealed that the talent management of the black academic within an integrated institutional framework, from three focus areas, namely attraction, retention and lastly, training and development interventions, is an effective and timely response to the research study question on how to attract and retain talented black academic staff (see 8.8.9.5).

The contribution made by this research to the field of public HR management relates to the talent management focus with an emphasis on the development of the talented black academic. This includes mentorship, coaching, acting and secondment opportunities, stretch assignments and job rotation.

The inclusion of psychometric testing into the recruitment and selection process to determine the psychological profile of the possible appointee would support person-job fit and contribute towards the retention of talented academics. HE leaders would need to prioritise an equitable workload model after thorough consultation with relevant role players. Support in terms of managing the additional administrative workload over and above the academic priorities would also complement the retention of talented academics.

The blended mentorship model (formal and informal) (see 8.8.6.2) would need to be institutionalised in the academic sector and incorporated into the performance agreements of academic staff to ensure accountability. Line managers of talented black academic staff would need to provide a caring, supportive and nurturing workplace culture within which the mentorship model could be implemented and disciplinary challenges be managed. Where a skills gap is identified in terms of effective managerial and supervisory ability, line managers should attend to the necessary training to improve these specific skills.

The management of the performance of the talented member of the academic staff by the line manager would take the form of regular performance-related discussions and career conversations. This engagement would complement the implementation of the mentorship model. The engagement between the line manager and the black academic staff member as well as between the mentor and the mentee would yield training and development needs, namely skills development opportunities, promotional opportunities, academic collaboration on research projects, academic peer networking, conference exposure, acting and secondment opportunities and succession planning. During the regular performance review and career conversation engagements between the line manager and the black member of the academic staff in the workplace, both parties should reflect on progress being made and where necessary, remedial measures should be implemented timeously.

The researcher intends for this research study to have a positive influence on the challenge to attract and retain black academic staff at the selected public HEIs.

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# ANNEXURE A

## SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE



**COLLEGE OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**DOCTORAL THESIS - MS K KISSOONDUTH**

**STUDENT NUMBER 723-510-0**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. This survey questionnaire is based on a research study investigating the attraction and retention of academics, particularly black staff in higher education. Black staff refer to Africans, Coloureds and Asians within the South African context.
2. All academics in the College / Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of South Africa, University of Witwatersrand and the University of Pretoria are encouraged to participate.
3. The survey questionnaire has been compiled in a manner that it would take a maximum of 20 minutes to complete.
4. You are kindly requested to complete this survey questionnaire as honestly and completely as possible.
5. Participation is anonymous: You are not requested to disclose your identity.
6. Your privacy will be respected. No one will be able to connect you to the answers you give.
7. You have the right to withdraw your participation at any time.
8. You will not receive any payment or reward, financial or otherwise, and the study will not incur undue costs to you.
9. A copy of the final approved research study will be available in the library of the University of South Africa, University of Witwatersrand and the University of Pretoria.
10. Thank you for your participation and your effort towards making this research study a success. Your valuable contribution would assist to identify gaps and find possible solutions to the challenge to attract and retain academics in higher education.

## SECTION A

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Please tick the appropriate box or fill in the relevant information

A.1 At which academic level were you initially appointed at your current university? (compulsory field)

Junior Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Associate Professor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professor	<input type="checkbox"/>

A.2 What is your current academic level? (compulsory field)

Junior Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Associate Professor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professor	<input type="checkbox"/>

A.3 For how long have you been employed on your current academic level (compulsory field)

Years	<input type="text"/>
Months	<input type="text"/>

A.4 For how long have you been employed as an academic in your entire academic career? (compulsory field)

Years	<input type="text"/>
Months	<input type="text"/>

A.5 Are you male or female? (compulsory field)

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>

A.6 To which of the following racial groups do you belong? (compulsory field)

African	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coloured	<input type="checkbox"/>
White	<input type="checkbox"/>

A.7 What is your nationality? (compulsory field)

South African born SA citizen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign born South African citizen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foreign born non-South African citizen	<input type="checkbox"/>

**A.8** Please select the category that best describes your life stage grouping - please note that you must select only **one** option listed below.

