



UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**Investigating the challenges of the University of KwaZulu-Natal attracting
professional services staff**

Zukiso Boyce

222081928

**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
MBA**

Graduate School of Business & Leadership

College of Law and Management Studies


Supervisor: Prof. BIBI ZAHEENAH CHUMMUN

2024



College of Law and Management Studies

Supervisors Permission to Submit Thesis/ Dissertation for Examination

| | | |
|---|---------------|----|
| Name: Zukiso Boyce | No: 222081928 | |
| Title: Investigating the challenges of the University of KwaZulu-Natal attracting professional services staff | | |
| Qualification: MBA | School: GSB&L | |
| | Yes | No |
| To my knowledge, the thesis/dissertation is primarily the student's work, and the student has acknowledged all reference sources. | X | |
| The English language is of a suitable standard for examination without going for professional editing. | X | |
| Turnitin Report % | 10% | |
| Comment if % is over 10%: | | |
| I agree to the submission of this thesis/dissertation for examination. | X | |
| Supervisor Name: Prof. Bibi Z. Chummun | | |
| Supervisors Signature:  | | |
| Date: 17.07.2024 | | |
| Co- Supervisors Name: NA | | |
| Co- Supervisors Signature: | | |
| Date: | | |


DECLARATION



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

I, Zukiso Boyce, declare that

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, and is my original research.
- (ii) This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
- (iii) This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
- (iv) This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a) Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
 - b) Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks and referenced.
- (v) Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am the author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.
- (vi) This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation/thesis and in the References sections.

Signed: 

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to extend my appreciation and thanks to Professor Bibi, who always pushed me to work harder to meet my deadlines and, most importantly, give her honest advice and guidance. To my wife and children, thank you for your support and for allowing me to go on this journey that has robbed you of two precious years with me. It is now done! I know that my wife is still trying to convince me to study further; it is a consideration I hold dearly, mainly because I know I will always have your love and support. Your support has always been unwavering, believing in me when I did not; thank you, my love. Finally, I would like to thank my mother, who has been with me when I could not even dream of reaching this point, never giving up on me regardless of all the troubles that I put her through. Without a doubt, without your sacrifices, none of this would be remotely possible. Thank you.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the challenges faced by tertiary institutions in attracting professional services staff. Universities are important to South Africa's education system, and addressing staff recruitment challenges is crucial for improving institutional effectiveness and supporting strategic goals. Higher Education Institutions in South Africa differentiate themselves through research and compete for competent individuals who can contribute to research goals. While most study on talent management focuses on other organisations, the challenges remain similar, compounded by limited resources and growing student numbers in higher education. The study was conducted across one tertiary institution with defined ICS ("IT"), internal audit, planning and monitoring, infrastructure planning and projects, HR, procurement, legal services, and Campus Management Services. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaires for the researcher respondents and secondary data was collected through documentary analysis of the relevant institution's records.

A quantitative research method was chosen for this study. Data were analysed using SPSS, and different tests were used, including Chi-Squared and Cronbach Alpha tests. The sample size for the study is 50 and questionnaires were sent electronically to the respondents. The study revealed that the process of recruitment, promotion, performance management, and talent management still needs improvement. The outcomes of the research are valuable for institution management and human resources departments. Some useful recommendations involved that leaders and managers should be actively involved in the process from the beginning, setting the strategy and talent requirements and engaging staff in their own development. Further, creating a supportive and nurturing environment that allows service staff members to add significantly to the general efficacy of the institution is paramount.

Keywords: Attraction, Retention, Higher Education Institutions, Talent Management.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| TABLES | 7 |
| FIGURES | 8 |
| 1 CHAPTER ONE | 9 |
| INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY | 9 |
| 1.1 Introduction..... | 9 |
| 1.2 Background | 9 |
| 1.3 Statement of the Problem | 11 |
| 1.6 Research Questions | 13 |
| 1.7 Significance of This Study..... | 13 |
| 1.10 Research Methodology | 14 |
| 1.11 Definition of Key Terms | 15 |
| 1.12 Outline of the Dissertation..... | 16 |
| 1.13 Summary of the Chapter | 16 |
| 2 CHAPTER TWO | 17 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW | 17 |
| An overview of the challenges of tertiary institutions in attracting professional services staff. | 17 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 17 |
| 2.1.1 Talent and Talent Management..... | 17 |
| 2.1.2 Talent Management..... | 19 |
| 2.1.3 Attraction Challenges..... | 20 |
| 2.1.4 Technology..... | 21 |
| 2.1.5 Training and Development..... | 22 |
| 2.1.6 Diversity and Transformation..... | 24 |
| 2.1.7 Performance Management | 24 |
| 2.1.8 Values and Cultures..... | 25 |
| 2.1.9 Key Areas of Study in Talent Management..... | 26 |
| 2.1.10 Five Important Principles for Developing Talent..... | 27 |
| 2.2 Theoretical Framework..... | 29 |

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 2.2.4 | The Talent Approach Methodology | 30 |
| 2.2.5 | Schiemann's People Equity Model of Talent Management | 31 |
| 2.3 | Conclusion and Summary | 32 |
| 3 | CHAPTER THREE | 33 |
| | RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | 33 |
| 3.1 | Introduction..... | 33 |
| 3.2 | Population study | 34 |
| 3.3 | Research design..... | 34 |
| 3.3.1 | Qualitative research | 35 |
| 3.3.2 | Quantitative Research | 35 |
| 3.4 | Description of the sample..... | 36 |
| 3.4.1 | Sample Size and Sampling Method | 36 |
| 3.5 | Methods of Collecting Data..... | 39 |
| 3.5.1 | Methods of data generation: Instruments Used for Data Collection..... | 39 |
| 3.6 | Data analysis..... | 43 |
| 3.7 | Validity and Reliability..... | 44 |
| 3.7.1 | Validity..... | 44 |
| 3.7.2 | Reliability | 45 |
| 3.8 | Ethical Considerations..... | 46 |
| 3.9 | Summary and Conclusion..... | 47 |
| 4 | CHAPTER FOUR | 48 |
| | PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS | 48 |
| 4.2 | Introduction..... | 48 |
| 4.3 | Demographic Details of Respondents | 48 |
| 4.4 | Institution's Policies, Approaches, Procedures, Methods, and Systems for Recruiting, Developing, and Retaining Professional Staff | 50 |
| 4.5 | Challenges connected with talent recruiting and retention of professional staff | 53 |
| 4.5 | Perceptions of service staff regarding university policies and programs | 58 |
| 4.6 | Institutional Documentary Analysis Findings | 72 |
| 4.7 | Summary and Conclusion..... | 74 |
| 5 | CHAPTER FIVE | 75 |
| | A DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY'S FINDINGS | 75 |

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 5.1 | Introduction..... | 75 |
| 5.2 | Institution's strategies for recruiting, developing, and retaining skilled staff through policies, processes, methods, and systems..... | 75 |
| 5.3 | The challenges in attracting and retaining capable service staff..... | 76 |
| 6 | CHAPTER SIX..... | 78 |
| | CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... | 78 |
| 6.1 | Introduction..... | 78 |
| 6.2 | Research Process Summary..... | 78 |
| 6.3 | Key Findings Summary | 78 |
| 6.4 | Conclusions..... | 79 |
| 6.5 | Recommendations | 79 |
| 6.6 | Recommendations for Future Research..... | 80 |
| 6.7 | Generalisation of the Study | 81 |
| 6.8 | Study Limitations | 81 |
| 6.9 | General Conclusion | 82 |
| 7 | References..... | 84 |
| 8 | APPENDICES..... | 94 |
| 10.1 | Appendix A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE STAFF | 94 |
| 10.2 | Appendix B: Ethical Clearance..... | 100 |
| 10.3 | Appendix C: Gatekeepers Approval..... | 101 |

TABLES

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1 - Objectives and Methods | 33 |
| Table 2 - Demographic Features of Service Staff Respondents (N=21)..... | 48 |
| Table 3 – the Attractive Skills..... | 51 |
| Table 4 - Attraction Challenges | 53 |
| Table 5 - Retention Challenges | 54 |
| Table 6 - Desire to Work for the institution | 56 |
| Table 7 - Reasons for the desire to work with institution | 57 |
| Table 8 - Reasons for Not Wanting to Work at the Institution..... | 58 |
| Table 9 - The Exchange of Ideas at the Institution | 57 |
| Table 10 - University Met Expectations..... | 58 |
| Table 11 - NO response to expectations being met..... | 59 |
| Table 12 -The Reasons for Being Valued..... | 60 |
| Table 13 - Justifications for Remaining at the Institution | 61 |
| Table 14 - Captivating Organisational Culture | 62 |
| Table 15 - Table 17: Service Staff Motivation Statements | 63 |
| Table 16 - Evaluation of Likert Scale Reports A-D Reports..... | 65 |
| Table 17 - Chi-Square Test reports on A-D | 66 |
| Table 18 - evaluation of Likert Scale reports E-L..... | 67 |
| Table 19 - Frequency evaluation of reports E-F | 68 |
| Table 20 - Frequency evaluation of reports I-L | 70 |
| Table 21 - Test Statistics reports E-L | 71 |

FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1 - Open Management Policy for Institution..... | 52 |
| Figure 2 - How Open Management Policy is Practiced..... | 52 |
| Figure 3 - Attraction Reason | 55 |
| Figure 4 - Feel Valued at the Institution | 60 |

1 CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Professional service staff, including non-academic and administrative roles, make up a significant portion of university workforces, but scholars frequently overlook their contributions (Cloete et al., 2019). Academic research typically focuses on faculty roles, leaving professional staff challenges largely unaddressed (Ngcobo and Mathunjwa, 2019). Recent literature emphasises the challenges that institutions face in attracting and retaining these critical personnel, with salary, career advancement opportunities, and work-life balance all having a significant impact on candidates' decisions (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2019). Understanding internal dynamics, such as organisational culture, and external market conditions is critical for effective recruitment strategies at universities like the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Jansen et al., 2020). The purpose of this study is to provide a quantitative analysis of the university's specific challenges in attracting professional staff. Surveys and questionnaires will be used to collect information from current staff members and prospective candidates, shedding light on current recruitment trends (Collins, 2019). This research is significant because it has the potential to inform higher education policy and practice, ultimately improving institutional performance by fostering an inclusive environment that values the contributions of all employees (Sheppard et al., 2020). The findings could assist similar institutions improve their recruitment efforts and foster a positive workplace culture. As a result, this study uses a quantitative methodology, focusing on a university in South Africa (University of KwaZulu-Natal). This chapter provides an overview of the research, including the background of the issue, the problem under investigation, the aims, the significance of the study, a description of the research methodology, and the format of the dissertation.

1.2 Background

Attracting professional staff has emerged as one of the most significant challenges facing tertiary institutions globally, particularly within higher education. This study investigates the issues the University of KwaZulu-Natal encounters in both hiring and retaining professional staff, while also evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies currently in place to address these difficulties. According to Mubarak, Mheen & Presbitero (2022) many South African higher education institutions differentiate themselves through their unique research priorities, competing for essential human resources that help them achieve strategic goals and maintain a competitive edge. Despite the majority of research on professional staff management being conducted outside of higher education, the continuing

increase in student numbers, coupled with resource constraints, exacerbates recruitment difficulties (Mubarak et al., 2022). The 21st-century economy is increasingly technology-driven and knowledge-based, elevating universities as focal points of information and learning. This shift makes the recruitment and retention of professional staff critical to institutional success (Selesho & Naile, 2019). Samuel and Chipunza (2019) noted a growing demand for professional staff, particularly as South African universities face pressures to expand enrolments. This rising demand intensifies the country's existing skills shortage, which is further complicated by the global mobility of these professionals.

Extensive research has been conducted on the management of professional staff and the various challenges universities face in this domain. Most institutions struggle to effectively manage the skills offered by their professional staff, which are vital for enhancing organisational performance (Morton, 2022). The Talent Shortage Survey from Manpower Group highlights the critical issues surrounding talent management and the broader implications that skill shortages have on human resources management (Farndale, Scullion & Sparrow, 2019; Collings et al., 2022). These talent shortages present severe challenges to institutions as they seek to implement effective talent management strategies to navigate this crisis successfully. Meyers, van Woerkom, and Dries (2022) indicate that tertiary institutions are confronted with the necessity for professional staff to remain competitive in an ever-evolving market. Similar to businesses, higher education institutions experience difficulties in attracting and retaining human resources amidst limited availability, both nationally and internationally. This scarcity presents unique challenges, including skills gaps and the urgent need for capable personnel (Tarique, Jackson & Schuler, 2019).

The core challenge highlighted by Meyers et al. (2022) is the imperative for professional staff to sustain a competitive edge in this dynamic landscape. Resolving talent-related issues is crucial for ensuring organisational success within today's research and educational frameworks. Universities aspire to lead in research and instruction to secure funding and maintain their reputational standing (UNESCO, 2022). However, it is concerning that very few university programs adequately support the effective recruitment and retention of professional staff (Lynch, 2018). Furthermore, the impending retirement of experienced professional staff raises additional challenges, as noted by Nge'the, Irvaro, and Namusonge (2022). This demographic shift raises concerns about finding qualified replacements with comparable skills and experience. With many experienced professionals nearing retirement, a lack of succession planning coupled with inadequately trained staff complicates the issue further. A shortage of strategically planned transitions means that institutions may lose crucial institutional knowledge and expertise. Budgetary constraints and insufficient government support also contribute to resource

limitations within higher education institutions, affecting their ability to attract adequate numbers of qualified professionals (Bitzer, 2019; Budderberg-Fischer et al., 2018). Limited budgets not only restrict salary offerings but also minimise opportunities for professional development, which can deter potential recruits. As a result, institutions are often unable to offer competitive compensation packages or career advancement opportunities that make attracting high-quality staff challenging.

Additionally, the lack of consistent investment in professional development creates a stagnant environment for current staff, leading to dissatisfaction and increased turnover rates. As noted by Meyer et al. (2022), retaining qualified staff involves not just competitive pay but also professional growth opportunities that help staff enhance their skills and advance their careers. Institutions that fail to recognise this interplay between recruitment and retention may find themselves in a cycle of perpetual staffing shortages. Another layer to this challenge lies in the understanding and recognition of the roles and responsibilities of professional staff within the institutional framework. Often, universities fail to adequately acknowledge the contributions made by professional staff as integral to the institution's success. The misconception that professional staff's roles are secondary can lead to a lack of appreciation and thus hinder efforts in recruitment and retention (Mubarak et al., 2022).

Institutional leadership and management approaches also influence the recruitment and retention of professional staff. Effective leadership practices that focus on fostering an inclusive culture can significantly impact employee satisfaction and retention (Selesho & Naile, 2019). Institutions need to cultivate environments that encourage collaboration and provide a sense of belonging among staff. The lack of such environments can create barriers that deter potential applicants and prompt existing staff members to seek opportunities elsewhere. Moreover, strategic partnerships with external organisations can provide institutions with additional resources and support in their recruitment efforts. Collaborations with industry can help universities align their recruitment strategies with the skills and competencies required by the market, effectively bridging the gap between academic training and workforce needs (Farndale, Scullion & Sparrow, 2019).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Attracting professional services staff to the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) presents significant challenges that impede the institution's ability to achieve its mission and remain competitive within the higher education landscape. Many higher education institutions struggle to recruit high-calibre talent, which is crucial for operational effectiveness (Cohen & Wills, 2020; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2018). This persistent issue highlights a broader crisis in talent management, where institutions find it

increasingly difficult to attract and retain qualified professionals who can fulfil institutional goals (Alriss et al., 2020). The evolving labour market, influenced by factors such as an ageing workforce, increased labour mobility, and globalisation, complicates recruitment efforts (Nissen et al., 2018). These dynamics not only affect the availability of skilled candidates but also dictate the qualifications and skills that higher education institutions require. For UKZN, effectively defining and attracting the right talent is essential for aligning its strategic objectives and ensuring long-term success (Nijs et al., 2020).

Moreover, high turnover rates among professional staff at UKZN indicate systemic issues, including uncompetitive remuneration packages and inadequate career advancement opportunities. Insufficient funding for research initiatives and institutional social issues contribute to a challenging work environment (Mokoditso, 2018; Thunnissen, 2020). As a result, attracting skilled professionals becomes increasingly complex, leading to a reliance on less experienced personnel who may lack the necessary skills to fulfil demanding roles. The impact of COVID-19 has further intensified these challenges, as universities like UKZN faced staffing shortages amid heightened uncertainty. The pandemic prompted remote work arrangements and shifted institutional priorities, complicating recruitment and causing many prospective candidates to hesitate in accepting positions due to health concerns and job market volatility (Plaus et al., 2021; Roberts & Fernandez, 2022). The perception of a talent deficit within the sector further exacerbates these recruitment challenges, underscoring the urgency for universities to adopt effective talent management strategies (Mahmood et al., 2019). Successful recruitment and retention of high-quality professional staff are vital for UKZN's ability to compete academically and provide outstanding service, making it crucial to understand the factors that impede these processes.

1.4 Rationale

This study is important because attracting and retaining professional staff in higher education institutions is crucial for the overall success and effectiveness of the institution. Professional staff play a vital role in carrying out administrative tasks, supporting research goals, and adding to the general functioning of the institution. However, these institutions often face challenges in recruiting and retaining skilled professionals. By exploring the challenges faced by the tertiary institution in attracting professional staff, this study aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for improving talent management strategies in higher education institutions. The findings can help the institution and other similar institutions address recruitment and retention challenges, improve their competitiveness, and enhance their overall performance. Furthermore, this study contributes to the literature on talent management in the higher education sector, which is limited compared to other sectors. By focusing

on this particular context, the study adds to the understanding of the unique challenges and strategies involved in attracting and retaining professional staff in higher education institutions.

1.5 Aim and Objectives

The main aim of this paper is to investigate the challenges of the University of KwaZulu-Natal attracting professional services staff

The study investigated and analysed the following:

- To determine the policies, attitudes, practices, methods, and frameworks that the organisation has implemented to attract, nurture, and maintain its professional service staff.
- To ascertain the challenges related to professional service personnel recruitment and retention.
- To investigate how professional service staff members view university policies and programmes.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research issues were sought to be addressed by the study:

- To attract professional staff, what are the rules, procedures, processes, and systems in place at the institution?
- What challenges does the organisation face when it comes to hiring and retaining professionals?
- What opinions do service personnel have regarding university policies and programmes?

1.7 Significance of This Study

The data gathered for this study is intended to broaden the general public's understanding of the difficulties educational institutions encounter in drawing in qualified personnel. This study looks at the difficulties South African educational institutions have in attracting professional employees. It seeks to offer a thorough comprehension of the difficulties. The researcher also intends to examine the effectiveness of the professional personnel as well as the challenges the institution has in its efforts to draw in professional staff. As a result, it will offer fresh data for study that seeks to comprehend the difficulties in-depth. Institutions and the local government play a crucial role as enablers, creating the infrastructure and favourable conditions needed to support collaborative decision-making. Thus, the data produced will educate decision-makers (including municipal government, with authorisation from the University) about the difficulties faced by these professionals. Moreover, not much research has been done on the difficulties faced by professional employees in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

1.8 Scope of the study

The scope of this study is focused on the challenges faced by the University of (UKZN) in attracting professional services staff. The study aims to understand the specific recruitment and retention challenges faced by the institution and examine the effectiveness of the talent management strategies implemented to address these challenges. The study is conducted within the context of higher education institutions in South Africa, with a particular focus on the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The research methodology includes the collection of primary data through self-administered questionnaires for researcher respondents and interviews with management respondents. Secondary data is collected through documentary analysis of the institution's records.

The sample size for the study comprises professional service staff members from the institution, including roles in IT, internal audit, planning and monitoring, infrastructure planning and projects, HR, procurement, legal services, and Campus Management Services. The focus of the study is on productive service staff members, excluding unproductive staff. The data analysis for this study will involve the use of statistical techniques, including the use of SPSS software for quantitative data analysis. Different tests such as Chi-Squared and Cronbach Alpha tests, will be utilised to analyse the data and draw conclusions. The findings of this study are expected to provide insights into the challenges faced by the institution and other similar institutions in attracting and retaining professional service staff. The outcomes of the research will be valuable for institution management and human resources departments in implementing effective talent management strategies.

1.9 Delamination of the Study

As a fact that, the institution in the classified staff groups are qualified/skilled individuals who aid in accomplishing the institution's goal, the study had certain limitations. Professionals who were not productive were consequently left out of the research. Moreover, the management hierarchy was restricted to individuals accountable for the organisation's main goals and putting associated plans and policies into action. Other management and portfolio categories that are not covered by the research policies and strategies were thus not included in the sample.

1.10 Research Methodology

The chosen research method for this study is the quantitative approach, which is considered appropriate for several reasons. One of the main advantages of this method is that it allows for quantifiable data collection, which can provide statistical support for the findings and conclusions of the study. Quantitative data for this study were collected using a combination of direct and secondary sources. Primary sources of data were collected through the questionnaire sent out and human

resources records, which provided numerical information and quantitative data. Observations were conducted with the aim of recording specific numerical measurements or data points. Also, questionnaire were structured in questioning with predefined response options, which can be readily quantified and analysed. Self-administered surveys were designed with quantitative scales and response options to acquire numerical data. Focus groups were conducted using predetermined quantitative questions and responses to facilitate group discussions. Secondary data was obtained through the review of institutional documents and relevant records, which may have included statistics that can be quantitatively analysed. By employing these strategies, a comprehensive understanding of the current situation within the institution can be obtained, which in turn allows for a more insightful analysis of the subject matter. This approach was considered suitable for the study's objective of investigating the challenges associated with attracting professional services staff to a single institution.

Furthermore, the study's respondents, who are qualified professional service staff working within the university, are well-positioned to offer their perspectives and insights on the research topic. Their familiarity with the tactics employed and their proximity to the institution make them particularly well-suited to provide valuable insights for the study. The sample size for this research consists of productive service staff from the institution. This selection guarantees representation from relevant personnel who are directly involved in the university's policies and initiatives related to attracting professional services staff. The sample of 50 respondents will be detailed for further analysis.

1.11 Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions apply to the terminologies used in this study:

Professional staff: Also referred to as professional support personnel, the concept of professionalism in education is undergoing significant transformation (Evetts, 2019). Professional services staff are those who have been categorised into roles such as Administration, Campus Management Services, Technical, Professional, and Managerial, as periodically updated by institutional policies (Tight, 2019). Despite these evolving definitions, the challenge of achieving recognition as professionals within higher education administration persists (Whitchurch, 2018). Over the past two decades, the meaning of "professional" related to professional services personnel has evolved, reflecting changes in the landscape of higher education (Nixon, 2020; Whitchurch, 2018; Sebalj et al., 2019). The term "support" denotes the roles of professional services staff within universities aimed at assisting various stakeholders, but the nature of this assistance—whether directed towards students, academics, or the institution—remains ambiguous. This ambiguity can lead to misconceptions about the role of professional services personnel, perpetuating outdated stereotypes, such as viewing them solely as administrative support for academics (Szekeres, 2018).

Talent Management: Talent management is defined as "the execution of integrated strategies or systems meant to improve processes for attracting, developing, and retaining people with the requisite skills and aptitude to fulfil current and future organisational demands" (Collings and Mellahi, 2020). This comprehensive approach underscores the strategic importance of managing talent in driving organisational success and meeting evolving challenges in a competitive environment.

1.12 Outline of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organised in the following manner:

CHAPTER TWO: Chapter 2(two) examines what various resources have written about talent, talent management, and the necessary steps for effective implementation of talent management practices.

CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology. The design of the study is covered in this chapter, along with the research strategy, data collection methods, population under investigation, sampling strategy, and method for distributing the research instrument.

CHAPTER FOUR: Results Presentation. The results of the study, derived from the data gathered, are presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: This chapter provides a comprehensive discussion of the findings obtained from the study.

CHAPTER SIX: Summary and Suggestions of the study. This section examines the final findings and gives recommendations based on them.

1.13 Summary of the Chapter

The history of the institution's difficulties in hiring qualified service personnel and its administration are covered in this chapter. The difficulties higher education faces in luring professionals, a crucial resource for colleges seeking to fulfil their declared goals and aspirations, is also covered. This chapter sets the stage for the rest of the entire work by outlining the goal and aims of the study, the methodologies employed for research, and the meanings of key terms. The second chapter finishes with an overview of the study undertaken on talent management challenges.

2 CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

An overview of the challenges of tertiary institutions in attracting professional services staff.

2.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed in this chapter focuses on the attraction of talent, development and retention of the talent—the three essential elements of talent management. The analysis also looks at the difficulties different organisations face in managing talent. Furthermore, technology, staff knowledge, and job satisfaction contribute to factors that affect an institution's ability to attract professional service staff. Talent and talent management are critical components of successful institutions such as universities. Talent can be defined as an individual's ability to contribute significantly to an institution's performance. Institutions continually face the challenge of attracting and retaining talented people, which makes them highly competitive in their field. Talented individuals are those with the knowledge, skills, and abilities that contribute to an institution's competitive advantage. Therefore, it is crucial to strategically manage talent to guarantee that the institution's objectives are met through appropriate hiring, staff development, and retention.

2.1.1 Talent and Talent Management

Any organisation's or institution's success is greatly influenced by talent. Talent refers to a set of innate abilities, including creativity, intelligence, and problem-solving skills, coupled with the willingness and ability to learn new skills. Talent is the ability to solve problems with exceptional skill and creativity (Gupta & Shaw, 2019), and it encompasses domains such as intellectual, social, emotional, and physical abilities (Golub, 2018). For universities, talent refers to individuals who possess particular competencies in areas such as research, teaching, and knowledge creation (Cunningham, Klump, & Massey, 2020). Talent enables professionals to contribute effectively to their institutions through expertise, technical knowledge, and innovative approaches.

Golub (2018) took a slightly different stance, arguing that talent refers to an individual's distinct aptitude or competence that is significant in performing a specific job or task competently. Talents could be natural abilities or developed through education, training, or experience. Talent attracts professional service staff in universities in terms of expertise, leadership abilities, and work ethics (Golub, 2018). Talented professionals can provide critical skills to universities to achieve their objectives, further enhancing the institution's reputation and expertise (Cunningham et al., 2018).

Talent is a unique combination of aptitudes, intellect, learning ability, and experience that individuals possess that make them successful in specific fields when utilised appropriately (Cunningham et al., 2018). The talent of an individual is often associated with their exceptional ability or creativity in their respective areas, and they possess a sense of purpose and direction that enables them to succeed in their work (Zachary, 2019). Talented individuals are often crucial for universities as they possess the skills and abilities required to explore new ideas, challenge academic norms, and develop visionary approaches to problem-solving while contributing to and expanding the institution's intellectual base (Zachary, 2019). Gupta & Shaw (2019) further argued that talent refers to the presence of exceptional creativity and intellectual prowess, as well as the capability to work collaboratively in a team environment. Talent in universities is exhibited in individuals who are highly skilled and experienced in their areas of expertise and are willing to contribute their skills to their institution or organisation (Gupta & Shaw, 2019).

Professional service staff with talent possess an outstanding track record in their respective fields. They are sought out for their ability to have significant positive impacts on their organisation's operations, culture, and performance (Zachary, 2019). An individual's special gift of natural ability or aptitude in a particular area could be utilised to achieve success in their profession (Golub, 2018). The talent of an individual is exhibited in their strong work ethic, problem-solving abilities and ability to consistently meet their objectives (Golub, 2018). In universities, talented professionals possess the potential to drive innovation and progress by advancing the institution's research agenda, contributing to learning and teaching, and developing strategic plans that elevate their institution's reputation, quality of service, and competitiveness (Fong, 2021).

Cunningham et al. (2018) believed that talent is an amalgam of creativity, intelligence, and expertise that underpins individuals' abilities to make unique contributions to their organisations. Talented individuals often have a passion for their work and have attained advanced levels of qualifications, training, or experience that have equipped them with the knowledge and proficiencies to deliver excellent work outcomes (Cunningham et al., 2018). In universities, talented professionals possess expertise and knowledge that enables them to excel in academic research and administration, foster student development, and effectively support the institution's mission, vision, and values. Talented individuals are identifiable through their unique skills that contribute to the success of their organisations (Zachary, 2019). In universities, talent is exhibited in staff who can communicate effectively, facilitate change, and collaborate to achieve shared goals. They possess the ability to motivate and inspire others, a capacity to be visionary and innovative, and a passion for learning and creating new knowledge (Golub, 2018).

Universities today tend to attract staff with a deep commitment to the institution's mission and values and demonstrate mastery in their skills to deliver quality service to stakeholders. They are agile, adaptable, continually learning, and team-oriented, ensuring collaboration and process improvements (Gupta & Shaw, 2019). Talented individuals strongly desire to succeed and achieve their goals through hard work and dedication to their profession (Fong, 2021). In universities, talent is an essential component that distinguishes successful professional service staff. They possess excellent communication skills, cultivate professional relationships, and are committed to contributing to their institution's strategic objectives while providing high-quality services to stakeholders.

2.1.2 Talent Management

Talent management has been defined by several authors; some of these definitions are covered here. For example, Collings and Mellahi (2019) referred to talent management as "the systematic recruitment, development, retention and deployment of talented individuals to meet strategic organisational needs." Edwards and Rees (2020) defined talent management as "a strategic and systematic approach that focuses on attracting, retaining, engaging, and developing high-potential employees through various activities that leverage their skills and capabilities." Scullion and Collings (2019) held the view that talent management is "an integrated system that utilises a variety of organisational processes and practices to identify, develop, and retain employees with the potential to make a significant contribution to an organisation's success." Bersin (2019) described talent management as "an approach to managing human resources that emphasises the development of employees' skills, the alignment of their goals with the organisation's strategic objectives, and the creation of a supportive work environment where employees can thrive and contribute to the success of the organisation".

The role of talent management for universities in attracting professional service staff could be seen in the recruitment process, where the university ensures that job postings, selection tools, and interview procedures are designed to identify the best candidates to fit into the organisation's culture and enhance diversity and inclusiveness (Kossek et al., 2019). It also involves professional development programs, including cross-training, coaching, mentoring, and job rotation, which enhance employees' competencies for improved organisational performance and employee engagement (Clark, 2018). Talent management also plays a significant role in retention, where universities provide competitive pay and benefits, recognition, and career advancement opportunities that motivate employees to stay with the institution and contribute to its success (Shields and Ward, 2019).

2.1.3 Attraction Challenges

Attracting and retaining high-performing professional staff is a critical aspect of staff selection for an institution's overall performance. Human capital has become a crucial component of organisations as it can contribute to long-term competitive advantage. Over the past two decades, it has become increasingly clear that professional staff knowledge, skills, and talents contribute to institutional performance (Lombardi & Baker, 2019). Consequently, an organisation's human asset is considered the primary source of value, growth, and long-term competitive advantage.

Research on talent management explains why individuals join or leave companies as well as how the business responds to and handles these events. To cope with attrition, this calls for the creation of plans, strategies, procedures, or recommendations (Kamau, 2020). For instance, a study by Dalton & Todorovic (2020) of over 70 eminent organisations found that a number of aspects of the work or institutional environment were key in luring professional service staff to join and remain with an organisation. The majority of professional service employees, according to Dalton & Todorovic's (2020) research, look for an engaging and demanding work environment, the capacity to balance personal and family obligations, an organisation with sound management practices, and a strong culture and set of values.

Additionally, Kamau (2020) examined over 100 professional staff members from a variety of institutions to determine why these organisations struggle to attract the necessary professional staff and how the organisations responded to the results (Kamau, 2020). According to the review, many professional services personnel believe that crucial resources that would allow them to accomplish their jobs are limited and that the programs are unrelated to their profession or the services they are given. As a result, most institutions attract relatively untrained or unprofessional personnel, and those who are already providing services may plan to leave due to limited resources. According to the review, the leadership development of their organisations is characterised by "reasonable/poor" instead of "amazing or fantastic" by 21% to 50% of professional staff members who plan to leave their current employer (Gorecky, 2020).

Furthermore, a review by Holmes & Olsher (2019) revealed a lack of faith in authority, with 23% of professional staff members who want to leave thinking that their organisations sufficiently foster trust in authority, compared to 57% that rank these activities as "reasonable/poor." Notably, compared to men, women in professional staff are less impressed with their institutions; 35% of women rate this skill as "bad," whereas 22% of men do the same (Holmes & Olsher, 2019). Universities have difficulty attracting workers due to low income and better prospects inside their environment. Interestingly, 50%

of respondents and another 25% reported that various universities in South Africa are having difficulty attracting employees due to other institutions' poor perceptions of the university (Gorecky, 2020).

2.1.4 Technology

Technological advancements have greatly influenced higher education institutions. Technology is pivotal in attracting and retaining professional service staff in today's digital era. However, it also presents certain challenges that need to be addressed. According to Adendorff & Dodd (2019), technological advancements have created a skills gap in the job market. This gap becomes a significant challenge for universities in South Africa as they struggle to attract and retain professional service staff with the necessary technological skill set (Adendorff & Dodd 2019). The demand for highly skilled individuals proficient in the latest technologies poses a hurdle for universities in recruiting the best talent. The study by Czerniewicz & Brown (2022) highlighted that the job market landscape has been transformed by technology, leading to new demands and expectations from professional service staff. Tertiary institutions face the challenge of keeping up with the evolving needs of the job market and aligning their technology infrastructure to attract staff who can contribute effectively in today's digital environment (Czerniewicz & Brown, 2022).

The study conducted by Gachago & Mekuria (2020) emphasised that technological advancements have raised the expectations of professional service staff. Staff members seek a technologically advanced work environment with access to the latest tools and resources that allow them to perform their roles more efficiently. Failing to meet these expectations can impede the university's ability to recruit and retain skilled professionals. One of the consequences of advancing technology is the increased possibility of remote work. Bai & Walcott's (2020) research demonstrates that offering remote work opportunities has become attractive for professionals, allowing them flexibility and improved work-life balance. Tertiary institutions must establish robust technological infrastructures and policies to support remote work and attract professionals seeking such flexibility.

According to Nleya & Zikhali (2020), tertiary institutions face the challenge of effectively managing their technological resources. Providing state-of-the-art technology requires substantial infrastructure, equipment, and ongoing maintenance investment. Failing to allocate adequate resources may lead to outdated technology and deter potential professional service staff from joining such institutions. To attract and retain highly skilled professionals, universities must invest in ongoing technological training and development programs. The research conducted by Gachago & Mekuria (2020) highlighted that offering regular training sessions helps staff members keep pace with technology advancements, fostering professional growth and job satisfaction. Tertiary institutions must prioritise providing up-to-date technological training to attract top-tier talent.

With increased digitalisation, the risk of data breaches and privacy infringement has become a critical concern for professionals. Gorecky (2020) highlighted that universities need robust cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive data. A lack of stringent security measures may deter potential professional service staff who prioritise data privacy, potentially affecting tertiary institution's ability to attract and retain the best talent. The always-connected nature of technology can contribute to work-life imbalance and burnout among professional service staff. According to the research by Van der Vyver (2021), the constant expectation to be available and responsive can lead to increased stress levels. Universities like UKZN must address this issue by establishing policies promoting a healthy work-life balance to attract professionals seeking a supportive and sustainable work environment.

Technological advancements should not exacerbate existing inequalities and barriers. As Lombardi & Baker (2019) highlighted, universities must ensure that their technological infrastructure is inclusive and accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities. Failure to provide equal opportunities may discourage professionals from joining such tertiary institutions, limiting the available diversity and talent pool. Some tertiary institutions compete with others, offering enticing income packages and technological resources. As Kamau (2020) noted, universities must compete with private companies to attract top talent, which implies that tertiary institutions need competitive compensation packages, access to cutting-edge technology, and professional growth and development opportunities. Tertiary institutions must invest in technological infrastructure, provide ongoing training, prioritise data security, maintain work-life balance, ensure digital inclusion, and compete effectively with industry rivals to attract and retain the best talent. By addressing the challenges posed by technology, tertiary institutions can position themselves as a technologically advanced institution that successfully attracts and retains professional service staff.

2.1.5 Training and Development

Programmes for training and development that are effective are essential for attracting and retaining professional service staff. According to Smith & Johnson (2019), they help tertiary institution align their service staff skills with strategic objectives, foster knowledge transfer, enhance job satisfaction, and improve overall productivity (Garcia & Clark, 2020). Investing in training and development initiatives demonstrates the institution's commitment to the growth and advancement of its staff, leading to increased employee loyalty and satisfaction. One of the primary challenges institutions face in training and development is time constraints. Some tertiary institutions often struggle to balance the need for continuous staff learning with operational demands. Limited time resources can inhibit the thorough implementation of comprehensive training programs. In such cases, institutions may opt for shorter,

more focused training sessions or develop online training platforms to provide flexibility and accessibility for employees (Goldstein & Ford, 2021).

Another significant challenge in training and development is budget constraints. Some tertiary institutions may struggle to allocate sufficient funds for training programs, resulting in a limited scope of training initiatives (Goldstein & Ford, 2021). To address this issue, institutions can explore cost-effective alternatives, such as leveraging internal resources and expertise to deliver training sessions, partnering with educational institutions or utilising online training platforms that offer affordable or free resources. Each service staff comes with a unique set of skills, experiences, and development needs (Peterson & White, 2019). Identifying and addressing these individual requirements can be a significant challenge for institutions. To overcome this hurdle, institutions should implement robust performance assessment systems and conduct regular needs analysis (Peterson & White, 2019). This will help tailor training programs to meet the specific development needs of service staff, ensuring maximum impact and engagement.

Rapid technological advancements have transformed the professional services landscape, necessitating continuous skill development. Tertiary institutions must keep pace with evolving technologies and provide staff with relevant training to remain competitive (Brown & Davis, 2020). Integrating advanced e-learning platforms, virtual reality simulations, and online certifications can be an effective solution to establish a dynamic and adaptable training environment (Kraiger & Swayze, 2019). Effective training and development programs attract and retain professional service staff in any institution. Institutions may face the challenge of retaining their trained and skilled professional service staff who seek new opportunities and career growth elsewhere. Kraiger & Swayze (2019) further stated that to foster staff loyalty and retention; institutions should focus on creating a supportive learning culture, offering career progression opportunities, and providing clear development pathways for service staff.

Measuring the effectiveness of training programs is crucial for continuous improvement; however, evaluation can be a challenge for institutions (Joyce & Nash, 2018). Developing comprehensive evaluation frameworks, incorporating feedback mechanisms, and utilising key performance indicators can assist institutions in assessing the impact and effectiveness of their training initiatives. Regular evaluation also enables institutions can pinpoint areas in need of development and make data-driven choices to improve upcoming training initiatives (Brown & Davis, 2020).