- At-home single:** Up to 34 years old, living with parent(s)/immediate family (at place of residence), no dependents, not married, not living with a partner/significant other
- Young independent single:** Up to 34 years old, not living with parent(s)/immediate family (at place of residence), no dependents, not married, not living with a partner/significant other
- Mature single:** Over 35 years old, not living with parent(s)/immediate family (at place of residence), no dependents, not married, not living with a partner/significant other
- Young couple:** Up to 49 years old, no dependents, married, living (at place of residence) with a partner/significant other
- Mature couple:** Aged 50+, no dependents, married, living (at place of residence) with a partner/significant other
- Single parent family:** Not married, not living together (at place of residence) with a partner/significant other, have dependent child(ren) (own or other)
- Young family:** Married or living together (at place of residence) with a partner/significant other, have at least one dependent child under 13 years (own or other)
- Mature family:** Married or living with a partner/significant other (at place of residence), no dependent children under 13 years (own & other). At least one dependent child over 13 (own or other)
- Golden nest:** 50+ years, married, living together (at place of residence) with a partner/significant other, no children or dependent child(ren) (own or other)
- Left alone:** 50+ years, not married, not living together, no children or dependent child(ren) (own or other)


**SECTION B**

**SECTION B1 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION AS A HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION**

**B1.1** The following reward elements in my institution would be very appealing to job applicants.

*Indicate by ranking from 1 to 5 in order where 1 is the most appealing and 5 the least appealing.*

- Remuneration e.g. salary
- Employee benefits e.g. pension
- Performance and recognition initiatives e.g. research incentives
- Development and career opportunities e.g. attendance at conferences
- Work/life balance initiatives e.g. flexible working hours


**B1.2** I prefer to apply for vacant positions through the following mediums.

*Indicate by ranking from 1 to 3 in order where 1 is the most preferred and 3 the least preferred medium.*

- Newspaper
- Intranet
- Internet
- Social recruiting tools (Internet, LinkedIn, Twitter, Glassdoor and Facebook)
- Other (please specify)


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Please tick the appropriate boxes

- B1.3** I was appointed after a formal advertisement and interview process.
- B1.4** I was given sufficient time to prepare for my interview.
- B1.5** I was given the opportunity to add information before the interview ended.
- B1.6** I was appointed within a reasonable time after the advertisement closed.
- B1.7** I am performing the duties specified in the advertisement.
- B1.8** I am performing the duties outlined in my job description.
- B1.9** My position adds value to my department.
- B1.10** The appointment criteria for academic positions should be lowered.
- B1.11** My department fills positions with internal qualifying candidates as far as possible.
- B1.12** I underwent a written psychometric test as part of the recruitment process.
- B1.13** The institutional values and culture provide a good fit with my personal values.
- B1.14** I am in the correct job role that fits my profile (experience, skill, qualification and career goals).

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
<b>YES</b>		<b>NO</b>		
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

**SECTION B2 RETENTION AS A HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION**

**B2.1 PROMOTION**

- B2.1.1** Promotion requirements in my department are fair.
- B2.1.2** Academic promotion criteria between colleges/faculties in my university are consistent.
- B2.1.3** Promotion opportunities are awarded equally in my department.
- B2.1.4** Promotional posts take long to be filled.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

**B2.2 WORKLOAD**

Please tick the appropriate boxes

- B2.2.1** I am over-burdened by administrative tasks.
- B2.2.2** I have adequate time to do research.
- B2.2.3** I have adequate time to do teaching.
- B2.2.4** I have adequate time to do community engagement.
- B2.2.5** I have adequate resources to perform my official responsibilities as an academic.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE









**SECTION B4 REMUNERATION AS A HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION**

Please tick the appropriate boxes

- B4.1** My peers are paid better in other universities.
- B4.2** My peers are paid better in the private sector.
- B4.3** My peers are paid better in the public service.
- B4.4** My pay increases when I work harder.
- B4.5** I have adequate time to attend to personal commitments.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

**B4.6 How would you rate each of the following items as an academic in your university?**

Indicate by numbering from 1 to 6 in order where 1 is the most important and 6 is the least important.

Remuneration e.g. your salary.

Employee benefits, e.g. your retirement savings.

Performance opportunities, e.g. research incentives.

Recognition opportunities, e.g. departmental or institutional awards.

Development and career opportunities, e.g. attendance at local and international conferences.

Work/life balance initiatives, e.g. flexible working hours.


**SECTION B5 TURNOVER INTENTION**

Please tick the appropriate boxes

- B5.1** I often look for alternate employment opportunities.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
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- B5.2** If you were to leave your current position at any point, what would be the **main** reason for this decision? Please select **one** option from the options provided below:

- a) I have a poor working relationship with my line manager.
- b) I am not satisfied with my personal remuneration.
- c) I am not satisfied with my current academic level.
- d) The institution is financially unstable.
- e) The culture in my department is unhealthy.
- f) There is a more progressive career path in the same institution but within another College / Faculty.
- g) There are better prospects in another institution within the South African higher education sector.
- h) There are better prospects in another institution within the South African private sector.
- i) There are better prospects in another institution within the South African public service.
- j) There are better prospects in the academic sector abroad.
- k) Other, please specify.