2.1.6 Diversity and Transformation

In recent years, tertiary institutions have significantly recognised the importance of diversity and transformation in creating a thriving and innovative work environment. Institutions that embrace diversity tend to be more successful due to the varied perspectives and experiences brought by a diverse workforce (Herring et al., 2019). However, despite acknowledging the significance of diversity, institutions often face challenges in attracting professional service staff from diverse backgrounds. Diversity brings a multitude of benefits to institutions. Firstly, diverse teams foster innovation and creativity. A study conducted by Herring et al. (2019) found that diverse teams are more adept at problem-solving and generating innovative ideas. Secondly, diversity enhances adaptability and flexibility, allowing institutions to respond effectively to rapidly evolving needs (O'Neill et al., 2019). Lastly, diverse teams have been proven to improve service staff engagement and morale, leading to increased productivity and staff satisfaction (Wang et al., 2020).

Despite the numerous advantages, some institutions still face barriers to achieving diversity and transformation. One of the main challenges is unconscious bias, as individuals tend to gravitate toward familiarity and similarity in their hiring processes (Jamieson et al., 2020). Additionally, the lack of diverse talent pipelines and networks further exacerbates the problem (Brewster et al., 2020). The underrepresentation of minorities in professional service roles, such as managerial positions, also contributes to the inequality and lack of diversity in these institutions (Stewart et al., 2020).

Performance management is increasingly recognised as a critical factor in attracting and retaining high-quality professional service staff at institutions. It encompasses various processes such as goal-setting, performance evaluation, feedback, and development planning. Effective performance management ensures employees understand their responsibilities, know how to meet expectations, and are motivated to excel. However, institutions face several challenges in implementing performance management practices, directly impacting their ability to attract and retain top talent.

2.1.7 Performance Management

Tertiary institutions often struggle to define clear and measurable performance expectations for professional service staff. Research by Smith (2018) highlighted the importance of setting specific, attainable, and relevant performance targets to guide employees' efforts and strengthen their motivation. Providing regular feedback is essential for employee development. However, some institutions may not have consistent feedback processes or fail to provide timely and constructive feedback. Bell (2019) emphasises the significance of ongoing feedback in improving performance and engagement among professional service staff. Performance evaluations based on subjective opinions can undermine objectivity and fairness. A study conducted by Chen et al. (2020) emphasised the need

for structured evaluation criteria and standardised assessment tools to minimise biases and enhance the credibility of performance evaluations.

However, some institutions may not invest enough in training and development programs tailored to professional service staff's specific needs. Yang and Hwang (2018) argued that providing adequate resources and opportunities for skill enhancement is crucial for attracting and retaining high-performing professionals. When professional service staff's goals do not align with the institution's objectives, it can lead to disengagement and decreased job satisfaction. Kim et al. (2019) emphasised the importance of aligning personal and institutional goals for enhanced performance and job satisfaction. Institutions may have inconsistent or ineffective recognition and reward systems, which can demotivate professional service staff. The study by Liu et al. (2018) highlights the need for well-designed recognition programs that acknowledge and reward exceptional performance. Inadequate professional staff involvement in performance management processes can limit their engagement and commitment. Jackson and Zaidi (2020) suggested that involving employees in goal-setting, feedback discussions, and development planning enhances their sense of ownership and commitment to achieving institutional objectives.

2.1.8 Values and Cultures

The values and culture of any tertiary institution greatly influence its ability to attract and retain professional service staff. Tertiary Institutions that can establish a strong and positive cultural identity and align it with potential employees' values have an advantage in attracting the right talent. However, challenges arise when institutions struggle to cultivate a culture that resonates with the expectations and values of professional service staff. Some institutions may face challenges in aligning their core values with those of potential professional staff. Kim and Jang (2019) emphasised the importance of a values-driven culture that resonates with candidates' personal values to attract and retain top talent. Any tertiary institution that lacks diversity and inclusivity may struggle to attract diverse professional service staff.

A study by Ahmad and Kamal (2018) suggested that promoting a diverse and inclusive culture enhances an institution's ability to attract talent from different backgrounds. Institutions that do not prioritise ethical conduct may face challenges in attracting ethically-minded professional service staff. Jones and Symon (2020) highlighted the importance of promoting ethical practices and building a trustworthy reputation. Institutions that do not prioritise and offer work-life balance opportunities may struggle to attract professionals seeking such arrangements. A study conducted by Allen et al. (2019) emphasised the significance of work-life integration in attracting and retaining top professionals.

Institutions that fail to position themselves as growth and development opportunity providers may deter ambitious professionals.

Rothman and Wedgwood (2018) emphasised that an institutional culture marked by negativity, low morale, or toxic behaviour can repel potential professional service staff. Bright and Fry (2020) highlighted the need for fostering a positive and inclusive culture to attract and retain top talent. Bright and Fry (2020) further argued that values and culture focused on the professionals' perceptions of the institution's atmosphere and value system. Staff want their personal beliefs to be honoured and seek a sense of trust, openness, and transparency within the institution. South Africa, for example, has a rich cultural legacy, and institutions that promote it are in high demand by professional service staff. Values and beliefs explain an institutional climate in terms of factors that are not visible but exist in professional staff behaviour and activities (Bright and Fry, 2020).

2.1.9 Key Areas of Study in Talent Management

Thunnissen, Boselie, and Fruytier's (2019) study looked at three important areas of talent management research: how talent is understood, what the goals and expected outcomes of talent management are, and the methods and projects used in talent management. They addressed two (2) alternative methods to define talent: the inclusive approach, which regards all staff members as talented, and the exclusive approach, which recognises a specific subset within the institution as talented. The researchers also underlined that talent management has numerous intended implications, such as attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining staff, as well as boosting overall institutional performance. They highlighted the importance of aspects including extra-role conduct, individual performance, motivation, institutional commitment, and alignment in impacting talent management. Additionally, branding was acknowledged as a significant part of talent management according to Christensen Hughes and Rog (2020), Jansen and Van der Pool (2018), Martin and Groen-in't Woud (2019), and others. These authors argued that institutions need to build a strong brand in order to attract potential service staff who are interested in offering their services to the institution.

Higher education institutions confront issues attracting professional staff due to increased professional staff turnover (Powell, 2021). High rates of employee turnover, especially in the professional world, can negatively impact learning efforts' strength, consistency, and quality. Selesho and Naile (2021) contend that frequent turnover can have an adverse effect on professional staff members and students who are expected to deliver quality services to students while managing heavy workloads. Simultaneously, professional staff members lack experience or fill vacant jobs. Weldon's (in Eversole, 2019) stated that Organisations that attain exceptional performance succeed in identifying the

attributes and characteristics demonstrated by their most competent staff to draw in more individuals who are similar to them lends credence to this point of view.

A lot of things need to be finished before an organisation may draw in professional employees. These include estimating the supply and demand for talent as well as the ability of the organisation to specify the vital skills, abilities, and behaviours needed at each level in order to determine the crucial qualifications needed to draw in new hires (www.deloitte.com). Securing talent also necessitates, as an institutional concept, the integration of procedures for both attraction and selection into a larger institutional framework, within which the institution is aware of the possible professional staff members' talents. Therefore, it is recommended that throughout the recruitment process, the institution should determine a set of standardised and essential skills that are required for any position within the institution.

In this context, Bushe (2019) argued where "professional service staff retention refers to the process of the ability of an institution to employ not only qualified professional staff, but also attract competent staff through the establishment of a quality duty-life, motivated staff climate, the best place of work, and being an institution of choice, depending upon dedicated formulation and execution of best practices in human resource and talent management".

2.1.10 Five Important Principles for Developing Talent

After discovering talent, it is crucial to nurture and promote its growth. Focusing on developing skilled individuals for essential jobs within the organisation and boosting their engagement and retention is crucial for effective personnel management. These ideas serve as the cornerstone for successful talent development programs.

These principles entail:

- Creating an explicit policy that defines talent within the organisation. According to Prius (2018), talent development strategies that see the association as a whole as the pool of available talent eventually yield higher institutional dividends.
- Seeing talent management as a cohesive process and organising it as a sound effort from professional progress, engagement, mentoring, training, and learning and improvement to talent pipeline and placement, talent recruitment and evaluation, and expert placement.
- As required by the professional service workforce, implementing talent development efforts to meet the needs of the corresponding categories.

- Provide coaching based on real-life experiences, improve individuals' abilities and skills, expand institutional knowledge, and accelerate their development.
- Harnessing the talent pool is vital since group-working talents can offer the organisation a large and mostly undiscovered psychological surplus, promoting hierarchical growth (Shirk, 2019).

Regarding the procedures related to organisational goals and strategies, the principles of talent development closely resemble those of talent management. Moreover, they emphasise the importance of the inclusive approach to talent management that was previously described in this chapter.

The literature reviewed provides pivotal frameworks surrounding talent management within higher education; however, it also revealed some gaps and potential biases. While Human Capital Theory emphasises investment in education and the resultant economic value, this perspective may inadvertently overlook socio-economic factors influencing staff recruitment at the institution, research indicates that candidates' financial considerations significantly affect employment decisions, but the lived experiences highlighted in the data suggest that non-monetary factors, such as institutional culture and work-life balance, carry substantial weight in decision-making (Mokhonoana, 2020).

Moreover, Social Exchange Theory's view of cost-benefit evaluation may oversimplify the intricate emotions and perceptions surrounding institutional capacity. The quantitative findings underscore this complexity, with many staff members expressing dissatisfaction with management practices and workplace engagement, contradicting the theoretical assumption of a straightforward relationship (Khumalo & Sibiyi, 2021). Furthermore, while Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory illustrates the importance of hygiene factors in job satisfaction, the data reveal that motivators such as recognition and opportunities for growth are not uniformly experienced, indicating inconsistencies between theory and practice (Zachary, 2020). Integrating these critical perspectives can enhance the understanding of talent management challenges at UKZN, underscoring the importance of contextual and subjective factors in determining staff attraction and retention.

It is revealed in this study that talent management in higher education, particularly at UKZN, is shaped by interrelated factors such as socio-economic status, institutional culture, and management practices. Human Capital Theory emphasises the economic motivations driving staff recruitment; however, quantitative data illustrate how workplace culture, feedback processes, and work-life balance also play significant roles (Mokhonoana, 2020). Social Exchange Theory reinforces the notion that perceived institutional support affects job satisfaction and retention; nonetheless, data shows staff often feel unsupported in their roles, leading to disengagement (Khumalo & Sibiyi, 2021). Likewise, Herzberg's

Two-Factor Theory highlights hygiene and motivation factors, yet the data underscores discrepancies between intended and actual experiences, where essential motivators remain unmet (Fong, 2021). Both strands of evidence indicate a need for a holistic approach to talent management that integrates theoretical frameworks and empirical realities, aligning institutional practices with the genuine needs and expectations of professional service staff. By doing so, UKZN can better address challenges in attracting and retaining qualified professionals, thereby enhancing institutional performance and stability.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

In this research, we discussed three key theories: Human Capital Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. These theories are important because they offer valuable insights into the factors influencing the recruitment and retention of professional services staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Human Capital Theory emphasised the role of education and skills in employment decisions, highlighting how insufficient salaries may deter qualified candidates. Social Exchange Theory provides a framework for understanding the relationship dynamics between the institution and potential staff, focusing on perceived benefits and costs. Finally, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguished between hygiene factors and motivators, illustrating how both play a critical role in job satisfaction and retention. Together, these theories enhanced the research's explanatory power, guiding the analysis and informing strategic recommendations for the institution. Furthermore, understanding talent management models to grasp and implement talent management effectively, different talent management models can be utilised. This study integrates two distinct models: the Talent Strategy Methodology Model (Bergeron, 2021) and the People Equity Model (Schiemann, 2019). These models have been selected for their valuable contributions to comprehending both the strategic and operational aspects of talent management inside organisations.

2.2.1 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory posits that individuals invest in their education and skills to enhance their economic value and employability (Becker, 1993). In the context of the institution, this theory helps explain the challenges of attracting professional services staff. The premise is that potential candidates weigh their investment in education and training against their expected salary and benefits. At the institution, insufficient salaries can deter qualified professionals from applying, as they may perceive that the return on their educational investment is not commensurate with what the institution offers (Schultz, 2020). Moreover, an institution's reputation for investing in its staff, such as through professional development opportunities, can influence recruitment efforts and retention (Mkhize &

Botha, 2021). As noted by Pienaar and Willemse (2022), organisations that foster a culture of continuous learning tend to attract and retain top talent, which is crucial for enhancing institutional performance.

2.2.2 Social Exchange Theory:

Social Exchange Theory (SET) posits that relationships are formed based on the perceived benefits and costs involved (Blau, 1964). This theory is applicable to the institution under study in understanding the dynamics between the institution and potential staff members. Candidates evaluate the benefits they will receive, such as salary, work environment, and career progression, against the costs, like job stress and work-life balance. The institution's ability to provide a supportive work environment and meaningful career growth can serve as significant motivators for attracting professional staff (Mokhonoana, 2022). If staff perceive a balance between the costs and benefits, they are more likely to accept positions at the institution and remain engaged (Roberts & Leiman, 2023). A study by Khumalo and Sibiya (2021) indicates that perceived organisational support strongly influences job satisfaction and retention, reinforcing the relevance of SET in this context.

2.2.3. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory posits that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction arise from different sets of factors: hygiene factors and motivators (Herzberg et al., 1959). Hygiene factors, such as salary and working conditions, do not necessarily motivate but can lead to dissatisfaction if inadequate. Motivators, including recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for growth, contribute to job satisfaction and retention. For the institution, inadequate salaries represent a hygiene factor that can lead to dissatisfaction among professional staff (Nthebe, 2022). Conversely, investing in motivators, such as professional development and recognition programs, can enhance job satisfaction and retention rates (Nkosi & Mthembu, 2023). Understanding the balance between these factors can help UKZN develop strategies to attract and retain talent effectively; as highlighted by research from Dlamini and Ngcobo (2021), institutions that focus on both hygiene and motivational factors are more successful in reducing turnover.

2.2.4 The Talent Approach Methodology

The Talent Strategy Approach, approved by Bergeron (2018), involved the development and customisation of the talent system to achieve specific goals and fit with the organisation's progress. Bergeron proposes a three (3) stage procedure within this paradigm that focuses on coordinating talent strategy. Bergeron (2018) supported the notion of the Talent approach methodology, which comprises designing and adjusting the talent system to correspond with the organisation's desired

goals and continuing development. According to Bergeron, this technique incorporates a three-step procedure targeted at achieving congruence between personnel strategy and organisational objectives. Managing the ability approach and activity plan is the first step. Acquiring, nurturing, utilising, and classifying talent are all part of this phase. According to Bergeron, it's critical to comprehend the institutional environment in order to provide an engaging talent system.

The implication is that the talent management system must be adapted according to the organisation's attitude and guidance rather than being limited to strictly following institutional rules. It is crucial to understand that the application of the talent approach should not be contained or restricted by the institutional procedure since it demands flexibility to fulfil the specific needs of the institution. "The subsequent phase (the plan of action) encompasses the design of strategies to fill the gap in the talent needs of the institution and making decisions on whether to recruit externally or develop from within the institution. The third phase measures performance outcomes. This involves measuring the critical performance indicators and examining the talent practice's adequacy. This model addresses the requirement for an efficient procedure of ability administration and incorporates the procedures into the general institution technique. It also highlights the requirement for institutions to execute talent management per their needs. Consequently, it advocates a vital connection between the talent management prepared and the execution of the institution. The talent strategy approach is similar to the effective talent management strategy approach in higher education by Rudhumbu and Maphosa (2020), discussed earlier regarding integrating talent management into the various areas of an institution.

The hypothetical structure examined above recommends that the aggressiveness of an institution and the accomplishment of its procedures are reliant, to some degree, on the ability that an institution has gained, held and created as per the institution's vital destinations. In the context of this study, this model has been useful as universities have used their strategic direction to define the talent required to achieve the missions set out, thus ensuring that talent is aligned with the greater good and needs of the institution.

2.2.5 Schiemann's People Equity Model of Talent Management

Schiemann (2019) advanced another helpful model in comprehending talent management: The People Equity Model. The model interfaces value, strategy and people. Schiemann distinguishes three critical components that add both to hierarchical and individual achievement. "These elements are Alignment, Capabilities and Engagement (ACE)". It is contended that these elements are vital to augmenting the esteemed commitment of individuals to the most basic hierarchical objective.

The degree to which everyone in an organisation collaborates and moves in the same direction is known as alignment, according to the People Equity Model. Vertical or horizontal alignment is possible. "Vertical alignment" refers to how closely employees are linked to or have an obvious route to the company's goals and structure. Likewise, this includes qualities to the arrangement and incorporates the connectedness of professional staff practices with hierarchical qualities. Horizontal alignment is the degree to which work units are adequately adjusted to each other to convey high-esteem items or administrations to students" (Schiemann, 2019). According to this model, the institution's ability to develop talent, knowledge, and resources to enhance its services is measured by defining it with the needs of its students in mind.

2.3 Conclusion and Summary

The literature review demonstrates how difficult it can be for many institutions to recruit, hire, train, and deploy professional service professionals. As a result, it should comprise a comprehensive and cohesive process that encompasses the organisation's overall strategy, identification of necessary competencies and talent, the planning process, talent acquisition, and talent development within the professional service staff. It is a multi-step procedure that needs to be carefully planned and carried out in order to be successful. All organisations, including higher education, are impacted by these issues. Lack of funding and an increase in enrolment worsen the situation in higher education and jeopardise the institution's mission to provide effective instruction. Clear performance objectives, behavioural alignment within the business or institution, and enhanced institutional and individual performance are the results of achieving them correctly. The aforementioned People Equity Model highlights how crucial institutional alignment is. The alignment needs to be both vertical and horizontal, as was previously mentioned. The knowledge, skills, and talents people need to perform their jobs are among the capabilities essential to the institution's operations. The research is grounded in three key theories that enhance understanding of recruitment and retention challenges in higher education. Human Capital Theory emphasises the importance of investing in education and skills, explaining how insufficient salaries at the institution may deter qualified candidates. Social Exchange Theory examines the balance of perceived benefits and costs within the employment relationship, highlighting the importance of a supportive work environment in attracting and retaining staff. Finally, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory differentiates between hygiene factors and motivators that influence job satisfaction and retention, reinforcing the need for competitive salaries and professional development opportunities. Together, these theories provide a framework for analysing the complexities of talent management in the context of the institution's unique challenges. The research methods employed in the study, as well as the methods for gathering and analysing data, are covered in the upcoming chapter.

3 CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides details regarding the research approach employed in the study. It encompasses different areas such as the research design, study environment, target population, sampling procedures, data collection methods, data analysis methodologies, and the research's validity, dependability, and ethical considerations. Table 1 indicates the alignment between the research objectives and the appropriate strategies applied. These sections delve into the details of how the study was conducted, ensuring that the research is thorough and dependable while also respecting ethical norms.

Table 1 - Objectives and Methods

| | Objectives | Methods |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Identify the institutional approaches, methods, protocols, systems, and strategies implemented for the recruitment, development, and retention of professional staff. | Evaluation of research, integrated talent management and performance management strategies, professional staff promotions, and management questionnaires |
| 2 | To ascertain the challenges related to professional staff retention and talent acquisition. | Management and professional staff questionnaires |
| 3 | Examine how service personnel view university policies and initiatives. | Questionnaire |

In the section on sampling size, professional service staff from different categories received a self-administered questionnaire. Additionally, institutional records were analysed to acquire a contextual understanding of the measures employed for attracting and keeping talent. This comprehensive approach comprised quantitative data from the questionnaire and the contextual information offered by the institutional documents.

3.2 Population study

Green and Thorogood (2019) defined the study population as the group of individuals or objects that the researcher selects and invites to participate in the research. Creswell (2018) described the study population as a clearly defined and specific group of people or things that are the subjects or recipients of the study. According to (Neuman & Robson, 2018), a research population is a collection of items or individuals with comparable characteristics. Similar characteristics may include geography, gender, age, sex, or a specific hobby. The study population is defined as individuals or items that are homogeneous in the description.

This study examined the challenges of attracting professional services staff in tertiary institutions. The main population were the university's support services staff.

3.3 Research design

Research designs are defined as the researcher's overall strategy in which various study components are logically integrated to effectively address a research topic (Yin, 2018). Creswell (2018) defined research design as "the blueprint or plan for collecting, analysing, and interpreting data that guides a researcher's inquiry towards achieving the stated objectives." The researcher employed a survey research design and utilised descriptive statistics to investigate the challenges encountered by the UKZN in attracting professional services staff. This choice of research design was guided by the researcher's objective to gather information on people's ideas and beliefs related to the topic. The survey research design allowed for the accumulation of quantitative data from a sample of participants through a structured questionnaire. The use of descriptive statistics facilitated the summarisation and analysis of the collected data, providing insights into the challenges faced by the university. These research designs were chosen to effectively address the research topic and accomplish the stated objectives (Leedy & Ormrod, 2017).

3.3.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research designs continue to emphasise flexibility and adaptability, allowing researchers to explore complex phenomena in depth. As noted by Clarke and Braun (2018), qualitative methodologies are particularly adept at capturing nuanced perspectives, thus helping to reveal previously hidden meanings within various social contexts. This aligns with the inductive reasoning central to qualitative research, where theories often emerge from the data rather than being pre-defined. Recent studies reinforce the importance of employing diverse data collection methods. For instance, Denzin and Lincoln (2018) highlight the continued relevance of tools such as interviews, focus groups, and observations, emphasising that these methods enhance the richness and depth of the data, permitting a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Additionally, semi-structured interviews have grown in prominence due to their ability to foster open dialogue and generate deeper insights (Mason, 2018). The analysis of qualitative data remains an iterative process. Researchers utilise approaches such as thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes, facilitating a more structured interpretation of qualitative findings (Braun & Clarke, 2019). This iterative nature of coding and categorising not only enhances the reliability of the analysis but also contributes to the emergent understanding of the studied phenomena, further bridging the gap between theory and data (Saldaña, 2018).

3.3.2 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is a systematic investigation that emphasises the measurement of quantity or amount, focusing on phenomena that can be described in numerical terms (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This type of research involves the collection of data in a quantitative form, allowing for rigorous statistical analysis. By employing structured methods, quantitative research ensures that data can be evaluated objectively, making it particularly valuable for hypothesis testing and theory verification. According to Bryman (2019), quantitative research homes in on 'hard' data, typically requiring the evaluation of responses using numerical assessments. Researchers often collect data that can be quantified, enabling them to analyse it using various statistical techniques. For example, survey responses can be quantified by counting the number of individuals who answered yes or no to specific questions. Additionally, researchers may utilise a Likert scale, which assigns numerical values to degrees of agreement or disagreement with statements. This method not only facilitates the collection of data but also allows for nuanced analysis of attitudes and opinions. One of the principal advantages of quantitative research is its ability to provide objective and measurable data. The use of statistical methods enables researchers to identify patterns, correlations, and trends, giving insights that may not be readily apparent through qualitative methods (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The reliance on

numerical data also enables researchers to draw conclusions grounded in statistical evidence, enhancing the validity and reliability of their findings (Bryman, 2019). Furthermore, the structured nature of quantitative research allows for the replication of studies, which is crucial for verifying results and contributing to the body of knowledge in a field. Overall, quantitative research remains a fundamental approach for anyone seeking to achieve reliable insights through systematic numerical analysis.

3.4 Description of the sample

Qualitative sampling strategies are employed to gather detailed information from different groups and subgroups within a population. The main objective is to select study participants who can provide useful data while being able to articulate their experiences and actions. For this particular study, purposive sampling was utilised (Flick, 2018). Purposive sampling involves the deliberate selection of specific individuals to be included in the sample (Palinkas et al., 2015). The researcher chooses participants based on particular characteristics or criteria relevant to the research (Etikan et al., 2016). In line with this, purposive sampling incorporates aspects of theoretical sampling (Ritchie et al., 2018). Theoretical sampling necessitates that only the most qualified individuals are involved in the study.

It is important to note that purposive sampling does not aim to represent a whole population. Therefore, the conclusions made from in-depth, qualitative interviews cannot be generalised to the broader population. In this case, the findings of the study cannot be extended to all support staff in other universities. The participants for this study were selected from the Institutional Planning Group (IPG) of the assigned institution. A total of fifty administrative (support) experts were recruited. The use of purposive sampling in this study ensures that people with relevant knowledge and experiences are included in the research. By intentionally selecting participants based on specific criteria, the researcher can collect in-depth and meaningful data that aligns with the study's goals. The focus is on getting rich and detailed information rather than aiming for a representative sample of the entire population. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to target individuals who can provide valuable insights and perspectives related to the study topic.

3.4.1 Sample Size and Sampling Method

In research, understanding the concepts of research population and sample is crucial. According to Gobo (2019), the research population refers to a large group of people who are the main targets of a logical evaluation. In contrast, a sample is a smaller subset of cases chosen by researchers from a larger pool, which is used to make inferences about the larger population (Flick, 2020). This distinction is critical for ensuring the validity and generalisability of research findings. To achieve representativeness, Creswell and Creswell (2018) highlighted the value of probability sampling

methods. This technique ensures that each unit in the target population has a known chance of being selected, utilising randomisation instruments like random number tables to determine the specific units to be included in the sample. This methodology provides a robust foundation for making statistical inferences about the larger population.

However, Babbie (2017) argued that in many social research contexts, conducting probability samples akin to those used in large-scale social surveys may not be feasible. This limitation often prompts researchers to employ non-probability sampling techniques, which deviate from probability theory. Non-probability sampling allows researchers to address various practical and logistical constraints while still pursuing valuable insights. In the specific context of this study, the researcher used non-probability sampling to select different categories of professional staff. This decision was based on judgement and the active interest of these staff members in professional services. Questionnaires were then distributed to all staff members within each respective category, as they were believed to best represent some of the study's objectives. This approach enabled the researcher to capture relevant perspectives from individuals with direct experience in the area.

One of the non-probability sampling methods is judgemental sampling, commonly used as a form of purposive sampling, especially when obtaining "specialised informed inputs" is essential to the research topic (Sekaran and Bougie, 2019). This method involves selecting units or individuals for observation based on the judgment that they can provide useful and representative information about the phenomena under investigation. In this study, judgement sampling was employed for both groups, as it involved choosing specific individuals or target respondents who could offer highly relevant information for the research. This method was considered the most appropriate strategy for gathering insights from a predetermined number of participants who could provide substantial input on the themes of the study. It is worth noting that the categories of participants involved in the study were carefully selected based on their institutional affiliations. This strategic selection aimed to ensure that the study encompassed perspectives from a diverse range of participants, enhancing the richness and depth of the results.

The study had a sample size of 50 participants, taken from the institutional planning and governance (IPG). The respondents were divided as follows:

- Campus Management Services: Out of the 22 staff members in this group, 17 participated.
- Internet, communication, and security (ICS): All 9 staff people in this group participated.
- Internal audit (IA): Out of the approximately 8 staff members in this group, 5 participated.

- Institutional Planning and Monitoring (IP): Out of the approximately 11 staff members in this group, 5 participated.
- Infrastructure planning and projects: Out of the approximately 16 staff members in this group, 5 participated.
- Forensics: All 4 staff members in this group participated.
- Utilities and energy: All 6 staff members in this group participated.

These response distributions represent the proportion of participated who performed within each subgroup, ensuring representation from different departments within the IPG. The mentioned numbers provide insights into the sample distribution and highlight the selection of participants for the study.

A survey was distributed to the chosen professional staff members, especially excluding those who were no longer active or included in the current staff list. This exclusion was due to their failure to provide significant insights relevant to the study. This sampling method allowed for diverse perspectives on the institution's strategies for attracting and retaining professional staff. The sample size was determined based on the need to collect adequate and relevant information from the chosen institutional categories of professional service staff. Given the focus on actively engaged professional staff in the study, it was important to gather data from a specific number of individuals who could give substantial input on the research themes.

The sample size in this study was chosen based on the need to obtain sufficient relevant information from the selected institutional categories of professional service staff. Since the research focused on professional personnel actively engaging in professional services, acquiring data from a specific number of individuals who could provide meaningful influence on the research subjects was necessary. The use of non-probability sampling, specifically judgmental sampling, was deemed appropriate in this case. Judgmental sampling allows for selecting specific units based on the researcher's judgment regarding their usefulness or representativeness of the phenomena under investigation. This method was chosen because it provided the best opportunity to obtain specialised information from respondents who could offer valuable insights on the research topic.

The specific sample size was determined based on the researcher's judgment and the aim of collecting sufficient data from the selected categories of researchers. By sending questionnaires to all staff members in these categories, it was ensured that the sample size was adequate to achieve the study's objectives and gather a significant amount of relevant information. The chosen sample size was driven by the need for specialised information and a thorough understanding of the research themes, considering the constraints of non-probability sampling.

3.5 Methods of Collecting Data

Primary data refers to information obtained through direct observation of events, people, or objects or by administering surveys to individuals. In contrast, secondary data consists of textual information derived from records and documents, such as organisational policies, procedures, and rules (Saunders et al., 2019). In this study, data was acquired using three different methods: a self-administered questionnaire and document analysis. The self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the professional staff, allowing for the collection of quantitative data, which is essential for gaining a deeper understanding of the research topic. As Creswell (2018) noted, quantitative methods can enhance the robustness of a study. Additionally, a document analysis was conducted to examine various policies, procedures, guidelines, and systems related to talent management within the institution. This review of secondary data enabled a description, interpretation, and evaluation of current practices in attracting professional staff. By employing these different data collection methods, a comprehensive understanding of the research goals and answers to the research questions was achieved. The combination of primary and secondary data sources provided a holistic view of the topic, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the results (Flick, 2018).

3.5.1 Methods of data generation: Instruments Used for Data Collection

Three tools were deployed to collect data for this investigation. These comprised a document review, interview surveys with management staff, and a self-administered questionnaire for the researcher participants at the case study institution. The document review involved studying institutional policies, which were considered authoritative, credible, objective, and factual. This analysis provided a contextual framework for understanding the challenges related to attracting professional services staff (Creswell, 2018). Interview questionnaires were utilised to gather insights from the management staff regarding their perceptions of these challenges. These questionnaires offered a structured method for data collection and facilitated in-depth discussions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017). Additionally, a self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the researcher participants at the case study organisation. This questionnaire enabled the collection of individual views and experiences related to attracting professional services staff. By employing these various data collection instruments, a comprehensive understanding of the research topic was achieved. The document review provided essential contextual background, while the interviews and self-administered questionnaires allowed for the exploration of diverse viewpoints and experiences (Saunders et al., 2019).

Interviews

Interviews are widely utilised by researchers in qualitative studies for the purpose of collecting data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This method allows for an in-depth exploration of issues, providing insights into participants' thoughts and feelings about the topic at hand. Interviews add a human element to the data, moving beyond impersonal facts and numbers (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). According to Saldaña (2021), interviews are valuable in obtaining a detailed understanding of participants' ideas and perceptions related to a particular topic. They provide an opportunity to gather information about individuals' personal thoughts and perspectives. Moreover, interviews allow for close and prolonged engagement between the researcher and the participants, creating a conducive environment for sharing and reflection (Mertens, 2020). Through this interactive process, the researcher can delve deeper into the essence of what is being studied, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. By employing interviews as a data collection method, researchers can capture rich, qualitative data that offers valuable insights into participants' experiences, opinions, and feelings. This method facilitates a deeper exploration of the research topic, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the complexities involved.

Focus group interviews

Instead of conducting in-depth group interviews, this study chose focus group discussions as the primary data collection method (Flick, 2018). Participants were purposefully selected based on their relevance to the study topic rather than aiming for a representative sample. The focus groups included individuals who could contribute meaningful insights, fell within a specific age range, shared similar socio-demographic characteristics, and felt comfortable expressing their thoughts to both the interviewer and fellow group members (Morgan, 2018). Focus group discussions offer a unique dynamic for data collection, allowing for rich interaction and social exchange among participants (Rourke, 2018). This environment often yields a more comprehensive understanding of the topic, as participants frequently feel more at ease discussing complex issues when they share experiences and camaraderie. In this study, a focus group discussion was conducted with support personnel to gain insights into their experiences and perspectives regarding the challenges of attracting skilled professionals. The session lasted approximately one hour and thirty minutes, fostering an open dialogue among participants. Through focus group discussions, the study aimed to capture a diverse range of data, facilitate meaningful interactions, and develop a deeper understanding of the research topic by leveraging the collective experiences shared by participants. This method enables researchers to delve into nuanced perspectives that individual interviews may not fully capture, ultimately enriching the understanding of the challenges faced in the professional landscape.

Document analysis

This study also employed document analysis as a data collection method, which involves carefully reviewing written materials to extract unbiased information and guide further inquiry (Bowen, 2019). Document analysis allows researchers to identify insights that may not be captured through interviews alone, thus enriching the data gathered (Hsieh & Shannon, 2019). In this study, the analysis focused on documents pertaining to the challenges of attracting professional services staffs and relevant institutional policies, providing essential context to individual experiences. The accessibility of these documents was a key factor in their selection, as they provided valuable background information for the study (Mills et al., 2019). During the analysis process, notes were meticulously taken, and all documents were sourced from the university website. By integrating document analysis, the study aimed to unearth additional insights that might not surface through other data-gathering techniques, thereby facilitating a more comprehensive exploration of the research topic.

Questionnaire Design

Creating a questionnaire requires a thorough understanding of the challenges surrounding the phenomena being studied (Bryman, 2019). This research on the barriers faced by the institution in attracting professional services staff utilise quantitative data collection methods. A comprehensive literature review was essential for identifying key themes that guided the development of the questionnaire (Fowler, 2019). The insights gained from this review provided a foundation for the questionnaire's focus areas and helped ensure its relevance to the study's objectives. Additionally, examining institutional policies offered valuable insights into talent management concepts, further informing the questionnaire's design. This evaluation was crucial in aligning the questions with existing talent management frameworks and practices within the institution. The Likert scale was utilised to structure response options, adhering to the principles of clarity in response categories (Dillman et al., 2019). Respondents rated their level of agreement with statements on a scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." This format enabled efficient clustering and analysis of responses, capturing nuanced perspectives that might not be apparent through other methods. The questionnaire included both closed-ended questions, utilising the Likert scale to evaluate the effectiveness of talent management programs, and open-ended questions that allowed for richer qualitative data. This mixed-methods approach enabled the researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' perceptions and experiences (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The open-ended responses could later be thematically coded, providing additional layers of meaning to the quantitative data collected. To ensure the questionnaire's validity and clarity, a pilot study was conducted, as recommended by Thabane et al. (2010). This pilot involved administering a smaller version of the

questionnaire to two respondents from each participant category. Feedback from this preliminary study facilitated adjustments in the final version, enhancing its flow and comprehension.

Document review

To investigate the institution's strategies, policies, procedures, processes, and systems for attracting, retaining, and developing professional staff, relevant documents were reviewed on the institution's website. These documents included talent management policies, processes, guidelines, and systems. By analysing these documents, the study aimed to gain a complete understanding of the provisions stated and to interpret and evaluate the circumstances described within them. The analysis of the data collected from these documents involved using quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2018). This method allowed for a structured examination of the information, facilitating the identification of key themes and patterns that could inform the development of effective strategies for professional staff engagement at the institution. By employing a rigorous document analysis, the study aimed to complement other data collection methods and provide a comprehensive understanding of the institution's talent management practices.

Data Collection Process

As a student member of the institution, the researcher had internet access to retrieve and review the necessary documents for the study. Consent forms and invitation letters, which are included in the appendices, were used to invite participants to take part in the research. Conducting interviews with the management group aligns with the fundamental principles of qualitative research, as emphasised by Babbie (2018), where the researcher serves as the primary data collection tool. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed online to the researcher-participant group through their institution-provided email addresses. Upon receiving the questionnaires, they were printed and assigned numerical codes for identification and analysis purposes. Interviews were conducted with 12 out of the 30 service staff members, resulting in a response rate of 40%. For the questionnaires, a total of 145 were sent electronically to professional staff members, including those who had left the institution. However, only 21 questionnaires were received and later analysed, which indicates a low response rate of 14.4%. As noted by Creswell (2018), low response rates can limit the generalisability of research findings. Despite efforts to increase the response rate through reminders and follow-ups, the response remained low, and additional attempts were halted to avoid overburdening the respondents. It is important to acknowledge the limitations imposed by this low response rate, exercising caution when generalising the results beyond the sample. Creswell (2018) highlights that improving response rates is crucial for enhancing a study's validity and representativeness. Overall, while document analysis, interviews, and self-administered questionnaires were employed to collect

data, the low response rate for the questionnaires poses a limitation to the generalisability of the results.

Response Rate

Rubin and Babbie (2011: 388) provided guidelines for response rates in their research:

- "A response rate of at least 50% is usually considered adequate for analysis and reporting".
- "A response rate of at least 60% is good".
- "A response rate of at least 70% is very good".

While the responses from the researcher group may not be extensive, they still offer valuable insights into the research topic. In addition to primary data collection, secondary data gathering methods were applied, such as policy analysis and document review. The study examined relevant papers and documents to gain a better understanding of the institutional context in which the research took place. These secondary data sources provided extra information that complemented the primary data, enhancing the overall understanding of the topic at hand.

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis is a complex and iterative process that includes organising, interpreting, and making sense of collected data (Cohen et al., 2018). It is not a linear or tidy process but rather a messy and interesting one where different steps overlap (Creswell, 2019). The goal of data analysis is to bring order, structure, and meaning to a substantial amount of data (De Vos et al., 2018; Henning et al., 2020). In this study, data from focus group interviews and document studies were collected and analysed to reveal themes, patterns, and experiences (Aronson, 2018). The process of data analysis begins with effective data collection, ensuring meaningful conversations and gathering rich data during interviews. Recorded materials supplement these discussions (Rabiee, 2018). The next step involves becoming familiar with the data by reading the transcripts multiple times in their entirety. The aim is to gain insights and understand the conversations as a whole before breaking them down into themes. Themes, as described by Taylor and Bogdan (2020), are formed from patterns such as vocabulary, recurring activities, meanings, and feelings. These themes involve combining specific ideas and experiences that, when examined individually, may have less significance.

Quantitative data for this study were collected using a combination of direct and secondary sources. Primary sources included first-hand interviews and human resources records, which provided numerical information and quantitative data. Observations were conducted with the aim of recording specific numerical measurements or data points. Personal interviews involved structured questioning with predefined response options, which can be readily quantified and analysed. Self-administered

surveys were designed with quantitative scales and response options to acquire numerical data. Focus groups were conducted using predetermined quantitative questions and responses to facilitate group discussions. Secondary data was obtained through the review of institutional documents and relevant records, which may have included statistics that can be quantitatively analysed. By employing these different data collection methods, a comprehensive set of data was obtained. The data analysis process involved organising and interpreting this data to discover insights and understand the research topic more deeply. Through the identification of themes and patterns, the data was made meaningful and helped to address the research objectives.