**SECTION C****CONCLUSION**

**C.1** Are there any other comments you would like to make within the context of this research study?


**THANK YOU, ONCE AGAIN FOR TAKING THE TIME TO RESPOND TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AND FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY.**

Kind regards

**MS K KISSOONDUTH**

**PhD STUDENT: 723-510-0**

## ANNEXURE B

# CONSENT: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE



16 February 2016

Dear Colleague

### **PARTICIPATION IN AN ANONYMOUS SURVEY**

**RESEARCH TOPIC: CHALLENGES FACING HIGHER EDUCATION TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN ACADEMICS, PARTICULARLY BLACK STAFF**

You are invited to participate in a survey conducted by Ms K Kisoonduth, student number 723-510-0, email address [kissok@unisa.ac.za](mailto:kissok@unisa.ac.za) under the supervision of Professor WN Webb, Associate Professor in the Department of Public Administration and Management, College of Economic and Management Sciences towards a PhD at the University of South Africa.

The survey questionnaire you have received has been designed to study the challenges facing higher education to attract and retain academics particularly black staff. You were selected in this survey because as an academic you would possess valuable insight into the current talent management practices by the institution and higher education, contribute meaningfully to understanding the challenges facing junior and seasoned academics in being attracted to and retained in academia and your take on the declining appeal of the academic profession.

This survey questionnaire will be administered in the University of South Africa, University of Pretoria and University of Witwatersrand. By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes, including dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and conference proceedings. It is hoped that the information we gain from this survey will help us to establish the current practices of talent management at the University of South Africa, University of Pretoria and the University of Witwatersrand and how the current talent management practices in higher education could be improved to stem the rate of turnover amongst academics.

You are, however, under no obligation to complete the survey and you can withdraw from the study prior to submitting the survey. The survey is developed to be anonymous. Any identifying information that is obtained in connection with this survey will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as is required by law.

If you choose to participate in this survey, it will take up no more than 20 minutes of your time. You will not benefit from your participation as an individual, however, it is envisioned that the findings of this study will improve the current talent management of academics in higher education. However, we do not foresee that you will experience any negative consequences by completing the survey. The researcher undertakes to keep any individual information provided herein confidential, not to let it out of their possession, and to analyze the feedback received to portray group tendencies.

The records will be kept for five years for audit purposes whereafter it will be permanently destroyed. Hard copies will be shredded and electronic versions will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the survey.

The research was reviewed and approved by the College of Economic Management and Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee and the Research Permission Subcommittee of the Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee. Should you have any concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor WN Webb on (012) 429 6909 or [webbwn@unisa.ac.za](mailto:webbwn@unisa.ac.za). Questions regarding your rights as a research participant can be addressed to the College of Economic and Management Sciences, Research Ethics Committee, for attention: The Chairperson - Professor JS Wessels on (012) 429 6099 or [wessejs@unisa.ac.za](mailto:wessejs@unisa.ac.za).

You are making a decision whether or not to participate by continuing to the next page. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time prior to clicking the send button.

**MS K KISSOONDUTH**

**PhD STUDENT 723-510-0**

**UNISA**

# ANNEXURE C

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



**COLLEGE OF ECONOMIC AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**DOCTORAL THESIS - MS K KISSOONDUTH**

**STUDENT NUMBER 723-510-0**

### **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE**

#### **OPENING OF THE INTERVIEW**

1. The interview is scheduled electronically by the researcher for 30 minutes at a date / time / venue that suits the academic. The participating academic is greeted and welcomed to the interview session.
2. The researcher explains that the interview is based on a research study into the challenges facing higher education to attract and retain academics particularly black staff.
3. A sample of academics on all levels in the College / Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of South Africa, University of Witwatersrand and the University of Pretoria are participating in this research study.
4. It is important that the participating academic feels comfortable with his/her participation. Hence the need to complete the consent form to participate voluntarily in this research study.
5. The participating academic is made aware that a copy of the final approved research study will be available in the library of the University of South Africa, University of Witwatersrand and the University of Pretoria.