Quantitative data were given to two groups of respondents, as well as the document analysis, were analysed separately and then compared to address each specific objective. The quantitative data collected from both respondent groups underwent coding and analysis using SPSS 2015, a software tool widely utilised for data coding and analysis. This process included calculating descriptive statistics and standard deviations, when appropriate, and presenting frequencies in tabular form. Descriptive statistics help to define interesting events by capturing the number of occurrences and provide insights into the average and dispersion of the data. Additionally, the Chi-square goodness of fit test was employed to examine whether the choice of response options varied significantly from what would be expected under the assumption of equal distribution. These statistical tests allow the examination of significant differences between groups based on demographic variables. The management data, on the other hand, mainly consisted of qualitative information. The analysis of open-ended questions involved categorising and organising answers based on their associated meanings. Furthermore, the document analysis focused on key aspects of talent management, development, recruitment, and retention. The findings from this analysis were then related to the appropriate research objectives. By conducting comprehensive quantitative data analyses, this study hoped to gain a thorough knowledge of the research objectives and provide a nuanced interpretation of the topic under investigation.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Maintaining validity and dependability is crucial in research to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results.

3.7.1 Validity

Validity, as defined by Salkind (2019), pertains to the truthfulness, accuracy, credibility, and soundness of a measurement instrument. It reflects how well the instrument measures what it is intended to assess. In the present study, questionnaires and document analysis were employed to

explore the concepts of talent and talent management, as well as the first-hand experiences of respondents regarding the support provided by the institution to its professional personnel. A clear connection was established between the existing literature and the institution's documentary system. The questionnaire was crafted to embody the various concepts widely used in the study of talent and talent management (Creswell, 2018). Sekaran and Bougie (2019) categorise validity into three types: content, criterion-related, and construct validity. Content validity ensures that the measurement includes a representative selection of elements that capture the desired construct effectively. Face validity, as a fundamental indicator of content validity, indicates that the items appear to measure the intended concept at a superficial level. Although Sekaran and Bougie (2019) point out that face validity is not always deemed a sufficient criterion for content validity, it was utilised in the pilot stage of this study. This approach aimed to confirm that the surveys superficially appeared to address various aspects of the talent management framework. By employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, the study aimed to enhance the comprehensiveness of its findings. Ensuring high validity in the research instruments is critical, as it directly impacts the interpretability and applicability of the results, making closer alignment with established frameworks in talent management essential for capturing participant perspectives effectively (Bryman, 2019).

3.7.2 Reliability

In the context of questionnaires and psychometric instruments, reliability refers to the consistency or stability of measurements obtained from these tools (Field, 2018). A commonly used measure of reliability is Cronbach's alpha, which evaluates the internal consistency of a set of items or a scale in terms of dependability. Specifically, Cronbach's alpha (α) assesses how accurately the items in a questionnaire measure the same underlying construct (Tavakol and Dennick, 2020). A high Cronbach's alpha indicates that the items have strong correlations with one another, suggesting that they are likely assessing the same construct. In this research study, the reliability of the questionnaire was quantitatively evaluated, yielding a Cronbach's alpha result of 0.91. This high coefficient reflects strong internal consistency among the items, confirming that the questionnaire effectively gauges the constructs it aims to measure (Urbach and Ahlemann, 2018). To provide further context, the dependability of the study increased from an initial value of 0.78 to 0.91, as presented in Chapter 4.

This improvement indicates that subsequent refinements to the questionnaire led to more reliable measurements, thereby enhancing the overall quality of the data collected. Reliability is critical in research, as it impacts the interpretability and validity of findings (Cohen et al., 2018). Thus, employing rigorous methods to assess and improve reliability ensures that the research conclusions drawn are

well-founded and can be confidently generalised to similar contexts. Cronbach's alpha is an important factor in ensuring that questionnaire items accurately assess the target construct. High dependability means that the instrument gives consistent and stable results across time and different samples. In this research, Internal consistency is used as it involves evaluating the extent to which items in a scale or questionnaire correlate with one another while Cronbach's alpha is the fundamental method of assessment.

Table 2 – Reliability Scoring

| Construct | Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Institutional Attractiveness | 7 | 0.85 |
| Management and Policy | 3 | 0.78 |
| Employee Value Proposition | 12 | 0.91 |

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were integral to the research process, ensuring adherence to ethical values and the protection of participants' well-being. According to Huysamen (2019), social scientists had to engage with study participants in a rational, respectful, and ethical manner, honouring their dignity throughout the research process. This ethical engagement was evident in participant recruitment, the implementation of research instruments, and the publication of study results. During the recruitment phase, it was crucial to ensure that individuals participated voluntarily and without coercion. Participants had to be fully informed not only about the study's objectives but also about their rights (Huysamen, 2019). The principle of voluntary involvement, founded on informed consent, was a critical ethical guideline (Creswell, 2018; Mouton, 2018). This ensured that participants made educated decisions regarding their participation, fostering an ethical research environment.

To uphold ethical standards during the administration of the research instrument, precautions were taken to protect the participants' mental, bodily, and emotional well-being, ensuring that the research did not cause harm or distress (Mouton, 2018). Ethical norms also dictated that participants' privacy had to be respected, personal information kept confidential, and data collected anonymously (Huysamen, 2019). In this study, participants were provided with detailed information regarding the purposes and objectives of the research, the voluntary nature of their involvement, the absence of

negative repercussions for non-participation, the anonymity of their responses, and the pledge to keep personal information confidential. These ethical requirements were explicitly stated in the written invitation to participate, along with an informed consent form included with the questionnaire. The same ethical standards were applied during the interviews with participants, reinforcing the commitment to ethical research practices.

3.9 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the research design and methodology, explaining the reasons behind using quantitative approaches in the study. It also outlined the data collection methods that were applied. The subsequent chapter focused on the responses received from the survey and self-administered questionnaires. It was important to note that the low response rate among researchers could reduce the generalisability of the study. However, this still contributed valuable insights to the research. The findings from the document analysis were presented in the following chapter. In this study, the aspects of research design and methods were discussed, demonstrating the appropriateness of employing a quantitative approach. Furthermore, the chapter detailed the data collection methods that were used. The subsequent chapter centred on the responses received from interviews and self-administered questionnaires. It was acknowledged that the limited response rate among researchers might impact the generalisability of the results. Nonetheless, the insights gained from their involvement still held significance for the study. The results of the document analysis were given in the upcoming chapter.

4 CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.2 Introduction

This chapter examines the responses given by the service staff in relation to the issues posed in the study. Furthermore, it examines the current documentation pertaining to the subject within the institution.

4.3 Demographic Details of Respondents

Table 3 - Demographic Features of Service Staff Respondents

| Categories | Characteristics | Frequency | % |
|------------|---|-----------|-----|
| | Internet and Communication Services ("ICS") | 8 | 16% |
| | Finance and Procurement | 13 | 26% |
| | Institutional planning and monitoring | 8 | 16% |
| | Legal services | 2 | 4% |
| | Human resources ("HR") Finance and Procurement | 5 | 10% |
| | Infrastructure planning and projects | 2 | 4% |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| | Campus Management Services | 5 | 10% |
| | Internal audit | 7 | 14% |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Highest Qualification | Masters | 20 | 40% |
| | Master's degeed | 30 | 60% |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Gender | Male | 30 | 60% |
| | Female | 20 | 40% |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Race | African | 25 | 50% |
| | Coloured | 2 | 4% |
| | Indian | 3 | 6% |
| | White | 20 | 40% |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Age | Below 40 | 5 | 10% |
| | 40-50 | 10 | 20% |
| | 51-55 | 20 | 40% |
| | 56-60 | 10 | 20% |
| | Over 60 | 5 | 10% |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |
| Period of employment | 1-5 years | 15 | 30% |

| | | | |
|--|--------------|-----------|------------|
| | 6-10 years | 10 | 20% |
| | >10 years | 25 | 50% |
| | Total | 50 | 100 |

According to the demographic data, the highest proportion of respondents (26%) work in finance and procurement, followed by 16% in institutional planning and monitoring. These figures indicate a significant representation of the Finance and Procurement service workforce within the institution. Additionally, the majority of respondents (60%) possess master's degrees or higher, and 50% have worked at the university for over ten years. In terms of gender, there are more male responders (60%) than females. In terms of racial distribution, African respondents make up 50%, while White respondents make up 40%. Furthermore, the majority of responders fell into the age group of 51-55.

4.4 Institution's Policies, Approaches, Procedures, Methods, and Systems for Recruiting, Developing, and Retaining Professional Staff

The study's major purpose was to determine the institution's policies, viewpoints, procedures, processes, and systems affecting the recruitment, development, and retention of professional staff. The responses of different participants who took part in the study are shown below.

Professional Staff Responses

Question 1: What measures does the organisation employ to attract professional staff in terms of policies, procedures, processes, and systems?

Regarding Question 1, which focused on the institution's policies, procedures, processes, and systems for attracting professional staff, respondents showed that 91.7% of the respondents answered positively, while 8.3% responded negatively. The chi-square goodness of fit analysis showed that a significant proportion of respondents agreed that the institution had effective policies, procedures, processes, and systems in place to attract professional individuals, as well as a talent management system ($\chi^2(1, N=12) = 8.333, p = 0.004$). This significant p-value shows that the organisation has adopted suitable policies, procedures, processes, and systems to attract professional personnel and manage talent successfully.

Table 5 provides an overview of the responses received regarding the rules, procedures, processes, and methods employed to attract professional staff and create a talent management system.

According to the data, 40% of the respondents agreed that a technologically advanced institution is the most appealing to professional service staff. In comparison, 20% viewed training and development, along with specialisation in adaptable professional service areas that adhere to policies and procedures, as the most attractive factors.

Table 4 – the Attractive Skills

| Attractive Skills | No. | % |
|--|------------|------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced in technology | 20 | 40% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a supportive learning culture | 5 | 10 % |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and development | 11 | 20% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilling in specialised service areas | 5 | 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership training | 2 | 4 % |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strong accomplishment oriented | 3 | 6% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualisation and problem definition methodology | 4 | 10% |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Service Staff Reaction

Question 2: Does the institution adopt an open management framework?

Out of the 20 respondents, the majority (76%) expressed the belief that the university does not successfully attract talented individuals. Only 19% agreed with this viewpoint based on factual proof. The Chi-square goodness of fit test showed that a significant percentage of respondents perceive the university as lacking in talent acquisition capabilities, with a p-value of 0.007. Moving on to Question 2, requesting whether the institution has an open management structure and its implementation, Figure 1 displays the answers received. A remarkable 60% of the respondents indicated that the university does not have an open management policy, whereas 25% acknowledged the presence of such a policy.

Figure 2 further elaborates on the reasons for this finding, with 15% of the participants attributing it to an authoritarian managerial style.

Figure 1 Open Management framework for the Institution

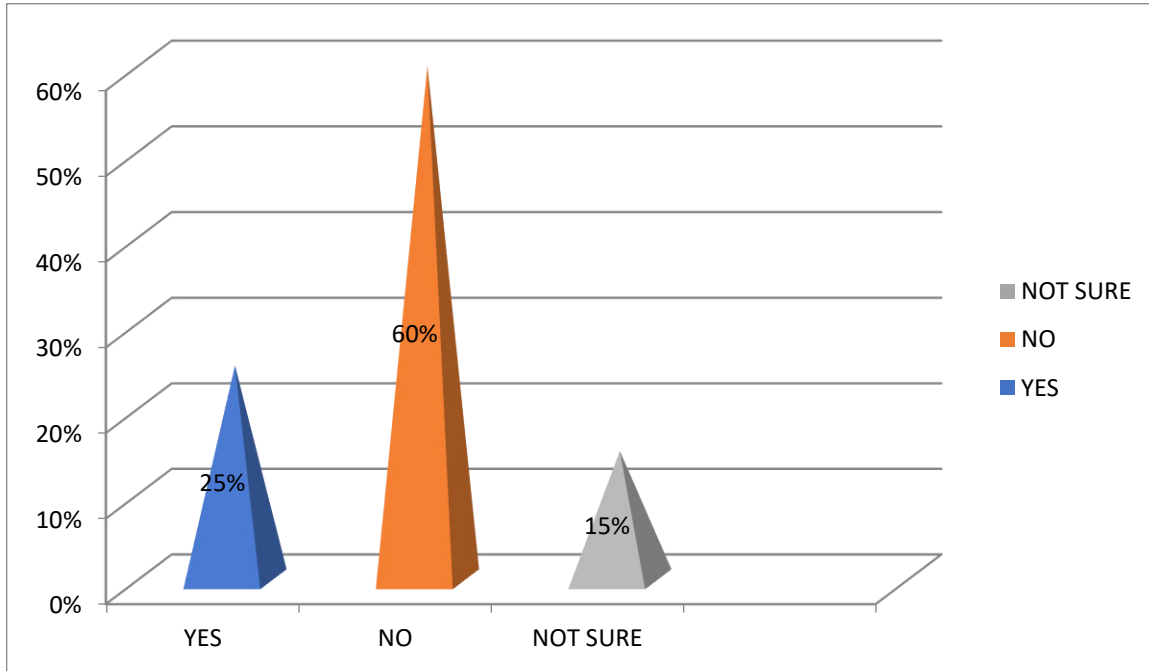


Figure 1 - Open Management framework for Institution

Figure 2 How Open Management framework is practiced

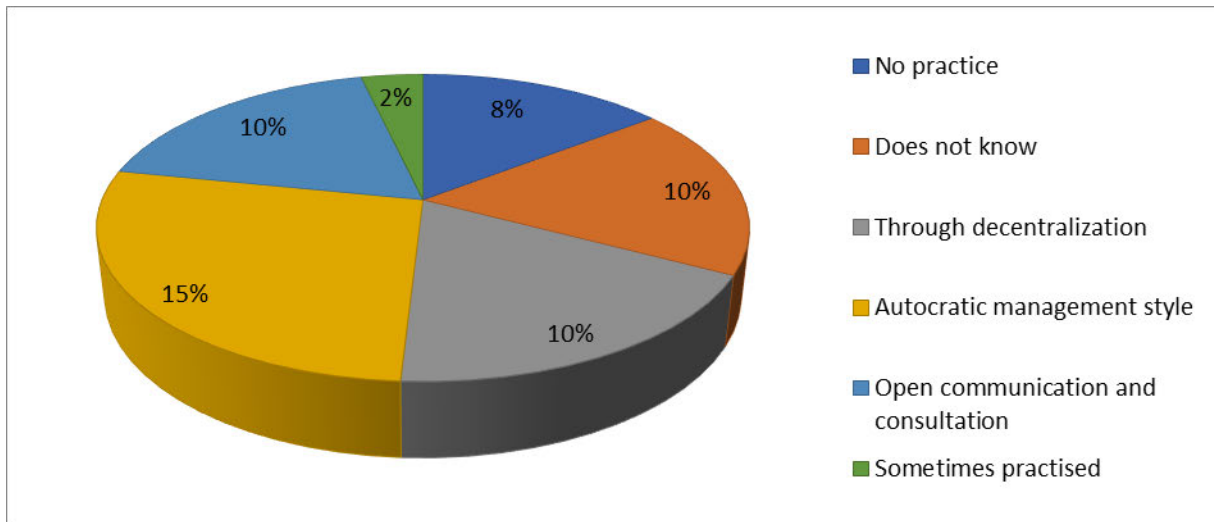


Figure 2 - How Open Management framework is practised

4.5 Challenges connected with talent recruiting and retention of professional staff

The study aimed to identify the challenges linked to talent recruitment and retention among professional staff at the institution. Based on the answers received from the service staff, the following findings were obtained:

Professional staff response:

Question 1: What are the challenges the institution finds in attracting professional staff, and how does the university address these challenges?

Table 4 offers insights into the recruitment issues. It shows that the university finds difficulty in attracting service professionals due to two main factors. Firstly, 50% of the respondents noted that the institution meets challenges in recruitment due to its low institutional salary, which fails to compete with better alternatives available elsewhere. Additionally, another 25% of the participants noted that negative perceptions held by other institutions about the university serve as a deterrent for attracting service professionals. Furthermore, an equal percentage of 10% of respondents pointed out that the problem lies in the time needed to develop talent in the knowledge industry, as well as the presence of rigid institutional policies at the university.

Table 5 - Attraction Challenges

| Attraction challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor remuneration at the university and better opportunities | 20 | 40% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Negative perception of the university by other institutions | 10 | 20% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The time it takes to develop talent in the knowledge industry | 5 | 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High professional promotion criteria | 10 | 20 % |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rigid institutional policies | 5 | 10 % |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Question 2: What retention issues/challenges does the university face?

Table 5 shows the university's retention challenges: reputation, changes, and retirement.

Table 5 provides insights into the retention challenges faced by the university, as stated by the respondents. The answers were categorised based on their meaning, allowing participants to articulate the hurdles in their own words. The findings show that 40% of the participants identified the institution's reputation as a key factor leading to retention problems, as rival institutions entice and recruit service professionals. Following closely, 20% of the respondents noted that the university has experienced significant changes in recent years, resulting in instability, inadequate compensation, and high promotion standards that hinder staff retention. Additionally, 12% of the respondents stated that the university's retirement age policy and extensions based on performance are further contributing factors to retention challenges. These answers clearly indicate that the university is grappling with retention issues related to its image, organisational changes, compensation, promotion standards, and retirement policies.

Table 6 - Retention Challenges

| Retention challenge | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reputation of the university results in it being poached by other institutions | 20 | 40% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many changes from the merger to the re-organisation instability, poor salaries and promotion requirements | 10 | 20% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retirement age policy and superannuation linked to performance | 6 | 12% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some service staff did not envision the transformation and the re-organisation as part of their career | 5 | 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High standard of skills excellence required | 5 | 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of young South African service staff | 4 | 8% |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Service Staff Responses

Question 3: What drew you to the University?

Based on Figure 3, it can be noticed that the greatest number of respondents (40%) were drawn to the University due to the quality of the service staff. Additionally, 25% of the respondents regarded the University's profile intriguing. Furthermore, 20% of the participants were drawn by the professional progression chances provided by the university. Lastly, 10% of the respondents were tempted by the University as it carried significance as their alma mater.

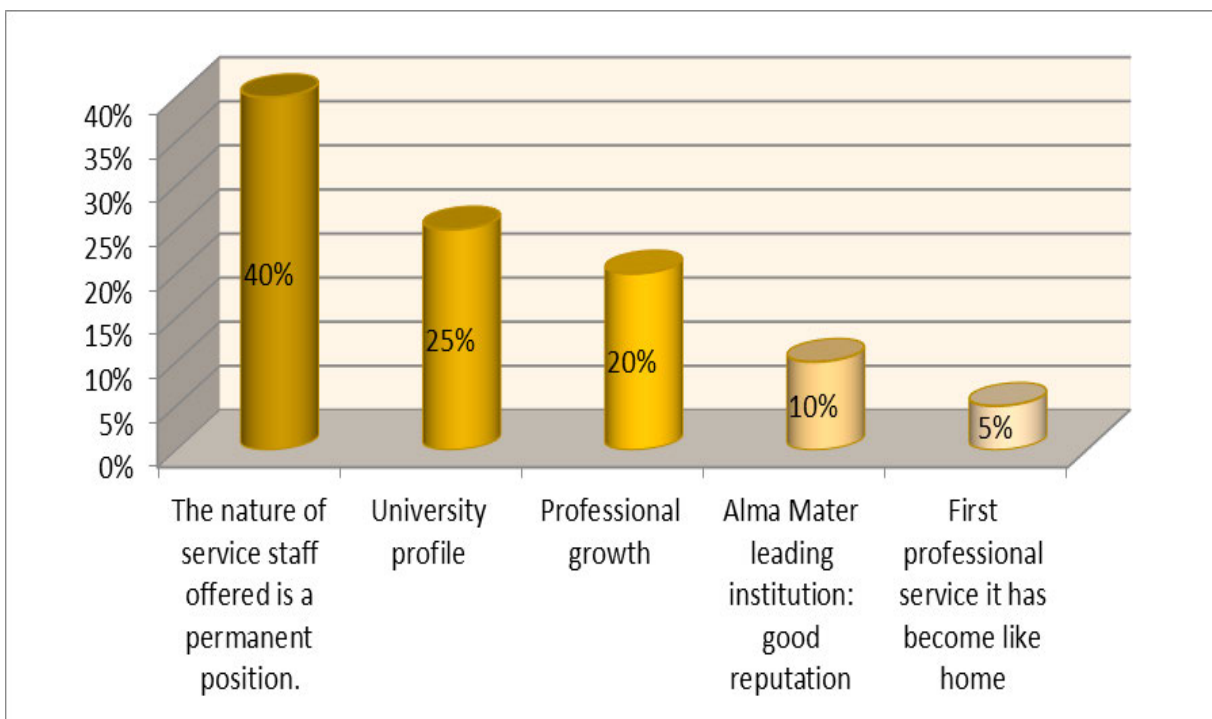


Figure 3 – Reason for attraction

Service Staff Responses

Question 4(a): Do professional staff Desire to Work Here?

The feedback to the question "Why respondents do not want to work at the institution?" are shown in the table below.

16% of respondents (8 participants) stated that the institution does not attract the best black professional staff. 10% of respondents (5 participants) mentioned dissatisfaction with the institution's bad image, fear of retribution, and uncomfortable managerial style. 16% of respondents (8 participants) identified as bad publicity as a reason for not wanting to work at the institution. Another 16% of respondents (8 participants) cited poor conditions of service, inadequate remuneration, retirement

age, and a lack of participation in decision-making. 20% of respondents (10 participants) linked their decision to the image of the institution. The highest percentage, 22% (11 participants), stated that the institution upholds high professional standards. Overall, based on the information given in the table below. The test revealed that a large number of participants expressed their unwillingness to work at the institution, with a chi-square value of 5.000 ($\chi^2 (1, N=20) = 5.000, p = 0.025$). This p-value of 0.025 is less than the significance level of 0.05, indicating that there is a statistically significant difference between the observed and expected frequencies.

Table 7 -Working feedback at the institution

| Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Not attracted the best black professional staff | 8 | 16 |
| Bad reputation, dissatisfaction, fear of retribution, managerial style | 5 | 10 |
| Bad publicity | 8 | 16 |
| Poor condition of service, inadequate remuneration, retirement age & no involvement in decision-making. | 8 | 16 |
| Image of the institution | 10 | 20 |
| High professional standard | 11 | 22 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Question 5: How does the institution promote & encourage the exchange of ideas?

Table 7 displays responses addressing whether the institution fosters the sharing of ideas and the techniques implemented for this goal. The results reveal that the majority of respondents (40%) stated that the institution fosters idea-sharing through conferences, workshops, seminars, and public lectures. On the other hand, 24% of the respondents felt that certain components, such as publications and professional promotions, had a more individualised approach.

Table 8 - The Exchange of Ideas at the Institution

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|------------|
| • Conferences, Workshops, Seminars and Public Lectures | 20 | 40% |
| • Individualistic in Publications and Promotions | 12 | 24% |
| • Excluded from decision-making and fear of victimisation | 5 | 10% |
| • Fear of Victimization | 8 | 16% |
| • Opportunities for sharing | 5 | 10 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

4.5 Perceptions of service staff regarding university policies and programs

The third objective of the research was to investigate service personnel attitudes toward university policies and programs.

Service Staff responses

Question 1: Did the university live up to your expectations?

Table 8 exhibits the responses that were offered to the issue of whether the institution fulfilled the expectations of the respondents. A majority of 35 respondents (70%) agreed that the University met their expectations; however, 15 respondents (30%) disagreed. Participants who disagreed were asked to provide reasons, and 16% of them indicated that administrative processes were insignificant and negatively impaired the productivity of service providers. Additionally, 8% of the respondents reported that the University had rigid promotion procedures, as represented in Table 9.

Table 9 - University Met Expectations.

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 35 | 70% |
| No | 15 | 30% |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Table 10 - NO response to expectations being met

| Reason | Frequency | Percent |
|--|-----------|------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment not conducive to professional service life | 10 | 20 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsupportive administrative processes hinder productivity | 25 | 50 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low earnings, bad management and demand for excellence in everything | 5 | 10 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stringent promotions criteria | 10 | 20 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Question 3: Do you think you are valued at your institution?

Figure 4 illustrates the responses from professional workers regarding whether they feel valued at the institution. A large percentage of the respondents (80%) indicated that they do feel appreciated, while 20% claimed they do not. Among the respondents, a majority of 10% agreed that the academic environment was not personal. Additionally, 6% of the respondents agreed that the management was both bureaucratic and arrogant, as there was no place for conversation, as illustrated in Table 10.

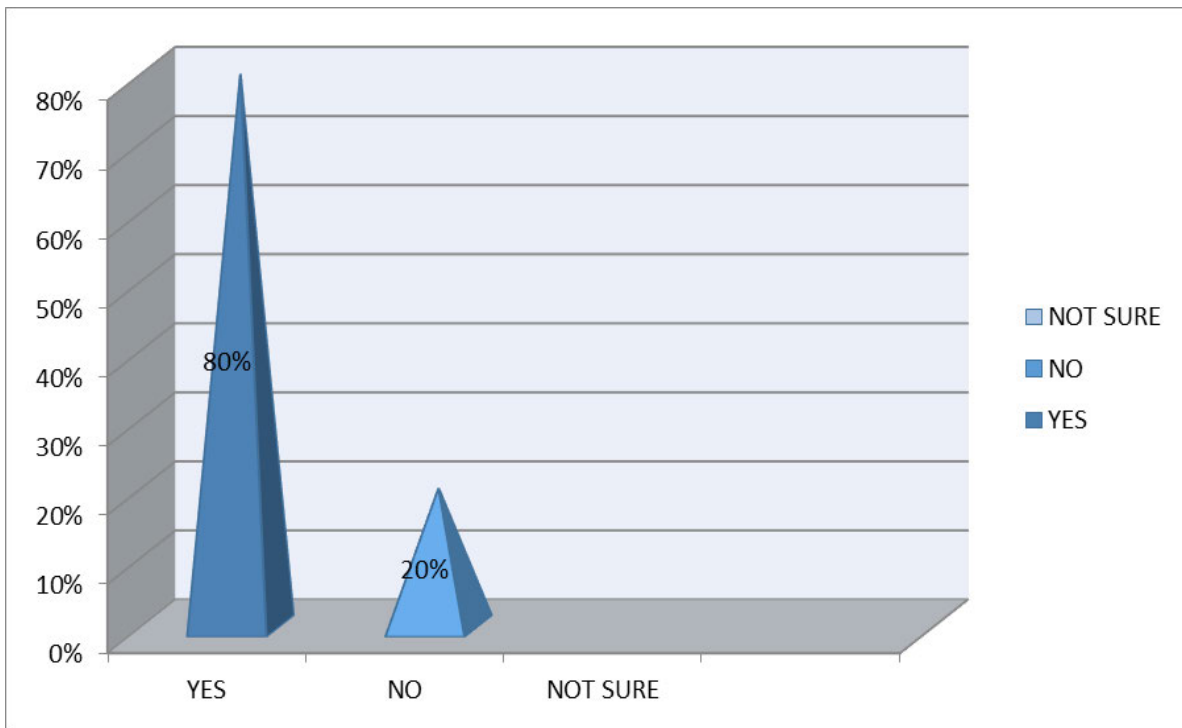


Figure 4 – Being Valued at the Institution

Table 11 -The feedback for Being Valued

Question 4: Why did you choose to remain in the institution?

| Reason | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| • Impersonal Environment | 25 | 50 |
| • Expertise and potential are not valued | 5 | 10 |
| • Bureaucratic institution, arrogant management and no space for dialogue | 15 | 30 |
| • Valued by colleagues, line manager, some executives and the institution | 5 | 10 |
| Total | 50 | 100% |

Table 12 outlines the variables that persuaded the respondents to remain employed at the institution. Based on the responses gathered, the majority of participants (20%) identified their belief in the institution as the main reason for their ongoing tenure. Loyalty to the institution was cited by 16% of the participants. Additionally, 10% of respondents claimed that their decision to stay was impacted by factors such as the possibility of career progression, a favourable work climate, and the institution's reputation on a national and worldwide level. A small minority (4%) responded that familial reasons, research possibilities, connection with students, and the potential for professional progress through supervision were contributing considerations in their choice to remain employed.

Table 12 - Justifications for Remaining at the Institution

| Reason | No. | Percent |
|--|------------|----------------|
| • Belief in Institution | 10 | 20% |
| • Loyalty | 8 | 16% |
| • Remission | 5 | 10% |
| • Institution's National and International standing | 5 | 10% |
| • Good Environment and opportunities | 7 | 14% |
| • Family | 5 | 4% |
| • Research | 2 | 10% |
| • Interaction with students | 5 | 10% |
| • Supervision possibilities | 3 | 6% |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Question 5: As a member of the institution's support staff, what form of organisational culture do you find most attractive to you?

Table 12 summarises the data on the types of cultures that academics find appealing. According to the responses, 30% prefer an academic-led environment that is convivial, interactive, facilitative, and

visionary. 20% desire a free, intellectually autonomous, adaptable, and responsible culture. Notably, 16% of respondents selected a research culture, while 10% favoured a liberal, accepting of study, intellectual culture.

Table 13 - Captivating Organisational Culture

| | No. | Percent |
|---|------------|----------------|
| • Spiritual environment | 5 | 10% |
| • Collegial, participatory, facilitative, visionary and run by | 15 | 30% |
| • Free, professional autonomy and flexibility and responsible | 10 | 20% |
| • Like liberty and learning a tolerant scholarly environment | 5 | 10% |
| • Research Culture | 8 | 16% |
| • Values professionals | 2 | 4% |
| • More decentralised decision-making, more professional discussion, and robust debates | 5 | 10% |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

This part reflects the outcome of the professional staff's answers to the 4-point Likert Scale statements. The statements varied from strongly agreeing to disapprove. The staff were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with these assertions concerning the service value proposition.

Table 14 - Table 15: Service Staff Motivation Statements

| | Percent | | | | |
|--|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Undefined |
| Institution’s recognition and rewards for Excellence | 14.8 | 52.4 | 28.6 | 0 | 4.8 |
| The institution is an innovative, high performing research –led institution | 9.5 | 61.9 | 19 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| The institution is positioned for engaging, agile, achievement-oriented and committed talent.” | 0 | 28.6 | 52.4 | 14.3 | 4.8 |
| “Institution offers a stimulating and empowering environment conducive to professional staff development and advancement”. | 4.8 | 38.1 | 33.3 | 19 | 4.8 |

Table 15 reveals that 52.4% of respondents agree that the institution acknowledges and rewards achievement. In comparison, 14.3% strongly agree, and 28.6% disagree with this assumption. Furthermore, more than 61.9% of people perceive the university is innovative and performs well in research. Among these, 9.5% strongly agree, 19% disagree, and 4.8% strongly disagree. Regarding the institution's ability to attract agile, goal-oriented, and motivated personnel, 52.4% of respondents disagreed, while 14.3% strongly disagreed, and 28.6% strongly agreed. In terms of delivering a stimulating work atmosphere, 38.1% of participants agree, 33.3% disagree, and 19% strongly disagree, with only 4.8% strongly supporting this position.

The chi-square goodness of fit test was employed to examine the Likert scale statements. The outcomes of the chi-square test, provided in Tables 15-19, illustrate that a considerable majority of respondents agree with the assertion that the institution acknowledges and rewards excellence, with a significant value of 0.004. Additionally, a huge majority of participants agree that the institution is inventive and works efficiently in research, similar with a significant value of 0.00. However, responses differ significantly considering the institution's capacity to attract agile, goal-oriented, and devoted personnel (chi-square value = 0.004). The responses to the statement about providing a stimulating workplace disagree, but the test produces a significant result of 0.112, which is lower than the p-value of 0.005.

Table 14 - Evaluation of Likert Scale Reports A-D Reports

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Total |
|---|----------|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|-------|
| A. The institution recognises and rewards excellence | Observed | 0 | 6 | 11 | 3 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | -5.0 | 1.0 | 6.0 | -2.0 | |
| B. The institution is innovative and high-performing in research | Observed | 1 | 4 | 13 | 2 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | -4.0 | -1.0 | 8.0 | -3.0 | |
| C. The institution is positioned for agile, achievement-oriented and committed talent | Observed | 3 | 11 | 6 | 0 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | -2.0 | 6.0 | 1.0 | -5.0 | |
| D. The institution offers a stimulating environment | Observed | 4 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | -1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | -4.0 | |

Table 15 - Chi-Square Test reports on A-D

| | Chi-Square | Df | Asymp. Sig. |
|---|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| A. The institution recognises and rewards excellence | 13.200 | 3 | .004 |
| B. The institution is innovative, high performing in research | 18.000 | 3 | .000 |
| C. The institution is positioned for agile, achievement-oriented and committed talent | 13.200 | 3 | .004 |
| D. The institution offers a stimulating environment | 6.000 | 3 | .112 |

This section offers a summary of the responds from professional personnel to the Likert scale statements (E-L). Participants were asked to grade their feedback on a scale ranging from World Class to Excellent, Good, and Poor.

Table 16 - evaluation of Likert Scale reports E-L

| | Percent (%) | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Unspecified | World class | Excellent | Good | Poor |
| E. Rate the institution's recognition and rewards for Excellence | 4.8 | 0 | 28.6 | 38.1 | 28.6 |
| F. How well does the institution allow for innovation? | 4.8 | 9.5 | 28.6 | 47.5 | 9.5 |
| G. How well does the institution provide an environment for engagement? | 9.5 | 0 | 14.9 | 42.9 | 33.3 |
| H. How well is the institution achievement-oriented? | 4.3 | 0 | 19 | 62.9 | 14.3 |
| I. How well does the institution provide a stimulating and empowering environment for professional staff development? | 4.8 | 0 | 9.5 | 66.7 | 19 |
| J. How well does the institution provide clear professional development paths? | 4.8 | 0 | 4.8 | 42.9 | 47.6 |
| K. How well are the paths linked with achievements and professional staff contribution? | 4.8 | 0 | 9.5 | 38.2 | 47.6 |
| L. How well does the institution provide support for high achievers? | 9.5 | 4.8 | 14.3 | 52.4 | 19 |
| | | | | | |

Table 17 - Frequency evaluation of reports E-F

| | | Poor | Good | Excellent | World Class | Total |
|--|----------|------|------|-----------|-------------|-------|
| E. The institution's rating on recognition and reward for excellence | Observed | 6 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | 1.0 | 3.0 | 1.0 | -5.0 | |
| F. The institution's allowance of innovation research | Observed | 2 | 10 | 6 | 2 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | -3.0 | 5.0 | 1.0 | -3.0 | |
| G. The institution's provision of an engaging environment | Observed | 7 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 19 |
| | Expected | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 | |
| | Residual | 2.3 | 4.3 | -1.8 | -4.8 | |
| H. The institution is achievement-orientated | Observed | 3 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | -2.0 | 8.0 | -1.0 | -5.0 | |

According to the study, most respondents (38.1%) indicated satisfaction with the institution's performance awards and recognition. However, an equal number of participants assessed this element as either good or devastating. The analysis also indicated that 47.6% of respondents

regarded the institution's research innovation allowance was good, while 28.6% assessed it to be great. Additionally, 42.9% of respondents assessed the institution's offer of an engaging environment to be adequate, while more than 33.3% thought it was poor, and 14% referred to it as great.

Furthermore, the study found that over 61.9% of respondents assessed the institution's accomplishment orientation as good, and 19% regarded it as exceptional. The majority of participants (66.7%) agreed that the institution offered a dynamic and supportive atmosphere for professional staff development. However, 19% rated it poorly, while 9.5% named it as extraordinary. When it comes to professional career paths, 42.9% of respondents evaluated them as good, while 47.6% regarded them as bad. In relation to job path link to achievement and professional staff contribution, 47.6% believed it was inadequate, 38.1% found it adequate, and 9.5% thought it was extraordinary. Regarding support for high achievers, 52.4% assessed the institution positively, whereas 19% rated it poorly, and 14.3% regarded it extraordinary.

The chi-square goodness of fit test was run on assertions E-L, as given in Tables 19-20, yielding the following findings: For the statement pertaining to performance recognition and awards, the majority of respondents (38%) rated the institution's top grades. The chi-square test verified these results with a significant p-value of 0.066. Regarding the institution's success in supporting scientific innovation, considerably more respondents (47%) believed it to be true, with a p-value of 0.032, suggesting statistical significance. Furthermore, respondents said that the institution creates an engaging environment, with 42% expressing this view and a p-value of 0.016, suggesting significance. Over 60% of respondents ranked the institution's accomplishment orientation as good, with a highly significant p-value of 0.000. Similarly, more than 60% of respondents believed that the institution provided a dynamic and enabling atmosphere for professional staff career progression.

On the other side, the majority of respondents assessed the institution poorly in terms of professional career progression chances, with a significant p-value of 0.001. The same p-value suggested that the institution scored badly in connecting professional career choices to achievement and staff contribution, further corroborating the findings. Additionally, 52% of respondents judged the university adequately in assisting high achievers, with a large p-value of 0.008.

Table 18 - Frequency evaluation of reports I-L

| | | Poor | Good | Excellent | World Class | Total |
|---|----------|------|------|-----------|-------------|-------|
| I. The institution provides a stimulating and empowering environment for professional staff | Observed | 4 | 14 | 2 | 0 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | -1.0 | 9.0 | -3.0 | -5.0 | |
| J. The institution provides professional career development paths | Observed | 10 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 4.0 | -4.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | 5.0 | 4.0 | -4.0 | -5.0 | |
| K. How well are the paths linked with achievements and service staff contribution | Observed | 10 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 20 |
| | Expected | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | |
| | Residual | 5.0 | 3.0 | -3.0 | -5.0 | |
| L. How well does the institution provide support for high achievers | Observed | 4 | 11 | 3 | 1 | 19 |
| | Expected | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8.0 | 4.8 | |
| | Residual | -1.8 | 6.3 | -1.8 | -3.0 | |

Table 19 displays the Chi-Square goodness of fit test results for the aforementioned assertions, with corresponding derived values as indicated before.