**SECTION A**

DATE OF INTERVIEW \_\_\_\_\_

START TIME OF INTERVIEW \_\_\_\_\_

VENUE OF INTERVIEW \_\_\_\_\_

INFORMED CONSENT SIGNED **YES / NO****GENERAL**

Before the actual interview begins, the researcher will enquire if the academic is comfortable with the use of a tape recorder. The researcher will thereafter proceed to ask a few questions related to biographical data.

1. You are appointed on the post level of a ...

JUNIOR LECTURER	LECTURER	SENIOR LECTURER	ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	PROFESSOR
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2. How long have you been employed in your current position?

\_\_\_\_\_ completed months.

3. How long have you been employed as an academic?

\_\_\_\_\_ completed months.

4. You are ... years of age at your last birthday?

5. Which race group do you belong to?

AFRICAN	WHITE	COLOURED	ASIAN
---------	-------	----------	-------

6. Gender

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Are you a \_\_\_?

SOUTH AFRICAN BORN SA CITIZEN	FOREIGN BORN SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZEN	FOREIGN BORN NON-SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZEN
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The researcher will thank the participant for participating freely and will enquire whether he/she felt uncomfortable with any aspect of the interview process. The researcher will close the interview process and record the time at closure.

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**END TIME OF INTERVIEW:**

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**PSEUDONYM:**

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## ANNEXURE D

### CONSENT: INTERVIEW



22 February 2016

Dear Colleague

#### **PARTICIPATION IN INTERVIEWS AS PART OF A RESEARCH STUDY**

#### **RESEARCH TOPIC: CHALLENGES FACING HIGHER EDUCATION TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN ACADEMIC STAFF**

You are invited to participate in a survey conducted by Ms K Kissoonduth, student number 723-510-0, email address [kissok@unisa.ac.za](mailto:kissok@unisa.ac.za) under the supervision of Professor WN Webb, Associate Professor in the Department of Public Administration and Management, College of Economic and Management Sciences towards a PhD at the University of South Africa.

The research study focuses on the challenges facing higher education to attract and retain academics, particularly black staff. A maximum of ten (10) academics will be interviewed per institution from within the College / Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences. You were selected for a possible interview in this survey because as an academic you would possess valuable insight into the current talent management practices by your institution and within higher education for all race groups particularly black staff, contribute meaningfully to understanding the challenges facing junior and seasoned academics in being attracted to and retained in academia and your take on the declining appeal of the academic profession.

Through your informed consent to participate in the research study, you agree that your participation is voluntary and that the information you provide may be used for research purposes, including dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and conference proceedings. It is hoped that the information we gain from this survey will help us to establish the current practices of talent management at the University of South Africa, University of Pretoria and the University of Johannesburg and how the current attraction and retention strategies in higher education could be improved to stem the rate of turnover amongst academics.

Your participation in this research study is strictly confidential and purely voluntary. No information will be included in the research that will identify the academic / institution. If you do

choose to participate in this survey, the interview process will be scheduled at your convenience and last a maximum of 60 minutes. If at any time during the interview, you feel the need to withdraw from the process, you would be welcome to do so. It is currently planned that the completion of all interviews will be no later than 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

You will not benefit from your participation as an individual, however, it is envisioned that the findings of this study will improve the current talent management of academics in higher education. I do not foresee that you will experience any negative consequences by participating in the interview process.

The records will be kept for five years for audit purposes whereafter it will be permanently destroyed. Hard copies will be shredded and electronic versions will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer. You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the survey. The final research product will be published and available in the UNISA library.

The research was reviewed and approved by the College of Economic Management and Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee and the Research Permission Subcommittee of the Senate Research and Innovation and Higher Degrees Committee. Should you have any concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact Professor WN Webb on (012) 429 6909 or [webbwn@unisa.ac.za](mailto:webbwn@unisa.ac.za). Questions regarding your rights as a research participant can be addressed to the College of Economic and Management Sciences, Ethics Research Committee, for attention: The Chairperson - Professor JS Wessels on (012) 429 6099 or [wessejs@unisa.ac.za](mailto:wessejs@unisa.ac.za).

Kind regards

**MS K KISSOONDUTH**

**PhD STUDENT 723-510-0**

**INTERVIEW CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

I \_\_\_\_\_ grant consent that the information I share during the interview may be used by Ms K Kissoonduth within the context of her PhD, for research purposes. I am aware that the interview will be digitally recorded and grant consent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected.

**Participant's Name (Please print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's Name (Please print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



**ANNEXURE E**  
**AUDIT TRAIL (CD)**