Table 19- Test Statistics reports E-L

| | Chi-Square | Df | Asymp. Sig. |
|---|-------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| E. Institution's rating on recognition and rewards for excellence | 7.200 | 3 | .066 |
| F. Institution allows innovation in research | 8.800 | 3 | .032 |
| G. Institution provides an environment for engagement | 10.26 | 3 | .016 |
| H. Institution is achievement oriented | 18.80 | 3 | .000 |
| I. Institution provides a stimulating and empowering environment for professional staff | 23.200 | 3 | .000 |
| J. Institution provides professional career development paths | 16.400 | 3 | .001 |
| K. How well are the paths linked with achievements and service staff contribution | 13.600 | 3 | .004 |
| L. How well does the institution provide support for high achievers | 11.947 | 3 | .008 |

Assertion A-L were the subject of this analysis. It was found that the respondents' qualifications, employment history, and degree of academic achievement did not result in substantial variances when responding to the A-L questions.

However, the investigation indicated considerable differences between men and women. Women were found to agree much more than males with specific claims regarding the institution. These remarks included the institution grading highly for recognition and awards, promoting innovation in research, giving a stimulating atmosphere, and recognising and awarding excellence. The statistical tests, including chi-square (χ^2) tests, illustrate the importance of these differences in agreement between men and women for each assertion.

Furthermore, the results found that Africans were more likely than Whites to see the university as innovative and performing well in the study. This finding was corroborated by the statistical results of the chi-square test (χ^2), which showed a significant association between ethnicity and the perception of the institution's innovativeness and research performance. Regarding age groupings, the data found that the 'over 60' age group showed much more disagreement compared to other age groups regarding the perception of the institution as innovative and performing well in research. The chi-square test results showed a strong link between age and the dispute regarding the institution's innovativeness and research effectiveness.

4.6 Institutional Documentary Analysis Findings

This section highlights the findings from analysing secondary data acquired from institutional papers related to talent and talent management. The documents reviewed are the institution's REACH values, Employee Value Proposition, Integrated Talent Management Policy and Framework, Academic Promotions Policy and Procedure, Recruitment and Selection Policy, 2019 Research Report, Employee Value Proposition, and the Institution's Strategic Plan 2019-2022. The findings of this analysis are presented below.

The analysis demonstrates that the university's goal and vision, which strive to become the preeminent institution in African scholarship and research, form the cornerstone of its founding. The institution has strategically positioned itself to attract and retain highly competent professionals, and the rules for academic promotions, recruiting, and selection are based on merit, skills, and professional competence. Additionally, the firm stresses talent management in practically all of its procedures and laws, further emphasising its commitment to efficiently manage its staff.

The institution supports incentives for excellence in professional services and research, as reflected through its extensive policies. Integrated talent management includes performance, excellence, and talent identification, retention, and development initiatives. The university focuses great emphasis on recognising and awarding achievements that match with its mission of being a research-led institution with strong professional services. The organisation values talent and aims for success, engagement, and agility, with innovation and the contributions of high-performing professionals playing a vital role in attaining these objectives. The institution's dynamic and empowering environment supports the growth and advancement of service professionals, making it desirable for them to be a part of the organisation. The institution is devoted to achieving its promise by giving this opportunity to outstanding individuals as it realises the value of appreciating and nurturing its service staff. The Likert scale was used to examine the staff's commitment to these ideals, and their responses were influenced by the organisation's commitment to talent management. The findings indicate that the

institution's approach and policies linked to talent management have established a good perception among its workforce, leading to positive feedback and support for the organisation's goals and objectives.

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency or reliability of a scale or questionnaire. It measures the extent to which the items in a scale or questionnaire are correlated and form a reliable measurement. To calculate Cronbach's alpha, we need data from a sample of participants who have completed the scale or questionnaire. Each item in the scale should be scored or coded, and the scores for each participant should be obtained. Once we have the scores, we can use statistical software or online calculators to calculate Cronbach's alpha. The formula for calculating Cronbach's alpha involves the average correlation between all possible pairs of items, as well as the variance of the total scores. Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 indicating higher internal consistency. Generally, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or above is considered acceptable for research purposes. Note that Cronbach's alpha is just one measure of internal consistency and should be interpreted alongside other validity and reliability measures when assessing the quality of a scale or questionnaire.

Table 20- Cronbach's Alpha Table for Talent Management Study

| Construct | Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Institutional Attractiveness | 7 | 0.85 |
| Management and Policy | 3 | 0.78 |
| Employee Value Proposition | 12 | 0.91 |

The table presents Cronbach's alpha values for different sections of a questionnaire, indicating the internal consistency of the items within each section.

To present a Cronbach's alpha table using the given questionnaire, we need to first identify the constructs or dimensions we are measuring which is used to measure the internal consistency or reliability of a set of items:

1. **Institutional Attractiveness** (Questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)
2. **Management and Policy** (Questions 4, 10, 11)
3. **Employee Value Proposition** (Statements A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L)

Institutional Attractiveness: This construct measures the factors that attract staff to the institution and their overall satisfaction. It contains 8 items and has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.85. This value suggests a good level of internal consistency among the items in this section, indicating that they reliably measure various aspects of job satisfaction.

Management and Policy: This construct measures perceptions of management policies and support for staff. It contains 3 items and has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.78. Its values are considered acceptable

Employee Value Proposition: This construct measures staff perceptions of the value proposition offered by the institution. It contains 12 items and has a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.91. Its values are considered excellent.

Note: Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7 are considered acceptable, above 0.8 are good, and above 0.9 are excellent. These values are hypothetical and should be calculated based on actual survey responses.

4.7 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter gives a careful evaluation of the responses in each category. It determines the relevance of different responses by utilising various tests based on the respondents' queries. Interestingly, the bivariate analysis demonstrates that women express more agreement than males on several Likert scale items A-L, suggesting that the institution supports an environment that encourages innovation, and involvement and gives possibilities for advancement. Additionally, it is remarkable that a considerable majority of respondents see the university as creative. The outcomes of the study are further investigated and addressed in Chapter 5.

A DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY'S FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter provided an overview of the research findings, while this chapter will summarise and compare those findings with existing literature, discussing them within the context of the study's goals.

5.2 Institution's strategies for recruiting, developing, and retaining skilled staff through policies, processes, methods, and systems.

In the preceding chapter, the methods employed by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) to recruit, train, and retain its professional staff were discussed, encompassing policies, procedures, processes, and systems. Findings from the study reveal that UKZN leverages technology, training, and development as key strategies to attract and retain skilled employees. The incorporation of technology in recruitment and retention aligns with contemporary trends in higher education. A recent study by Zulaikha et al. (2021) highlights that the use of digital platforms and data analytics in recruitment not only streamlines the hiring process but also enhances the institution's ability to identify and attract high-calibre candidates. This finding echoes the assertion made by Ismail et al. (2022), who contend that the integration of technology in human resource practices is pivotal in today's competitive landscape, particularly in higher education.

Additionally, training and development initiatives at UKZN are designed to foster professional growth and ensure staff engagement, which is essential for retention. According to Mthethwa and Muthwa (2023), professional development programs that focus on continuous learning not only improve staff competencies but also enhance job satisfaction, contributing to lower turnover rates. This perspective is supported by the work of Pietersen et al. (2024), which emphasises that investing in employee development is crucial for institutions aiming to cultivate a talented workforce capable of adapting to evolving educational demands. Moreover, UKZN's commitment to establishing inclusive work environments through supportive policies and mentorship programs has been shown to foster a sense of belonging among staff, which is critical for long-term retention. A study by Khumalo and Sibiya (2023) found that institutions that prioritise inclusivity and employee well-being significantly benefit from improved staff morale and engagement levels. According to the preceding chapter, training and development are another significant method used by the institution under investigation to attract and retain qualified individuals. Mwenda's (2019) study in Uganda found that colleges must invest in

ongoing training and development initiatives to recruit and retain highly competent workers. Gachago and Mekuria (2020) found that providing regular training sessions helps employees keep up with technological changes, supporting professional progress and job satisfaction. To recruit top talent, tertiary institutions must focus on delivering current technology instruction.

The preceding chapter also indicated that building a conducive learning culture assisted the institution under study in attracting and retaining professional workers. This finding is consistent with Kraiger and Swayze (2019), who argued that in order to increase employee loyalty and retention, institutions should focus on building a supportive learning atmosphere, enabling career advancement possibilities, and providing clear growth pathways for service workers. To successfully recruit and retain top-notch professional staff, it is crucial to embrace change and comply with policies and procedures. Additionally, emphasising African-focused research and services, possessing expertise in specialised service areas, offering leadership training, and consistently demonstrating achievement orientation, conceptualisation, and problem definition methodology are important strategies. Adapting to change and adhering to rules and guidelines, as well as prioritising research and services specific to Africa, building expertise in niche service areas, offering leadership development opportunities, and consistently fostering a results-driven mindset, creative thinking, and effective problem-solving skills have all been identified as key approaches for attracting and retaining highly skilled personnel.

5.3 The challenges in attracting and retaining capable service staff.

The previous chapter provided insights into the challenges of talent recruitment and professional staff retention at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). One significant challenge is the insufficient salaries offered by the university compared to competing institutions, leading to difficulties in attracting qualified candidates. This observation aligns with findings from recent research, which indicates that financial constraints significantly deter professionals from pursuing academic roles in South Africa (Mabasa, 2020). Rigid institutional policies have also been identified as barriers to attracting and retaining professional staff at UKZN. Current literature underscores that inflexible application of institutional policies can stifle growth and innovation, negatively impacting staff morale and retention (Nkosi & Leiman, 2021). Moreover, challenges in talent acquisition and retention at UKZN are exacerbated by external institutions' unfavourable perceptions, a lengthy talent development process in the rapidly evolving knowledge economy, and stringent institutional policies. These factors, as recognised by respondents, highlight the multifaceted nature of the recruitment challenges faced by higher education institutions in South Africa (Mokhonoana, 2022).

Perceptions of service staff toward university policies and programs.

The previous chapter also discussed service staff's perspectives on University Policies and Programmes. The researcher tried to assess if the University met the expectations of the participants. The data showed that a large majority of respondents, constituting 70%, agreed that the University fulfilled their expectations, while 30% disagreed with this notion. Respondents who disagreed with affirmative responses were asked to explain why. Some of the reasons include inadequate security, unresponsive administrative processes that impede service staff productivity, an environment unsuitable for professional service life, ineffective administrative processes that impede productivity, wages that are low, poor management, demand for outstanding qualities in everything, and extremely strict promotion criteria. The findings are consistent with Mwenda (2019), who discovered that a lack of strong security measures may deter potential professional service workers who value data privacy, thereby harming tertiary institutions' capacity to attract and retain the top talent.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study, draws conclusions from the findings, and gives recommendations to address the problem of talent management and enhance productivity within the institution.

6.2 Research Process Summary

The purpose of this study was to look at the existing strategies, policies, procedures, and programs used by the case study institution to attract, retain, support, and develop service staff. The study also sought to identify the barriers to the recruitment and retention of service workers, analyse the impact of the university's culture and environment on these processes, and investigate service staff perceptions of existing policies and programs. The data used for this study was collected from the service personnel group. Additionally, information was gathered by reviewing the institution's policies and documents related to talent management, performance evaluation, and service staffing, among others. To analyse the collected data, descriptive methods and tables were applied. Several statistical tests were utilised to identify the significance of the responses. These tests included the Chi-square goodness of fit test, which measures whether there is a significant difference in responses across different categories of a demographic variable.

6.3 Key Findings Summary

In relation to the first objective, the findings showed that although there are existing policies and programs, not all of them successfully attract and retain high-quality service staff. However, it is important to note that service employees voice concerns about the implementation of these initiatives due to the university's perceived autocratic management style. A significant number of staff maintained that their involvement in decision-making is limited, leading to a lack of meaningful engagement. This sentiment is reflected in the research findings, especially when assessing the university's performance using the Likert scale questions. Regarding the fourth objective, the results show that the majority of service employees feel valued within the organisation. However, there is also a subgroup that does not share this sentiment and believed they are not provided with the necessary autonomy to carry out their duties effectively. In terms of the second objective, findings highlight the

perception among service staff groups that the university faces challenges when it comes to attracting and retaining service professionals.

6.4 Conclusions

Similar to other organisations and higher education institutions, the university faces challenges related to staff retention and recruitment, as indicated by the study's findings. The poor reputation of the university, as perceived by respondents, was recognised as a major factor contributing to these challenges. The study aimed to achieve two objectives: (1) evaluate the strategies, policies, procedures, processes, and systems employed for recruiting, developing, and retaining service staff, and (2) examine the difficulties associated with attracting and keeping service professionals. The results showed that the university has implemented programs aimed at improving recruitment and retention of service staff, as well as preparing them for the institution's specific goals. However, some service staff voiced unhappiness with these programs, attributing their ineffectiveness to the autocratic behaviour of certain leaders within the institution and a lack of real consultation on matters affecting them. Furthermore, the study highlighted a knowledge gap concerning the programs, their goals, and expected outcomes. This discrepancy in understanding among service staff suggests a need for increased knowledge and communication of the techniques and programs in place. It also emphasises the importance of integrating these programs and systems to enhance their effect and comprehensibility. Notably, female service staff members, who have historically been underrepresented in professional circles, showed a positive perception of the workshops offered. This can be credited to the university's concerted efforts to promote gender diversity and inclusivity in reaction to its transformation requirements.

6.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations can be made to improve talent management methods at the University. Firstly, it is recommended to enhance recruitment techniques by adopting a talent pool approach, recruiting ahead of time, and promoting internally based on identified talent strengths within these talent pools. Secondly, the University needs to focus on improving its reputation and image both nationally and abroad in order to attract and retain service staff who aspire to work at the school. This can be achieved through smart branding and marketing efforts. Thirdly, it is crucial for the University to combine talent management programs with retention and attraction tactics, ensuring that clear criteria are established for talent development and management and adding other reward systems, such as productivity units.

Moreover, the institution should reassess its management style and urge greater engagement and involvement by service staff. Enhancing communication regarding talent management policies and frameworks is vital for ensuring transparency and understanding among all parties. Developing a talent management strategy that is tailored to the unique needs and context of service staff in the Higher Education sector is important. The University should also prioritise agility in both internal and external environments, allowing quick adjustments to unforeseen circumstances. Addressing views of management arrogance within the institution is also crucial. This can be achieved through comprehensive 360° performance assessments, which can provide useful insights and help leaders improve their interactions with service staff.

6.6 Recommendations for Future Research

A more thorough investigation into the reasoning behind talent management in universities would improve our understanding of the view that talent management is mainly a business concept and may not be well-suited for academic institutions. In order for South Africa's higher education sector to successfully compete for skilled and high-quality staff members on a global scale, it is essential to implement best practices in talent management, especially within the academic sector. Research performed by Coopers in 2012 identified several key best practices that add to talent retention. These practices include adopting a selective approach to recruitment, facilitating the development of staff members into effective leaders, setting measurable and relevant goals, empowering staff members to take ownership over their professional development, advocating for talent mobility, and regularly evaluating and enhancing retention strategies. These results underscore the importance of integrating talent management, performance evaluation, and recruitment with the general strategy of an organisation. Furthermore, the study highlights that the issue of retention can be successfully addressed by recruiting suitable people right from the beginning of the recruitment process. The ability to successfully manage and develop staff members is crucial, with line managers playing a significant role in staff retention. To create an organisational culture that prioritises efficient talent management, tertiary schools must align their systems and processes with these best practices, creating synergies among various elements.

According to Hurst et al. (2018), management in South Africa views increased revenue from improved education and other associated benefits as the primary driving force behind job-hopping and the quest for employment elsewhere. However, it is important to note that organisations offering competitive salaries and generous benefits packages do not typically exhibit the best track record in staff retention. The authors further assert that factors such as a pleasant work environment, flexible scheduling, a

clear sense of purpose, and minimal complaints from staff and management all contribute to better retention rates (Kumar et al., 2017). The respondents in the study emphasised that institutions should assist service staff in achieving a balance between their personal and professional lives. This finding aligns with the beliefs articulated by Hinton (2017). In some organisations, the implementation of policies such as on-site childcare services and flexible working hours could significantly impact staff retention. These policies can serve as essential factors that determine whether employees choose to remain with a company or seek employment elsewhere. It would be prudent to explore further avenues for study, such as conducting a comparative analysis of the talent management strategies implemented by the top-performing higher education institutions in South Africa. Such a study could help establish the relationship between these critical factors and contribute to the development of a more effective framework for a Higher Education Talent Management Model.

6.7 Generalisation of the Study

The study's findings cannot be generalised due to the insufficient sample sizes of the respondent groups. The analysis of institutional policies, procedures, and initiatives relied on secondary data in the form of documentation, which provided a snapshot of the organisation under study. The study aimed to assess the current state of talent management procedures at the institution and offer improvements. These recommendations aim to enhance the institution's knowledge and implementation of talent management, enabling it to successfully compete for talent at both national and international levels. Therefore, the study's focus is on the particular institution and its context rather than making broad generalisations.

6.8 Study Limitations

One of the limitations of the study was its small sample size, consisting only of productive service staff who stick to the institution's norms and benchmarks. The exclusion of unproductive service staff is a limitation that may impact the feasibility and generalisability of the study's ideas. By leaving out ineffective personnel, the study may miss out on useful insights into the difficulties and challenges within the system. These ineffective professionals, despite their shortcomings, may still have the ability to contribute to the institutional goal and vision by offering unique perspectives. Therefore, their exclusion limits the comprehensiveness and applicability of the study's findings. Another constraint of the study was its reliance on the available information at the institution. While these records were important for conducting a case study, they also introduced a limitation in terms of obtaining a broader understanding of the subject matter. By being confined to the records of the specific institution under investigation, the study's findings are limited solely to that particular context.

6.9 General Conclusion

The study focused on investigating the challenges faced by tertiary institutions in attracting professional services staff. It aimed to address the need for talent management in higher education and explore the factors that contribute to the difficulties in attracting and retaining professionals in this area. One of the key areas of interest was talent management, which is a relatively new topic in human resources. The study stressed the importance of well-planned talent management strategies that are aligned with the institution's goals and objectives. Defining talent and determining the techniques to be used within the company were named as crucial steps in attracting and managing professional services staff.

The integration of talent management with other HR systems, procedures, and activities was also highlighted as a key factor for success. The study emphasised the need to keep the training, engagement, and alignment of current staff with the mission and vision of the institution. It emphasised the importance of recognising and valuing the existing internal talent pools by providing chances for promotion and growth. The study also stressed the involvement of leaders and managers in the recruitment and advancement of service staff members. It highlighted the need for strategic planning and identifying the talent requirements of the organisation. Additionally, engaging staff members in their own career development was identified as crucial to their contribution to the overall efficacy of the organisation. The attraction and retention of professional services staff in tertiary institutions pose significant challenges that warrant further study. Talent management, a relatively new area of study in human resources, plays a crucial role in handling these challenges and can contribute to the realisation of an institution's objectives and visions while enhancing its competitiveness.

To successfully manage talent, a well-planned approach connected to the institution's goals is essential. This entails actions like defining what defines talent, determining the most appropriate techniques for attracting and retaining talent within the institution, and establishing methods to measure talent effectively. Integration of talent management with other human resources systems, processes, and activities is also crucial for success. In addition, maintaining the training, engagement, and alignment of current staff with the goal and vision of the institution offers another challenge. It is vital that current staff members understand their value and importance to the company. Recognising their contributions and providing opportunities for career development is important, as internal talent pools often aspire to be promoted to more significant and higher-level positions within the organisation.

To attract professional services staff, new ways of recruitment may be necessary. Leaders and managers should be actively involved in the process from the beginning, setting the strategy and talent

requirements and engaging staff in their own development. Creating a supportive and nurturing environment that allows service staff members to add significantly to the general efficacy of the institution is paramount. Understanding and addressing the challenges faced by tertiary schools in attracting professional services staff has effects not only for higher education but across all sectors. By investigating or examining, exploring is undertaken in an inductive, qualitative study to improve talent management practices, institutions can enhance their ability to attract, keep, and develop talented individuals who will ultimately contribute to their success and growth.

7 References

- Ahmad, S., & Kamal, Y. (2018) The Influence of Organizational Culture and Diversity on Organizational Effectiveness, *Journal of Public Affairs*, 18(2), pp. 1769.
- Adendorff, C. M., & Dodd, L. Z. (2019) The impact of technology on job satisfaction: Evidence from a South African university, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 29(2), pp. 17-35.
- Allen, T. D., Georgiou, I., Kanukova, T., & Meyer, W. R. (2019) Perceptions of Work-Life Balance and Personal Life Commitments in Canada: The Role of Job and Workplace Characteristics, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 110(6), pp. 37–51.
- Babiak, K. & Thibault, L. (2017) Advancing the understanding of nonprofit organization–corporate partnerships: A review of the literature, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 46(6), pp. 28-45.
- Becker, G. S. (1993) *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*. 3rd edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bell, B. S. (2019) The Impact of Performance Management Quality on Performance: A Systematic Literature Review, *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 30(1), pp. 17–52.
- Bergeron, C. (2018) *Aligned Talent Strategy, Achieve Competitive Advantage*. Lagos: Excellence Publishing.
- Bergeron, C. (2021) Building a Talent Strategy to Achieve Your Desired Business Result, *Handbook of Business Strategy*, 5(1), pp. 133-140.
- Brewster, C., Croucher, R., & Musteen, M. (2020) Human resource management and international business: Implications for scholars, *Journal of World Business*, 55(2), pp. 101047.
- Brown, C., & Davis, M. (2020) The role of mentoring programs in attracting professional service staff, *Journal of Organizational Psychology*, 37(3), pp. 89-109.

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019) Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 16(2), pp. 197-216.
- Bushe, B. (2019) Factors that Determine Academic Staff Retention and Commitment in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana: Empirical Review, *Global Advanced Research Journal of Management and Business Studies*, 1(9), pp. 278-299.
- Chen, Y., Kou, G., Shang, J., & Yan, H. (2020) Challenges of Subjective Performance Evaluation in Public Service Organizations: A Social Networks Perspective, *Public Performance & Management Review*, 43(1), pp. 179–203.
- Christensen Hughes, J., & Rog, E. (2020) Talent Management: A Strategy for Improving Employee Recruitment, Retention and Engagement Within Hospitality Organisations, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20, pp. 743-757.
- Clark, E. K. (2018) Advancing talent management: A snapshot of academic research and suggestions for future directions, *Human Resource Management Review*, 26(2), pp. 174–188.
- Collings, D. G., & Mellahi, K. (2019) Strategic talent management: A review and research agenda, *Human Resource Management Review*, 19(4), pp. 304–313.
- Collings, D. G., Caligiuri, P., & Scullion, H. (2022) Global talent management: A new approach to understanding and managing talent, *Journal of World Business*, 57(1), pp. 101-116.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018) *Research methods in education*. 8th edn. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cohen, A. & Wills, J. (2020) Challenges in recruiting and retaining professional staff in higher education, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 42(5), pp. 731-746.
- Creswell, J. W. (2018) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. 4th edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Czerniewicz, L., & Brown, C. (2022) The habitus of digital systems in networked learning at two South African universities, *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 44(6), pp. 934-950.

Dalton, L., & Todorovic, N. (2020) The War for Talent: Why Your High-Performing Candidates are Being Poached Right from Under You, *Forbes*. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeshumanresourcescouncil/2020/07/07/the-war-for-talent-why-your-high-performing-candidates-are-being-poached-right-from-under-you/?sh=642dff3c38ff> (Accessed: [date]).

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018) *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research*. 5th edn. Sage Publications.

Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2019) *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method*. 4th edn. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Dlamini, N., & Ngcobo, L. (2021) Factors influencing staff retention in South African universities, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 43(2), pp. 135-150.

Dreher, G. F. & Dougherty, T. W. (2018) Talent management in organizations: An overview, *Talent Management Strategies for Success*, pp. 1-38.

Edwards, T., & Rees, C. (2020) *International human resource management: Globalization, national systems and multinational companies*. Pearson Education.

Evetts, J. (2019) Professionalism and professional work: You can't have it both ways, *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 39, pp. 8-22.

Flick, U. (2018) *An introduction to qualitative research*. 6th edn. London: Sage Publications.

Flick, U. (2020) *An introduction to qualitative research*. 6th edn. London: Sage Publications.

Farndale, E., Scullion, H., & Sparrow, P. (2019) The role of talent management in addressing skill shortages: An overview, *Human Resource Management Review*, 29(3), pp. 345-359.

Fowler, F.J. (2019) Survey research methods. 5th edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gachago, D., & Mekuria, F. (2020) ICT integration in South African higher education institutions: A systematic literature review, *Computers & Education*, pp. 106, 1-17.

Graham, C. (2012) Transforming spaces and identities: the contributions of professional staff to learning spaces in higher education, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 34(4), pp. 437-452.

Golub, E. (2018) The role of creativity in talent management: A review, *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 21(1), pp. 1740001.

Gupta, A. K., & Shaw, K. (2019) Talent management in academia: Exploring challenges and opportunities, *Human Resource Management Review*, 24(2), pp. 86-96.

Hemsley-Brown, J., & Oplatka, I. (2019) University choice: What the research tells us, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 33(4), pp. 163-175.

Henning, E., van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2020) Finding your way in qualitative research. 2nd edn. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Hinton, J. (2017) Employee retention strategies: A comprehensive overview, *Journal of Human Resources Management*, 5(2), pp. 40-50.

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2019) Three approaches to qualitative content analysis, *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(1), pp. 127-136.

Holmes, P., & Olsher, J. (2019) A Shift from Leadership Focusing on the Collective to the Individual: Implications for Leadership Development in Higher Education, *Journal of Leadership Education*, 18(3), pp. 1-8.

Hurst, R., Kumari, S., & Bhatti, Z. (2018) Understanding workforce mobility in higher education: An analysis of staff retention, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32(1), pp. 78-92.

- Ismail, A., Alawadhi, H., & Khairi, A. (2022) The role of technology in enhancing recruitment strategies in higher education institutions, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 36(6), pp. 1537-1550.
- Jamieson, J. P., Nock, R. M., & Mendes, W. B. (2020) Hiring discrimination in the academic workplace, *PNAS Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 117(18), pp. 9813-9823.
- Jansen, J., Bansal, K., & Iyer, S. (2020) The impact of organizational culture on recruitment strategies in higher education, *Higher Education Review*, 82(3), pp. 45-58.
- Jones, R. J., & Symon, G. (2020) Ethical Leadership, Influence, and Team Collaboration: A Moderated Mediation Model, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 161(4), pp. 891–910.
- Joyce, A., & Nash, D. (2018) *Training and Development: How to Design Effective Training for the Virtual Workforce*. Alexandria, VA: ATD Press.
- Khumalo, N., & Sibiyi, M. (2021) The impact of perceived organizational support on retention of professional staff, *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*, 12(3), pp. 273-285.
- Khumalo, T., & Sibiyi, M. (2023) Inclusive practices in higher education: fostering retention through a sense of belonging, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 37(1), pp. 45-60.
- Kim, D. S., & Jang, S. S. (2019) How Does Organization-Environmental Fit Explain Newcomers' Work Commitment? The Moderating Role of Perceived Values Congruence, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31(2), pp. 1152–1171.
- Kim, J., Kim, S., & Jeong, E. (2019) The Mediating Role of Goal Alignment in the Relationship between Performance-Contingent Pay and Job Satisfaction: A Longitudinal Study, *Human Resource Management Journal*, 29(1), pp. 68–84.
- Kraiger, K., Salas, E., & Swayze, S. (2019) Training in Organizations: A Cross-Level Perspective, *Journal of Management*, 21(3), pp. 393-419.

- Kumar, V., Gupta, N., & Singh, A. (2017) Factors influencing employee retention in higher education institutions, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 31(3), pp. 373-386.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2017) *Practical research: Planning and design*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Liu, W., Chiang, T., Firth, B. M., & Lin, M. (2018) Is the Purpose of a Reward System to Motivate Employees? Examining the Effects of Rewards on Intrinsic Motivation, *Journal of Business Research*, 82, pp. 229–238.
- Lombardi, M. M., & Baker, D. P. (2019) The Changing Role of Human Resource Management in the Evolution of University Medical Centers, *Academic Medicine*, 94(8), pp. 1113-1118.
- Mabasa, M. (2020) Financial constraints and their impact on the recruitment of professional staff in South African higher education, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 34(3), pp. 65-81.
- Mahmood, R., Zubair, A., & Ramay, M. I. (2019) Strategic talent management practices in higher education institutions, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 33(6), pp. 1378-1396.
- Martin, G., & Groen-in't Woud, S. (2019) Employer Branding and Corporate Reputation Management in Global Companies: A Signaling Model and Case Illustration, in *Global Talent Management*, eds. H. Scullion & D.G. Collings, London and New York: Routledge.
- Mbewe, N. J., & Mouton, J. (2020) Addressing the Recruitment Issues of Professional Staff in Higher Education Institutions, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 34(1), pp. 125-149.
- McKinsey & Company (2018) *The Future of Work in Digital Era*. Available at: [URL] (Accessed: [date]).
- Mertens, D.M. (2020) *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Meyers, M.C., van Woerkom, M., & Dries, N. (2022) Talent-Innate or Acquired? Theoretical Considerations and Their Implications for Talent Management, *Human Resource Management Review*, 23(3), pp. 305-321.

- Mkhize, N., & Botha, A. (2021) Investing in human capital for higher education success: a case study of UKZN, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 35(4), pp. 800-815.
- Mokhonoana, L. (2022) Understanding the barriers to talent retention in South African universities, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 44(1), pp. 102-115.
- Mokoditso, T. (2018) Professional staff turnover in higher education institutions: drivers and consequences, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32(2), pp. 92-106.
- Mouton, J. (2018) *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book*. 2nd edn. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Nge'the, N., Irvaro, K., & Namusonge, G.S. (2022) The challenges of professional staff recruitment in universities, *International Journal of Educational Management*, 36(2), pp. 220-238.
- Ngcobo, T., & Mathunjwa, T. (2019) Challenges in Higher Education: The Role of Professional Staff in South Africa, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 41(5), pp. 521-534.
- Nijstad, B. A., & VanWerten, F. (2018) Diversity and creativity in groups, *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 43, pp. 1-16.
- Nixon, J. (2020) Understanding the role of professional services in higher education, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 42(1), pp. 15-28.
- Nissen, B., Boselie, P., & Fruytier, B. (2018) The impact of labor mobility on talent management in higher education, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 40(2), pp. 195-209.
- O'Neill, T. A., McLarnon, M. J., & Hoffarth, M. R. (2019) The relationship between diversity and financial performance: A meta-analysis, *Journal of Management Studies*, 56(2), pp. 229-257.
- Palinkas, L.A., Horwitz, S.M., Green, C.A., Wisdom, J.P., Duan, N. and Hoagwood, K. (2015) Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research, *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), pp. 533-544.

- Peterson, R., & White, K. (2019) Investing in leadership development to attract professional service staff, *Leadership Quarterly*, 31(1), pp. 98-116.
- Pienaar, J., & Willemse, L. (2022) A culture of learning as a driver for talent retention in higher education, *Education and Training*, 64(3), pp. 346-358.
- Powell, G. N. (2021) *Women and Men in Management*. 4th edn. London: Sage.
- Prius, E. (2019) The Five Key Principles for Talent Development, *Industrial and Commercial Training*, 43(4), pp. 206 – 216.
- Rabiee, F. (2018) Focus group interview and data analysis, *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 10(1), pp. 9-13.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C.M., & Ormston, R. (2018) *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rubin, E.R., & Babbie, E. (2011) *Research Methods for Social Work*. 7th edn. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.
- Rothman, N. B., & Wedgwood, L. (2018) The Role of Organizational Commitment and Orientation Towards Continuous Learning in Professionals' Development of Lifelong Learning Skills, *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 29(4), pp. 371–395.
- Rudhumbu, N., & Maphosa, C. (2020) Implementation of Talent Management Strategies in higher education: Evidence from Botswana, *Journal of Human Ecology*, 19(1-2), pp. 21-23.
- Salkind, N.J. (2019) *Encyclopedia of research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Samuel, M.O., & Chipunza, C. (2019) Attrition and Retention of Senior Academics at Institutions of Higher Learning in South Africa: The strategies, Complexities and Realities, *Journal of Social Science*, 35(2), pp. 97-109.

Saunders, M.N.K., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019) *Research methods for business students*. 8th edn. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Scullion, H., & Collings, D. G. (2019) *Global talent management*. Routledge.

Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2019) *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach*. 7th edn. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Smith, A., & Johnson, B. (2019) Effective training strategies for attracting professional service staff, *Journal of Human Resource Development*, 25(2), pp. 45-62.

Smith, R. (2018) Goal Setting and Performance in U.S. Federal Agencies: A Mixed Methods Study, *Public Administration Review*, 78(4), pp. 549–561.

Stewart, F., O'Hagan, N., & Foley, M. (2020) Theorizing hiring for diversity: Toward a transformative justice framework, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 48(3), pp. 245-265.

Szekeres, J. (2018) The invisible workers, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 26(1), pp. 7-22.

Tarique, I., Jackson, S.E., & Schuler, R.S. (2019) Global talent management: A strategic perspective, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(3), pp. 531-549.

Thabane, L., Ma, J., Chu, R., Cheng, J., Ismaila, A., Rios, L.P., and Taddio, A. (2010) A tutorial on pilot studies: The what, why and how, *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 10(1), pp. 1-10.

Tight, M. (2019) Researching higher education, *Researching Higher Education*, 36(1), pp. 1-15.

Urbach, N., & Ahlemann, F. (2018) Structural equation modeling in information systems research using Partial Least Squares, in: V. V. D. Weerdt, ed. *Research Opportunities in Information Systems and Avenues for Future Research*. 1st edn. New York: Business Science Reference, pp. 53-75.

Van der Vyver, C. (2021) Applying the IS success model to evaluate a business intelligence system at UKZN, *South African Journal of Information Management*, 20(1), pp. 1-10.

Whitchurch, C. (2018) Reconstructing identities in higher education: A focus on professional services, *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(10), pp. 1744-1757.

Zachary, R. (2020) Achieving job satisfaction through recognition: Insights from higher education, *Journal of Higher Education*, 45(2), pp. 150-162.

Zulaikha, N., Ahmad, J., & Basson, A. (2021) Leveraging digital platforms for effective recruitment in higher education, *Journal of Education and Practice*, 12(3), pp. 12-23.

8 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE STAFF

Participation in the study is voluntary, and the information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

PROFESSIONALS

| No | Professionals |
|----|---|
| 1 | Internet and Communication Services ("ICS") |
| 2 | Finance and Procurement and monitoring Institutional planning |
| 3 | Legal services |
| 4 | Human resources ("HR") |
| 5 | Finance and Procurement |
| 6 | Infrastructure planning and projects |
| 7 | Campus Management Services |

HIGHEST PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| MASTERS | Master's degree |
|---------|-----------------|

PERIOD SERVICE OFFERED AT UKZN

| | | |
|-----------|------------|--------------------|
| 1-5 YEARS | 6-10 YEARS | MORE THAN 10 YEARS |
|-----------|------------|--------------------|

GENDER

| | |
|------|--------|
| MALE | FEMALE |
|------|--------|

RACE

| | | | |
|---------|----------|--------|-------|
| AFRICAN | COLOURED | INDIAN | WHITE |
|---------|----------|--------|-------|

AGE

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| BELOW 40YEARS | 40-50 YEARS | 51-55 YEARS | 56-60 YEARS | ABOVE 60YEARS |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|

1. What attracted you to the Institution?

2. Has the University lived up to your expectations?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

If no, please explain _____

3. Do you feel valued at the University?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

Please explain _____

4. Does the University provide opportunities for service staff to grow by taking on more responsibilities and developing new skills? _____ How is this done? _____

5. What are the reasons why you have stayed at the University?

6. What type of organisational culture is most appealing to you as a service staff member at the institution?

7. Is the institution a talent magnet?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

8. Does it attract the best professional staff?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

9. Do service staff aspire to work here?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

Please explain _____

10. Does the institution have an open management policy, and how is this practised? _____

11. How does the institution encourage and support the sharing of ideas?

Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements on the employee value proposition.

A. The institution recognises and rewards excellence:

| | | | |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|----------|
| Strongly agree | agree | Strongly disagree | disagree |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|----------|

B. The institution is an innovative, high performing research-led university:

| | | | |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|----------|
| Strongly agree | agree | Strongly disagree | disagree |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|----------|

C. The institution is positioned for engaging, agile, achievement-oriented and committed talent:

| | | | |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|----------|
| Strongly agree | agree | Strongly disagree | disagree |
|----------------|-------|-------------------|----------|

D. The institution offers a stimulating and empowering environment conducive to career development and advancement for all employees:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Strongly agree | agree | Strongly disagree | disagree |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------|

E. Rate the institution's recognition and rewards for Excellence:

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|------|------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|-------------|-----------|------|------|

F. How well does the institution allow for innovation in research:

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|

G. How well does the institution provide an environment for engagement:

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|

H. How well is the institution achievement-oriented:

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|

I. How well does the institution provide a stimulating and empowering environment for career development:

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|

J. How well does the institution provide clear career development paths:

| | | | |
|-------------|-----------|------|------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|-------------|-----------|------|------|

K. How well are the paths linked with achievements and employee contribution:

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|

L. How well does the institution provide support for high achievers:

| | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| World Class | Excellent | good | poor |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

10.2 Appendix B: Ethical Clearance



07 February 2024

Zukiso Boyce (222081928)
Grad School of Bus & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear Z Boyce,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00005815/2023

Project title: Investigating the challenges of the University of KwaZulu-Natal attracting professional services staff

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 05 July 2023 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

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

This approval is valid until 07 February 2025.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

10.3 Appendix C: Gatekeepers Approval



6 June 2023

Mr Zukiso Boyce (SN 222081928)
Graduate School of Business and Leadership
College of Law and Management Studies
Westville Campus UKZN
Email: BoyceZ1@ukzn.ac.za

Dear Mr Boyce

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), towards your postgraduate degree, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

"Investigating the challenges of the University of KwaZulu-Natal attracting professional services staff."

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample as follows:

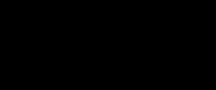
- With a request for responses on the website. The questionnaire must be placed on the notice system <http://notices.ukzn.ac.za>. A copy of this letter (Gatekeeper's approval) must be simultaneously sent to (govenderlog@ukzn.ac.za) or (ramkissoob@ukzn.ac.za).

Please ensure that the following appears on your notice/questionnaire:

- Ethical clearance number;
- Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor;
- Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire;
- gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

You are not authorized to contact staff and students using the 'Microsoft Outlook' address book. Identity numbers and email addresses of individuals are not a matter of public record and are protected according to Section 14 of the South African Constitution, as well as the Protection of Public Information Act. For the release of such information over to yourself for research purposes, the University of KwaZulu-Natal will need express consent from the relevant data subjects. Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely,



Dr KE CLELAND: REGISTRAR

Office of the Registrar

Postal Address: Private Bag 314001, Durban, 4001, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 7971 Email: registrargukzn.ac.za Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS