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**The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and the elite professionals in
Zimbabwe**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT**

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Year: October 2023

DECLARATION

I, Martha Mapuranga, declare that:

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- (ii) This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
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DEDICATION

To my mother and my late father, Diana and Elimon, respectively.

To my siblings, Rabison, Jeremiah, Rumbidzai, Tendai, Enoch and Reuben.

To my best friend, Farai Maunganidze.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish how a precarious socio-economic environment has reconfigured the status of elite professionals from a human resource management perspective in Zimbabwe. There is dearth of empirical studies in human resource management on the effects of the reconfigured middle class and elite professionals in the Global South particularly in Southern Africa. Focus was on three elite professions, namely the medical, legal and the academic. Qualitative research was employed in this study. Fifteen purposively sampled participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview. Observations and documents were also used to strengthen the data from interviews. Data from interviews was analyzed through phenomenological analysis, while content analysis was used for documents. Data analysis was also aided by QSR also known as NVIVO, a qualitative data analysis software. Findings revealed that elite professionals feel a sense of disequilibrium in their salaries and income. This is due to the fact that they are now comparing themselves with other occupations in lower categories within their country as well as professionals in the same category but beyond their borders. This therefore causes high outmigration of elite professionals with remaining professionals resorting to other strategies of augmenting/supplementing their meagre salaries. These include less engagement in training and development programs, career planning and progression as well as job satisfaction and job engagement level. It was also revealed that financial rewards are not hygiene factors but motivational factors when it comes to unstable economic environment like the current situation in Zimbabwe. This was evidenced by findings, which indicated that elite professionals are engaging in unorthodox means to supplement their salaries. Therefore, responsible entities dealing with professionals should restructure their reward policies to suite elite professionals so as to improve their job satisfaction, job engagement as well as development programs since these professionals offer their expertise that improves the performance of the country. It was concluded that, there is no universal definition of middle class as elite professionals no longer hold the middle class characteristics like other elite fields globally.

Key words: elite professionals, human resource management, middle class, precariat, Zimbabwe.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
List of figures.....	xii
List of tables.....	xiii
List of Abbreviations	xiv
Glossary	xv
Chapter 1 Background and its setting: The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and elite professionals in Zimbabwe	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the study	1
1.3 Justification for the study	3
1.4 Research Problem.....	5
1.5 Arguments of the thesis.....	6
1.6 Aim of the study.....	8
1.6.1 Research Objectives	8
1.7 Research Questions	8
1.8 Contribution of the study	9
1.8.1 Empirical contribution.....	9
1.8.2 Methodological contribution	10
1.8.3 Theoretical contribution	11
1.9 Delimitations of the study	11
1.10 Limitations of the study	11
1.11 Chapter Summary.....	12
Chapter 2 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework: Elite Professionals and Middle Class	13
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 The economic history and the emergence of new precarious environment in Zimbabwe	13
2.3 Theoretical framework	15
2.3.1 Equity Theory.....	15

2.3.1.1	The concept of Equity theory from the Zimbabwean perspective.	16
2.3.2	Two-Factor Theory by Fredrick Herzberg	19
2.3.2.1	The applicability of the two-factor theory in the Zimbabwean setup...19	
2.3.3	Neoclassical approach to international migration	20
2.4	Conceptual Framework	21
2.4.1	Training and Development as it relates to compromised middle class	23
2.4.2	Career planning and progression as it relates to the compromised middle class.....	23
2.4.3	Job satisfaction and compromised middle class.....	24
2.4.4	The compromised middle class and job engagement	25
2.5	Migration/attrition of elite professions in Zimbabwe	25
2.5.1	Brain drain of Academic lecturers in Zimbabwe	27
2.5.2	Health profession and brain drain in Zimbabwe	29
2.6	Global middle-class characteristics	30
2.6.1	High income and purchasing parity.....	32
2.6.2	Consumerism/willingness to pay extra for quality	33
2.6.3	Control in Economic and political status of a country	33
2.6.4	High Social Status	34
2.7	Chapter summary	34
Chapter 3 Middle class and elite professions in relation to Human Resource Management		
3.1	Introduction	35
3.2	The concept of middle class in Zimbabwe.....	35
3.3	The concept of Elite Professions and middle class in Zimbabwe.....	39
3.4	Career planning and progression of elite professions in Zimbabwe.....	41
3.4.1	Career planning and progression in the academic profession	41
3.4.2	Career planning and progression in the medical profession.....	43
3.4.3	Career planning and progression of the legal profession	44
3.5	Training and development of elite professions	44
3.5.1	Training and development in the academic profession	44
3.5.2	Training and development in the health profession	46
3.5.3	Training and development in the legal profession	47
3.6	Job satisfaction of elite professionals.....	47
3.6.1	Job satisfaction in the academic profession.....	48
3.6.2	Job satisfaction in the health profession.....	50

3.6.3 Job satisfaction in the legal profession.....	52
3.7 Job engagement and elite professionals	53
3.7.1 Job engagement in academics	54
3.7.2 Job engagement in the health profession.....	54
3.7.3 Job engagement of the legal profession.....	56
3.8 Chapter summary	57
Chapter 4 Research methodology	58
4.1 Introduction	58
4.2 Aim of the research study and specific objectives	58
4.3 Research Approach	58
4.4 Research Paradigm.....	61
4.5 Research Design.....	63
4.6 Study population	65
4.7 Sampling Technique.....	65
4.8 Sample Size.....	66
4.9 Data Collection.....	67
4.9.1 Primary data collection.....	68
4.9.1.1 Semi-structured interviews	68
4.9.1.2 Observation.....	72
4.9.2 Documentary analysis	73
4.9.2.1 Newspapers.....	74
4.9.2.2 Diaries.....	75
4.9.2.3 Organisational websites	76
4.9.3 Justification for using documentary analysis in this research	77
4.10 Analysis of data.....	77
4.10.1 Phenomenological analysis	77
4.10.2 Content analysis.....	79
4.11 Presentation of data	80
4.12 Trustworthiness of the research	80
4.12.1 Credibility.....	81
4.12.2 Transferability	82
4.12.3 Dependability	82
4.12.4 Confirmability	83
4.13 Pilot Study.....	83

4.14 Data collection procedure	84
4.15 Ethical considerations	86
4.16 Chapter summary	86
Chapter 5 Data presentation: Professional development of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	88
5.1 Introduction	88
5.2 Biographical characteristics of participants	88
5.3 Overview of data presentation	93
5.4 Biographical related data and Class mobility.....	94
5.5 Career planning and progression of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	96
5.5.1 Career planning and progression of Academic lecturers.....	96
5.5.1.1 Career planning and progression of lecturers at an individual level	96
5.5.1.2 Career planning and progression of academic lecturers at organisational level	99
5.5.2 Career Planning and Progression in the Legal Profession.....	102
5.5.3: Career planning and progression in the medical profession.....	104
5.6 Section summary	105
5.7 Training and development in elite professions in Zimbabwe	106
5.7.1 Training and development in the academic profession	107
5.7.2 Training and development in the legal profession	109
5.7.3 Training and development in the medical profession.....	111
5.8 Comment on the training and development of elite professionals	113
5.9 Chapter summary	115
Chapter 6 Data presentation: Job satisfaction, job engagement and coping mechanisms of elite professionals in Zimbabwe.....	116
6.1 Introduction	116
6.2 The impact of the precarious environment on job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	116
6.2.1 Academic lecturers and Job satisfaction in Zimbabwe	116
6.2.2 Lawyers and job satisfaction in a precarious environment.....	122
6.2.3 Medical doctors and job satisfaction in a precarious environment.....	127
6.2.4 Section summary	130
6.3 Job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe.....	132
6.3.1 Academic professionals and job engagement	132
6.2.2 Job engagement of medical doctors in a precarious environment.....	134

6.2.3 Legal practitioners and job engagement in Zimbabwe.....	137
6.2.4 Section Summary.....	138
6.3 Coping strategies of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	140
6.3.1 Coping strategies for academic professionals in a precarious environment	140
6.3.1.1 Formal mechanisms of survival by Academic professionals	140
6.3.1.2 Unprofessional/unorthodox means of survival by academic professionals.....	141
6.3.2 Coping strategies for the legal profession in a precarious environment	143
6.3.3 Coping mechanisms by medical doctors	147
6.3.3.1 Professional coping mechanisms by medical professionals	147
6.3.3.2 Unlawful coping mechanisms by medical doctors in Zimbabwe.....	149
6.4 Section Summary	152
6.5 Cross-cutting aspects.....	154
6.5.1 The impact of economic effects on salaries and migration	154
6.5.2 Comparison between professional dignity/autonomy and job satisfaction	158
6.5.3 The interlinkage between middle class and job engagement in a precarious environment	160
6.6 Chapter summary	163
Chapter 7 Discussion of findings: Professional development of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	165
7.1 Introduction	165
7.2 Overview	165
7.3 Reconfigured middle class of elite professions in Zimbabwe.....	165
7.4 The impact of the redefined middle class on career planning and progression .	167
7.4.1 Redefined middle class and career planning and progression in academics	167
7.4.2 The impact of the redefined middle class on career progression of medical profession in Zimbabwe.....	171
7.4.3 Career progression of the legal profession in Zimbabwe.....	172
7.5 The impact of the precarious environment on Training and development of elite professionals	173
7.5.1 The impact of the precarious environment on the training and development of academic professions	174
7.5.2 The impact of the precarious environment on the training and development of medical professionals in Zimbabwe	175

7.5.3 Effects of the precarious environment on training and development of legal professionals.....	177
7.6 Chapter summary	178
Chapter 8 Discussion of findings: Job satisfaction, job engagement and coping mechanisms of elite professionals in Zimbabwe.....	179
8.1 Introduction	179
8.2 The impact of the precarious environment on job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	179
8.2.1 Academic professions and job satisfaction in Zimbabwe	179
8.2.2 Legal professions and job satisfaction in Zimbabwe	182
8.2.3 Medical professions and job satisfaction in Zimbabwe	185
8.3 The impact of the precarious environment on job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	187
8.3.1 Job engagement and academic professions in Zimbabwe	187
8.3.2 Job engagement of Medical professionals in Zimbabwe	189
8.3.3 Job engagement of legal professionals in Zimbabwe.....	191
8.4 Coping strategies of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	192
8.4.1 Coping mechanism used by academic lecturers in Zimbabwe.....	192
8.4.1.1 Professional/Formal mechanisms	192
8.4.1.2 Unorthodox/informal means of survival.....	193
8.4.2 Coping mechanisms employed by the medical professionals in Zimbabwe.....	194
8.4.2.1 Professional/Formal mechanisms	194
8.4.2.2 Unorthodox/Informal means of survival	195
8.4.3 Legal professionals and their coping mechanisms in a precarious environment	197
8.4.3.1 Professional/formal mechanisms	197
8.4.3.2 Unorthodox/Informal means of survival	197
8.5 Chapter summary	198
Chapter 9 Conclusion and recommendations	200
9.1 Introduction	200
9.2 Thesis overview	200
9.3 Summary of research findings	201
9.3.1 Career planning and progression in elite professions in Zimbabwe.....	201
9.3.2 Training and development of elite professionals in Zimbabwe	201
9.3.3 Job satisfaction of elite professions in Zimbabwe.....	202

9.3.4 Job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe.....	202
9.3.5 Coping mechanisms of elite professionals in the context of precarious environment	203
9.4 Contributions of the study	203
9.4.1 Theoretical contribution	204
9.4.1.1 From an equity perspective.....	204
9.4.1.2 Theoretical contribution from Herzberg’s two-factor theory	206
9.4.1.3 Theoretical contribution from the neoclassical approach to international migration	207
9.4.2 Methodological contribution	207
9.4.3 Empirical contribution.....	208
9.5 Recommendations for responsible organisations.....	209
9.6 Chapter Summary.....	211
References.....	212
Annexure 1: Personal reflections	240
Annexure 2: Interview guide for academic professionals.....	242
Annexure 3: Interview guide for medical professionals	245
Annexure 4: Interview guide for legal professionals.....	248
Annexure 5: Informed consent letter	251
Annexure 6: Observational checklist	256
Annexure 7: Ethical clearance from UKZN	257
Annexure 8: Supervisor’s gatekeeper request.....	258
Annexure 9: Researcher’s gatekeeper request	259
Annexure 10: Authority letter from a public university	261
Annexure 11: Authority letter from a private university	262
Annexure 12: Authority letter from Law Society of Zimbabwe.....	263
Annexure 13: Authority letter from a provincial hospital	264

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Characteristics of elite professions in middle class.....	2
Figure 2.1: Framework for analysing the impact of precarious environment on elite professions.....	22
Figure 3.1: Zimbabwe Classes.....	39
Figure 4.1: Research design employed in this thesis.....	65
Figure 4.2: Stages in data analysis.....	78
Figure 5.1: Career planning and progression of academic lecturers.....	101
Figure 5.2: A comparison of career planning and progression of elite professionals...	106
Generated by Nvivo version 12.....	106
Figure 5.3: The impact of economic environment on elite professionals in Zimbabwe.....	114
Figure 6.1: A word cloud on the causes of job dissatisfaction among academic lecturers in Zimbabwe.....	122
Figure 6.2: A word cloud on job satisfaction and lawyers in Zimbabwe.....	126
Figure 6.3: The impact of the precarious environment on job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe.....	131
Figure 6.4: Factors that affect job engagement of medical doctors in Zimbabwe.....	136
Figure 6.5: Causes of low job engagement on elite professionals in Zimbabwe.....	139
Figure 6.6: The effect of salaries on migration of elite professionals.....	153
Figure 6.7: Elite professionals and their coping strategies.....	154
Figure 6.8: Comparison proportions of factors that lead to high outmigration of elite professionals in Zimbabwe.....	155
Figure 6.9: The impact of economic environment on migration.....	158
Figure 6.10: The relationship between job satisfaction and professional autonomy....	160
Figure 6.11: The relationship between job engagement and compromised middle class.....	161
Figure 6.12: The relationship between job engagement and compromised middle class.....	162
Figure 9.1: The model of the revised equity theory in the context of a declining economy.....	205
Figure 9.2: The revised two-factor theory in a precarious environment.....	207

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: The use of the qualitative approach	60
Table 2: The exact categories of sample	67
Table 3: Characteristics of participants.....	89
Table 4: An extract from the XYZ university website for social science degree programmes	118

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPD	continuous professional development
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
GDP	gross domestic product
GNU	Government of National Unity
HEI	higher education institution
HR	human resources
HRM	human resource management
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LSZ	Law Society of Zimbabwe
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
RTGS	Real Time Gross Settlement
USD	United States Dollar
VUCA	volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity
ZHDA	Zimbabwean Hospital Doctors Association
ZHSB	Zimbabwe Health Service Board
ZIMPREST	Zimbabwe Program for Economic and Social Transformation
ZWL	Zimbabwean dollars

GLOSSARY

Elite professionals

This is a group of people in society who are considered to be superior due to professional closure high educational attainment coupled with high income. They are also the most prestigious professionals due to the nature of their income.

Precarious

This is an unstable economic environment that causes the instability of elite professionals (Matthews & Onyemaobi, 2020). It is also characterised by hyper-inflation and political instability.

Precariat

This is a group of people in a social class who have unstable income and employment (Braga, 2016; Standing, 2013).

Profession

A profession is a group of professionals who adhere to ethical standards and are accepted by the public for possessing special knowledge and skills (Browne, 2020). They are also prepared to apply their knowledge and the skills acquired for the interest of others.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND ITS SETTING: THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW PRECARIAT? MIDDLE CLASS AND ELITE PROFESSIONALS IN ZIMBABWE

1.1 Introduction

The emergence of a new precariat due to the precarious environment in Zimbabwe has led to low employee morale among elite professionals. Braga (2016) defines precariat as a social class of people who have unstable income. This thesis therefore seeks to understand the impact of the precarious environment on elite professionals in Zimbabwe from a Human Resource Management perspective.

The chapter will provide a background to the study, problem statement, the objectives and the research questions that guide this thesis. Attention will be given to how the precarious environment has reconfigured the status of elite professions from a HR perspective. The study will further look into empirical, methodological and theoretical contributions of the study. Limitations and delimitations of the study will be provided by this chapter.

1.2 Background of the study

At the rise of independence in 1980, the Zimbabwean economy was relatively stable (Chevo, 2021), only to start shrinking around the mid-90s (Maunganidze et al., 2021). Munangagwa (2009) adds that the Zimbabwean economy has been experiencing decline, which resulted in a high inflation rate. This decline of the Zimbabwean economy has an effect on the livelihood of elite professionals, which therefore makes it difficult for them to be in the middle-class category (Dent et al., 2016; Maunganidze et al., 2021). Elite profession is defined by Voldnes et al. (2014), in as a group in society which is considered to be superior owing to its power, talent and privileges, among other factors. This research defines elite professions as those people who enjoy superior intellectual rights, economic status and occupy a high status in the social hierarchy. Professionals such as medical practitioners, legal practitioners and academics are known worldwide to belong to the middle class (Pedersen et al., 2010; Strømme & Hansen, 2017). It is therefore important to empirically establish the effects of the redefined middle class

in a precarious environment and their implications for the human resource management (HRM) profession.

The World Bank (2021), Kharas (2010), Handley (2015), Ncube and Lufumpa (2014) and Scharrer et al. (2018) listed characteristics of the middle class to include consumption, income, willingness to pay extra for quality products and private healthcare owing to the nature of their rewards. Although these characteristics are quite common in stable economies, this is not always the case in developing countries such as Zimbabwe, which has a declining economy and has reconfigured the conventional social strata. Therefore, the impact of precariat economy on elite professions from an HR perspective remains to be seen.

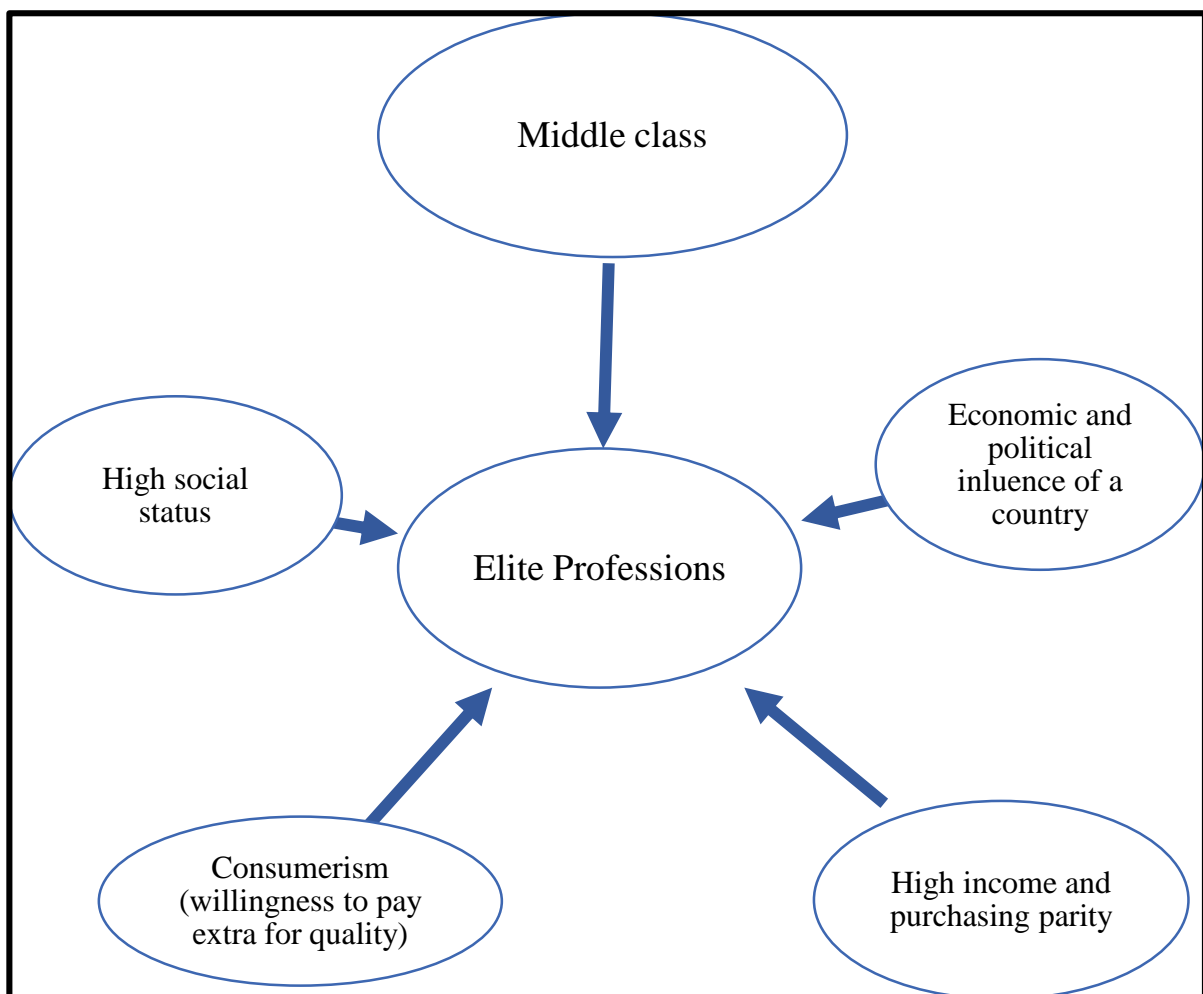


Figure 1.1: Characteristics of elite professions in middle class

(Author's compilation)

These characteristics of elite professions in a middle class, shown in Figure 1.1 above, were adopted in this study, as these clearly represent the characteristics of university lecturers, medical doctors and lawyers (individuals in elite professions and therefore assumed to belong to be middle class). However, these characteristics seem to be more common in developed countries and not in a precarious environment like Zimbabwe.

The precarious environment of the country has led to the increasing level of “brain drain”, especially among healthcare professionals and other highly skilled professionals (Dzinamarira & Musuka, 2021). However, the remaining employees are trying to navigate the economic crises by purchasing United States dollars on the black market (Chagonda, 2016; Gukurume, 2015), as their salaries are in Zimbabwean currency, but many of their expenses are in US dollars or South African rands (Murisa, 2010). This has resulted in an increase of skills flight and unorthodox means to balance their salaries against their bills. It therefore calls for a re-examination of HR policies, practices and procedures, specifically for elite professions in precarious environment.

1.3 Justification for the study

Most of the empirical studies on professions and professional work have been conducted from a sociological perspective (Bonnin & Ruggunan, 2013; Broadbent et al., 2005; Brock et al., 2014; Faulconbridge & Muzio, 2012). Faulconbridge and Muzio (2012) tackled on the rescaling of the professions towards a transnational sociology of the professions. Maunganidze et al. (2021) considered the economic crisis and professions from a sociological perspective. Smeby (2019) focused on a Southern African dialogue of the professions and professional work.

Contrary to the focus of previous research, this study was conducted from a HRM perspective. Therefore, the research adds new dimensions and arguments to the body of knowledge in the HRM profession in as far as elite professions are concerned.

Furthermore, Saks (2021) notes that some of these studies on professions have been concentrated on the Global North, and there is less empirical knowledge from the Global South. In addition, these empirical studies, particularly from the Global North, were conducted in countries with stable economies (Dayton, 2015; Farrell et al., 2006; Kharas, 2010; Saks, 2021). However, these studies were conducted in stable environments, unlike the one in which this

study was conducted (i.e. Zimbabwe), which has been challenged by volatility, uncertainty complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). Few studies, if any, have been conducted in a Southern African context, particularly Zimbabwe. This indicates a gap that needed to be filled. This research sought to do so.

Current research on middle and elite professions has been conducted in a quantitative nature (Ahn & Sailor, 2010; Schlemmer, 2005). The present researcher therefore argues that there is a need to conduct qualitative research to fill the research gap that has been left by quantitative researchers, particularly in Zimbabwe, about the impact of the precarious environment on the elite professions.

It is important to note and argue that there are no published studies that have been conducted to date in the Southern Africa region, particularly in Zimbabwe, focusing on the middle class and elite professions in a precarious environment. This therefore necessitated the researcher to investigate the impact of precarious environment on elite professions from an HR perspective. Zimbabwe has a unique socio-economic environment, which remains to be seen whether elite professions are equally operating in the same class with the rest of the world.

Much work relating to middle class and elite professions has been conducted in developed countries. Nault and Thau (2022) focused on how professional choices correlate with honesty given the fact that their professional choices have high income. Faulconbridge and Muzio (2012) argued that globalisation has a significant implication on professions. Ashley et al. (2015) focused on the barriers to entry for people with less privileged socio economic backgrounds to elite profession of law with particular focus on London. Strømme and Hansen (2017) focused on the closure in the elite professions for the field of law and medicine in Norway. Schlemmer (2005) concentrated on South Africa's emerging African middle class and not for other developing African countries. All these are developed countries which therefore strengthen the notion that there is no much empirical literature pertaining middle class and elite professions in developing countries like Zimbabwe.

In addition, studies that were conducted in Zimbabwe have concentrated on less-skilled blue-collar workers. Chireshe and Shumba (2011) concentrated on the teaching profession, specifically the challenges facing teachers with regard to motivation. Malvern et al. (2010) investigated employee-retention strategies among low-level employees in a volatile economic environment. Bhebhe (2020) focused on the declining economic situation on frontline

employee disengagement in a hotel in Zimbabwe. Shizha and Kariwo (2011) focused on the deprofessionalization of the teaching profession, which was a result of the unstable political and economic environment. Masvaure et al. (2014) concentrated on work engagement intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction among employees in the mining sector. These studies were conducted on low-level employees who do not qualify as middle class. While Maunganidze et al. (2021) focused on the effects of the declining economy on chartered accountants, who do fall in the middle-class category; nevertheless, there is a lacuna in medical, legal and academic professions, which needs to be filled.

Maunganidze (2016) focused on the changing nature of professional work in Zimbabwe. However, there seems to be a lack of literature pertaining to middle class and elite professions in Zimbabwe, especially from an HR perspective. As previously noted in this thesis, much work has been conducted outside Zimbabwe and the Southern African region in general. Owing to the unique nature and experiences in Zimbabwe in as far as its social and economic environment is concerned. Some of these studies were conducted from a sociological perspective and those studies that were conducted in Zimbabwe that were conducted on low level employees. It is therefore important to note the impact of the unstable economic environment on employees who are at the top management level in Zimbabwe from an HR perspective. There is a gap in the literature, which is the focus of this thesis. Attention will also be given to the aspects of HRM, namely, career planning and progression, training and development, job engagement and job satisfaction. These are some of the areas that might have been affected by the precarious environment.

1.4 Research Problem

Zimbabwe is a country which is faced with socio-economic shifts and, owing to these shifts, elite professionals are continuously finding it difficult to belong to the middle-class category (Dent et al., 2016). This therefore leads to high outward migration, unorthodox acts, and the underperformance of the elite professionals in order to fill the disequilibrium between their inputs (qualifications, experience) and outputs (financial rewards, recognition opportunity for growth and outputs). This therefore calls for a relook at HR policies, practices and procedures specifically for elite professions in precarious environment.

1.5 Arguments of the thesis

The first argument of this thesis relates to the concept of career planning and progression of elite profession. It is the researcher's argument that elite professions are finding it difficult to engage in career planning and progression due to the nature of their income. They are no longer prioritising their planning and progression since the rewards are not at par with the level of education.

The high unemployment rate and hyperinflation has resulted in the continuous eroding of elite professions' income. This has influenced them greatly, which makes them focus more on survival hence migrating or resigning from the public institutions to private sector. This high rate of employee attrition has a negative impact on employees' career planning programmes since their normal employment span is short, as they will be focusing more on income. This can also have a negative impact to the HRM profession and the organisation at large, as they will not be able to find the right employee for their key positions. For instance academic institutions are now having challenges in whom they will appoint to leadership positions since lecturers are now too mobile in search of better income and working conditions. This argument is in relation to Research Question 1.

The second argument relates to process of continuous professional development (CPD) programmes of elite professions in Zimbabwe. Elite professions are finding it difficult to engage in CPD programmes because of the unstable economic environment. Professions such as academics are supposed to engage in publishing articles and attending seminars so as to continuously renew their skills. However, this not happening because of the prevailing economic environment. They are failing to publish due to the nature of their income, their employers are also not able to pay for them to attend seminar. The same applies to doctors and lawyers. They simply engage in these CPD programmes so as to renew their practicing certificates. However, their salaries are too little for them to engage in development programmes.

The third argument relates to the concept of job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. This research argues that elite professions no longer feel content with their jobs owing to the nature of their rewards. This is the reason they are engaging in other formal activities to supplement their income. They enjoy their work but the high inflation rate, which rose from 26.5% in December 2023 to 34.8% in January 2024 (Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, 2024), has

eroded their salaries and rewards. They have therefore considered engaging in part-time work in other professional fields, which implies that they are no longer satisfied with their jobs. This argument relates to Research Question 3.

The fourth argument is premised on the aspect of job engagement. The research argues that academic lecturers, medical doctors and lawyers are no longer engaged to their work because of their income. However, on account of the high rate of unemployment, they are now being forced to be committed to the organisation so as to achieve organisational goals. For instance, academic lecturers are publishing articles only because they are being forced to do so by the law or the “publish or perish” mantra. According to Plume and van Weijen (2014), “publish or perish” is a common phrase used to describe the pressure researchers feel to publish their work in an academic community. This means that every academic lecturer is responsible for their own achievement. This does not mean that they are committed to doing their work, but rather that they are protecting their jobs, so as not to lose them, especially those who do not have any intentions of migrating.

Closely linked to the above, lawyers are offering services to their clients. Maunganidze and Bonnin (2021) described this as the concept of “eating what they killed”. This implies that lawyers are entitled to income only if they practise and represents clients. A lawyer’s failure to practise will result in little or no income for them and their law firms, while, at the same time, it is difficult for them to migrate to other countries due to the differing nature of law practised in other countries or nations. With regard to doctors, they have to go to work since strong penalties are imposed to those who initiate strikes. This argument addresses Research Question 4.

The fifth and final argument by the researcher is that, due to the unstable economic environment, elite professions are continuously finding it difficult to survive in Zimbabwe. It is the researcher’s argument that the unstable economic environment has affected elite professionals mainly on their salaries. They no longer qualify to be categorised in the middle class because their salaries have been eroded by the hyperinflation. This has resulted in lower social status than they should obtain because they can no longer afford quality goods and services that cost more than non-premium items. They must therefore navigate these issues and balance their salaries. They are now migrating to other countries, where they are being offered rewards that are equitable to their level of education.

In addition, some of the elite professionals are now resigning from the public sector, in which rewards are offered in Zimbabwean dollars (ZWL), and joining the private sector, in which rewards are offered in US dollars. Furthermore, some of the elite professionals engage in unprofessional acts to balance their inputs and outputs in order to earn a better living. However, some of these coping mechanisms may have a negative impact on the HRM profession in the country, as well as the delivery of services to the consumers. This argument addresses the fifth and final research question.

1.6 Aim of the study

The study aimed at establishing how a precarious socio-economic environment has reconfigured the status of elite professionals from an HRM perspective.

1.6.1 Research Objectives

The study also sought to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To assess and explain career planning and progression in elite professions in Zimbabwe.
2. To evaluate the extent to which elite professionals engage in training and development programmes in Zimbabwe.
3. To understand the level of job satisfaction of elite professions in Zimbabwe.
4. To assess the level of job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe.
5. To assess coping mechanisms of elite professionals in the context of precarious environment.
6. To offer recommendations on how HR policies, practices and procedures can be tailor made to accommodate elite professionals.

1.7 Research Questions

The study sought to address a number of questions that relate to middle class and elite professions. These questions are in line with how the redefined middle class has affected elite professions, which also has effects on the HRM profession. These questions are:

1. To what extent does career planning and progression concept applicable to elite professionals in Zimbabwe in their effort to maintain their middle-class status?

2. To what extent do elite professionals in Zimbabwe engage in training and development programmes as they make effort to maintain their middle-class status?
3. What is the level of job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe with respect to middle class?
4. What is the level of job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe in the context of middle-class status?
5. What are the coping mechanisms of elite professionals in the context of precarious environment and middle-class status?
6. In what ways may HR policies, practices and processes be tailor-made to accommodate elite professionals in their endeavour to maintain their middle-class status?

The researcher used a phenomenological approach in order to address these questions with the focus on academic profession, legal profession and medical profession in Zimbabwe. These six questions allowed the researcher to answer the core of this research that is to investigate how the prevailing socio-economic landscape in Zimbabwe has influenced elite professions and the implications on HRM.

1.8 Contribution of the study

This research study has made methodological, theoretical and empirical contributions to the profession of HRM.

1.8.1 Empirical contribution

From an empirical dimension, the study contributed in a number of ways: for individuals, universities and organisations both private and public.

Individuals: Zimbabwe is a developing country, which had about 15 million people as at 20 April 2022 Population and Housing Census Preliminary Results (ZIMSTAT, 2022). Of the total population, 61% are young people who are under the age of 25. These youth need to have a deep understanding when planning their career paths. As a result, this thesis will provide them with information about the academic, legal and medical professions. Individuals will have to choose these elite fields basing on the developing country perspective and not developed countries as their characteristics differ.

Academic institutions: Academic institutions will have the knowledge about the consequences of imbalance between the inputs and the outputs of elite professions. As a result they will structure their tuition fees considering the outputs these elite professionals will gain after the completion of their degree programmes. As a result, their inputs must not be high since people will always associate it with high rewards in return, especially in developing countries. In addition they should produce graduates who are quite familiar with their professions in terms of rewards to minimise outward migration and unorthodox means of these elite professions.

Organisations employing elite professionals: Contemporary organisations that are employing elite professionals will have more information about the impact of the redefined middle-class status of elite professionals, particularly in developing countries. This will help them to structure their reward policies and strategies in order to motivate their employees, since these low rewards jeopardise the services that are being rendered by elite professionals, particularly in the public sector.

This study has also made an empirical contribution to the body of knowledge from an HR perspective, and it will help authorities define the middle class in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the body of knowledge will allow us to define the characteristics of elite professionals in the middle-class category, considering the Zimbabwean prevailing socio-economic environment.

1.8.2 Methodological contribution

It is also important to note that the study made some methodological contribution to the management profession of HRM and elite professions. Previous researches conducted in this field were quantitative in nature as it was mainly grounded in positivism approach (Ahn & Sailor, 2010; Schlemmer, 2005). This could be related to the fact that most of the studies were conducted in sociological perspective or by academics who had better understanding of quantitative methodologies. This is mainly true when considering the Southern African context. This study used qualitative methodology in order to gain an in-depth understanding from elite professions themselves and in their own words. The use of documents is also another important methodological contribution that was employed in this study. Documents have not been widely used pertaining middle class and elite professions in a precarious environment. Hence, rich qualitative data was derived from this study.

1.8.3 Theoretical contribution

The theoretical base of the study was Stacey Adams's Equity Theory of motivation and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. The thesis has extended these theories of motivation. On Adams's Equity Theory, the thesis extended that people are now comparing themselves with other occupations that are outside their profession. Others are now comparing themselves with the same profession but beyond their geographical boundaries. In addition, from Herzberg's two-factor theory the study elaborated that hygiene factors motivate employees in developing countries characterised by unstable economic environment.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

Participants from this study were drawn from three elite professions in Zimbabwe which are, the legal profession, academic and health profession. Academic lecturers and medical doctors were from both private and public institutions. Participants were chosen from two cities – Masvingo and Harare – as these were convenient cities for the researcher.

The interviews focused only on the impact of the unstable economic environment to elite professions in an HR perspective and all the questions revolving around this area. This primary area served as the conceptual delimitations of the study.

It's important to take note of the selection criteria used when choosing the documents for the study's documentary analysis. The researcher took into consideration publications from the relevant professions, including annual reports, newspapers, and pamphlets. Despite the fact that these documents contained information about middle class and elite professions, the researcher had to carefully examine them for any issues or trends that might be connected to any of the earlier research arguments.

1.10 Limitations of the study

This research study encountered a number of challenges. Firstly, it was very difficult to convince these professionals to be interviewed. Most of the time, a single professional had to be booked for more than three times with all appointments failing to transpire. In order to address this limitation, the researcher had to be patient and keep on rescheduling interviews since these professionals are always busy with their work-related responsibilities.

Time was also another limitation, which was encountered in this research especially on interviews. A number of participants indicated that they had busy schedules because of the nature of their work. They had to attend court sessions frequently, attend to patients or deliver lectures. Owing to this, the time allocated to interview sessions was very short (35 to 40 minutes). The researcher, however, had to make the best use of that short time allocated to make sure that all important elements of the research were covered.

In addition, most of the interviews were conducted in participants' offices and premises and this posed as another challenge to the research. This meant that there were many disturbances, in most cases by subordinates or visitors. These disturbances would lengthen the span of interviews unnecessarily. However, to address this the researcher would pause her recorder every time there was interruptions and would take down some notes as it was the easiest way to resume the interview session after disturbances.

This research study also encountered some financially related challenges. There were transport-related costs as well costs relating to phone calls, especially during the data collection phase of the study. Financial resources were as well inadequate. The researcher however got some assistance from friends and family members in order to mitigate this challenge.

1.11 Chapter Summary

It was in the interest of this chapter to serve as an introduction to the whole study. In order to put the study into perspective, this chapter had a section on the background of the study. The study was guided by a specific research aim, specific research objectives and questions and these formed part of Chapter 1.

The chapter also looked briefly into the contributions of this study as far as empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions are concerned. The chapter also indicated the delimitations of the study whereby the characteristics of those who participated in the study were discussed. The issue of limitations which plagued the study also formed part of this chapter. The chapter was concluded by focusing on those terms which form the basis for this study. These terms were operationally defined as they were used in this study. The next chapter discusses the literature review. General and specific trends will be highlighted. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks will also be fully explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: ELITE PROFESSIONALS AND MIDDLE CLASS

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 provides the background and the research objective that guided this thesis. This chapter therefore focuses on the theoretical framework, conceptual framework and empirical literature. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), a theoretical framework describes theoretical underpinnings of a research. While a conceptual framework is a written or visual representation that explains the study variables and their relationship to each other (Van der Waldt, 2020).

Attention is given to the precarious environment in Zimbabwe, since it has reconfigured elite professions. The study will further focus on the impact of this unstable environment to the HRM profession. It is also crucial at this stage to note that although much work about professions and the middle class has been conducted, few to no studies have been conducted or published on how the unstable economic environment has reconfigured elite professions within the context of Zimbabwe. This gap will be further explored in this chapter.

2.2 The economic history and the emergence of new precarious environment in Zimbabwe

There was much excitement and hope when Zimbabwe gained political independence in 1980 (Marango et al., 2016). Industries were operating at full capacity. As a result, the production rate was very high, which led to high employment opportunities, coupled with a strong own currency (Mazulu, 2006). The drought of 1982–1983, which was also followed by the 1987 drought, resulted in the decrease of exports (Munangagwa, 2009). The government therefore decided to shift the economic policies from the year 1990 and, as a result, the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) was adopted and rolled out (Matanda & Jeche, 1998). ESAP was adopted to increase the gross domestic product (GDP) from 1991 to 1995. However, the country failed to achieve the 5% growth rate under ESAP policies, and this had negative effects on the manufacturing industry.

In a bid to improve the failed ESAP, the Mugabe regime implemented another policy, the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) from the period of 1996 to 2000 (Nyoni, 2018). Munangagwa (2009) and Simpson et al. (2018) stated that ZIMPREST, however, also failed as a result of poor fiscal policies. Kairiza (2012) highlighted that the infamous Black Friday of November 1997 also contributed to the deteriorating macroeconomic condition. Chagonda (2019) furthermore stated that 60,000 war veterans were granted 50,000 Zimbabwean dollars, which was equivalent to 3,000 US dollars at a time for each individual, with an additional monthly pension, which was equivalent to 125 US dollars. This was not budgeted for. Mangwanya and Manyeruke (2019) indicated that the war veterans' pay-outs resulted in 3% GDP. This had the immediate effect of inflating the budget deficit by 55%. This resulted in the deterioration of the macro-economic environment into a hyperinflationary environment, which forced people to migrate (Munangagwa, 2009). Zimbabwe continued enduring economic instability from the year 2000 owing to the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (Chitongo et al., 2020).

Despite the implementation of several economic plans starting in the year 2000, the economic climate kept deteriorating (Coltart, 2008). In all these years the Mugabe regime tried to maintain a one-party state (Munangagwa, 2009). However, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was formed due to disgruntlement and economic instability. The emergence of this new political party, MDC, in 1999 made this situation even worse (Matamanda et al., 2020). Kufakurinani (2021) furthermore stated that the Zimbabwean economic challenges became more crystallised when MDC was established, with high unemployment rates coupled with the high inflation rate. All these political instabilities worsened the economic environment in Zimbabwe.

The dollarization of the economy during the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2008 brought some hope to the Zimbabwean economic environment (Marevesa, 2019; Nyamapheni & Robinson, 2022; Oosterom, 2019). However Mhlanga and Ndhlovu (2021) argued that the country plunged back to its dark days with the expiration of the GNU in 2013. The Zimbabwean socio-economic challenges are becoming deeper day by day, despite the elimination of the former and late president Robert Mugabe who was removed from power by a coup in November, he was accused of the socio-economic challenges for the 37 dictatorial years he reigned (Mhlanga & Ndhlovu, 2021). However this did not even solve the economic challenges

even after Mnangagwa took over as the president of Zimbabwe in 2017, there were still problems with the currency (Nyamunda, 2021).

Currently, Zimbabwe faces a broad range of socioeconomic and political difficulties, including soaring commodity prices (Tagarirofa & Tobias, 2019). Samaita (2019a) highlighted that political instability, a high unemployment rate, hyperinflation and soaring commodity prices have also led to high volumes of outward migration in all professions. The rise of the informal market came about as a result of economic challenges (Kabonga, 2020). The US dollar began to dominate in Zimbabwe's economic transactions in 2008, giving the impression that the nation was temporarily stabilising (Nyamunda, 2021). Nyamunda (2021) further argued that the insufficiency of US dollars led the government of Zimbabwe to introduce the Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) dollar as a coping mechanism. Furthermore, Eye Witness News (2018) stated that in an effort to alleviate severe cash shortages, the Southern African nation abandoned its currency in favour of the US dollar in 2009 after years of hyperinflation introduced bond notes in November 2016. This, however, worsened the situation since people were earning RTGS, while the parallel market continues to thrive (Dzirutwe, 2018). BusinessTimes (2018) cited in (Nyamunda, 2021) indicated that the Minister of Finance misconstrued that, these problems were simply a precursor to worsening economic issues. The Zimbabwean currency crisis led to a number of issues, including the need for people to find alternate means of subsistence (Madimu, 2020; Saunders & Nyamunda, 2016). As Kabonga (2020) indicated that, the informal sector sustained thousands of the households as the formal sectors collapsed.

2.3 Theoretical framework

In an effort to answer the study's primary research question, which is determining the impact of the precarious environment on elite professions, the researcher used the equity theory of motivation as the main theory guiding the research. Herzberg's two-factor theory and the neoclassical approach to international migration were also used as supporting theories in this research.

2.3.1 Equity Theory

Equity theory is a motivational theory which was developed by Stacey Adams in 1963. The Equity theory states that individuals are motivated by fairness (Inuwa, 2017). It further suggests

that the “inputs” and “outputs” of the employees must be fairly balanced (Adams, 1963). Inputs are unique qualities that employees bring to their work, such as job performance, level of responsibility, knowledge, skills, and abilities required by the position, education, and personal sacrifice and effort, among other things (Ang et al., 2003). Outputs are the specific characteristics that emerge from the employer-employee relationship and include compensation, acknowledgment, a sense of advancement, benefits, status, and intrinsic rewards (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

According to this theory, workers evaluate their efforts and results and determine whether they were fair by contrasting them with those of others (Inuwa, 2017; Prieto et al., 2023). Miner (2015) asserts that individuals in equity look around and compare themselves with others. This introduces a comparison element between two people working for the same organisation, necessitating an equilibrium between outputs and rewards and benefits. Employees whose perception is that they are under-compensated will experience inequity tension.

Adams’s equity theory has four associate groups in which people compare themselves and their experiences (Prieto et al., 2023). These groups include self–inside (this is the individual’s experience within their current organisation), self–outside (this is the individual’s experience with other organisations), other–outside (these are members of the group in the individual’s current organisation) and lastly others–outside (these are other people outside of the individual’s current organisation). Employees expect fairness from all these comparisons. However, when equity is not perceived, people will experience distress (Kwon & Jang, 2012). Miner (2015) stated that people find something to return it to the state of fairness by either changing their levels of effort or by adjusting the values of their contributions. This cognitive distortion makes it feel fair for individuals in equity (Ryan, 2016).

2.3.1.1 The concept of Equity theory from the Zimbabwean perspective.

Equity theory is concerned with the way in which people perceive their treatment compared with others in the same group in the organisation (Adams, 1963). This indicates that the equity theory is mainly centred on the organisational level. However, this research expands the equity theory so that it will suit the prevailing economic environment in Zimbabwe. Equity theory, in the context of this research, is therefore an inter-country matter, since elite professionals in Zimbabwe are now comparing themselves with the elite professionals from other countries. As a result, this has led to high attrition and outmigration to countries where there are high outputs.

Therefore, the equity theory is now cutting across geographical boundaries with regard to elite professionals in Zimbabwe.

The equity theory emphasises that employees will quit a job when the element of inequality is perceived among peers (Hu, 2021). This indicates that the existing literature of the theory emphasise on employees having that one option of quitting their jobs but does not go further to discuss the element of potential migration. However, this research brings in this element of potential migration as well other unprofessional ways that elite professions supplement their income to maintain their middle-class status. Lim (2020) highlighted that individuals seek to maximise their outputs. When elite professionals perceive an element of inequality, they migrate to other countries, rather than quitting their jobs and remain in the country. Those who are not able to migrate would rather look for ways that will help them to maximise their outputs. They might even withdraw their engagement level so that it will match the outputs. For instance, medical doctors in Zimbabwe are now engaging in seemingly unending industrial action (Musekiwa & Musekiwa, 2023). These are some of the elements that have not been discussed previously, particularly from a professional perspective.

Elite professions in Zimbabwe are living in a precarious environment where they no longer suit in the middle class setup like in other countries (Gosha, 2020), their outputs are inferior to what is being received in well developed nations (Hofisi & Chingoiro, 2021). This is where element of comparison comes in as they tend to compare their outputs with those from stable economies. The same outputs that elite professions in stable economies are the same elements that are used to solidify or enhance the middle-class status. For instance, high income automatically allows an elite professional to serve for retirement as well as owning a house in a low-density area or even dining for vacations. As a result, the country will suffer high intentional labour turnover owing to the migration of these elite professions to where high outputs are offered.

In addition, academic lecturers are now less engaged in CPD programmes because the seminars are expensive for them, as they are not being supplied by grants with their universities to participate in such seminars (Chitanana et al., 2008). Their salaries do not allow them to continuously develop themselves (Muzira & Bondai, 2020). The same applies to medical doctors and lawyers. Therefore, growth becomes secondary, although it is necessary for the organisation. However elite professions from stable economies are able to participate in CPD

programmes since they belong to the middle class. The disequilibrium among professions now causes distress and demotivation of profession as a result high outmigration from Zimbabwe is being experienced as way to increase their outputs thereby maintaining the middle-class status.

The equity theory emphasises that people must believe that they will be compensated fairly for their work and that their rewards will be comparable to those of their peers (Kollmann et al., 2020; Mira et al., 2019). When an element of disequilibrium is felt, employees will be forced to leave the organisation and move to somewhere they will obtain better outputs. Researchers contend that brain drain is caused by an imbalance between inputs (experience, qualifications), and outputs (financial rewards, opportunities for advancement) (Gwaradzimba & Shumba, 2010; Nyanga et al., 2012; Shumba & Mawere, 2012), low performance in employees (Ryan, 2016) and unorthodox means of survival (Maunganidze et al., 2021). This implies that migration is one of the methods (among other strategies) used by professionals to balance their inputs and outputs.

According to Adams's Equity Theory, individuals desire equal compensation for their contributions to the working population, of which they are a part of (Twalib & Kariuki, 2020). Elite professions want an equilibrium state of outputs as they share inputs with their peers in other countries (Garwe & Thondhlana, 2019). The legal, academic and medical professions are elite professions because their inputs are higher than other occupations. For instance it takes 5 years to attain a first degree in medicine or law and for only those who had scored higher points in stipulated prestigious and more difficult subjects in high school (Vaz et al., 1998). Therefore, owing to these difficulties, they perceive that their outputs should also be compared to others in the similar professions.

When a state of disequilibrium is felt individuals may cease to be motivated (Kwon & Jang, 2012). Elite professionals are migrating to other countries due to this element of comparison. They perceive that their rewards are not equitable to their peers in similar profession in other countries. Dzinamarira and Musuka (2021) revealed that there is high outmigration of healthcare professions to developed countries due to low income. Hence when this comparison is made professions are bound to leave the country and seek better opportunities abroad.

Zhou et al. (2020) assert that in order to ensure the highest levels of motivation, engagement, and performance, fairness should be created. Since this increases professional motivation, it is crucial for the HRM profession to take into account the issue of equity and fairness of elite

professions. When elite professions' standards are comparable to those of elite professions in other middle-class countries, it will minimise attrition and skills flight from Zimbabwe as well as unprofessional conducts by elite professions while maximising their outputs. Adams's theory emphasises that when there is no justice among them, people become distressed (Kwon & Jang, 2012). A sense of distress in the workplace will result in poor performance and low contributions to the organisation (Alimi et al., 2020).

2.3.2 Two-Factor Theory by Fredrick Herzberg

Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, also referred to as the two-factor theory is a motivational theory which was developed by Fredrick Herzberg (Nickerson, 2023). According to Herzberg's two-factor theory lack of hygiene factors cause job dissatisfaction while motivators ensures job satisfaction. Salary, working conditions, fringe benefits, status, and job security are all hygiene-related factors (Thant & Chang, 2021). Motivational factors include responsibility, achievement and recognition (Chiat & Panatik, 2019).

According to the theory, there are various sets of workplace variables that are mutually exclusive and either lead to job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017). According to Nickerson (2023) Herzberg's two-factor theory explores the conditions under which an individual responds to various internal and external stimuli by assuming a complex interaction between internal and external factors. This suggests that individuals from different backgrounds are stimulated by same factors.

The two-factor theory assumes that the hygiene and motivational factors are distinct (Nickerson, 2023). As a result Kacel et al. (2005) state that the opposite of job satisfaction is no satisfaction. However Robbins and Judge (2013) claimed that the conventional understanding of job satisfaction implies that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are situated along the same continuum. Therefore, employees who are not satisfied with their jobs are dissatisfied.

2.3.2.1 The applicability of the two-factor theory in the Zimbabwean setup.

Alshmemri et al. (2017) state that motivational factors directly contribute to job satisfaction due to an individual's need for self-actualisation and self-growth, while hygiene factors are related to the desire to avoid unpleasantness. This is not applicable when it comes to the Zimbabwean setup, which is characterised by a VUCA economy (Mhlanga, 2019). Mathende

and Yousefi (2021) furthermore stated that the VUCA environment has become the new normal in Zimbabwe. This emphasises that there are economic challenges facing employees whereby they earn money (RTGS) to buy money (USD) (Chagonda, 2016; Gukurume, 2015). In this case employees seem to be motivated by money and hygiene factors may improve their satisfaction level. People need high rewards that is why medical doctors embark on industrial action, while academics lower their efforts in publication. This is an indication that money is a motivator when it comes to a precarious environment like the one which is being obtained in Zimbabwe. Robbins and Judge (2013) noted that if motivational and hygiene factors are equally important to an employee, they should both be able to inspire workers.

Herzberg's theory has become the most commonly used theory in job satisfaction (Dion, 2006). However this can be perceived as an imaginary theory especially from a Zimbabwean view point. From an Equity theory perspective individuals need to perceive that the rewards they receive for their contribution are fair and those rewards are similar to those received by peers (Kollmann et al., 2020; Mira et al., 2019). In this case, elite professionals are now comparing monetary rewards with their peers beyond their borders. As a result, they feel disequilibrium, and when this is felt, it causes brain drain (Gwaradzimba & Shumba, 2010; Nyanga et al., 2012). A total of 908,914 people emigrated from Zimbabwe at the time of the census (April 2022); 58% of the emigrants were professionals (ZIMSTAT, 2022). This high outmigration of experienced elite professionals to countries that offer better rewards that are at par with the inputs is a clear indication that elite professionals are motivated by financial rewards. This emphasises that Herzberg's two-factor theory is mainly applicable to economically stable environments.

2.3.3 Neoclassical approach to international migration

The neoclassical approach to international migration emphasises that the differentiation on wages and employment conditions between countries push individuals to maximise their income (Bauer & Zimmermann, 2018; Miladinov, 2020; Tarasyev & Jabbar, 2018). The theory further asserts that migration occurs until expected earnings have been equalised internationally (Malmberg, 2021). This also emphasise the equilibrium of outputs as it is the major push factor for outward movement. Jennings and Slavin (2015) and Ryan (2016) argued that employees can also resort to unorthodox means, which lowers their performance. However, this research is mainly concerned about those that remain in the country.

When disequilibrium is felt among employees, it calls for them to migrate to other countries where there are better earnings (Borjas, 2013) . This implies that salaries and benefits are major push factors that cause elite professionals in Zimbabwe to migrate to other countries. Chikanda (2007) and Gaidzanwa (1999) add that the rise in migration is largely the result of economic factors. This clearly indicates that elite professionals are migrating to other countries due to the unstable economic environment that has a negative effect on their social status. Owing to their salaries, they no longer qualify to be in the middle-class category, as elite professionals in other countries in similar jobs would. Therefore, the goal of this research was to identify strategies that support human management profession and reduce skills flight from the nation.

Africa has lost up to 60,000 middle- and high-level managers and almost one-third of its skilled workers to well-developed countries with stable economies (Bloom & Standing, 2001). This outflow has had a negative impact on the health system's users, especially the poor who cannot afford alternative health care (Chikanda, 2007). Wadda (2000) highlighted that outward movement of people has an impact on the human capital crisis. This has a negative effect on the economy, since elite professionals are considered to be superiors who drive the economy (Voldnes et al. 2014, cited in (Maunganidze, 2019).

Dodani and LaPorte (2005) revealed that most immigrants move from developing nations to developed nations. As a result, there is a negative effect from the country of departure since these countries invest in training professionals. Hence there is loss of qualified personnel and higher expenses.

Wage differentiation is the major reason that high skilled professionals migrate to other countries (Muyambo & Ranga, 2020; Yu, 2022). Push factors such as remuneration and poor working facilities have forced skilled personnel to migrate from their own home country to other countries.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The unstable economic environment which is also being necessitated by the political instability in the country (Chitongo et al., 2020) is causing some negative impacts to the elite professions. Owing to the nature of their employment, elite professions belong to the middle-class category. However, this middle class is now being compromised by the precarious environment in Zimbabwe. As a result, elite professionals are now comparing themselves with other

professionals in other countries and the informal sector. This therefore causes them to migrate to other countries with equitable or attractive rewards while others engage in various income generating activities to protect their social class status.

The compromised middle-class status is as a result of the unstable economic environment. This has adverse effects on elite professionals in Zimbabwe, which is the reason they are now engaging in additional income-generating activities to supplement their salaries. These income-generating activities vary from profession to profession. Figure 2.1 below presents the conceptual framework on the causes of the precarious environment and their implications for elite professionals.

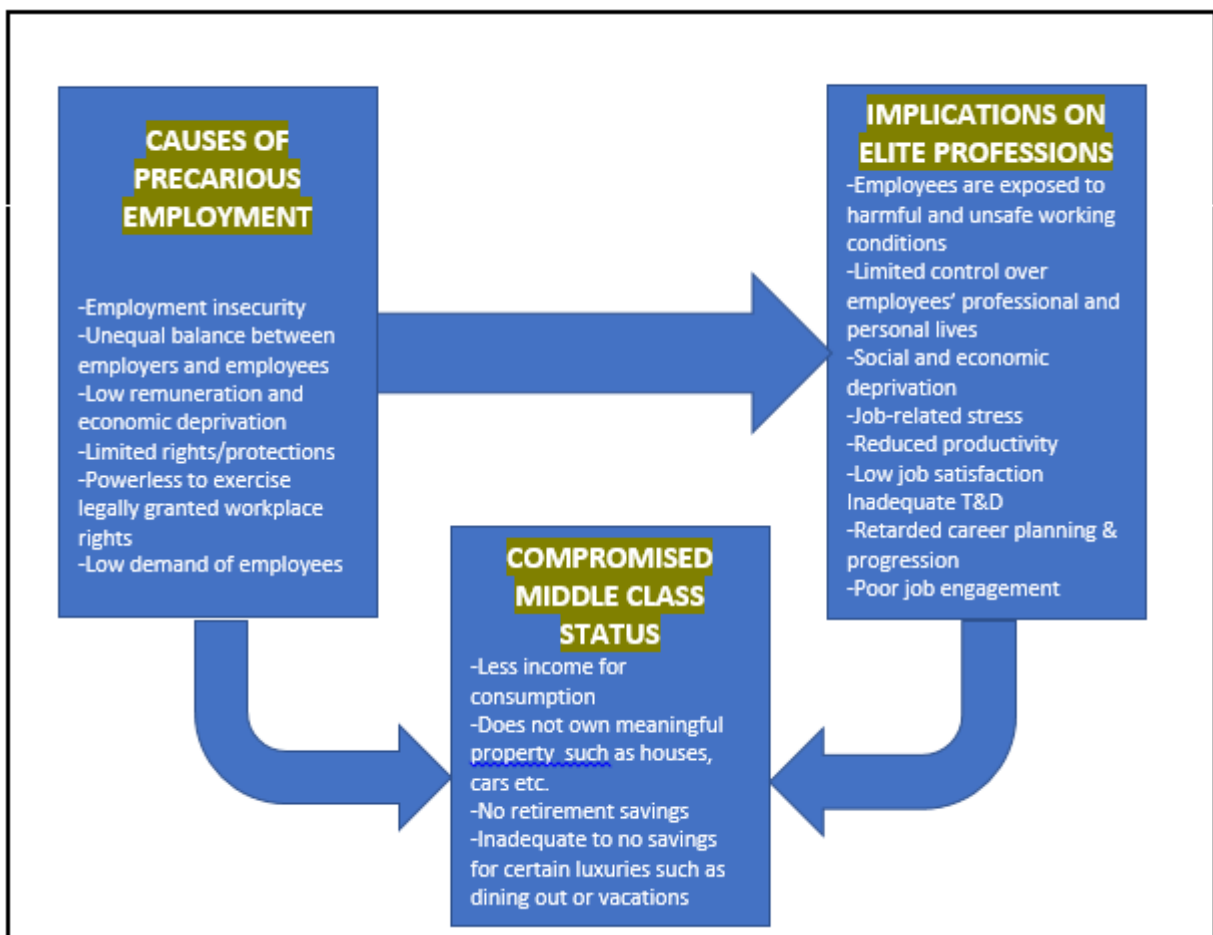


Figure 2.1: Framework for analysing the impact of precarious environment on elite professions

(Author’s compilation)

The explanations of Figure 2.1 above are provided in the light of the earlier arguments in this thesis as well as pertinent literature. It is important for one to note that these factors are

interrelated when it comes to the impact of the unstable environment to the HRM profession. For instance, when one is not satisfied with a job, it may lead to unprofessionalism and poor organisational performance.

2.4.1 Training and Development as it relates to compromised middle class

Employees who consistently participate in training and development programmes are necessary for a company to meet the demands of the environment's constant change (Baran & Woznyj, 2020). The same applies to the elite professions, they as will need CPD skills to consciously renew their skills and knowledge, as they are also employees. Armstrong (2020) strengthens this notion by stating that employees are an integral part of the organisation who require continuous development. However, they can no longer afford to attend CPD programmes, as they now living under an unstable economic environment characterised by weak reward structures.

Earley and Bubb (2004) refer to CPD as the continual education and preparation for the professions. Gold et al. (2007) assert that CPD helps to stay current in order to safeguard professional autonomy and keep their position in society. This emphasises the importance of training and development in professionals as it also helps them as elite professions to maintain their social status.

2.4.2 Career planning and progression as it relates to the compromised middle class

Effective HR encompasses career planning and succession planning (Chebet, 2015). According to Aburumman et al. (2020), employee career planning is only possible with efficient HR procedures in place, therefore career planning and advancement is a continuous process of creating HR for success (Ababneh, 2013). In addition, it is a methodical process that involves choosing a career path and career goals (Conger, 2002). This means that elite professions must offer opportunities for career planning and advancement, but on account of the current economic climate, people are instead concentrating on survival rather than growth (Carbery & Garavan, 2005). This has implications for the nation or organisations. For instance, professorship is now attained by those who have financial support, as academic lecturers are now concentrating on ways to earn more money, making it difficult for one to publish because universities no longer support these publications (Garwe, 2015b; Thondhlana & Chirume, 2016). As a result, academics will give less attention to publication, as they need finances to

support their families. This therefore necessitates a review of Zimbabwe's elite professionals' career planning and advancement policies, as they also serve as a means of employee motivation (Adekola, 2011; Antoniu, 2010; Hassan, 2016).

Career planning helps an employee in making career decisions, while taking into account their skills and the needs of the company (Mkandatsama & Nyanhete, 2017). Khan et al. (2015) state that employees should keep in mind the needs of the organisation, as their psychological development affects their performance. Lawyers are educated for the social justice of the society (Bloch, 2010); however, owing to the fact that they are in the precarious environment in Zimbabwe, they are now focusing on monetary benefits, neglecting their roles of representing the society. There is a lack of career planning and progression in the legal profession (Sasinsky, 2020). This could be one of the reasons that armed robbers roam Zimbabwe, since lawyers need money for their survival and will therefore accept bribes when offered. All of these clearly indicate the impact of the compromised middle class in a precarious environment.

2.4.3 Job satisfaction and compromised middle class

Job satisfaction is an emotional reaction that indicates how much people enjoy their work (Amin, 2021). Employees need to be satisfied with their jobs to ensure the effectiveness of organisations. Judge et al. (2020) recognised the worth of job satisfaction in predicting organisational effectiveness. Andreas (2022) revealed that job dissatisfaction may cause frustration, rage, and in some cases, depression. Employee commitment is higher and retention rates are higher among contented workers, who also tend to care more about the calibre of their work (Mabaso & Dlamini, 2021; Mawardi, 2022). However, this has become a different scenario to the elite professions in Zimbabwe. There are now high attrition rates from the health sector and academic lecturers. All these issues emanate from the compromised middle class which has been affected by the precarious environment.

According to Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation, there are two factors that affect employee satisfaction: hygiene factors and motivators. While motivators help increase job satisfaction, hygiene factors help prevent job dissatisfaction (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Salary, working conditions, fringe benefits, status, and job security are all hygiene-related factors (Thant & Chang, 2021). Motivational factors include responsibility, achievement and recognition (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). This implies that employees are not motivated by hygiene

factors (money, work environment) but they are rather motivated by nonfinancial rewards. In this scenario, elite professionals seem to be motivated by monetary rewards. That is one of the reasons they leave their home countries and go to other countries that offer better rewards.

2.4.4 The compromised middle class and job engagement

Employee engagement is the level of enthusiasm employees feel toward their job (Saks et al., 2022). Aldabbas et al. (2021) adds that job engagement is characterised by persistence, and the mental and emotional connection that employees feel toward the organisation for which they work. Employees who are highly engaged at work typically put in more effort and are more productive than their counterparts, and they are more likely to deliver the outcomes that their employers and customers want (Kong, 2009). However, the impact of the redefined middle class on job engagement of elite profession is yet to be seen.

Academic lecturers, medical doctors and lawyers could be less engaged in their work because of the precarious environment which has led to the compromised middle-class status. For instance, academic lecturers are publishing articles only because of the fact that they are forced to do so by their surrounding circumstances – the publish or perish mantra (Plume & van Weijen, 2014). The same applies to medical doctors and lawyers. Lawyers offer services to the clients since it is their only way of earning rewards. This rule means that they have to work if they are to have an income, as it might be a challenge for them to migrate to countries with stable economic environment. In the case of the doctors, they have to go to work since strong penalties are imposed on those who initiate strike (African News Agency, 2019). However, this does not mean that elite professions are engaged, rather they appear on work environment simply to protect their jobs but with less engagement.

2.5 Migration/attrition of elite professions in Zimbabwe

The emigration of highly skilled professionals is to blame for some of Africa's economic and developmental challenges. Human capital flight is the term for people moving from less developed countries to more developed countries where they believe they will receive equitable rewards as their skills are highly valued and appreciated. This includes the most skilled and competent people (Okafor & Chimereze, 2020). The British Royal Society coined the term “brain drain” to describe the exodus of professionals to the United States of America (Alem, 2016).

According to African scholars, the migration of Africans to Europe and North America began in the 1960s, when large numbers of Africans participated in a record-breaking expansion of access to education across Europe and America (Adepoju, 2006; Giménez-Gómez et al., 2019). Flahaux and De Haas (2016); Kadiri (2015) and Odhiambo (2013) indicated that in the 1960s, the number of Africans leaving the continent was relatively low, but as their various countries' social, political and economic situations worsened, this number eventually rose.

The loss of employees with the necessary skills and experience has a negative effect on organisations' performance and standards (Fischer et al., 2021). Employee turnover also has serious implications for the organisation. In recent years, academics as well as concerned individuals have grown concerned about the exodus of highly qualified and competent people from developing countries, particularly Africa, to developed countries as this trend has continued to deprive the continent of its best human capital (Adeyemi et al., 2018). Elite professionals are migrating to other countries in search of better salaries that suit their level of education. Some elite professionals are resigning from the public sector and joining the private sector, where they earn US dollars. The most expensive resources in any nation are its intellectuals because of the expense and time involved in their training (Dodani & LaPorte, 2005). The implication of this is that when these professionals migrate to other countries, the HR management profession will also be greatly affected.

The organisation will suffer from a shortage of experienced and skilled workers as a result of employee turnover and skills migration (Kanyumbaya & Msosa, 2020). Dzinamarira and Musuka (2021) assert that brain drain refers to the one-way flow of highly skilled employees from developing to industrialised nations. Owing to the low incomes that are a hallmark of developing nations, highly qualified and skilled workers are drawn to more developed nations like the UK (Britnell, 2019), which lowers organisational performance and standards.

Employers face a serious problem with voluntary employee turnover because high turnover rates cause the remaining employees to experience much stress at work (Sithole & Pwaka, 2019). Arshadi and Damiri (2013) stated that employee loyalty and commitment to their jobs cannot grow as a result of voluntary turnover. This implies that employee turnover and outward migration have serious effects on both employees and organisations. Mashange et al. (2019) added that the movement of health professionals, which is necessitated by a global shortage of healthcare workers, is considered a crisis in health-sector HR.

In addition to the above, Bielewska (2021) stated that the movement of managerial and administrative personnel from semi-developed to advanced countries is referred to as brain drain. This definition implies that the professional exodus from managerial and administrative positions is also referred to as brain drain. In this case doctors, lawyers and academic lecturers are employees who belong to the managerial position in the country. Therefore, brain drain has a negative effect on these professions. This is also supported by Qadri (2018), who stated that brain drain is the phenomenon where many educated and skilled individuals leave their home country in search of greener pastures (better pay and good working conditions) abroad.

The HRM profession will also spend more money hiring and training new employees as a result of the high employee turnover and brain drain (Juhdi et al., 2013). This implies that turnover intentions are very expensive to the organisation as they have become important element that affects an organisation's overall performance (Busari et al., 2017). When there is high brain drain and high rate of turnover organisations will be forced to recruit new employees to fill the post which is a costly procedure for an organisation. It is an expensive activity especially to recruit elite professionals and train them.

2.5.1 Brain drain of Academic lecturers in Zimbabwe

Robinson (2020) revealed that over the past few decades, Zimbabwe has lost a sizable number of academic professionals to other nations. Kanonge and Bussin (2022) furthermore stated that Zimbabwe has lost over 100,000 academics alone. This loss is ongoing, and the motivation for this migration is expected earnings, rather than actual earnings (Bauer & Zimmermann, 2018). Academic lecturers in Zimbabwe migrate to other countries, where they expect to receive better earnings and working conditions, compared to others with their level of education. Serow (2000) stated that academics often see a conflict between rewards and their own values and efforts. This becomes the main reason lecturers are leaving the country as there is conflict between rewards and efforts.

Bigirimana et al. (2016) further claim that between 2002 and 2013, a total of 40 academic lecturers left Africa University to well-developed countries that offered equitable rewards. This suggests that there are also challenges in the private sector with regard to employee retention, even though some policies, for instance The Africa University Charter of 1992, stipulate that remuneration of lecturers in private institutions in Zimbabwe must be at least 25% higher than the public (state) institutions in Zimbabwe (Murapa, 2015). The other reason could be that they

do not receive their rewards in time (Zivengwa et al., 2011). However, there is clear indication that lecturers are earning less than their counterparts abroad. As a result Zimbabwean lecturers fall short of qualifying to fit in the global middle-class category. This therefore calls for a redefined middle class in the Zimbabwean context.

When it occurs in the workplace, high staff turnover has a negative impact on growth, profitability, and customer satisfaction, which is detrimental to the efficient operation of institutions. Over the past 5 years, virtually all sectors in Southern Africa have seen an increase in the departure of technical expertise (Stilwell, 2003). Chimanikire et al. (2007) state that universities in Zimbabwe and other tertiary institutions have experienced significant staffing shortages. When academic professionals seek greener pastures abroad it clearly indicates that academic professionals are earning less. As a result, they are not able to support their families in a way that fits their class mobility. This therefore cause them to seek better salaries abroad, while others lower their inputs to suit the salary.

A number of studies have highlighted that the socio-demographic factors have an influence on the employee intention to depart or remain at their organisations (Akova et al., 2015; Chowdhury, 2015; Hundera, 2014). This implies that there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and rewards (Akhigbe & Onuoha; Dodanwala & San Santoso, 2021; Emiroğlu et al., 2015). When the rewards are not compatible, lecturers will be forced to leave their institutions. Furthermore, this also the reason they engage in part-time work, for example, lecturing at other universities while they are permanently employed by another university, to supplement their income. Therefore, socio-demographic factors influence brain drain among academics.

A study conducted by Onah and Anikwe (2016) which involved the Nigerian universities identified salary packages as one of the problems that affects attraction and retention of quality academic staff. Gurmessa et al. (2018) found out that staff turnover is one of the critical challenges facing higher learning institutions. Bwowe (2020) indicated that the availability of job opportunities elsewhere and lack of advancement opportunities have triggered academic lecturers to migrate to other countries. This means that high turnover is being experienced among academic staff; therefore, this calls for the HR management profession to reconsider ways that they can use to retain and motivate lecturers in a precarious environment.

Fonjungo et al. (2013) revealed that the majority of staff member who left Addis Ababa University are lecturers, this might be the result of people with higher education levels having higher expectations for financial rights, since Iqbal (2010) indicated that they have got more needs to fulfil, more than the low educational levels. Owence et al. (2014) stated that there is a natural discrepancy between what employees believe they should be paid and what institutions spend on rewards, and most of them believe they are worth more than they are paid. Hence when rewards do not match the qualifications academic lecturers will be forced to leave the university for better rewarding posts.

High academic turnover results in a number of problems for higher education, which include increased costs for hiring and training new employees, loss of research outputs, and decreased organisational productivity (Barkhuizen et al., 2020). As a result of lecturers being replaced mid-semester, the quality of instruction may suffer (Komalasari et al., 2020). As a result, the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education should find ways to attract motivate and retain lecturers to reduce high labour turnover and migration.

The migration of academics has been a clear indication that lecturers in Zimbabwe are earning less than their counterparts abroad. As a result, they find migration to be one of the alternatives that they can pursue to balance their inputs and outputs to match the middle-class status. However, not all academics are in a position to migrate; some of them prefer not to migrate, on account of their different circumstances.

2.5.2 Health profession and brain drain in Zimbabwe

The British Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care introduced new Health and Care Visas in July 2020 (Nickson et al., 2021). This resulted in more affordable, quick and easy migration of healthcare professionals from Zimbabwe to UK (Karombo, 2020). The high rate of migration by healthcare professionals starting in 2020 was due to the fact that they are earning less than professionals in equivalent positions abroad (Dzinamarira & Musuka, 2021). Ministry of Health and Child Care (2019) furthermore stated that 34% of doctor positions were vacant as of December 2019 and that this high rate is still present.

The health sector is experiencing a severe human capital crisis, particularly in Africa (Mathauer & Imhoff, 2006). Economic push factors have necessitated for this high outward migration of skilled professionals from developing to industrialised nations (Docquier et al., 2007;

Gaidzanwa, 1999). In other words, economic factors, particularly in Zimbabwe, are to blame for the exodus of skilled professionals from African nations. Low salaries and the high inflation rate could be one of the reasons skilled professionals are looking for greener pastures.

Dodani and LaPorte (2005) claim that brain drain is the migration of medical professionals to other nations in search of good standards of living, higher salary, and more stable political conditions. The high brain drain of doctors and nurses emerged as a result of failure of Zimbabwe's ESAP, which was introduced to improve the economic status of the country (Mapepa & Adekoye, 2019). The increase in living expenses and the decline of professional status as a result of poor salaries has made professionals look for jobs in other fields (Mudzonga, 2022). Maphoto (2022) adds that health professionals have left Zimbabwe in large numbers due to deteriorating political and socio-economic environment. In other words, doctors in Zimbabwe are forced to migrate to other countries due to the low salaries that are being obtained in the country. According to Chikanda and Tawodzera (2017), most of the medical professionals who have emigrated from Zimbabwe have gone to nations like the United Kingdom and South Africa where their qualifications and skills are respected and recognised. It can also be noted that such countries are well developed they have stable economies, they pay their employees considering the inputs. Hence, when the inputs and outputs do not match, one will be forced to engage in unorthodox means or migrate to other countries as they try to belong to the global middle-class category.

2.6 Global middle-class characteristics

Ravallion (2009) defines middle classes in developing nations as having an income range between the median poverty line and the category of the middle class in the West, which is above the US poverty line. The World Bank (2021) July statistics indicates that people with incomes between US \$4,096 and \$12,535 per month, fall into the middle class category. Savage et al. (2013) also describe the middle class in terms of earnings and spending. This implies that the middle class is determined by the financial benefits that a job offers. The elite professions in Zimbabwe, such as medicine, law, and academia, are those with salaries that are close to the poverty threshold. As a result, these occupations are eligible to be classified as middle class by the definition. However, Lentz and Melber (2016), Neubert (2014) and Spronk (2014) argued that the middle class category's income threshold in Africa is a moot point, necessitating other methods that go beyond income to define middle class.

People who are experiencing an increase in their income and purchasing power are becoming more prevalent, especially in developing nations (McEwan et al., 2015). The number of people who are seeing their incomes rise is increasing, which implies that the middle class is also growing.

The middle-class category is described as having an income within some interval that includes the median and the interval which has been typically symmetric in income space around the median (Ravallion, 2009). This definition suite in developed countries where there are stable economies.

Neubert (2014) stated that the degree of income and the quantitative levels of consumption that the middle class engages in are used to define and compare them. The economic cut off that designates middle class is determined by daily income and expenditures per person. Depending on the nation or continent, there is diversity in income and spending. As a result, it becomes somewhat challenging for the elite professions to be classified as middle class in the context of Zimbabwe.

Freidson (1973a) and Freidson (1983) made the case that professionals have influence over both their clients and the labour markets. The middle class has influence over the markets because they have higher incomes than other social groups (Dallinger, 2013). Owing to their limitations, they also have control over their clients. For example, there are not many gynaecologists in Zimbabwe (Chinene et al., 2022). Therefore, one has to wait for their services. However, it is a different situation when it comes to the Zimbabwean doctors. They no longer have control over their clients, since some of these clients have a better financial status than them. Gosha (2020) highlighted that businesspeople belong to the middle-class category. Henceforth, medical doctors are now under the businesspeople in terms of the social hierarchy because of the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe.

Ncube and Lufumpa (2014), among other scholars and economists, have emphasised the need to pay attention to the emergence of a new African middle class category that is based on disposable income. In other words middle class is a social class with enough disposable income for consumption. Law and medicine are two examples of professions that can be categorised as projects of monopolisation of status, income, and work in a specific labour or service market (Muzio et al., 2013). Elite professions have market control, which also means they have economic control over the nation (Wu et al., 2019). However, this a different scenario when it

comes to the Zimbabwean setup. Hence the need for a close look at elite professionals and consider their new traits in the context of precarious employment.

Saks (2012) considers professionals to be a dependable force in society. The taxonomic approach believes that professionals have a wide range of traits that set them apart from other occupations (Lawman, 2021). This implies that elite professions differ significantly from other occupations because they enjoy a higher social status within society as they also contribute positively to the society or country at large. They also earn better salaries as a result they can afford a different life style which is different from the majority of people in the society. This is also supported by Freidson (2001), who considered professionalism as a more practical form of social organisation that is both bureaucratic and consumeristic in nature. Elite occupations in a nation typically bring in higher salaries than other occupations. The academic, legal and medical professions are believed to be the highest paying jobs in Zimbabwe (Mutekwe et al., 2011). However, owing to the unstable environment, which is characterised by high inflation and a high unemployment rate, they are no longer able to afford to live better lives than the businesspeople in the nation (Kanonge, 2021).

The idea of professionalism is not as prevalent outside of Anglo-American literature, where it refers to the privileged, high status and high income occupational groups (Evetts, 2009). High income is a defining characteristic of professions in more industrialised nations with stable economies. In other words, occupations have a higher status because they pay well. However, this idea becomes controversial in developing nations like Zimbabwe, where higher inflation devalues the professional status of its citizens, pushing them out of the middle-class category. This therefore makes it difficult to differentiate professions from other occupations (Svensson & Evetts, 2003).

2.6.1 High income and purchasing parity

The fact that there is a skills flight of medical professionals to other nations implies that doctors are leaving the country in search of better economic opportunities (IRUO, 2021; Ogbu, 2019). Chikanda (2007) indicates that the economic factors are largely responsible for the magnitude of the migration of health practitioners from Zimbabwe to other countries. Bludau (2021) supports that the economic factors are largely responsible for the outflow of skilled professionals from the continent. This demonstrates that middle-class professionals need high income and high purchasing power. As result they are now being forced to go countries where

there is high purchasing parity and income while others are engaging in different activities to support their meagre salaries.

The existing literature stipulates a number of qualities that should be possessed by middle-class people, including income (although the exact amount that qualifies as middle class varies greatly from country to country), educational level, home and car ownership, possession of consumer goods (home furnishings and appliances), access to credit, spending on leisure and travel, and a general orientation toward consumption (Iqani, 2017; Magubane, 2017; Thurlow et al., 2015; Uner & Gungordu, 2016). However, middle class can connote more than the aforementioned factors. Despite having a high income, it is another feature that being middle class comes with a certain social value (Johnson & Johnson, 2016), that is, that society values individuals based on what they possess.

2.6.2 Consumerism/willingness to pay extra for quality

Handley (2015) also describes the middle-class category in terms of the consumer class, and it is also one of the characteristics of elite professions. Consequently, the middle class category can frequently be described as a consuming class (Bennett et al., 2009; Liechty, 2003). Kharas (2010) asserts that middle classes in South Africa are frequently referred to as the consumer classes because of their possessions. This proves that consumers in the middle class have the means and are prepared to pay more to obtain superior goods than those of other consumers. Given the state of the Zimbabwean economy, this is a bit challenging. Elite professionals are prioritising cheaper goods as some of them are using public transport as they do not afford to fuel their cars due to poor salaries. Nevertheless, Evans (2011) argued that prioritising cheaper goods can be seen as a person's ethical decision to avoid wasting money and as well as their unwillingness to pay more for sustainable goods.

2.6.3 Control in Economic and political status of a country

According to Liechty (2003), professional groups are able to create and mould significant changes in the labour market. The economy of the nation is shaped by professionals (Candia et al., 2020; Galea & Abdalla, 2020). In other words, they sculpt the nation's middle class. Brock et al. (2014), furthermore stated that professionals like accountants and lawyers are now significant economic actors as they arbitrate, regulate, and support domestic and international trade. Professionals are therefore important to the nation as the nation's economy depends on

them. The former President of the United States Barack Obama in (Johnson & Johnson, 2016) highlighted that middle class people in America are the country's economic backbone. This emphasise the notion that middle class people are the engine of the economy.

Boushey and Hersh (2012) claimed that a strong middle class in a nation supports inclusive political and economic institutions that, in turn, support the nation's economic growth. The middle class denotes a society with the possibility of upward mobility and achievement above the level of subsistence, as well as an open rather than a closed opportunity structure (Landry & Marsh, 2011). However, elite professions in Zimbabwe do not have control over the economy and political status on account of the nature of their rewards. This calls for a re-examination of elite professions in a precarious environment.

2.6.4 High Social Status

Bonnin and Ruggunan (2013) assert that any professionalization initiatives must prioritise social closure. For a profession to be considered middle class, there must be social closure. However, owing to the economic environment, they cannot monopolise other groups for them to be recognised in Zimbabwe's current political climate.

2.7 Chapter summary

The second chapter of this thesis examined the introductory and general literature on elite professions and its attributes. The main aim of this thesis is to examine the impact of the unstable economic environment on elite professions. This chapter's focus was on the conceptual and theoretical foundation that underpinned this thesis. The study was backed up by the equity theory developed by Stacey Adams. The two-factor theory was also used as a supporting theory to strengthen the thesis.

The Equity Theory emphasises that there must be a balance between the inputs and outputs of employees. When a disequilibrium is felt employees will lower their inputs to match the outputs. The chapter proceeds looking at the implications of the precarious environment to the elite professions in Zimbabwe in as far as HRM is concerned. The next chapter will focus on literature that is particularly relevant to the three professions being studied; medical doctors, lawyers, and academic lecturers.

CHAPTER 3

MIDDLE CLASS AND ELITE PROFESSIONS IN RELATION TO HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the conceptual and theoretical framework that guided this thesis. This chapter focuses on the related preliminary literature about middle class and elite professions, namely, the medical, legal and academic professions. The unstable economic environment has reconfigured the social class of elite professionals; as a result, this has ripple effects on HRM. Therefore, there is a need for organisations that employ elite professionals to relook at the reward policies for elite professions so as to reduce their negative effect on both elite professionals and HRM.

3.2 The concept of middle class in Zimbabwe

The term middle class is used differently, depending on the country or societal context. Middle class in developing nations is defined as those who are still considered poor by United States standards but do not fall below the median poverty line in those nations (Ravallion, 2009). Southall (2020) asserts that middle class is one of the social classes in the nation that struggles to maintain its status due to the rising cost of living. This indicates that elite professions are in the middle category as they are continuously finding it difficult to maintain their social status.

The body of literature on professions is enormous and has long been a trending topic, but most of it has emerged from a sociological perspective (Adams, 2010). A robust middle class supports inclusive political and economic institutions that support economic growth (Boushey & Hersh, 2012). By virtue of elite professions being in the middle class, they must drive and support the economic institutions that support the economic growth of the nation. Professions share a common interest and control the social conditions and environment that surrounds them (Muzio et al., 2013), while the middle class consist of highly ranked professionals (Schlemmer, 2005). This implies that doctors, lawyers and lecturers are considered middle class when it comes to the Zimbabwean setup. They drive and control the economy because they are the highly ranked professionals. Southall (2020) furthermore stated that middle class refers to individuals who are economically independent but have little social influence or power.

The middle class is frequently described as a consuming class (Bennett et al., 2009; Donner, 2012; Liechty, 2020; Vann, 2012). In other words, the members of the middle class are defined in terms of their income and expenditure, as these aspects directly affect the consumption of an individual. The particular histories and socioeconomic formations of each cultural context will shape the characteristics of each middle class, which will be global because transnational flows of finance, media, and culture ultimately influence middle class consumption patterns (Iqani, 2017). Kharas (2010) also strengthened the notion that consumer behaviour defines the middle class. In this case, it is the consumer culture that defines the middle class of a country. This definition becomes difficult to apply in the Zimbabwean context. Some of the elite professionals who are said to be in this category use public transport because they do not have the ability to drive cars. They cannot afford fuel for their day-to-day running. Therefore, this calls for an alternative definition of middle class that better suits the context of Zimbabwe and other developing countries.

Middle class is defined by López and Weinstein (2012) as initially being both transnational and globally oriented. Middle class is something that was created in a historical time and place through common practices of class distinction, rather than a structure into which individuals can be slotted (Gilbertson, 2014). Although economists disagree on the precise makeup of the world's middle classes and the best way to define them, they generally concur that the number of people who are experiencing rising incomes and rising purchasing power is on the rise, especially in developing nations (McEwan et al., 2015).

High income is one of the indicator that an individual belongs to a middle class (Wiesel et al., 2023). Omar and Inaba (2020) and Pratomo et al. (2020) argued that the exact amount that defines middle class varies greatly from country to country. Johnson and Johnson (2016) argued that middle class can connote more than income. Nevertheless, one has to have enough disposable income for him or her to enjoy the benefits of a middle-class person, such as owning a house and/or car and spending the money on leisure and other activities (Elhefnawy, 2021; Hansen, 2020). Some of the elite professionals in Zimbabwe are not enjoying these rights; this therefore implies that they do not belong to the middle class.

Another trait of the middle class is their willingness to pay more for high-quality products (Kornher et al., 2019). In other words, groups of people in the middle class category are expected to pay extra or more than the majority for them to obtain quality goods than the other

classes or majority. In this regard the elite professions who are in the middle class category must be willing to pay extra than the majority. However, this is a different case when it comes to the Zimbabwean set up, elite profession are consuming goods just like the majority. It is commonly believed that the middle classes are homogeneous and that this homogeneity applies not only to a particular society but to all societies worldwide (Chen & Goodman, 2013). This means that elite professionals in Zimbabwe do not qualify to fall under middle class. As a result, the definition of middle class needs to be reconsidered, particularly in unstable economic environments. In contrast, South Africa sees and understands the middle class as the consumer class (Kharas, 2010; Visagie & Posel, 2013), which is becomes different to the way it is regarded in developing countries like Zimbabwe.

It is impossible to simply or easily transfer models created in one world to another because doing so produces unreliable assumptions and expectations (Scharrer et al., 2018). Therefore, one will end up believing and accepting that middle class in Zimbabwe is merely rhetoric and there is need to clarify what middle class means from a Zimbabwean perspective.

The emergence of a world middle-class society has been heralded by the global middle-class category (Kharas, 2010). However, its group members are expected to have similar lifestyles, habits, and pursuits (Scharrer et al., 2018). Therefore, when a common lifestyle is not shared within the same category, it calls for a relook at reward policies and procedures of elite professionals to consider whether they still belong in that category. It also strengthen the neoclassical theory of international migration, which state that wage disparities between nations cause people to move abroad in order to increase their income (Bauer & Zimmermann, 2018; Malmberg, 2021).

One of the biggest development challenges facing African nations is human capital flight, (Sako, 2002). The high brain drain of skilled professionals from African countries, particularly from Zimbabwe, is due to the economic upheaval which does not sustain the living of most professionals. Robinson (2020) adds that this exodus of skilled workers from Zimbabwe is caused by a variety of economic factors. Professionals will leave their native land as a result of earning rewards that they are not comfortable with. When the results are not pleasurable, an employee can seek better opportunities that help sustain a living. This could be one of the challenges that is hindering growth of Zimbabwe, as skilled professional continue to leave the country to other countries where there are better opportunities.

Sub-Saharan Africans who work in the health sector, including doctors, spend a lot of time on things that are not actually part of their jobs. (Roenen et al., 1997). In other words, professions can engage in other activities which are not professional in order for them to balance the economic dilemma that they are in which affect their social life. Mambiravana et al. (2022) indicated that middle class in Zimbabwe engage in extra jobs to supplement their income. This could be one the reasons academic and health professionals engage in informal business as they try to supplement their income.

Mambiravana et al. (2022) assert that middle class are educated professionals who play a vital role in various sectors such as education, social development and health. This clearly indicates that elite professionals in Zimbabwe are in the middle-class category, since Mambiravana et al. (2022) furthermore stated that middle class people afford to live an average life and have resources to access necessities such as education for their children, healthcare services, and shelter for their families. However, as a result of the socio-economic environment, they are finding it difficult to enjoy these and therefore end up resorting to migration (Gwaradzimba & Shumba, 2010) and other job activities as to supplement their income (Mambiravana et al., 2022).

As earlier on highlighted by the previous paragraphs, the Zimbabwean political social and economic landscape has reconfigured the middle class. Gosha (2020) stated that the traditional division of society into upper class, middle class, and lower class is fading into obscurity as new categories emerge from the constantly shifting environment. Figure 3.1 below indicate how the social class of elite professions in Zimbabwe has been reconfigured.

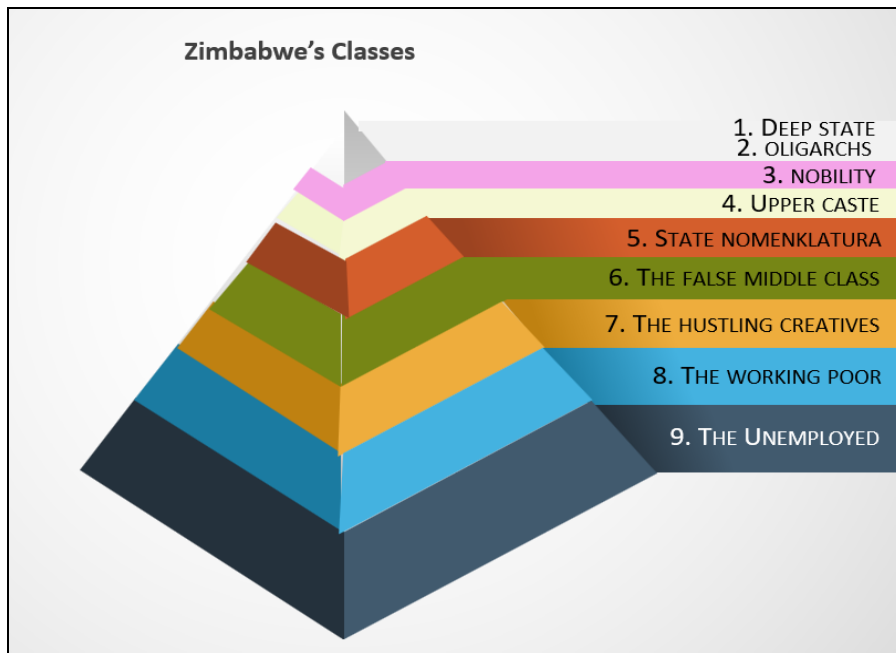


Figure 3.1: Zimbabwe Classes

Adapted from Gosha (2020)

Gosha (2020) indicated that doctors and lawyers, among other professionals, belong to the upper caste. This implies that elite professions are below businesspeople because they have more wealth class. This clearly indicates how the socio-economic environment has reconfigured the status of elite professions, as they are simply regarded as experts who offer expertise to the deep state and oligarch (Gosha, 2020).

3.3 The concept of Elite Professions and middle class in Zimbabwe

More inequality exists in high level professions like medicine and law than in other career paths (Strømme & Hansen, 2017). In addition, these are elite fields with demanding entrance requirements and high levels of rewards (Pedersen et al., 2010; Reimer & Pollak, 2010). This clearly indicates that elite professions are eligible for the middle-class category due to their high level of rewards.

Norway views the legal and medical professions as elite because of the fierce competition for admission and the high expectations placed on candidates' salaries (Borgen & Mastekaasa, 2018; Hansen, 2008). This clearly shows that output and income should be equivalent, and as a result, elite professions should have high salaries on account of their level of education.

Strømme and Hansen (2017) add that there is a vertical difference with regard to education; this calls for the increase in horizontal differences, that is, in terms of benefits reaped.

Mather (2011) suggests that professions enjoy autonomy. This means that a profession regulates itself and is also able to make independent judgements about the profession. However, this is different when compared to the Zimbabwean setup. Industrial action that concerns poor working conditions and salary grievances are being considered as political moves (Mwonzora, 2022). This is evidenced by Madzimure and Chipunza (2019), who indicated that the medical doctors who were fired for engaging in industrial action in 2018 over poor salaries and working conditions were supposed to reapply to be accepted back into practicing. This is a clear indication that the vice president took the industrial action by medical doctors as a threat to the ruling party. African News Agency (2019) reported that the vice president allegedly accused the medical professionals of engaging in poor negotiating tactics, proving that their strike was driven by politics. As a result, they were fired from work. This clearly indicates lack of autonomy in elite professions, as their industrial action was politicised.

In addition, the lack of autonomy and the politicising of Zimbabwean professions may also be noted in the case of the former University of Zimbabwe vice chancellor Professor Levi Nyagura, who was arrested for awarding the former first lady Dr Grace Mugabe a doctoral degree (Mashininga, 2018; Razemba & Nemukuyu, 2018). In this case, the former vice chancellor had to follow the rules and regulations of the former and late president Robert Mugabe since Garwe and Thondhlana (2019) highlighted that the president is the Chancellor of all universities in Zimbabwe. Hence the former vice chancellor had to follow the commands. However he was later arrested after the removal of the late president Mugabe by coup as the regime had changed.

The legal profession is also not spared from this lack of autonomy and politics. A number of lawyers are being arrested and detained in prisons as they are being associated with politics. Job Sikhala is one of the prominent lawyers who was arrested after seeking justice for one of the clients who was killed. Dhewa (2022) highlighted that Sikhala has been arrested over 60 times. However, it is the duty of the lawyer to represent the clients but in this case, they are now linked to politics that is why they are arrested.

Furthermore, Sommerlad (2016) indicated that only a small number of women attain a partnership status. This is due to the fact that the legal profession in Zimbabwe is being

politicised; therefore, few women will aim for partnership status. This notion has been strengthened by Maunganidze and Bonnin (2021), who highlighted that politics is one of the major barriers for women in the legal profession.

3.4 Career planning and progression of elite professions in Zimbabwe

Chebet (2015) highlighted that effective HR encompasses career planning and succession planning. This section focuses on career planning progression from three dimensions: the academic, legal and health professions.

3.4.1 Career planning and progression in the academic profession

All facets of Zimbabwe's economy were shaken, and in some cases destroyed, by the politically motivated but chaotic land redistribution exercise that occurred in 2000 (Mushonga & Nyakudya, 2011). Zimbabwe's educational system was not exempted either; like all other economic sectors, it suffered greatly from the brain drain or the exodus of professionals to domestic, regional and international locations as several studies have shown (Hwami, 2022; Kanonge & Bussin, 2022; Manyau et al., 2022; Shumba & Mawere, 2012). As a result, there is a critical shortage of academic staff as higher education institutions (HEIs) are struggling to attract and keep highly qualified talent (Mabaso & Dlamini, 2021), despite the fact that human resources is the most important and valuable resource an organisation can have as it is also the foundation of organisational effectiveness. The inability of HEIs to attract and retain has resulted in migration. However not all of the academic have the capacity and privilege to migrate to other countries there those who have remained in the country. It is yet to be seen how the redefined middle class has affected academics from an HR perspective.

Yankholmes (2014) argued that universities and other institutions of higher learning should adopt a policy encouraging academic staff to publish in a select number of journals. According to Plume and van Weijen (2014), the phrase "publish or perish" is frequently used to refer to the pressure academics place on researchers to publish their work. This indicates that academics are encouraged to publish articles, as their promotion relies on the number of publications they have made.

Closely linked to the above, an increase in student enrolment without a corresponding increase in academic staff compromises the quality of universities (Yankholmes, 2014). Vurayai and Ndofirepi (2022) added that academics are required to participate in community engagement

through article writing, as it determines their promotion in their career. Although institutions value service less than research, women often encounter challenges regarding promotion, as it consumes more time for them than it does for their male counterparts (Flaherty, 2017). This implies that men experience fewer challenges than their female counterparts when it comes to career planning and progression.

The primary advantage of publishing is that it encourages lecturers to concentrate on producing research for the advancement of their careers and the benefit of academia and society at large (Carnelley, 2018). This emphasises the importance of career planning and progressions in the academic profession. However, owing to the VUCA environment, elite professionals may not consider writing articles, as they are busy focusing on moneymaking projects to supplement their income. Kamwendo (2014) indicated that many African academics are at risk of the publish or perish rule. Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (2013) has emphasised research and publication in higher education in Zimbabwe as it is attributed to tenure and promotion criteria. This implies that academics will focus on publishing only during their probation time, which is about 3 to 5 years (Vurayai & Ndofirepi, 2022).

Academics have three main responsibilities in institutions, namely, teaching, community engagement and research (Vurayai & Ndofirepi, 2022). Cummings (2013) and Wadesango (2014) furthermore stated that research output has a significant influence on decisions about tenure, promotions, pay raises and mobility. Von Solms and Von Solms (2016) argued that having few or no publications could jeopardise an academic's career.

Victor and Babatunde (2014) revealed that motivation and academic performance have a significant relationship. Chinamasa (2012) and Zhang and Davies (2014) furthermore stated that academics are motivated by monetary rewards to produce publications. This implies that academics need motivation in terms of rewards and pay in order to increase their publication output. Carnelley (2018) asserts that academics are under pressure to publish for personal gain rather than for the advancement of society.

In addition, Imhonopi and Urim (2013) state that research initiatives cannot take place in obsolescent, insufficient and poor infrastructure. Okendo (2018) argued that, as a result, universities should provide and increase budgetary allocations to enhance research productivity. Atieno et al. (2022) furthermore stated that academics' efforts to conduct research are hampered by the high cost of publishing. Owing to these publishing costs, academics are

not in a position to publish articles. Carter and Aulette (2016) argued that, despite a number of challenged on academics, they are being encouraged to publish articles.

Kumwenda et al. (2017) and Managa (2013) revealed that many universities in Africa do not conduct research and frequently face challenges publishing in reputable, high-impact journals. Fewer publications could be the result of a funding shortage, particularly in unstable environments (Sułkowski et al., 2020). Atieno et al. (2022) assert that allocations for research publication funds are zero because of the need to balance limited resources in this economy. That is the reason that African countries do not possess adequate research (Tierney, 2012). This implies that there will be no career planning and progression in the academics due to lack of funding for researchers.

Since universities no longer fund publications, academic lecturers are now primarily concerned with ways to increase their income in the uncertain environment (Jung et al., 2021). Professorship is now attained only by those who can afford to pay page fees for the publication of their articles (Garwe, 2015b; Thondhlana & Chirume, 2016). In this regard, publication becomes secondary, as the academics need finances to support their families according to the middle-class category.

3.4.2 Career planning and progression in the medical profession

The most extensively researched topic in global healthcare is the migration of healthcare professionals (Bludau, 2021). Zimbabwe's health sector is not spared from this. It has suffered greatly from the brain drain, which has resulted in unprecedented opportunities for global mobility and a sharp decline in working conditions and prospects at home (Southall, 2020). Most of the health professionals who have left Zimbabwe have migrated to countries where their qualifications are recognised, such as the United Kingdom, South Africa and Botswana (Mbiba et al., 2020). However not all of the health professions have resorted to migration some of them are still working under the precarious environment in Zimbabwe.

Chimbari et al. (2008) suggested that the lack of career planning and advancement in Zimbabwe's healthcare system is to blame for the health sector's gloomy outlook. This emphasises the importance of career planning and advancement for medical doctors in Zimbabwe, if the country is to improve its healthcare system. A study by Delobelle et al. (2011) indicated that the only way to improve job satisfaction in the healthcare system was through

wages and unblocking promotion channels. However, health workers no longer focus on promotion but rather ways to maximise their outputs so as to enjoy the middle-class status.

Chikanda (2005) stated that doctors in Zimbabwe also frequently leave their jobs due to a lack of facilities and resources and a lack of opportunities for advancement and self-improvement. Akinwale and George (2023) furthermore stated that migration is possible for all health professionals, since they have marketable skills. This implies that medical doctors also require career planning and progression so that they will not migrate or resign from public entities.

3.4.3 Career planning and progression of the legal profession

While the history and nature of the legal professions' work have started to expand in recent years (Alexander, 2010; Karekwaivanane, 2011; Tsunga, 2009), a number of questions remain unanswered, particularly their salaries in a volatile environment characterised by hyperinflation. There is still need to relook into how the prevailing socio-economic environment has reconfigured this legal profession which belong to a middle class category. However, studies have indicated that there is no much literature about career planning of legal professions.

Studies repeatedly show that working conditions for female lawyers are worse than for male lawyers (Hersch & Meyers, 2018); they earn lower pay and have fewer opportunities for promotion (Jackson, 2016). This means that lawyers also need career planning and progression. A lack of this might result in an exodus of them. Maunganidze (2020) furthermore stated that married women in the legal profession have difficulties advancing in the profession.

3.5 Training and development of elite professions

It has been noted in the previous chapter training and development is crucial, particularly in the ever-changing environment (Baran & Woznyj, 2020). This section elaborates further about training and development in the academic, legal and health profession.

3.5.1 Training and development in the academic profession

CPD continues to gain significance within a European context, putting more of a focus on lifelong learning and educators improving their performance (Alexandrou et al., 2005). Chitanana et al. (2008) recommended that academics engage in professional development

programmes. This indicates the importance of training and development programmes in the academic profession.

Masango (2015) revealed that academics' access to conference funding serves as a significant source of motivation for their research. This means that academics need institutional support through funding, as this offers them the possibility of increasing their research. However, the Zimbabwean institutions are not in a position to provide equitable salaries, let alone research grants. This therefore leads to less focus in training and development, as academics are not able to fund themselves to attend conferences. As a result, this will also hinder their career progression.

CPD improves lecturers' knowledge and skills and gives them the chance to think about their attitudes and methods in an effort to raise the standard of learning and teaching (Adu & Okeke, 2014; Wan & Lam, 2010). Gulston (2010) and Pitsoe and Maila (2012) emphasised that lecturers must develop their teaching skills in order to understand where they must learn new pedagogical and content concepts and assume new roles, for instance the Ministry of Higher Tertiary introduced a new curriculum change Education 5.0 from education 3.0 (Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, 2018a). Education 5.0 (Teaching, research, community service, innovation and industrialisation) is a philosophy meant to reorient Education 3.0 (teaching, research and community service). All tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe are demanded to apply the Education 5.0 as it helps to modernise and industrialise Zimbabwe (Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, 2018a). Togo and Gandidzanwa (2021) assert that Education 5.0 is meant to complement the national vision of being a middle-income economy by the year 2030, through the eradication of high unemployment. Tertiary institutions are now turning to problem-solving for value creation by preparing students not only for white-collar jobs or to become job seekers, but also to be entrepreneurs (Muzira & Bondai, 2020). This is meant to eradicate the high unemployment rate, which stands at 21%, for the nation and for the students (Sithole et al., 2021; ZIMSTAT, 2022). However, nothing is being done for already disgruntled lecturers. In other words, there is now of job enlargement to lecturers who are already dissatisfied with work. As a result, lecturers will reduce their inputs since there is a sense of inequality.

Owence et al. (2014) state that any organisation's staff should continue to pursue academic goals in order to improve the organisation's standards and relevance. This means that they need

some form professional development, since some of the academic professions are encountering challenges with this new curriculum (Muzira & Bondai, 2020). These programmes are very crucial; however only few lecturers join such CPD programmes as Adu and Okeke (2014); Mwanza-Kabaghe and Mofu-Mwansa (2018) revealed that lecturers have insufficient resources to participate in CPD programmes such as seminars. It is therefore necessary to rethink the CPD of elite professionals who are living under precarious environment such as the one currently present in Zimbabwe.

Iwuchukwu and Echedom (2020) assert that development entails a wide range of activities intended to give employees skills relevant to their jobs. Academic lecturers must be continuously developed to renew the knowledge they have, as they impart this knowledge to others.

In addition, Kennedy (2007) and Wan and Lam (2010) assert that lecturers require continuing support in the form of CPD activities that will enhance their beliefs in their power to make a difference to their pupils' learning. CPD is important for academics but as a result of the nature of their salaries, they cannot afford such programmes, even though they are very crucial for them. Burton and Johnson (2010) and Steyn and Van Niekerk (2005) furthermore stated that highly qualified lecturers can influence students' learning and the quality of instruction in order to maintain the educational system. This means that CPD helps improve the higher and tertiary education system in Zimbabwe; therefore, lecturers must be in a position to participate in CPD to improve the quality of learning in universities. In other words, if salaries and rewards are not equitable, academic lecturers will end up pursuing other means, some of which may be unethical, to support their living.

Academic lecturers are not able to participate in CPD programmes because the seminars are expensive for them, as they are not being supplied by grants by their universities to participate in such seminars (Chitanana et al., 2008). Their salaries do not allow them to continuously develop themselves (Muzira & Bondai, 2020).

3.5.2 Training and development in the health profession

Chimbari et al. (2008) stated that medical professionals who are interested in furthering their professional development should be provided with suitable housing, educational allowances, and low-interest student loans. Chmielewska et al. (2020) furthermore stated that more training

and development initiatives for medical staff should be carried out by hospitals. This emphasises the importance of CPD for medical doctors to renew their skills in order for the organisation to be competitive. However, due to the economic setup in Zimbabwe, medical doctors are not able to engage in these development programmes. This may, in turn, reduce the quality of services being offered in the public institutions.

Henderson and Tulloch (2008) state that training and development, career planning and performance management help to build the knowledge and skills of employees required for the middle class. A study by Ramasodi (2012) indicated that professional development in doctors is important as it also affects job satisfaction.

3.5.3 Training and development in the legal profession

According to the Statutory Instrument 37 of 2015, CPD means the system of continuing legal education, under which a lawyer who has finished their pupillage must complete a minimum of 12 hours of professional academic engagements, including mandatory pupillage training, to qualify for the renewal of their practising certificate for each calendar year of practice (Gold et al. (2007)). This clearly indicates that continuous development is an ongoing process in the legal profession, which requires someone with a sound financial background to renew their practicing certificates.

Law is a stressful occupation (Brough & Boase, 2019) and in an already pressuring environment, it can be challenging to prioritise one's CPD (Gold et al., 2007; McGuire et al., 2001), since it may cause more stress than it's worth. Lawyers need more income to engage in CPD programmes to renew their practicing certificates. This may cause stress to them since their clients may fail to afford their services.

It has been indicated by the literature that there is not much literature about training and development in the health and legal profession. Therefore, this thesis will add more literature about training and development on the existing to the medical and legal profession particularly in precarious environment.

3.6 Job satisfaction of elite professionals

Job satisfaction is defined as an emotional response defining the degree to which people like their job (Amin, 2021). A study by Davidescu et al. (2020) indicated that job satisfaction

contributes to the development and retention of human capital in organisation. Employees need to be satisfied with their jobs so that organisations may be effective. Therefore, this section of the study provides more details on job satisfaction of elite professionals, namely, the legal, academic and health professions.

3.6.1 Job satisfaction in the academic profession

Laakso (2020) stated that Zimbabwe's success can be attributed to the constitution's recognition of academic freedom and the respect accorded to public universities' autonomy. However this seems to be on paper only, as Gukurume (2019b) argued that institutions are regarded as a socio-political space, since spies and state security agents pose as students on campus. This surveillance of public institutions has been detailed by Moyo (2016). Gukurume (2018) furthermore stated that academics are seen as rivals of the state and supporters of insurgence. This leads to the high dissatisfaction of academics, as they constantly teach in fear of the security agents at the institution. This is also evidenced by security agents that are deployed to monitor and control students and academics on campus (Gukurume, 2019b).

A study by Chimanikire et al. (2007) revealed that lecturers with high dependants are satisfied with monetary rewards. This suggests that when monetary rewards fail to satisfy their needs, they will seek better opportunities with better monetary rewards to fulfil their needs. Nawab and Bhatti (2011) showed that compensation has an impact on job satisfaction in higher education. Gwaradzimba and Shumba (2010) and Shumba and Mawere (2012) revealed that, as a result of political and economic unrest in Zimbabwe, 100,000 academics alone have emigrated from their native nation to more developed nations and areas. This clearly suggests that the standard of living for academic lecturers has depreciated; therefore, they opt to move abroad for better income.

Closely related to the above, lecturers are now less concerned about publishing articles due to their salaries and lack of research grants (Garwe, 2015a). They now devote their research time to moonlighting to supplement their meagre salaries (Hardré et al., 2007). Sohail and Delin (2013) are of the opinion that compensation and job satisfaction among academics in higher education have a moderate relationship. Mabaso and Dlamini (2021) are of the view that salary is one of the primary reasons employees leave their organisation.

Job satisfaction has been found to be one cause of staff turnover: employees experiencing job dissatisfaction leave their current employer easily (Abdali, 2011). According to Hardré et al. (2007), a lack of institutional support in the form of providing funding for research activities is among the key reasons for dissatisfaction among academics. Sorkness et al. (2017) found that a lack of support and mentorship in academia reduces one's level of satisfaction. This suggests that academic lecturers lack support from their employers and their peers. As a result of job dissatisfaction, universities are experiencing high labour turnover. Kanonge (2021) furthermore stated that universities have lost over 100,000 academics.

Kanonge and Bussin (2022) stated that academic institutions in Zimbabwe are encountering a new wave of brain drain. When the work environment is not conducive to the lecturers, it will affect their job satisfaction and result in high turnover (Bigirimana & Sibanda, 2016; Kanonge & Bussin, 2022; Segbenya et al., 2022). Universities in Zimbabwe, both private and public, are losing academic staff as a result of low salaries (Bigirimana & Sibanda, 2016). Noordin and Jusoff (2009) found that employee satisfaction has a high impact on academic employee commitment and low turnover.

According to ILO/UNESCO (2008), working conditions have an impact on the lecturers entering or leaving the profession. Mugimu (2021) and Kigotho (2021) discovered that there is a lack of internet connectivity and access in HEIs in Africa. This implies that there will be high attrition, as people will not be willing to join a profession that does not offer conducive working environment.

Several lecturers have shifted their focus to consulting work and donor-funded research projects (Hungwe, 2011; Mushonga & Nyakudya, 2011), while some choose to work privately and part-time as tutors in exclusive colleges (Mkandatsama & Nyanhete, 2017). Others take up petty trading (Kabonga, 2020) or dealing in foreign currency (Gukurume, 2019a; Mambiravana et al., 2022), among other alternative means so as to supplement their salaries, which are being eroded by the hyperinflation.

Higher education institutions are now understaffed on account of the inability to recruit and retain highly qualified and talented employees (Mabaso & Dlamini, 2021). Mutula (2009) revealed that most African countries face high challenges that include heavy teaching loads. Mustafa (2013) indicated in that, in order to produce top-notch graduates, all HEIs should give

maximum attention to the job satisfaction of their academics. Heavy teaching loads may consequently lead to employee dissatisfaction.

Anwar and Shukur (2015) study on the impact of training and development on job satisfaction in private banks revealed that development significantly correlates to job satisfaction. They further indicated that organisations should emphasise the idea of job satisfaction in order to survive and thrive in today's competitive marketplace and economy. The level of satisfaction of individuals is linked to the rise of organisational output (Lambert et al., 2001). Another study by Costen and Salazar (2011) revealed that employees who perceive that they have an opportunity to develop new skills are more satisfied with their jobs. Jehanzeb and Mohanty (2018) reported the positive impact of employee development initiatives on job satisfaction. Chaudhary and Bhaskar (2016) uncovered a strong relationship between training and development and job satisfaction. This emphasises the importance of training and development on employee satisfaction.

3.6.2 Job satisfaction in the health profession

Mabaso and Dlamini (2021) stated that employee satisfaction has remained a remarkable area in the field of HRM. Herzberg's two-factor theory describes money and benefits as hygiene factors. However, Shannon et al. (2019) purports that most people agree that wages have an impact on job satisfaction. This has also caused healthcare workers to move across the nation (McCoy et al., 2008). The migration of health professionals indicates low job satisfaction.

Closely related to the above, Mathauer and Imhoff (2006); Romig and Bryant (2021) argued that financial incentives are crucial and that the issue of low salaries must be solved because the income of health professionals and their families is insufficient to meet even the most basic needs. A research by Mafini and Dlodlo (2014) showed that the relationship between pay and job satisfaction is somewhat positive. Migration of health professions from Zimbabwe to other countries clearly indicates that healthcare professionals are earning less than they should be earning comparing to other neighbouring countries. Therefore, this makes it difficult to categorise them as middle class.

Health workers are also affected by relative pay and income differences, which can result in dissatisfaction, a lack of motivation, and a move towards higher paying jobs (McCoy et al., 2008). When there is loss of motivation and dissatisfaction of the job, employees might engage

in industrial action such that the employer reviews their salaries (Russo et al., 2019). It is crucial to understand that participation in industrial action by medical professionals, especially those working for the government, is not just a phenomenon of the post-Mugabe era (Mwonzora, 2022). However, the main concern is on the frequency and recurrence of these industrial actions, which indicates job dissatisfaction among health professionals. Russo et al. (2019) stated that in recent years the health profession has been engaging in industrial action on yearly basis. Gualano et al. (2016) stated that job satisfaction is the personal attitude towards all aspects of work; as a result, salary, working conditions and organisational environment are considered to be directly linked to the turnover intentions of health professionals.

Zimbabwean medical professionals, including junior doctors, stopped working in March 2018 and did not resume until December of that year because of a variety of workplace complaints, including low pay, a lack of medicine supply and crumbling hospital infrastructure (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, 2018). Makoni (2019) revealed that the senior and junior doctors started industrial action as a result of poor pay and deteriorating working conditions. This is a clear indication that lack of motivation in the medical profession.

If employees are happy in their jobs, they will exhibit pleasant attitudes (Millán et al., 2013). Qasim and Syed (2012) stated the importance of financial incentives in determining job satisfaction. Herzberg considers rewards as hygiene factors that do not lead to job satisfaction (Alshmemri et al. 2017). However, Maslow's hierarchy of needs indicates that individuals need money to support their needs (Poston, 2009).

Zimbabwean health professionals frequently go on strike to voice their dissatisfaction with their pay and working conditions, but the government has been unable to implement the necessary salary increases (Crush & Chikanda, 2017). Dandadzi et al. (2022) revealed that doctors in Zimbabwe refer patients to their own surgeries because they want to supplement their income. However this contrary is to the public as some of the patients may not afford private health care since it is more costly than public health care (Brekke & Sjørgard, 2007).

A study conducted by Lambrou et al. (2010) in African countries stressed the significance of non-financial incentives for doctors' motivation. Hofisi and Chingiro (2021) indicated that the Zimbabwe Health Service Board (ZHSB) emphasised the significance of monetary incentives for doctors to be motivation. This suggests that medical doctors in Zimbabwe require

both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for them to be able to meet global middle-class characteristics.

3.6.3 Job satisfaction in the legal profession

Karekwaivanane (2016) stated that first lawyers like Godfrey Chidyausiku and Honour Mkushi pushed their way through the narrow gate up to the top. This suggests that legal profession is a profession which has some difficulties in entry, therefore it is an elite profession which falls under the middle-class category.

There has been much interest in women in the legal profession (Bolton & Muzio, 2007), and it is an exemplar of gender stratification (Maunganidze, 2020). Female attorneys make less money than male attorneys, female assistants make 27.5% less money than male assistants, and so on (Law Society salary survey, 2004e). Bolton and Muzio (2008) highlighted that the disadvantages that female legal practitioners experience worsen as they move up the professional ladder, with female partners making nearly 40% less than male partners, despite being in the same profession. This may affect the level of satisfaction among women who work in the law profession. Bolton and Muzio (2007) emphasised that professions have a homogeneous identity. However, Choroszewicz and Adams (2019a, 2019b) revealed the methods used to favour male-dominated professions in the gendering of occupations. Maunganidze (2020) states that gendered organisations are problematic for women's employment, as these professions require interpersonal networks and attitudes. These interpersonal networks in the legal profession promote the interest of men (Stainback et al., 2016).

High-paying professions, which include doctors and lawyers, have surprisingly high rates of unhappiness related to their professional paths (Flores & Arce, 2014; McGuire et al., 2001). Mounteer (2004) furthermore stated that, despite making a lot of money, lawyers are nearly four times more likely than the general population to suffer from depression. This clearly indicates that there is low job satisfaction among lawyers owing to the nature of their income. They need high income to increase their satisfaction.

Dezalay (2017) reveals that lawyers have either been idealised as defenders of liberty or decried as the agents of corruption throughout the African continent. Lawyers control the country when

their income is stable. However, they may turn to corruption to balance their income. This is the prevailing situation in Zimbabwe on account of the general socio-economic environment.

The Law Society of Zimbabwe (LSZ, 2021) states that over the years the state used some apparatus to harass legal practitioners for actions that are connected to their duties as officers in court, thereby threatening the independence of the profession. Lawyers escape adductions from unknown persons (Dube, 2018). For instance, Job Sikhala was arrested and thrown in jail as he tried to settle justice but he was then accused for initiating violence (Chingono, 2023). This lack freedom and autonomy may lead to job dissatisfaction in the legal profession.

A lack of autonomy in the legal profession may also cause job dissatisfaction in the profession. Zimbabwe Law for Human Rights (2019) revealed that lawyers continue to be manhandled at police stations and even outside courts. The LSZ (2019) furthermore stated that some lawyers such as Chivasa Partners were once charged for visiting a client in hospital who had been shot by police during a collective bargaining. As a result, lack of autonomy in the legal profession may have an impact on legal professionals' job satisfaction level.

The literature has indicated that there are still more gaps in the knowledge about job satisfaction of elite professionals, particularly those from a precarious environment. It was therefore the quest of this thesis to re-examine the impact of the precarious environment on medical, legal and academic professionals in Zimbabwe.

3.7 Job engagement and elite professionals

Kahn (1990) denotes that work engagement is the degree to which a person shows self-preference in job tasks to promote connections between self and job through cognitive, emotional and physical self-investment. Huang et al. (2022) argued that job engagement must be divided into physical engagement, cognitive engagement and emotional engagement. This implies that employees have three levels of engagement. Iqbal et al. (2017) state that Kahn's theory of engagement revealed three drivers of employee engagement which include: psychological conditions that enable engagement in an employee which include meaningfulness (does the employee find their work meaningful?), safety (does the employee feel safe to express their opinions at work without risk of negative consequences?) and availability (does the employee feel mentally and physically able to harness their full self?).

Jaharuddin and Zainol (2019) found that work–life balance has an impact on an individual’s engagement level. A research by Korir and Kipkebut (2016) revealed a connection between financial incentives and job engagement. Rashid et al. (2011) furthermore stated that, organisations must provide financial rewards to enhance employee engagement.

3.7.1 Job engagement in academics

Mushonga and Nyakudya (2011) referred to academics as the walking dead, as they are said to be to be physically present at the workplace but psychologically absent because of harsh socio-economic environment prevailing in the country. Roberts and Davenport (2002) state that people may be enthusiastic about their work but not devoted to the company. This suggests that there will be less of job engagement from the lecturers as are always languishing in poverty, they will always be engaged on some other duties such they will earn a living in this harsh economic environment.

Jones (2010) states that public services, such as health and education, have largely crumbled as a result of *ku kiya kiya* (a “making-do” economy). This suggests that a number of services, particularly in public entities, have declined as result of job disengagement, which is being caused by poor salaries. Maunganidze et al. (2021) furthermore stated that professions should also respond to economic crises and austerity measures. Employees are busy looking for other alternatives that enables them to raise money to supplement their incomes as result it leads to low engagement.

Harini et al. (2019) revealed that job satisfaction has a positive relationship with work environment of academic lecturers. Soliman et al. (2021) indicated that lecturers’ engagement and commitment plays pivotal role in organisations. Harini et al. (2020) discovered that work–life balance and workplace engagement have an impact on lecturers’ intentions to leave their jobs.

3.7.2 Job engagement in the health profession

The ability to recruit and retain employees is influenced by compensation (Bustamam et al., 2014; Terera & Ngirande, 2014). Mathauer and Imhoff (2006) stated that individual health workers’ performance suffers when they lack motivation. As a result, lack of financial rewards affect an individual’s engagement level. Narainsamy and Van Der Westhuizen (2013) are of

the view that low work engagement is common in nations or regions with limited medical resources. Demerouti et al. (2019) discovered a positive relationship between job resources and work environment.

Elite professional groups value their rewards and, because of the level of education they have obtained, they should also have better rewards than the one they are receiving (Akinbobola, 2020; Kumaranayake et al., 2000). According to equity theory, the inputs and outputs of an employee must be fairly balanced. A mismatch causes low engagement in employees (Ryan, 2016). Health professionals offer quality health services in high income countries, as they receive equitable rewards (Dussault, 2008). The reason that doctors in Zimbabwe embark on a number of strikes is the fact that there is a mismatch between inputs and outputs.

The healthcare system is characterised by an extensive private sector, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (Kumaranayake et al., 2000). In other words, in the health sector in low-income nations, if doctors wish to earn a decent living, they have no option but to work in the private sector, where the income is better than in the public institutions. Differences in income affect the distribution of health workers between the public and private sector (McCoy et al., 2008). Some of the doctors will even work for both private and public institutions to maximise their income (Berman & Cuizon, 2004; Socha & Bech, 2011). This has implications for the public sector, however, as medical doctors will not be as engaged in public hospitals. They will prioritise the private sector, in which they are rewarded in US dollars (Makoni, 2019). Kankaanranta et al. (2007) stated that general wages in the private sector are higher than in the public sector.

The ability and willingness of health professionals to deliver high-quality and pertinent services is crucial for the success of efforts to improve the performance of health services (WHO, 2006). Low pay is a contributing factor to lower healthcare quality in low-income countries (Chaudhury et al., 2006). This implies that low income in the health sector can lead to serious repercussions in a country, for instance, high death rates and brain drain. Qin et al. (2013) furthermore stated that the adjustments of compensation can help improve the standard of health care. The healthcare professionals have some degree of closure as they can determine the services they want to offer and when they are not satisfied with their income they can decide to offer poor quality services. Millán et al. (2013) assert that workers will only exhibit pleasurable positive attitudes if they are satisfied with their jobs. Poor service delivery in the

public health institutions in Zimbabwe can be attributed to low engagement, which is being necessitated, by poor salaries and poor working conditions.

When pay is low in absolute terms, health professionals will work extra shifts to supplement their incomes by offering private medical care, engaging in other income-generating activities, and collecting unofficial fees from their clients (Roenen et al., 1997). Low wage level in the health care sector forces many health care professionals to seek compensation from other grey revenue (Qin et al., 2013). This reduces their engagement level. Berman and Cuizon (2004) revealed that public sector healthcare institutions in developing countries are characterised by multiple job holding. This will therefore cause low engagement among healthcare professionals.

Crush (2019) showed that the ability of health workers to find employment abroad has resulted in a complex migration pattern, characterised by a flow of health professionals from low-income to high-income countries. Mushonga (2015) revealed that, the high outmigration led to low employee morale for the remaining employees due to overworking. This implies that the outmigration of the health profession has an impact to both the remaining employees and the country at large.

Nigam et al. (2014) stated that the engagement of the medical staff has a significant impact on hospital performance, particularly when it comes to improving the organisational effectiveness of a hospital. This emphasises the notion that job engagement is important on medical doctors as it determines the effectiveness of an organisation. Doctors need to be motivated to improve their engagement. However, Chmielewska et al. (2020) argued that people who choose to become medical doctors are more motivated by motivational factors and are highly focused on their professional success.

3.7.3 Job engagement of the legal profession

Drew et al. (2015) assert that the practice of law is both rewarding and challenging. Kirkebøen (2012) argued that expected earnings influence an individual's choice of education. In other words, individuals choose the legal profession with the idea that they will earn high salaries, since it is also regarded as field that offers high rewards because of its complexity. Weak reward structures may lower the engagement of legal practitioners. Verheul (2021) revealed that lawyers in Zimbabwe had to make demonstrations to deliver their petition about the

restoration of the rule of law and safeguarding of the Constitution. This indicates that lawyers are still engaged in their work, despite their low income.

Hamman and Koen (2020) assert that lawyers have a legal right to be paid for their services, but sadly, they might be offered dirty money instead of legal fees. In other words, legal practitioners are engaging in other activities to supplement their income. Levi (2015) stated that lawyers may overcharge for services in order to collect as much in illegal funds as possible. All of these are ways to balance their income so that they may enjoy a better standard of living in their societies.

In addition, Drew et al. (2015) indicated that work–life balance is critically important to the individual legal practitioner. Despite the fact that there are more women working than ever before, they frequently run into problems because they have to balance their roles in the home and at work (Mahpul & Abdullah, 2011). Dousin et al. (2022) furthermore stated that work–life balance is important, as it benefits both the employer and the employee.

Several studies have indicated high rate of stress experienced by lawyers as a result of work–life imbalances (Brough & Boase, 2019; Brough et al., 2015). Sigurdson (2018) stated that divorce rates among female lawyers are higher than for women in other professions. Chabaya et al. (2009) revealed that women are expected to follow gender norms. Stress and work–life imbalances among female legal practitioners might also be the reason that female lawyers in Zimbabwe lower their engagement level.

There is still a paucity of literature on elite professionals and job satisfaction. This however, gives this thesis room to consider how the middle class has been redefined in relation to the job engagement of elite professionals.

3.8 Chapter summary

Chapter 3 of this thesis focused on pertinent literature about the elite professions. Attention was given precisely to the HR concepts, namely, job satisfaction, job engagement, career planning and progression, and training and development. However, it has been noted that there is a research gap left by previous researchers that needs to be filled. Therefore, this thesis seeks to investigate the impact of the redefined middle class from an HR perspective. The research methodology employed in this thesis will be explained in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis presented the literature review and the theoretical framework. These chapters introduced and explained literature in relation to the middle class and elite professions. The literature was reviewed in relation to the objectives of this thesis. However, the related literature was silent on the effects middle class and elite professions in a precarious environment like Zimbabwe from an HRM perspective. This therefore prompted the need for this study to be carried out. This chapter focuses on the methodology that was employed in this thesis on the development of a new precariat, the middle class and elite professions in Zimbabwe. The section considers research methodology in terms of research philosophy, research approach, sample and sampling technique, and research instruments.

4.2 Aim of the research study and specific objectives

The aim of this study was to demonstrate how a precarious socio-economic landscape in Zimbabwe has reconfigured the status of elite professionals from an HR perspective. The research objectives and questions are provided in Chapter 1 of the study and can be found in Sections 1.5.1 and 1.6, respectively.

The thesis was also based on five arguments. The first argument of this thesis relates to the concept of career planning and progression of elite profession. The second argument states that elite professionals are finding it difficult to engage in CPD programmes because of the unstable economic environment. The third argument relates to the concept job satisfaction of elite professions in Zimbabwe. The research also argues that academic lecturers, medical doctors and lawyers are no longer engaged to their work because of their income. The fifth and final argument of the research relates to the notion of survival strategies employed by elite professions as a result of the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe.

4.3 Research Approach

The research approach reflects the methods and activities used to accomplish a particular research goal (Abu-Alhaija, 2019). Coe et al. (2021) stated that research approach encompasses the method and procedures employed to conduct research. In other words, this is a plan that

reflects how the research programme has been carried out. There are basically two main methodological approaches to research which include quantitative and qualitative (Sprake & Palmer, 2022). This thesis employed the qualitative approach to answer research objectives. Hughes and Sharrock (2016) suggested that in order to produce meaningful understandings, researchers should take appropriate research designs into consideration.

Frost (2021) claims that a qualitative approach intends to reveal a range of behaviour of target audience and the perceptions that motivate it with regard to particular issues or topics. The aim of this thesis was to investigate how elite professionals view the redefined middle-class status. Kalman (2019) revealed that researchers who use a qualitative approach hope to understand the attitudes and behaviours of the target population. In this study, qualitative research was used because it aided in the collection of data that provides a detailed account of events and interpersonal interactions (Johnson et al., 2020).

To fully comprehend significance and applicability of the qualitative methodology in this thesis, it is necessary to explain the shortcomings of the quantitative approach. Sprake and Palmer (2022) claimed that by using a highly controlled quantitative methodology in research, one runs the risk of learning limited and occasionally useless things about human experience and behaviour. The researcher designs a control and then carries it out according to how the study's instruments are made. Typically, respondents are not free to provide information that the pre-existing and predetermined instruments cannot record. The inevitable by-product of quantitative methodology is narrowness. The researcher made efforts in this research not to focus on the quantitative, thereby reducing the possibility for identifying emerging viewpoints by testing only hypotheses from previously established theory.

People are treated as separate from their social contexts in quantitative methodology. It is also regrettable to note that, in line with the aforementioned statement, quantitative methods even treat "parts" of people differently, such as their attitudes and memory. In order to demonstrate the researcher's preconceived notions about humans, which the participants are unable to challenge, participants are treated as identical units. Unlike quantitative methodology, qualitative methodology requires the researcher to interact with what is being researched (Stahl & King, 2020).

In social research, it is widely accepted that staying close to the subjects is necessary to know and understand them; however, in quantitative research, the researcher must maintain a

distance in order to uphold the idea of objectivity. The researcher’s attitudes and motivations are not acknowledged, disclosed, or valued during the research process. Some researchers consider the quantitative methodology’s objectivity to be mythical. The desire to keep oneself at arm’s length from the research process hides the researcher’s influence and active involvement in the process, which occurs in a social context (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023).

But qualitative researchers contend that using predetermined variables forces theoretical frameworks on participants and inevitably prevents participants from disclosing information about how they, as participants, understand and interpret the world around them. Sprake and Palmer (2022) argued that the hallmarks of qualitative researchers are based upon human curiosity for, and appreciation of, the complexities inherent to social phenomena. The researcher was able to combine the phenomenological strategies and the qualitative approach to come up with a hybrid approach to investigate the effects of the redefined middle class on elite professions in Zimbabwe from an HR perspective. This therefore justifies the adoption of qualitative research methodology. Table 1 below shows how qualitative approach was used in this thesis.

Table 1: The use of the qualitative approach taken from (Creswell and Poth, 2019 and Naido 2023)

Natural setting	The primary convenient locations for these elite professionals, where research participants were interviewed, were at their places of employment (their law firms, hospitals, and the institutions where they lecture).
Researcher as a key instrument	The researcher collected data herself through interviewing participants, observing the way they live and also examining related documents. Semi-structured were used which gave room for probing questions. She further transcribed the interviews herself.
Multiple methods	Both primary and secondary methods of data collection were used to gather information. The primary sources for data collection and analysis were elite professions (lawyers, academic lecturers, and medical doctors).
Complex reasoning through inductive logic	Themes were found by using empirical observations. Themes that emerged from participant perceptions were examined in order to establish a link between the data and the theory. After that, the findings of the study were put to use in an effort to refute accepted wisdom and written works.

Participants' multiple perceptions and meanings	This qualitative study investigated how elite professionals perceived the redefining of middle-class status from an HR perspective. There were different views from the participants due to their profession, gender, working experience as well as their age.
Demographic/biographical data	Demographic/biographical related data is considered solely as data independent of the thesis. However, by combining age, gender, and working experience, the researcher was able to derive meaningful information.
Context dependent	This research study was aimed at elite professions, namely, medical doctors, lawyers and academic lecturers. The researcher gained meaningful insights into the effects of the redefined middle class on elite professions through the use of descriptions of phenomena that elite professionals experience.
Emergent design	The study used face-to-face interviews as a way of collecting data. However, owing to the challenges of interviewing these professionals in an unstable economic and political environment, the researcher had to use observation of residential areas and their mode of transport, to gain in-depth information, since these participants were not comfortable to be interviewed for a longer period of time required by phenomenological researchers.
Reflexivity	The researcher had experience in the academic field; therefore, she was familiar with some of the emerging challenges that the academic lecturers were facing. She was able to understand the language and terms used in the academic profession. She also had an understanding of how the precarious environment has reconfigured the status of these elite professionals.

Source: Creswell and Poth (2019) and Naido (2023)

4.4 Research Paradigm

The source, nature, and development of knowledge are all covered by the research paradigm (Al-Ababneh, 2020). Bleiker et al. (2019) stated that research paradigm involves examining the nature of knowledge itself, how it comes into being and is transmitted through language. Collis and Hussey (2021) posit that a research paradigm is a set of rules for administering research that is based on presumptions about realism and the nature of knowledge. This means that research paradigm guides the research on how it should be conducted. Theoretical paradigms like positivism, constructivism, interpretivism, transformativism, critical theory, emancipationism, deconstructivism, and pragmatism have all been described in literature

(Tharsika & Pratheepkanth, 2020). The interpretivist paradigm was chosen by the researcher for this study, and this will be discussed in detail along with the rationale behind the decision.

Given that it is qualitative in nature, this research is interpretivism-based. Interpretivism seeks to surmise the world empathically from the stance of the research subjects in order to better understand the complexity of social phenomena (Bell et al., 2022). Interpretivism considers reality to be highly subjective because our perceptions influence it (Mason et al., 2022). Interpretivism was employed in this research as it assisted in exploring the complexities of the elite professions in Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe's middle class, the researcher looked at the experiences of elite professionals; these experiences were then subjectively felt and interpreted.

It is simpler to understand the interpretivist paradigm after briefly discussing the positivist approach. Owing to positivism's perceived inability to please the needs of social scientists, interpretivism emerged (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Occasionally, positivism is used interchangeably with the scientific method or science research in other texts. It is founded on the rationalistic and empirical philosophy that was made popular by figures such as Emmanuel Kant, Francis Bacon, John Locke, Auguste Comte and Aristotle. The deterministic philosophy of positivism assumes that causes influence effects or outcomes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Positivism can be used to study society if two assumptions are true: first, that it can be studied in the same way as the natural world, and second, that a method for studying society that is devoid of values exists. The presence of interpretation with a causal component is also necessary for positivism to be used in the social sphere (Mohajan, 2020). Positivism aims to predict and control forces that surround people by testing a theory or describing an experience through elements like observation and measurement (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019; Gunbayi, 2020). According to positivists, there is only one single objective reality. Typically, positivistic research uses quantitative techniques for data collection and analysis.

Despite how powerful it may seem, positivism was found to be inapplicable in this study. The rigid assumptions of this paradigm were unable to take into account the investigative components of the current research study that dealt with both social and personal experiences. These elite professionals report the effects of the precarious environment in their own unique ways and with their own words. The effects of the precarious environment on elite professions are experienced individually. Elite professionals needed a suitable forum on which to freely express how the uncertain economic climate has affected their respective fields. This was a

challenge for the researcher. According to the literature, the professional landscape has continuously changed and been (re-)configured. The researcher had to choose the interpretive paradigm because of difficulties with the positivistic paradigm.

Ataro (2020); Kumatongo and Muzata (2021) indicated that the constructivist and interpretivist paradigms are frequently viewed as one. This same strategy was used in this study. Qualitative research methodology maintains that there are numerous truths and various realities, which is the same philosophical foundation as this paradigm. The investigation of a new, precarious middle class and elite professions in Zimbabwe is more consistent with interpretivism's focus on the holistic perspective of the individual and the environment. The interpretivist paradigm is also connected to methodological approaches that give research participants' voices, concerns, and practices a chance to be heard (Calabria & Bailey, 2021; Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2011). It is also crucial to emphasise that the interpretivist paradigm places more emphasis on learning about people's thoughts and feelings in the context of their circumstances more than it does on making determinations about the degree to which those feelings and thoughts are valid (Denscombe, 2021; Sanchez et al., 2023).

The interpretivist/constructivist paradigm emerged as result of Edmund Husserl's (1927) work on phenomenology. The study of interpretive understanding, known as hermeneutics, which was developed by German philosophers such as Wilhelm Dilthey, is also related to this paradigm. Understanding the realm of human experience is in the interests of the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm (Corry et al., 2019). This then means that, as noted by Boyland (2019) Reality is a social construction. When using the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm, a researcher frequently relies on the perspectives of the participants in the situation being investigated (Mason et al., 2022). This study's goal is to look into the phenomenon of elite professions in a society where many people have unstable employment. Interpretivism and the inherent approaches of qualitative research methodologies are thus the best strategy for achieving the goals of this study. Typically, a constructivist researcher will use qualitative methods for data collection and analysis.

4.5 Research Design

The overall framework and plan of a research study is referred to as a design in this context (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). According to Tomaszewski et al. (2020) the focus of research design is on the overarching strategy and analytical strategy that the researcher used to integrate

various study components. De Vaus (2001) furthermore stated that, it ensures that the research problem will be thoroughly investigated. As a result, the researcher can infer implications from the research design regarding haphazard relationships between the variables and concepts under investigation. This research study used a phenomenological multiple case study whereby three different categories of professions (legal profession, academic profession and health profession) were used to examine a social phenomenon.

Cresswell and Poth (2018) view phenomenology as a method that explores a particular human experience of everyday life to gain deeper understanding from a fresh new perspective. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) and Walters (2017) claim that, in order to record the human experience with people who had first-hand experience of the phenomenon, phenomenological case studies necessitate semi-structured interviews. Grossoehme (2014) stated that phenomenological research collects data from a small sample size of individuals who have experience of the subject under study. Gary et al. (2020) and Henry et al. (2008) assert that multiple phenomenological case studies investigate people's lived experiences and perceptions of a phenomenon. Yin (2018) explains further that a case study design is used to determine whether a particular theory or model is applicable to real-world phenomena. Gustafsson (2017) and Halkias et al. (2022) assert that a multiple case investigation entails looking into several phenomena in order to gain a deeper understanding of them than a single case can. Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) furthermore stated that a case study allows significant interaction with the participants thereby providing an in-depth picture of the phenomenon. This research study wanted to gain a deep understanding of the effects of the redefined middle class on elite professions in an unstable economic environment from an HR perspective.

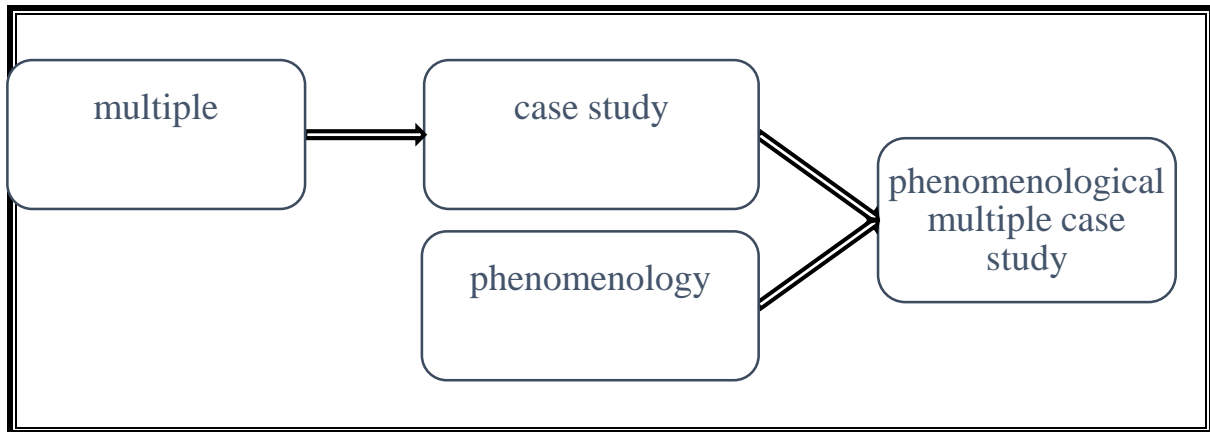


Figure 4.1: Research design employed in this thesis

This phenomenological multiple case study was employed to gain a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of middle class and elite professions in Zimbabwe. Three professions that made it to be a phenomenological multiple case study were: the legal, academic and medical professions.

4.6 Study population

The population of this study included medical doctors, lawyers and academic lecturers who were employed in their respective institutions in Zimbabwe. The population of the study included only those who had 5 or more years of experience, as they have witnessed the economic shifts in the country.

4.7 Sampling Technique

The process of taking samples from the population is known as sampling technique (Mishra & Alok, 2022; Sileyew, 2019). Probability sampling is related to a quantitative research strategy, whereas non-probability sampling is related to a qualitative research strategy (Berndt, 2020; Etikan & Bala, 2017; Mishra & Alok, 2022). Since this research is qualitative in nature, a non-probability sampling technique was used, as the researcher wished to gather in-depth data from experienced participants. Non-probability techniques place more of an emphasis on the researcher’s capacity to choose components for a sample (Pandey & Pandey, 2021). Consequently, this thesis employed judgemental and snowball sampling, which are techniques in non-probability sampling.

Judgemental sampling was used in conjunction with snowballing, where necessary, for the researcher to answer the research questions of this study. Oribhabor and Anyanwu (2019) assert that when choosing the units to be studied, the researcher uses their judgement. Campbell et al. (2020) assert that judgemental sampling enables the researcher to choose the participants required for the study because of the distinctive qualities that make them the owners of the information the researcher needs. Mweshi and Sakyi (2020) furthermore stated that qualitative studies tend to heavily rely on participants who are articulate and introspective enough to provide rich descriptions of their experiences. Iliyasu and Etikan (2021) contended the identification and selection of people or category of people who have the knowledge and skills about a specific phenomenon is a key component of purposive sampling. In this thesis, the researcher chose professionals with at least 5 years of working experience from the legal, medical, and academic fields. Because they have seen how the economy has changed and affected their lives, these participants were able to provide pertinent information about the area under investigation.

Moreover, the researcher chose purposive sampling, as it assisted in choosing respondents who were keen to take part in this research. Interviewing unwilling participants could have affected the quality of the data. Beytekin (2021) emphasises the value of preparedness and frankness to participate, as well as the capacity for articulate and reflective communication of experiences and opinions. Academic, legal and medical professionals are busy people; therefore, one may encounter challenges when interviewing these professionals. This is supported by Maunganidze (2019), who highlighted that there are methodological challenges in interviewing elites. Some of them could keep rescheduling appointments, for example. Therefore, to avoid this, the researcher had to select participants who were also willing to be part of the research, as this would strengthen the quality of the data obtained from the interviews.

In addition, Naderifar et al. (2017) stated that snowballing is used when the target characteristics are not easily accessible. In this case, snowballing was mainly used among the legal professionals, as the researcher sought participants with 5 years or more of experience. Therefore, she was directed by other lawyers after having interviewed them.

4.8 Sample Size

The appropriateness of sample sizes in qualitative studies has been a source of contention (Mwita, 2022). Charmaz and Belgrave (2019) and Levitt (2021) highlighted that constructivist

researchers do not believe that the small samples generally used in qualitative studies are adequate for generalisation. This is why those who are opposed to qualitative research see it as having a significant flaw. One of the reasons for the same, however, is the requirement for comprehensive data to be gathered from comparatively small samples.

Creswell and Poth (2016) and Guetterman (2015) suggested that a sample of five to 25 participants is adequate for phenomenology studies. Braun and Clarke (2021) advised using a minimum number of 12 people as a sample size for qualitative research. Sarfo et al. (2021) noted that even though small sample is typical for phenomenological studies, it is crucial to stress that to successively achieve the goals of the study, the researcher must continue to recruit participants until saturation. Grosseohme (2014) furthermore stated that phenomenological research requires a small sample size as it gathers descriptions of the participants' lived experiences, which are rich in detail and imagery. Nevertheless, there are a number of opinions among scholars regarding sample size. Empson (2018) and Maunganidze (2019) argued that there are additional challenges to interviewing elite professionals (versus interviewing non-elite professionals) because elites have high-profile status. Therefore, 15 participants were used in this research. There were five respondents from the legal field, five from the medical field, and five from the academic field.

Table 2: The exact categories of sample

Category	Sample
Lawyers	5
Lecturers	5
Medical Doctors	5
TOTAL	15

4.9 Data Collection

The procedure for gathering data for this study is covered in the paragraphs below. The section also includes explanations of how the interview guides and other research instruments were created. Secondary data was also gathered from academic institutions, newspapers, annual reports, the Internet, and other sources that offered the necessary information for addressing the research questions posed in Chapter 1 and corresponding research arguments.

4.9.1 Primary data collection

Before the commencement of this research the researcher made some observations using phenomenology on how the elite professions are coping through the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe. The secondary data lacked some information on the effects of the redefined middle class on elite professions from an HR perspective. This therefore instilled the zeal in the researcher since there was a gap which was not filled and this was to be achieved through primary data.

Primary data involves the collection of data from live sources (Walliman, 2021). According to Sileyew (2019), primary data are facts discovered for the first time through personal observation and documentation. Leko et al. (2021) furthermore stated that the aim of primary data collection is to gather information that is as accurate and comprehensive as possible. In this research, the researcher used interviews and observations as primary data to obtain in-depth and accurate data that answered the research question. The structure of the interviews and the rationale behind using observations is explained in the following subsections.

4.9.1.1 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative research interviews are thought to be the most popular method of data collection. (Mwita, 2022). Denscombe (2017) explains that interviews are frequently preferred because they make it easier for investigators to understand respondents' feelings and perceptions about the phenomenon being studied. In this case, the researcher wanted to understand the feelings of elite professionals about their reconfigured social status due to the precarious environment. Interviews may be unstructured, structured or semi-structured. This research used semi-structured interviews, accompanied by interview guides, to collect data for the thesis.

Semi-structured interview combines a set of open questions to spark conversation with the opportunity for the interviewer to delve deeper into particular themes or responses. (Alshenqeeti, 2014; Ruslin et al., 2022). Creswell and Poth (2018) pointed out that semi-structured interviews give the researcher the chance to prepare a list of questions for their participants with the option of follow-up questions for more in-depth explanation. Therefore, interview guides were prepared for the three categories to guide the researcher on the objectives of the study. This also meant that face-to-face interviews were to be conducted.

Interview guides were prepared for all three categories of the elite professions. These interview guides were guided by the research questions. Castillo-Montoya (2016) proposes that the structure of an interview guide requires an introduction, a middle and end. In this case, the interview guides for all the categories were prepared in such a way that they had four sections: the introduction, biographical section, the core question and the conclusion.

The first section of the interview guide was the introduction. The researcher had to introduce herself to the participant before the beginning of the research and she would request permission to record so that she would be able to analyse the data after the session. Confidentiality and anonymity were addressed at this stage. All 15 of the participants from different categories of elite professions who participated in the interview sessions completed and signed the consent forms.

The biographical information was presented in the following section. Because the researcher was aware that factors such as one's age, gender, and number of years in a profession, among other biographical data, can influence how one responds to a particular question, biographically related information was included.

Themes were created to guide the researcher and specific questions related to research questions were used as main questions that guided the participants during the interview. The interview guides were structured as below, and questions were asked in relation to the professionals being interviewed. The researcher had to group questions where necessary so as to minimise time required from participants, considering the fact that there are challenges in interviewing elite professions, as highlighted by Maunganidze (2019). However, follow-up questions were asked to gain clarification and in-depth meaning about the data that was being provided by the participant. Rubin and Rubin (2011) note that the researcher should ask some follow-up questions to gain more depth about an idea, concept, issue or event. For example:

Researcher: *Can you explain the characteristics of a lawyer in a middle-class category in other countries?*

Participant 1: *They own houses in low density areas, they own cars and they afford to go for vacations*

Researcher: *Do you have the capacity to go for vacations?*

Participant 1: *My passport expired. I have not renewed it.*

Researcher: *But you do have the capacity to renew it?*

Participant 1: *Yes, I can afford but it is of no use at the moment because I do not see myself going for a holiday outside the country if I cannot afford to visit resort areas in my country. This situation we are in, right now in Zimbabwe has made it impossible for us to enjoy these benefits, I cannot even send my kids to a private school, I have a car but I do not afford to use it on daily basis because of fuel hikes, so I end up using public transport.*

The researcher was able to better understand the participants' data by asking follow-up questions, which also provided additional details about the research topic.

Theme 1: application of the middle-class idea to elite professions

- ✓ What do you think of the idea of the middle class as someone in a high position of authority?
- ✓ Describe what a middle-class person in other countries would look like, such as a doctor, lawyer, or lecturer.
- ✓ Do you have enough money on hand to take a family vacation?
- ✓ Where do your kids go to school: upper top, A class, or B class?
- ✓ Do you have the means to make prompt payments on your bills?

Theme 2: Concept of career planning and progression to elite professions

- ✓ How well does the concept of career planning and progression apply to you as doctors, lawyers and lecturers?
- ✓ Does the organisation prioritise career planning and progression?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic landscape to your career planning and progression as a medical doctor/lawyer/lecturer?

Theme 3: Elite professionals and training and development programmes

- ✓ Do you engage in Training and Development programmes as medical doctors/lawyers/lecturers here in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on training and development of lecturers/lawyers/medical doctors?
- ✓ What are the challenges being faced in as far as training and development of medical doctors/lawyers/academic lecturers in Zimbabwe is concerned?

Theme 4: Job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe with respect to middle class

- ✓ What is your level of job engagement as a medical doctor/lawyer/academic lecturer?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as a lecturers/lawyers/medical doctors in Zimbabwe?

Theme 5: The degree of job satisfaction in Zimbabwe's elite professions relative to middle class status

- ✓ What is your level of job satisfaction as a lecturers/lawyers/medical doctors?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as a lecturers/lawyers/medical doctors in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ What is the impact of the precarious environment to reward and motivation of medical doctors/lawyers/lecturers?

Theme 6: The effects of the socioeconomic environment on elite professions

- ✓ What are the effects of socio-economic environment on you as a medical doctor/lawyer/lecturer?
- ✓ What are the consequences redefined middle class on professionalism of medical doctors/lawyers/lecturers?
- ✓ Do medical doctors/lawyers/academic lecturers migrate to other countries?

Theme 7: Coping strategies used by eminent professionals in a precarious environment by people of middle-class status

- ✓ How are you coping up as a medical doctor/lawyer/academic lecturer in this unstable economic environment?
- ✓ Besides your normal load what else do you do that generates income?

The last segment of the interview guided provided some resolutions that can be used by HR or organisations that employ elite professions to reduce the effects of redefined middle-class status on elite professions in a precarious environment. The researcher could not leave this section since she wanted the perceptions of these elite professions as they are ones that are being affected by the unstable economic environment.

Theme 8: Methods by which HR policies, practices, and procedures can be modified to fit elite professionals' efforts to maintain middle-class status

- ✓ What measures can the government take through the ministry to preserve the social status of medical doctors/lawyers/academic lecturers?
- ✓ Is there anything that you can do as medical doctors/lawyers/academic lecturers to maintain the social status?

Exit Question

- ✓ Is there anything that you would want to add regarding the issue of middle class and elite professions in a precarious environment?

The above questions were asked to participants from the three categories. The responses that the participants provided helped the researcher in answering the research questions. These questions were consistent for all categories; however, the researcher could not follow the sequence some of the questions were being answered with some follow-up questions, as supported by (Rubin & Rubin, 2011; Van Audenhove & Donders, 2019).

4.9.1.2 Observation

Observation is seen as a foundation of everyday social interaction (Sileyew, 2019). Owing to the challenges of interviewing professionals indicated by Maunganidze (2019), particularly in an unstable economic environment, the researcher had to use observations to supplement the

information that was obtained from interviews. The researcher prepared an observational checklist (see Annexure 6). Denzin and Lincoln (2018b) argued that conducting qualitative research in dynamic and complex environments requires a sound methodological awareness because, like society, qualitative research is always complex, dynamic and “on the move.” The interviews could not extend to 60 minutes, which is the general guideline for phenomenology, as some of the participants could not spare that much time. For example, some doctors would be called to attend to a critical patient. As a result, the researcher would observe the residential locations of participants and other related information that helped to answer the research question. It was also through observation that the researcher experienced a zeal to investigate and fill the research gap left by previous researchers and theorists about middle class and elite profession.

4.9.2 Documentary analysis

This was the initial stage that the researcher used in coming up with the research title. The researcher had to analyse the documents in relation to the observations that she had made in relation to the middle class and elite professions. Documents were also used to develop a more and comprehensive research study. Memos, newspapers, annual reports and also the researcher’s diary were used in this study. These helped to triangulate data. Natow (2020) demonstrated that the process of triangulation critical when it comes to social science studies. The idea of triangulation and the practice of triangulating research require more than one strategy to address the study’s questions or respond to the research statement. In this instance, it was crucial to consider the effect of the precarious environment on elite professions from a variety of angles. Documents from the years 2000 to 2022 were used. The economy began to contract around the year 2000.

Newspapers were also taken into account because they covered important topics for the study. These included, among other related articles, articles about the corruption of some legal and medical professionals as well as articles about the suspension of professionals by the professional bodies for the public’s safety. Consequently, it is therefore crucial to concentrate on document analysis and explain how and why it is used as a valid source of research data.

Gorsky and Mold (2020) have shown that document analysis has been practiced since the development of writing, roughly 4000 BC. The authors made the claim that social science research has incorporated documentary research and analysis. Kutsyuruba (2023) described it

as the written documentation of people, places, and things produced as a result of living. Oral histories are not included but media like film, audiotapes, and videos are. Denscombe (2021) and Morgan (2022) also emphasised that audio, visual, and written sources are all used in documentary analysis. Karppinen and Moe (2019) documentary analysis, also known as documentary research, is the study of documents. Quinlan (2011) argued that the terms “documentary research” and “documentary analysis” can be used interchangeably. Documentary research can be conducted using memos, diaries, files, archives, meeting minutes, reports from businesses, governments, and other sources. Documents can also be derived from Internet research, including looking up other online documents as well as websites and web pages. To put it another way, any document can serve as the subject of documentary research.

Documentary research is a methodology that can be used in a study or as a way to gather data (Mwita, 2022). Morgan (2022) concurred, indicating that documents can be used as independent sources of data. Bingham et al. (2019) argued that every document examined has been written or produced by a particular person, in a particular setting, and with a specific goal in mind. Important to keep in mind is that just because something is written down, it does not automatically make it true or factual. The factual information contained in a document may be the focus of social research, or it may instead centre on the reasons for and circumstances surrounding the production of that specific document in the way it did and the context in which it did it. Utilising any other method of data collection is just as effective as conducting a documentary study (Morgan, 2022). Documentary research has a wide range of sources and formats (Bowen, 2009; Tight, 2019). However, the sources that were used in this research study are highlighted.

4.9.2.1 Newspapers

De Jong et al. (2008) and Scott (2006) argued that a social science researcher could benefit from the information available in the press. The fact that newspapers provide accurate, up-to-date information is one of their most highly valued benefits. The value of the newspaper for the research study, however, depends on the knowledge of the writer, the publication’s focus, as well as the inside information the correspondents can unearth.

Business researchers in Zimbabwe may consult, among other publications, the *Financial Gazette*, Business Editions in the *Sunday Mail*, and the Business Copy of *The Herald*.

However, Denscombe (2010) stated that researchers are advised to exercise caution when relying solely on the contents of newspapers and magazines to reflect an accurate account of historical events. Newspapers were chosen for this study because they frequently cover topics related to professional conduct. Professional conduct is frequently in the news, and newspapers are quick to cover the stories for general public consumption. It has also been observed that professional organisations frequently publish articles in the neighbourhood papers, either for member benefit or to raise public awareness. Newspapers are used by the LSZ to inform the public any time it deregisters a lawyer from its list. Newspaper usage is also more common in academic institutions, as they use them to announce their vacancies for their various programmes, which is why they were crucial to this research study. Official newspapers such as *The Herald* and *The Sunday Mail* from 2000 to 2022 were used in this study. This is also because some updated information was also found in newspapers. For example:

Government fires 77 striking doctors (The Herald, November 6, 2019)

The government is working to normalise the situation at public hospitals following the dismissal of 77 who went on illegal strike recently. The situation is being exacerbated by city of Harare nurses who have stopped reporting for duty citing incapacitation. (Machivenyika & Chipunza, 2019)

4.9.2.2 Diaries

The researcher's intended subject population's behaviour and thoughts are captured in the diaries, which are a valuable source of documentary data. The fact that these diaries document already-occurring events makes them crucial for research. It is crucial to keep in mind, though, that in this context, the term "diary" does not refer to a situation in which it is used as a planner, recording obligations for the future that must be scheduled and kept. The diary typically serves as a retrospective account of previously occurring events for research purposes. Factual information, noteworthy incidents, and personal interpretation make up the diary's three most important components (Denscombe, 2010). A record of events, choices, and parties involved is referred to as factual data. A description of the diary-keeper's priorities and the identification of issues deemed to be significantly important are both involved in significant incidents. Last but not least, personal interpretation focuses on a personal reflection and interpretation of hypothetically occurring events as well as a description of personal feelings and emotions related to the events described.

There is a chance that each of these three factors will offer researchers a wealth of data. The researcher should refrain from interpreting the accounts given in diaries as statements of objective reality, though. Diaries must always be viewed as a version of events as the writer sees them because they are a product of the writer's past experiences, own identity, own aspirations, and own personality. This is because they portray a retrospective account of events.

The researcher used her own memos and personal diaries for this study. Since 2021, when the researcher first applied to be a PhD student, she has participated in a variety of activities leading up to the completion of her thesis, such as casual conversations with friends and family members who are in the field of academic profession, legal as well as medical profession. She observed their conduct and behaviours, especially from an informal perspective. It was also in the interest of the investigator to record in a diary all the important events of the elite professions that occurred during the period she was doing her PhD.

The researcher interpreted the conversations and events in her own way. However, it is crucial to point out that the interpretations were supported by the researcher's background as a researcher and academic. In addition, the interpretations were made in the context of the current literature to which the investigator was exposed throughout her PhD.

4.9.2.3 Organisational websites

Owing to the rise in technology, companies now post their information on their websites. This also became another source of information that the researcher used in this research study. One can now find relevant information on the company's website. In this case the researcher used information which was in relation to the middle class and elite profession in a precarious environment. For example:

The following full-time positions are open to applicants with the necessary qualifications and experience:

Department of Human Resource management- Gweru Campus

Post A: Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor/Professor (16 Posts)

(www.msu.ac.zw, November 2022)

The rise in vacancies raised some issues in as far as the academic field is concerned. This assisted the investigator to strengthen the research and answer the research questions.

4.9.3 Justification for using documentary analysis in this research

In order to strengthen and supplement the information collected from participants, documentary research was used in this study. Natow (2020) highlighted this as the triangulation of data. In addition, as noted by Dzwigol (2020), documentary research materials are easily accessible and contain a wealth of knowledge. Furthermore, Denscombe (2010) revealed that records are static and present a snapshot of events at a particular time. The study examined the effects of the precarious environment on elite professionals from an HR perspective. The time period under reflection includes the period from 2000 up to 2022. In addition, each of these periods are characterised by certain characteristics that may include political, legal, economic and or technological issues. These characteristics could be reflected in the documents of that particular era in history. According to Mwita (2022) and Natow (2020), documents have the ability to communicate more than just the data and information that they contain. In this study, documents managed to reveal information beyond the contained data.

4.10 Analysis of data

Data analysis is the procedure of methodically gathering information from interviews and other sources and compiling it to make the findings simple to understand and communicate (Umanailo, 2019). Tomaszewski et al. (2020) revealed that when conducting data analysis, researchers must be in a position to code and find themes and relationships for the gathered data. Hence, the researcher used phenomenological and hermeneutic analysis for interviews and observations. Content analysis was employed to analyse the data from documents. Data analysis was aided by the use of QSR, also known as NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software.

4.10.1 Phenomenological analysis

The foundation of phenomenological analysis is discussions and reflections of direct sensory perception and occurrence of a phenomenon under study (Boadu, 2021; Sundler et al., 2019). Yüksel and Yıldırım (2015) assert that researchers keep their subjectivity in reserve throughout the study. There are various orientations that of phenomenological analysis which can be used

in qualitative methods of analysis, these include hermeneutic, interpretive, descriptive and narrative (Van Exel & De Graaf, 2005). This study adopted the hermeneutic in conjunction with descriptive analysis.

Hermeneutic analysis emphasises that the data is not a linear or sequential process but a circular and dynamic one (Crowther & Thomson, 2020). Dangal and Joshi (2020) asserted that hermeneutic analysis involves a constant dialogue between the researcher, the data and the literature in which the meanings and insights emerge and evolve. According to Sundler et al. (2019) hermeneutic analysis helps to understand lived experiences through interpretations and in depth understanding. It involves four steps: naïve reading, structural analysis, comprehensive undertaking and critical analysis. However for the researcher to develop a deep understanding of the data she had to blend it with descriptive analysis. Understanding subjective experience and gaining understanding of people’s behaviours and motivations can be done effectively through descriptive analysis (Sundler et al., 2019). It involves four processes, namely, bracketing, horizontalisation, clustering and textualisation. The multiple use of phenomenological criteria helped to fill in the loophole left by another, thereby gaining a deep analysis of the research. The data analysis was then structured as follows:

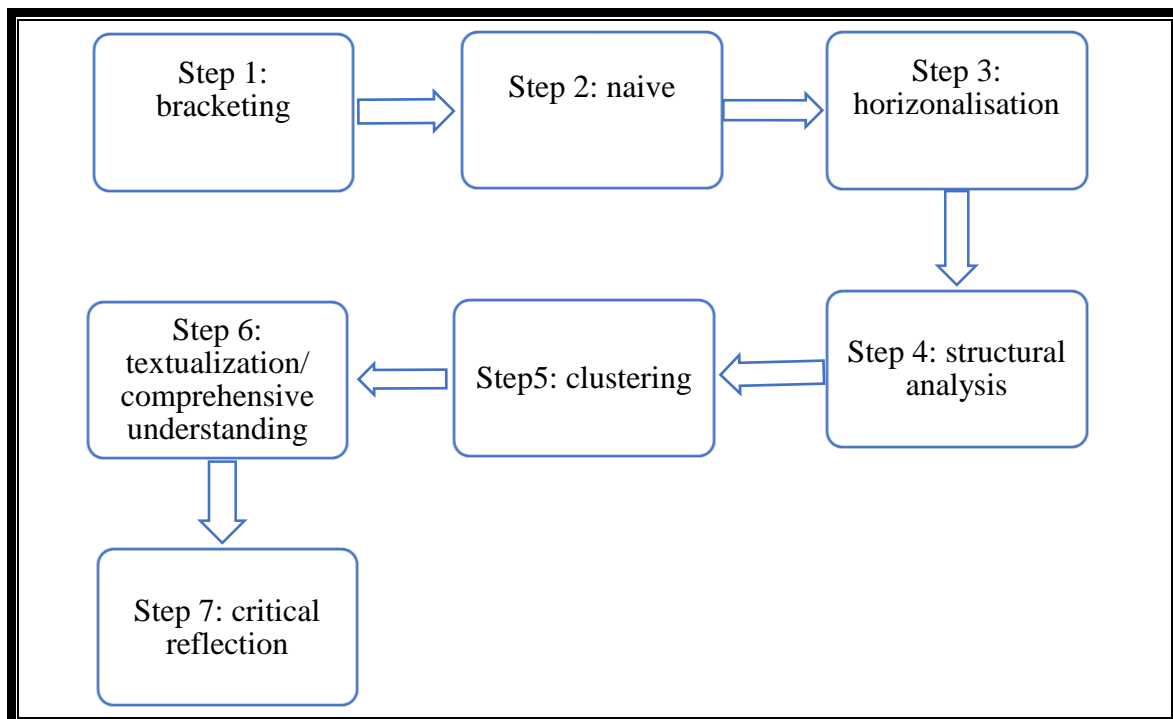


Figure 4.2: Stages in data analysis

After gathering the data, the researcher had to transcribe the data from verbatim to word since the researcher recorded all of the interviews. To fully comprehend and become familiar with the data, the researcher transcribed the data herself. This stage required the researcher to set aside her own assumptions and focused on the data collected from the interviews. All of the 15 interviews were transcribed to allow the next phase of analysis.

Step 1: I had to set aside my own assumptions and focus on the data I was transcribing. In some instances I had to refer back to my diary which I used during interview sessions.

Step 2: After the transcription process the researcher had to re-read the transcriptions in order to get the sense and familiarisation with data.

Step 3: Every statement and expression was treated as equally important and relevant for answering the research objectives.

Step 4: I then identified themes and sub-themes before loading the data to NVivo software which also helped in analysing data through the formulation of pictures which I then presented in this write up.

Step 5: Data was coded and grouped based on their similarities and differences.

Step 6: I was now able to write a comprehensive description of the phenomena and their essences.

Step 7: I ultimately had to assess the interpretation in light of the research question, the literature, and the study's implications.

The interview recordings were then cleaned, transcribed, and coded to create themes that assisted in data analysis in relation to the study's goals. The data was then loaded to QSR to produce pictures that were in connection with the objectives of the study.

4.10.2 Content analysis

When content analysis was first introduced, it was strictly a quantitative technique that counted instances of previously identified targets in consumer research to measure their observed frequency (Richards et al., 2023). However, Kleinheksel et al. (2020) argued that the analysis process was modified into a more interesting and important approach. As the naturalistic

qualitative paradigm in social sciences research gained popularity, researchers' interest in human behaviour in natural settings also increased.

According to Bell et al. (2022), content analysis involves analysing the content of the data to identify patterns, themes, and other insights. Kleinheksel et al. (2020) furthermore stated that content analysis is a repeatable and legitimate inference of data in their respective circumstances which seeks to offer fresh perceptions, information, and useful guidelines for action. The researcher extracted words and phrases from the documents and classified them into relevant categories using content analysis.

4.11 Presentation of data

Data presentation is the process of using different graphical representations to show the relationship between two or more data sets so that a decision can be made based on them (Groenland & Dana, 2020). According to Adu (2019) illustrative quotes are used to present data in qualitative research. In this research the analysed data was presented in form of figures adapted from NVivo software, illustrative quotes that were accompanied by explanations and also summaries.

4.12 Trustworthiness of the research

Positivist scholars frequently question the reliability and validity of qualitative research because naturalistic or social research cannot use their concepts of reliability and validity in the same way. Debates over quality in qualitative research have been a point of conversation among researchers (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018a; Flick, 2018). The inclusion of validity and reliability measures in qualitative research has been highlighted by a number of researchers (Hayashi et al., 2019; Nassaji, 2020). Many social and naturalistic researchers have chosen to use their own unique terminology in an effort to set themselves apart from the positivist paradigm (Hayashi et al., 2019). Stenfors et al. (2020) asserted that four standards are frequently used to evaluate the credibility of qualitative research. These are dependability, credibility, which relates to internal validity, confirmability and transferability, which relates to reliability.

In this study, the researcher addressed a number of requirements related to each of these constructs in an effort to ensure the reliability of her findings. This is discussed below.

4.12.1 Credibility

One of the main criteria that positivists address is internal validity. Here, they aim to make sure their research precisely measures or tests what is intended (Stenfors et al., 2020). Hayashi et al. (2019) posit that credibility is equivalent idea for a qualitative researcher and it answers the question “How congruent are the findings with reality?” Nassaji (2020) has indicated that, another crucial aspects of exhibiting trustworthiness is ensuring credibility. The use of established research methods is the first requirement aimed at answering the aforementioned query. Phenomenological/interpretive design was employed in this study. In addition, it is advised that researchers use the technique of iterative questioning to ensure credibility. The questioning focused both on past and present in as far as the effects of the precarious environment on elite professions is concerned.

Moreover, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argued that, in order to ensure credibility, researchers themselves must be included in addition to outside review. This can be done by providing reflective commentary that partially takes into account the efficacy of the techniques being employed. The commentary was started by the procedure used during the interviews, which allowed the researcher to keep an eye on and provide guidance against any potential attitudes that could have affected the study.

In qualitative research, the researcher’s training, expertise, and credentials are important (Khankeh et al., 2015; Nguyen et al., 2022). The researcher graduated with honours in Human Resource Management from Great Zimbabwe University in Zimbabwe as well as Master’s in Human Resources Management with the same university. The researcher was also a part-time lecturer in the Department of HRM at one of the state universities in Zimbabwe at the time this research study was being written. As a university lecturer, the researcher has occasionally worked on qualitative research projects and supervised undergraduate research. The researcher has also written journal articles with others that focus on qualitative methodology.

The use of triangulation is a crucial strategy for ensuring credibility in qualitative research. Dzwigol (2020) stated that using a variety of techniques is necessary for triangulation, particularly individual interviews, focus groups, and observation. These constitute the principal methods for gathering data in qualitative research. Natow (2020) purports that utilising various techniques balances out each person’s shortcomings while also taking advantage of their unique advantages. Individual interviews with three different categories of respondents were

used by the researcher in this study to address this idea. The researcher also conducted documentary research, looking for documents that discussed the impact of the reimagined middle class on elite professionals. The researcher also drew on her personal background as an academic and researcher. Her knowledge, journals, and memos were used as additional data collection tools.

4.12.2 Transferability

The idea of generalisability in positivism or quantitative research methods is equivalent to transferability. Nguyen et al. (2022) indicated that external validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings of a specific study can be applied in other situations. Khankeh et al. (2015) claimed that it is unfeasible to show that the findings and conclusions of a qualitative project are applicable to other situations and populations because the results of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals. In qualitative research, the concept of transferability has long been a contentious topic. Because every observation is defined and a result of the context in which it occurs, some authorities contend that transferability is impossible (Maxwell, 2021). However, it is crucial to remember that the main goal of qualitative research is to comprehend and acknowledge the circumstances in which a specific finding or phenomenon appears and operates rather than to look for the usual and conventional generalisability (Nassaji, 2020). Sampling techniques employed in this study were presented.

4.12.3 Dependability

The idea of dependability intertwines with the idea of reliability in positivism (Cian, 2021). By using techniques that demonstrate that similar results would be obtained if the work were to be repeated in the same context, using the same methods, and with the same participants, reliability was addressed. Practically speaking, dependability and credibility are closely related. Insuring the latter greatly benefits from addressing the former. This might be accomplished by combining different approaches, such as focus groups and individual interviews (Nassaji, 2020). By using professional interviews and documentary research, the investigator was able to give attention to both notions of credibility and dependability in this study.

By thoroughly documenting the study's processes, one can directly address the issue of dependability while also making it possible for future researchers to replicate that specific study. A thorough explanation of the methodology employed also enables the reader to evaluate critically the degree to which ethical research practices would have been adhered to (Cian, 2021). The researcher dedicated a chapter to outlining the research design, sampling techniques, tools used, research procedure, and all other related issues that pertain to research methodology to address the dependability concept.

4.12.4 Confirmability

The issue of objectivity in positivism is closely related with the issue of confirmability in qualitative research. According to Rose and Johnson (2020), the application of tools that do not cling on human skill or on understanding is correlated with objectivity in science. Since tests and questionnaires are created by people, it is impossible to truly maintain objectivity because the researcher will invariably interfere with the process (Mohajan, 2020). Confirmability calls for the researcher to take actions that, to the extent possible, help to ensure that the investigator's findings precisely reflect the experiences of the respondents rather than the investigator's preferences and traits. Utilising triangulation can help ensure confirmability because it lessens the impact of researcher bias on research (Dzwigol, 2020). Through the use of key informant interviews, interviews with elite professionals, and documentary research, this thesis addressed the idea of confirmability.

The researcher's capacity to offer a "audit trail" can also guarantee confirmability (Nassaji, 2020). This would enable an unbiased reader to follow the research from the decisions made throughout the procedures described. To address the question of confirmability in this thesis, the researcher included a thorough methodology chapter and a number of appendices. In relation to the study's goals, the choice of the research design, methodology, and data analysis has also been discussed.

4.13 Pilot Study

The investigator carried out a pilot study to evaluate the research tools, namely, the interview guides. The pilot study included three participants. Al-Mekhlafi et al. (2022) asserted that a pilot study often uses a smaller-sized sample study to assist in the planning and modification of tools for the main study. The three participants were a medical doctor, a lawyer and an

academic lecturer. Since several questions produced the same results, some of them were eliminated. They were viewed as superfluous and added unnecessary length to the interview. Furthermore, it was claimed that some of the questions were too vague, and they were therefore rephrased.

4.14 Data collection procedure

First, the researcher requested permission to conduct her study from the legal, academic and medical professionals' institutions. Documents that would aid in the research from the relevant professional bodies and institutions of the professions under study were also requested. To prove that she was a legitimate student, she provided a formal letter from the UKZN that was signed by her supervisor (see Annexure 8). The LSZ represented the legal profession. The provincial hospital where the researcher had access granted permission for the doctors. In as far as, the academic professions permission was granted from both the public and private institution (see Annexures 10, 11, 12 and 13). The investigator had to request ethical clearance from the UKZN Research Ethics Office through the RIG system and permission was granted (see Annexure 7).

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select a few people from each group. The researcher had a reason to concentrate on experts who had been working in the field for at least 5 years because they had seen first-hand how the effects of the middle class's redefinition affected the elite in a precarious environment. The researcher used snowballing to supplement purposive sampling because some of the chosen potential participants were difficult to reach. After a fruitful interview, the researcher would then inquire about the possibility of the participant's referring her to another potential subject. Calls or in-person visits were the two ways to schedule appointments. The researcher would call a few hours before the scheduled time of the interview to confirm the appointment. The investigator also took advantage of those members who were peer colleagues in academia, as this helped in selecting those who had enough experience about the subject under study. A pilot study was conducted before the initial interviews.

The offices of the interviewees were used for the interviews. An average of 35 minutes were spent on each interview. The researcher would reintroduce herself and explain the study's objectives when she arrived. Before respondents agreed to participate in the study, some ethically pertinent issues were discussed. These included the concepts of confidentiality,

coercion-free consent, and freedom from coercion. As proof that they were voluntarily taking part in this study, participants were given consent forms, which they were required to sign (see Annexure 5). In all cases, the participants agreed when the researcher asked if she could tape-record the interviews. A few quick notes were also made during interviews for follow-up inquiries. The participants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide to elicit their responses (see Annexures 2, 3 and 4).

The researcher contacted the relevant organisations or academic division with regard to the documentary component of the study. Most frequently, she was given a partner with whom to collect the necessary paperwork. For analysis, important documents from the corresponding professions, including memos, newsletters, and magazines, were gathered. After that, the researcher gathered some significant documents from the Internet and newspapers that were related to other organisations and institutions. It was important to read any document that discussed how the precarious environment affected elite professions. Each document had to be carefully read by the researcher in order to find the data she needed to respond to the study's questions and support the research claims made in Chapter 1 of this thesis.

Verbatim transcripts of the interviews was done. During the interview transcription process, nonverbal cues like protracted pauses and sighs were also noted. In order to avoid the difficulties of outsourcing, the researcher did her own transcriptions.

For the purpose of data analysis, NVivo was employed in this study. Each interview transcript was uploaded into the NVivo program. The researcher used auto-coding to categorise the interview guide's sections according to how each participant responded; for instance, the section on each participant's biographical details was given its own category. Every section of the interview schedule received the same treatment. The software generated various main nodes and the ensuing child nodes from the data itself. The data analysis software did not, however, take the place of the investigator's active participation in qualitative research. The researcher actively contributed to the analysis by offering interpretations and developing codes, or nodes as they are known in NVivo. Up until the final position was reached, the process of creating nodes continued, with some of the nodes being combined with one another and others being made to stand alone. In addition, notes were made because it was possible for the researcher to forget the definitions of various pieces of information over time. The software was used to extract various numbers. These consist of some tree structures, word clouds, and word searches.

4.15 Ethical considerations

It was crucial to take into account the ethical standards that researcher adhered to throughout this research study. In this research, the researcher had a duty to safeguard her subjects. One of the moral concerns in human subject's research is the issue of informed consent. Participants' free and informed consent is required by the researcher (Norman et al., 2021). The annexure section of this document contains the consent form for this study. The consent forms were created to ensure that potential participants knew what the study was about and had the choice to participate or not. The study upheld the anonymity of all participants and the organisations they represented. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms for both participants and organisations have been used in all of the excerpts. The consent form was enthusiastically signed by each participant who took part in the study. To give each participant a chance to review the transcript, a brief thank-you note for their participation was sent along with the transcript via email or hard copies. Every participant expressed satisfaction with the interviews' transcriptions. Each university department whose chairperson participated in the study was promised full copies of the thesis as well as some feedback in the form of summarised findings. This was carried out in order to guarantee participants' privacy. The research ethics committee of the UKZN approved my ethical clearance in July 2022. Ethical clearance, Protocol Reference Number HSSREC/00004466/2022. The study's Appendix section includes a copy of this.

4.16 Chapter summary

The study's methodology was the main topic of Chapter 4. The research goals and supporting arguments for this study were reviewed at the beginning of the chapter. It then looked at the study's methodology in more detail. The qualitative methodology was highlighted, along with the reasons it was selected over the quantitative approach. In this section, quantitative methodology was also briefly covered.

The basis of this chapter was to examine the research paradigm employed in this critical investigation. The interpretivist paradigm was chosen as the framework for this thesis, and its applicability to the research topic was carefully considered. The chapter also discussed the relationship between qualitative methodology and the instruments used in gathering data.

The data collection method was also discussed under this section. This section concentrated on the interview guides that were employed to gather information for the thesis. The section also discussed the composition of the interview guides in relation to the research questions the instruments aimed to answer. Furthermore, the chapter detailed the data analysis methods that were used. Discussions on trustworthiness and research ethics were the last components of this chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ELITE PROFESSIONALS IN ZIMBABWE

5.1 Introduction

This and the next chapter focus on data presentation. The first chapter about data presentation (Chapter 5) answers the first two questions, and the second chapter of data presentation (Chapter 6) answers the next three research questions of the thesis. These are:

- To what extent does career planning and progression concept applicable to elite professions in Zimbabwe in their effort to maintain the middle-class status?
- To what extent do elite professionals engage in training and development programmes in Zimbabwe as they make effort to maintain the middle-class status?
- What is the level of job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe with respect to middle class?
- What is the level of job satisfaction of elite professions in Zimbabwe in the context of middle-class status?
- What are the coping mechanisms of elite professionals in the context of precarious environment in the context of middle-class status?

This chapter is therefore the first of the two chapters on data presentation which dwells on the first two objectives which are in relation to professional development of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. Namely the extent does career planning and progression concept applicable to elite professions in Zimbabwe in their effort to maintain the middle-class status. The second objective relates to the extent to which elite professionals in Zimbabwe engage in Training and Development. Text was mainly used to present the data and where necessary figures extracted from NVivo version 12 were used. Since this is the beginning of data analysis, the chapter begins with biographical related aspects of the participants as it plays a vital role on their social class.

5.2 Biographical characteristics of participants

This thesis considers demographic data as important information that also added more dimensions to the findings. This also helped to strengthen the credibility and trustworthiness

of the thesis as it highlighted how the precarious economic environment has reconfigured the class mobility of elite professionals. Table 3 below presents the demographic characteristics of participants who took part in this research study.

Table 3: Characteristics of participants

Participant number	Demographic characteristics of participants
Participant 1 (A1)	A1 was a 48-year-old married male lecturer working in two universities, one in the private sector and one in the public sector in the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. A1 is also a part-time lecturer in another university. These universities cannot be mentioned due to confidentiality. He was holding the position of the acting chairperson at the time the interviews were conducted. He was once a tutor at a polytechnic college for 4 years. He then upgraded himself to be at Master’s degree level specialising in Information and Technology. He had worked as a lecturer for the past 10 years. He is yet to enrol for his PhD specialising in his field. A1 is renting an apartment in high density suburbs. He is in possession of an old model motor vehicle. He has only a residential stand in a high-density suburb, which is yet to be developed. His children attended government schools.
Participant 2 (A2)	A2 was a 49-year-old married male lecturer who was working in the public sector. He is a PhD holder who lives in medium density suburbs with some members of his extended family (a family beyond nuclear family). He has been a lecturer for the past 13 years and has been engaged as a part time lecturer with different universities. He also owns an old model car.

Participant number	Demographic characteristics of participants
Participant 3 (A3)	A3 was a 41-year-old married female lecture. She is renting an apartment in high density suburbs. She is not in possession of a motor vehicle nor any movable property. A3 has enrolled for her PhD with an international university. A3 has 9 years' experience in the field of academics and she was once in the non-teaching department at the same university. She also sells second hand clothes at her house. The kids are enrolled in public schools.
Participant 4 (A4)	A4 is a female lecturer who was 42 years old. She is married and she owns a house in high density suburbs. A4 was enrolled by UNISA for a PhD programme and she was in her third year. She started working as primary teacher in the public sector and then she later joined the ministry of higher and tertiary where she now has 12 years of experience. She is also the chairperson of the HR department. She also runs a clothing shop in the same city.
Participant 5 (A5)	A5 is 51-year-old married male lecturer who was working in the public sector. A5 was once a secretary general of the works council at his university. He had 18 years of experience in the academic sectors. He owns a house in a low density area and he also has a modern motor vehicle. He is a PhD holder and also a senior lecturer at the university. He is also a part timer lecturer in various universities in Zimbabwe. His children are enrolled at a private school.
Participant 6 (L1)	L1 is a male lawyer who is married. He is 63 years old. L1 lives in low density suburbs and owns two other houses in medium-density suburbs. He has been practicing law for the past 32 years. He is a Master of Law degree holder. L1 also owns a farm and several cars which he acquired in the first years of his profession. He is also the owner or sole partner of the firm with four employees and two students who are on their internship practicing law.

Participant number	Demographic characteristics of participants
Participant 7 (L2)	L2 is a 49-year-old married male lawyer who lives in medium density suburbs. He is a holder of the Bachelor of Law Honours degree. L2 has 16 years of experience and is the partner of the firm. He owns a house in the medium density suburb and is in possession of an old model car. His children are enrolled at a local private school.
Participant 8 (L3)	L3 is a 48-year-old male lawyer. He is married and lives in medium density suburbs. L3 is a partner in the firm with 14 years of experience in the legal field. He is a holder of the Bachelor of Law Honours degree obtained from the local university. He is in possession of a vehicle and a residential stand which is yet to be developed.
Participant 9 (L4)	L4 is a 40-year-old married female lawyer who resides in a high-density suburb. She is an employee at a law firm. She has 10 years of experience in the legal field. L4 is a holder of the Bachelor of Law Honours degree, which she obtained from an abroad university. She is not in possession of any immovable property. She owns a motor vehicle. The kids are enrolled at a public institution.
Participant 10 (L5)	L5 is a married female lawyer, who is 42 years old. She is an employee in the firm with 15 years of experience. L5 owns a house in high density suburbs. She is a holder of the Bachelor of Law Honours degree which was obtained from a local university. She drives a modern vehicle.
Participant 11 (M1)	M1 is a male medical doctor who is 45 years old. He lives in a low-density suburb. M1 is a government employee who also runs his own surgery in the city, with five employees. He has been in the medical field for the past 15 years. M1 is also a holder of the Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBChB) which he obtained from a local university.

Participant number	Demographic characteristics of participants
Participant 12 (M2)	M2 is a 40-year-old medical doctor. She lives in medium density suburbs. M2 is a government employee but she also does her part time work with a private hospital. She is a holder Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery which she obtained from a local university. She always drove to work.
Participant 13 (M3)	M3 is 48-year-old male medical doctor. He lives in low density suburbs with his family and drives to work every day. M3 is a government employee and he has his own surgery in the same city. He is also lecturing medical students at a local university. He is a holder of a Master's degree in Public Health and a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery obtained from a local university. He had 17 years of experience. He owns two motor vehicles and one of them is a modern vehicle. The kids are enrolled at a private institution.
Participant 14 (M4)	M4 is a 46-year-old male medical doctor who is married. He resides in low-density suburbs and drives to work every day. M4 is fully employed by the government and he also runs his dental surgery in the same city. He is a holder of a Bachelor's degree in Dentistry (BChD). He has been working in the medical field for the past 12 years.
Participant 15 (M5)	M5 is a 44-year-old married female medical doctor. She resides in medium density suburbs and she is a government employee. M5 has been in the medical field for the past 12 years. She is also employed at a private clinic as a visiting doctor. She is a holder of Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery which she obtained from an international university.

The above table clearly indicates that 15 participants took part in the research for this thesis. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the participants. Five participants were lecturers in the academic field, five of the participants were from the legal field and the remaining five were medical doctors. The table also indicates that the majority of the participants each had over 10 years of working experience. One female academic had 9 years. This is evidence of the purposive sampling technique, which was used because the researcher

sought participants who had been working long enough to witness the changes in the economy that had an impact on their social class level, as well various HR aspects.

Women formed a smaller proportion (four) of the respondents in this research. This is likely to be because these are high professions that require more attention from those who work in them. Owing to the nature of the cultural restrictions imposed on women, this could account for why there are fewer women in these fields. The researcher had to balance the gender of the respondents with anticipation of getting more dimensions in the data collected. This is evidenced as the research unfolds in these data presentation chapters.

In addition, their qualifications also added more information to the data as it clearly indicates the magnitude of precariat that these elite professionals are in. From the academic field, one of the five participants was a holder of a doctoral degree, the other two were still in the process of obtaining their doctorates, and the others were yet to enrol for doctoral studies. From the legal field, only two of the participants held a master's degree, despite their level of experience. The other three were holders of bachelor's degrees. A similar profile was found among the participants from the medical profession: four of the participants were first-degree holders, and one of them had Master's in Public Health. This was related to career planning and progression, which was the first argument of the thesis.

5.3 Overview of data presentation

Data presented in this chapter and the following two chapters was collected through face-to-face interviews with the participants. All of the participants were willing to share their perceptions about middle class and elite professions. Appointments were booked physically with the aid of phone calls to remind participants about the appointment made. However, a number of participants kept postponing schedules as indicated by the researcher's diary. The researcher did not lose patience.

The researcher had to bunch some questions since she also paid attention to gestures. For instance, M1 kept answering calls as he was called to attend to some patients. This would disrupt the flow of the interview. In such cases, the researcher had to use observations to get more information. She also had to understand that these professionals are living in a precarious situation; therefore, they need to do their jobs in order to earn money for their survival. For instance, L1 had to reschedule the meeting three times since he had to attend court sessions and

failure to attend could have resulted in no income for his firm as well as portraying a bad image of the firm.

5.4 Biographical related data and Class mobility

The biographical data has indicated that the precarious economic environment has reconfigured the class mobility of the elite professions in Zimbabwe. Their residential places no longer reflect the ideal middle class characteristics. The majority of participants resided in high-density areas (five participants) or medium-density suburbs (five participants). Only a few of them lived in low-density suburbs, that is, L1 who has been in the profession for years, and M1 and M3, who had two professional jobs. Of the participants who lived in high-density suburbs, the majority (three) were from the academic profession, which seems to be the most affected profession.

In addition, the biographical data revealed that some elite professionals in Zimbabwe do not own immovable properties, despite having been in their professions for many years. This indicates that the unstable economic environment has reconfigured their social status, as they are not able to save enough money to acquire immovable properties. Those that have acquired residential stands (three, of them in the academic field) have not yet developed the stands. Iqani (2017) highlighted that the definition of middle class varies from country to country; however, there are general characteristics that qualify one to be in the middle-class category. Many of the elite professionals who participated in this study do not own houses, as a result of their inability to save. As a result, they are renting houses, which excludes one from belonging to the middle class. A3 stated the following:

I am renting a full house in Rujeko. What I earn is far much below the financial requirements of obtaining a stand and building a house. We are living from hand to mouth.

The findings also revealed that the majority of participants who did not have a motor vehicle were from the academic field. Those that owned cars had old-model cars (considered to be a car manufactured in the 1990s). They were also not in a position to replace them or buy new cars. However, doctors and lawyers had motor vehicles. One of the lawyers and two doctors had modern cars. Nevertheless, some of them were not in a position to fuel these cars to be able

to drive to work on daily basis. These characteristics compromises these elite professionals' ability to fully belong to the middle-class category. L2 had this to say:

The small car that I have can take me from one destination to another if it breaks down I will be forced to work with what is there. I will not engage on something that will compromise my practice. People will say that is a lawyer but I cannot compromise my work. So in the event my car breaks down I will use public transports. Everyone now knows that lawyers are now cheap as avocados...

It has also been revealed that elite professionals are no longer in a position to pay their bills on time, since their income is being eroded by hyperinflation. This indicated that the precarious environment in Zimbabwe has reconfigured the middle class. Elite professions now belong to the middle class category on the basis of educational qualifications as they are not in a position to pay their bills in time. A1 had this to say:

Sometimes I skip my bills like medical and pay the following month. So I skip and pay the next month when I get some allowances from my part-time job...

It has also been revealed that elite professions are now receiving salaries that are not equitable to their level of education and experience. They are earning ZWL, which they have to convert or purchase US dollars from the parallel market. Chagonda (2016) and Gukurume (2015) highlighted that Zimbabweans are earning RTGS to purchase US Dollars as their bills are in foreign currency. Ultimately, they will receive far less money to cater for their basic bills. In other words, the inputs are higher than the outputs. This implies that elite professionals in Zimbabwe are no longer in the middle class; the precarious environment has reconfigured their social status. A4 had this to say:

...I pay almost all of my bills in foreign currency the likes of PSMAS, Nyaradzo even water bills and fuel. They all require US dollars again you have to go to the parallel market to buy US dollars. So we work for money to buy money. Parallel market rates are very high...

This precarious environment has made elite professions to earn less than the less educated. This concurs with Gosha (2020), who indicated that doctors and lawyers, among other professionals, belong to a social structure that earns less than businesspeople in Zimbabwe. This implies that

businesspeople in Zimbabwe have more income than elite professionals, despite their relatively lower level of education than elite professionals. Therefore, education is becoming less important in a precarious environment. This reduces the social status of elite professionals, as they earn less than those in “less-educated” occupations. L2 stated that:

I have attained 5 years in college but I can compare myself with a gold dealer with an O level certificate. We are at different levels when it comes to education. You do everything for them but they have lots of money. So education now in Zimbabwe will assist you in nothing. But the hope will be if things get right you would use whatever qualifications you have.

The above findings have clearly indicated that the prevailing economic environment has reconfigured the status of elite professionals who no longer qualify to be in the middle class especially when one is to use the global middle class characteristics.

5.5 Career planning and progression of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

This section presents the data in relation to career planning and progression of elite professionals. Findings are presented on profession basis as they differ from one profession to the other. As already highlighted text was mainly used with the aid of figures extracted from NVivo version 12.

5.5.1 Career planning and progression of Academic lecturers

This section focuses on the data presentation about the career planning and progression of academic professionals from two perspectives. The first of them is the individual level, and the second perspective is the organisational level. Almost all of the participants indicated that they are not very concerned about upward growth, both at the individual level and at the organisational level.

5.5.1.1 Career planning and progression of lecturers at an individual level

To begin with, findings through the biographical related data which was presented earlier clearly evidenced that academic professions are now concerned about making money and how best they can survive in an unstable economic environment. One of the lecturers was not yet a

PhD holder and the other one had enrolled for the purpose of securing her job since it is a requirement by the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. A4 indicated that:

I enrolled with UNISA recently for my PhD simply because my job is at risk. Quality Assurance Department emphasised that all lecturers must have PhDs otherwise if it was not that, why should I think of it if my salary is too little to even cater for my basic needs and it is in RTGS but my expenses are in US dollars. You know the difference in terms of remuneration is meagre and doesn't justify my extra effort.

Documents also supported the notion that academic lecturers should be holders of doctoral degrees. These, however, made many of the academic lecturers enrol for PhD programmes, since they want to secure their jobs, despite their being underpaid. The former minister of higher and tertiary education, Professor Moyo, made an announcement in *The Herald* that lecturers should upgrade to PhD level or else they might lose their jobs (Maponga, 2015). Some therefore enrolled for PhD studies, but others could not enrol on account of the nature of their income. The Ministry is still emphasising that academic lecturers must be doctorate holders. One of the documents indicated that:

Government has adopted a stance of lenience towards lecturers who do not hold doctorates. There have been growing calls in the academic sphere that lecturers with masters' degrees should be relaxing by now. Despite the reprieve this should not be the cue to relax for lecturers who are yet to attain their doctorates.

The Herald April 2019 by Leeroy Dzenga

Another article, published in *New Zimbabwe* in March 2023 by Professor Kangira, indicated that only PhD holders should lecture at university level. This put pressure on academic lecturers to enrol for doctoral degrees, despite the nature of their income, which is paid in Zimbabwean dollars, while their expenses are in US dollars.

Findings have also revealed that academic lecturers are less concerned about upward growth since there is little difference in their salaries: senior lecturers, PhD holders and Professors earn roughly the same as one another. As a result, academic professionals are now concentrating less on career development. A5 indicated that:

You know those juniors no longer have motivation and the zeal to write articles so that they can as well grow upward in the industry because the difference is just the same in terms of salaries. I also don't have time to continue publishing because the university is not even supporting despite the peanuts we are earning. Our scholarly work is not being funded by institutions.

Findings have also revealed that the prevailing economic environment has greatly influenced career planning and progression of elite professional. From the themes and sub-notes that were created, it has been indicated that professionals are now comparing themselves with those that are less educated, indicating that the less educated ones have enough disposable income – often more than they do. A1 indicated that:

It is now difficult to think about advancing because education does not pay nowadays. It is a requirement for me to have a PhD but where can I get the money from. I am looking for scholarships. Besides that it's difficult for me. I need to feed my family.

This shows that lecturers are now comparing themselves with the informal traders and less educated, therefore they regard upgrading as secondary particularly in an unstable economic environment even though it is a requirement by their organisations.

The study found that elite professionals are no longer concentrating on their career planning and progression since they are not being rewarded according to their level of education. It is also indicted that academic professionals are now comparing themselves with those that are less educated as they are earning more than those who have invested in education. This evidenced by A2 who indicated that:

I am now focusing on survival, it gives me nothing to write articles, my experience does not match with my salary, if I am to compare it with the investment I have made so far. I can't even replace the money I used while I was doing my PhD so it's of no use to think about articles. Maybe I can do that for the sake of a title but honestly I am not motivated at all. I do not know about others but I am sure those with PhD feel this pain.

As evidenced by above paragraphs, lecturers are less motivated to focus on their upward growth due to the nature of their income. Their salaries and their level of education are not at par and

this has been caused by the unstable economic environment which is characterised by hyperinflation, which was at 314.5% in the year 2023 (O'Neill, 2023).

5.5.1.2 Career planning and progression of academic lecturers at organisational level

Findings have also indicated that academic lecturers are also not concerned with the career planning and progression, even at organisational level. It has been indicated that lecturers do not want any positions of authority in their organisations, as this deprives them of engaging in other part-time work since they are always in meetings. This is evidenced by A5, who indicated that:

Many lectures do not want these positions because you will not have enough time to do part time work. You know the good part with lecturing is you do your work at your own time and pace. So if you are part of the management you will be forced to attend meetings on daily basis, as a result there will less time for other part time activities.

This shows that academic lecturers no longer focus on career growth, even at the organisational level, as they are busy finding other part-time work to supplement their salaries, which are being eroded by inflation. It also indicates that academic lecturers consider earning more money rather than their career growth, as they regard career growth as an obstruction to engaging in other activities that generate income.

Through findings it has been revealed that academics are no longer interested in career planning and progression do due to lack of support from their institutions. Due to the unstable economic environment organisations are not in a capacity to promote career planning and progression of their employees. This is noted from the researcher where she found a memo from one the entities (which cannot be named owing to confidentiality and anonymity reasons). The memo stated that:

We have been informed by the Planning office that the University is financially crippled at the moment hence we were advised that all considerations for new applications for research grants should be suspended for this semester.

[XYZ] University memo, dated 16 January 2023.

The economic environment in Zimbabwe has affected organisations to the extent that the university is not able to support the lecturers with research grants. This has affected the career planning and progression of the employees as they depend on these grants to publish their article.

Findings have also revealed that academic professionals are less engaged in career planning and progression due to the nature of requirements needed for one to be upgraded. Participants have indicated that there are number of requirements that one need to upgrade from being a lecturer to a senior lecturer and from being a senior lecturer to professorship position. A5 indicated that:

...they don't pay page fee for us but yet they want us to publish articles with well recognised publishers. How are we going to do that? I can't use my salary to pay page fee...

The word cloud in Figure 5.1 below also supports the idea that academic lecturers are not very concerned with career development as a result of a lack of support from their institutions. Owing to the economic instability in the country, universities do not have the capacity to cover the page fees for the publication of articles and, by nature of their salaries, lecturers cannot afford to pay these page fees. As a result, they no longer consider career planning a necessity in their profession. Figure 5.1 below indicates why academic lecturers are not engaging in career planning and progression.



Figure 5.1: Career planning and progression of academic lecturers

Generated by NVivo version 12.

The word cloud above depicts the reasons that academic lecturers are not engaging in career planning and progression. Commercialisation is the word that appears most, and by virtue of it appearing most, indicates that it was mentioned most frequently by the academic professionals in this study. The privatisation of the higher and tertiary education sector has worsened the situation, since the government had to withdraw support they offered to universities. Watson et al. (2010) highlighted that, from the period of 1980 to early 2000, the government of Zimbabwe provided grants to students in colleges and universities. These grants helped to control the number of candidates enrolled in universities, as universities would stick to governmental regulations for enrolling, since the government was the main source of funding. However, owing to the deteriorating economic environment, as previously highlighted, universities were privatised. The privatisation increased the enrolment of candidates in universities as universities wanted to boost their income. Garwe and Thondhlana (2019) noted the increase of student enrolment in Higher and Tertiary Education from 50,000 in 2005 to 90,000 by 2015. This increase in enrolment resulted in lecturers having high workloads. They no longer have the time to practise the research component which is also part of their job description. As a result, academic lecturers now focus less on career planning and progression, as they do not have enough time to write articles owing to high teaching and supervision loads.

Findings have also revealed that academic lecturers are now engaging less in career planning and progression because of job dissatisfaction. Lecturers are less motivated to engage in career planning, as the rewards themselves are dissatisfying. The privatisation of universities was coupled with weak reward structures, as the government had no interference with higher and tertiary institutions. Garwe and Thondhlana (2019) highlighted that students enrolled in higher and tertiary institutions now pay their fees directly to the institutions; these institutions utilise the funds at their will, without the government's interference. Zivengwa et al. (2011) indicated that, ever since these institutions were privatised, lecturers have not been receiving their rewards on time. Lecturers therefore consider career planning and progression as less important on account of weak rewards that are not motivating. The next section focuses on career planning and progression in the legal profession.

5.5.2 Career Planning and Progression in the Legal Profession

The findings revealed that the legal professionals, particularly women in this profession, are facing challenges in career planning and progression. As indicated by the biographical data, L4 and L5 are still employees; they have not yet attained the level of partner in their field. Unlike men, women have cultural barriers that hinder them from participating in training and development programmes that are required by the profession for one to progress. Therefore, it takes time for them to become partners in legal firms. As noted, the female participants are still employees, despite their experience in the legal profession. Jackson (2016) highlighted that women in the legal profession receive lower pay and fewer opportunities than men. Bolton and Muzio (2007) highlighted that the disadvantages of women worsen as they move up the professional ladder, as there are 40% fewer female partners than male partners. As a result of this, women in the legal profession are less engaged in career planning and progression. This therefore indicates that there is less career planning and progression for women in the legal profession, owing in part to cultural and social barriers.

In addition, findings have also revealed that there is less career progression in the legal profession in general, as lawyers are merely concerned about their income. The socio-economic environment has affected lawyers to an extent that they are now concerned about income generation for their survival. Career development has become secondary. L4 stated that:

It is important to be an equal partner in the firm, but with this economic environment you can only thrive to survive because our clients are not able to pay our services so

the flow of income is also low. It's better to use that money to renew my practicing certificate than to engage in development programmes for promotion. This can only happen in a stable economic environment.

Legal professionals are suffering from the ripple effects of the unstable economic environment. As revealed by the findings, the majority of clients do not have the capacity to pay legal representation. Some of the clients are now settling for legal advice from legal advisers, as it is more affordable than full legal representation. This therefore means that they forgo providing legal representation, focusing instead on giving legal advice, which enables them to earn income. A1 stated that:

We now have problems that are now coming from colleges are now offering legal advice to clients. Clients are now opting for legal advice because they charge less than what we charge. So this affects the number of clients at the end of the day. The more clients you have the more income you have.

Closely linked to the above, there is less career development, as lawyers are now offering legal advice to clients and not legal representation. Since they are now offering legal advice, which is cheaper, it implies that they have a low income that cannot sustain them. Therefore, they end up being less concerned about career development.

It was also revealed by the participants that lawyers are less concerned about career progression, as this profession does not have political freedom. Due to the unstable political and economic environment, lawyers are now caught between representing the clients and protecting the ruling party. Lawyers are being oppressed for protecting the rights of the people. As result they are now less concerned about career progression. They only focus on earning for their survival. L3 stated that:

...we are here to represent justice, but in most cases some lawyers, especially prominent lawyers the likes of Fadzai Mahere, Job Sikhala and all those prominent ones, are always in problems. Some of our colleagues face abductions and some are being thrown in prison while others are still missing. This is affecting our profession, because it takes sacrifices to represent cases that are in connection with the government, but these are the only cases that can boost our income...

Lawyers also need professional freedom for them to take career progression into consideration. A lack of professional freedom is hindering those in the legal profession from participating in career progression.

5.5.3: Career planning and progression in the medical profession

The findings revealed that doctors are finding it difficult to consider career planning and progression in the environment in which they are living. Medical doctors are no longer focusing on career planning and progression, as they are busy maximising their outputs so that they may belong to a better social class. By virtue of their being in the medical profession, they are regarded as people with a lot of money. However, with the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe, doctors are earning below their inputs as a result they are not concerned with career planning and progression.

It was also revealed that doctors are not into career progression, as they are focusing on gaining experience and exposure in the field, which will enable them to migrate to other countries that have better and equitable salaries. M1 indicated that:

I don't think there is anyone in this country who thinks about upward growth. Everyone is busy thinking about how they can get money for their survival. That is why you see that young experienced doctors went to UK and some other countries. You invest lots of money for you to earn less.

Career planning and progression is also regarded as politically related, which may prompt medical doctors to participate in industrial action. Owing to the nature of their income, which is being eroded by inflation, medical doctors engage in strikes for salary increases. As a result, if one has an administration position for example a provincial medical superintendent, they are automatically associated with politics and will therefore not be allowed to express their feelings. This is evidenced by M3:

M3: Personally I am comfortable where I am because it gives me more time to hustle for other part time work so that I can have more money for the family consumption. I can also express my feelings unlike those in administration position. I am sure you know how it is in Zimbabwe.

MM: okay. What do you mean by expressing your feelings?

M3: Those in top positions are not supposed to strike. In fact, they can't even do that because these positions are political and you will be forced to support the ruling since we do not have political freedom...

From the above findings it has been noted that medical doctors in Zimbabwe do not value career planning and progression, as they are busy trying to find other ways that can help them to supplement their income. Some noted that organisational promotions hinder them in participating in other activities that are income generating.

5.6 Section summary

The findings revealed that the majority of participants, especially from the academic field, are now less engaged in career planning and progression. Only legal practitioners engage in career development, as this helps them to acquire more clients and income if they became partners in their legal firms. However, women in all fields have cultural and social barriers that disadvantage them from participating in development programmes. Figure 5.2 below presents a comparison of career planning and progression of elite professionals.

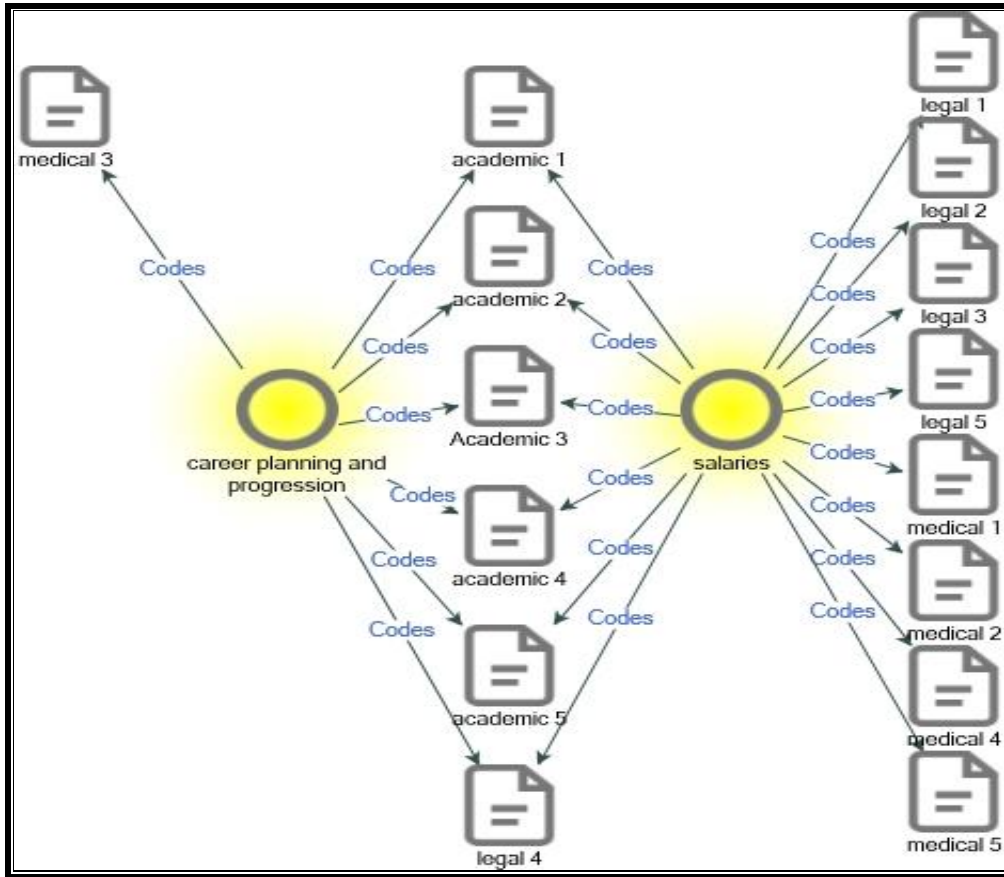


Figure 5.2: A comparison of career planning and progression of elite professionals

Generated by Nvivo version 12

The figure depicts that most elite professions who are less concerned about career planning and progression mentioned salaries as the major obstacle to career planning and progression. The figure depicts that the academic profession is mainly affected since it is the one in which the majority of the participants mentioned salaries as the major obstacle to career planning and progression. This implies that the unstable economic environment has mainly affected career planning and progression in the academic profession. However, as previously mentioned, women from the legal profession are also less engaged on account of cultural barriers.

5.7 Training and development in elite professions in Zimbabwe

The study found that CPD is now a secondary priority to elite professionals, as they are more concerned about generating more income, in line with the qualifications they have. The unstable economic environment made it impossible for elite professionals to earn equitable inputs. Elite professionals are considered to be less engaged in capacity development

programmes; they engage only in funded programmes since they do not pay for these programmes. As a result, this has reduced the level of training and development among elite professionals.

5.7.1 Training and development in the academic profession

The study found that the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe has affected the academic profession to such an extent that continuous development programmes have become of less importance to those in the profession. Academic lecturers are no longer interested in CPD, since their salaries are being eroded by inflation. This is evidenced by A1, who indicated that:

I can't fork out money from my pocket to attend a seminar, we are not earning much like what the society think we are surviving on hustles, so I can't take money from my hustles to attend a seminar of which the university will benefit from my experience.

In addition, the findings also revealed that, owing to lack of support from their institutions, academics are less concerned about training and development. This is unlike the situation in well-developed economies, in which universities provide support to their academic staff to attend seminars and other continuous development programmes. Zimbabwean lecturers do not have the drive to continuously develop themselves to suit the prevailing academic environment and to meet their social status, as they do not have support. The majority of participants cited lack of support as one of the major reasons they did not have the inclination to participate in CPD programmes. This was evidenced by A4 and A5. A4 indicated that:

The challenge we have here is that they only send memos indicating that we need to attend seminars and webinars without any support. They cannot even provide us data to join those online webinars. They are not supportive at all so what can you expect from me to use the little money I have to support the university it is not really practical.

In the same vein, A5 added:

You know the problem with these universities is that they only support what they want and they think is beneficial, if they do not support lecturers with page fee, research funds, how can we renew our skills? We are here to impart knowledge to adult people – some of them are already employers, while others are employees in their

organisations. In this case, how can we impart them with high quality information if we are not renewing this and how can I renew the skills if the university is not supportive?

Findings have also revealed that the lack of resources in institutions has affected the extent to which academic lecturers engage in continuous development programmes. On account of the unstable economic environment, there are many power outages, which is not a conducive environment for lecturers to work in. This has a severely negative impact on their work, as they are not able to focus on their article writing.

It has been revealed that academic professionals are considering enrolling for their doctoral degrees with international universities, since local universities are unaffordable. Academic professionals have indicated that local universities are unaffordable and, as a result, they resort to enrolling at international universities. A4 indicated that:

I have enrolled for a PhD programme with Unisa because it is a requirement for all lecturers to have doctorate degrees or at least evidence that you have been enrolled for the degree programme. I failed to enrol with Zimbabwean universities because they require a lot of money. They are not affordable especially with someone in Zimbabwe when you rely on your salary as your only source of income.

In addition, these institutions do not have resources that can be used by their staff to support their continuous development. The libraries do not have enough resources, and the internet connection is weak, owing to excessive blackouts. The infrastructure is not “friendly” enough, considering that lecturers are professionals with a high social status. Therefore, taking all of these factors into consideration, they end up not considering training and development as an important concept to their field. This was evidenced by A5, who indicated that:

In most cases we do not have electricity, even though you have the energy to write articles how are you going to do that, worse still our libraries, you know that one which is close to the main road, lots of noise you cannot work there. You need a cool environment to do your researches. I have gone there several times and there is always weak internet connection. We are still very far away from other universities abroad.

It has been also revealed that lecturers place less importance on continuous development programmes, due to lack of financial motivation. Academics are motivated by financial

rewards to continuously develop themselves. Individuals are being driven by monetary rewards to engage in development programmes. However, the inability of academic institutions to provide high rewards has made lecturers to be less concerned about developing themselves. A3 stated that:

I understand training and development is meant for us, but universities also benefit through us. So if they cannot give us better salaries, how are we going to participate in these? They need to have strong rewarding scales that differentiate highly educated lecturers like professors and doctors. The only way to motivate lecturers here in Zimbabwe is through money. Money can solve a number of problems being experienced in our institutions.

These findings have indicated that continuous development programmes are not being executed the way they should be considering the nature of the academic lecturers. They need to continuously develop themselves so that they are able to relay meaning knowledge to their students. However, this has been proved to be a different situation when it comes to the Zimbabwean setup.

5.7.2 Training and development in the legal profession

Findings from the legal profession revealed that, unlike in the academic profession, which has an alternative to continuous development programmes, lawyers are mandated to renew their practicing certificates on yearly basis after attaining or scoring 12 points in that year. These points accrue only when the professional attends seminars. The LSZ does not renew the practicing certificates of those who failed to meet the required points. Despite the harsh economic environment, legal practitioners renew their practicing certificates, since they are not allowed to practice without them. This requires a sound financial background, as evidenced by L2, who indicated that:

We do have capacity development programmes. The law society of Zimbabwe has a system in which it compels lawyers to attend seminars and workshops some of which are coordinated by the law society. It is actually a requirement of a lawyer to have CPD points upon registration or on applying for renewal of your practicing certificate you should also produce a certificate which confirms that you indeed have 12 points which

you can only acquire by going through certain workshops. So sometimes you could find workshops on taxation, those workshops on litigation.

The LSZ also emphasises that lawyers should attend training and development programmes. The LSZ July newsletter stated that:

In the period under review the LSZ conducted three trainings, two of these targeted improving the Constitutional literacy and litigation skills for lawyers whilst one focused on strengthening their electoral litigation skills. The trainings sparked interest among members as witnessed by the overwhelming subscriptions. (LSZ, 2022c:3)

It has also been revealed that Continuous Development Programmes are very important in the legal profession. The LSZ newsletter of April 2022 indicated that:

Members are reminded that as in partial fulfilment of the CPD requirements applicants will be required to have completed at least 4 CPD points in AMLCFT and Risk Management. (LSZ, 2022a:2)

Despite the economic hardship, lawyers still need to attend CPD programmes for them to renew their practicing certificates. However, it has also been indicated that some legal practitioners are not able to participate in these training programmes as a result of incapacitation. The July newsletter furthermore indicated that:

From 2018 to date, trainings on constitutional and electoral litigation have cumulatively benefited 362 legal practitioners out of about 2000 legal practitioners registered with the Society translating to about 18% trained lawyers who the LSZ can safely depend on in advancing any Constitutional and electoral related matters. Members are advised that those who have undertaken litigation on electoral matters will be accredited with Continuous professional development points (CPD). (LSZ, 2022c:4)

Findings have also revealed that lawyers write conversion examinations. This programme is mandatory to those who studied law with international universities. All lawyers who attended international university are mandated to write conversion examinations so that they will be registered as lawyers by the Law Society Zimbabwe. This indicates that one also needs sound

financial background despite the poor economic environment. This is supported by L1 who indicated that:

I have a student here who is studying Law in South Africa, I had to accept her for attachment because, I know with my experience that it is a bit challenging to practise law in Zimbabwe if you studied law with international universities. This means that if she wants to practise law here in Zimbabwe she has to write conversion examination so that the Law Society of Zimbabwe registers her. If she does not do that, she will not be a recognised lawyer in Zimbabwe.

Legal practitioners are now engaging in other activities to raise money that will enable them to engage into training and development programmes. Some of these activities are lawful while others are unlawful, such as money laundering and fraud. Owing to the prevailing economic environment, people can no longer afford legal representation, and some of them may instead seek legal advice. This is affecting the income of the legal professionals; therefore, they end up engaging in other activities to fund their continuous development programmes. L2 indicated that:

...we depend on them but here in Zimbabwe the situation is different. Lawyers are struggling even to pay their bills because we no longer have clients. Our clients no longer afford to pay us what we charge because of the unstable environment and this has caused us to suffer.

These findings clearly indicate that, despite the unstable economic environment, lawyers need to find ways to raise their income, since they depend on their clients for money, but the clients are also struggling in the unstable economic environment. Legal practitioners are now renewing their practicing certificates for them to remain legal practitioners, thus protecting their jobs.

5.7.3 Training and development in the medical profession

The findings revealed that training and development is less regarded as a necessity by the medical doctors, even though it is very useful to them. Medical doctors are attending only those workshops that are funded by the Ministry, simply to maximise their points, since their salaries are inadequate to feed their families, let alone to participate in training and development programmes. This was evidenced by M1.

Researcher: Do you engage in Training and Development programmes as medical doctors in Zimbabwe?

M1: Yeah we are involved in that we always have to be attending some workshops and we are given some points at the end of the year you should accumulate. But because of COVID I didn't accrue much points.

Researcher: So is mandatory for all doctors to participate in these workshops?

M1: Yes all doctors are obliged to attend works because there are certain points that you should accrue at the end of the year so it is a requirement from the ministry. You need to have 25 points for you to have a certificate.

Researcher: Okay, I see. So where do you get the funding to attend the workshops and other training programmes?

M1: In most cases it's the Government because we are incapacitated to do so. We only attend funded workshops but for the past 2 years the government has reduced the budget for these capacity development programmes even though they help us as medical doctors.

As noted by M1, medical doctors are unable to participate in continuous development programmes. As a result, they participate only in funded training.

Findings have also revealed that the government had reduced the budget for training programmes. As a result of this medical doctors are no longer participating in continuous development programmes as they rely on government funding. M2 indicated that:

The deteriorating economic conditions have reduced our remuneration as well as these continuous development programmes. We know it is the role of the government to equip us to capacitate us as employees but how can they capacitate us when they are failing to pay us when they force us not to bargain for salaries and better working conditions. That is why a number of doctors leave the public sector joining the private sector.

The findings above have indicated that CPD programmes in the medical profession occur at a minimum level. This is because medical doctors are unable to participate in these programmes. This is also strengthened by Chipunza (2019) in *The Herald*, who cited Dr Madzimba, the

director in the Ministry of Health and Child Care, who acknowledged First Lady Auxillia Mnangagwa for funding medical doctors to participate in training for specialised management professions of medicine. He further highlighted that the partnership made by the first lady helped to address the HR challenges that the country is facing, as a number of doctors are willing to be trained. This implies that there is a shortage of specialised doctors in Zimbabwe as a result of a lack of training, as doctors do not have the capacity to self-fund their training programmes. The comment that was made by the director of the Ministry of Health and Child Care implies that doctors have the willingness to engage in CPD; however, they want to participate only in donor-funded training programmes. This indicates that there is now less of CPD in the medical profession as a result of the precarious environment.

5.8 Comment on the training and development of elite professionals

Findings have revealed that the precarious environment in Zimbabwe has a negative effect on the training and development of elite professionals. Figure 5.3 below represents a comparison of CPD across all professions. As evidenced from the preceding discussion and the figure below, the majority (11) of the participants indicated that the prevailing economic environment is affecting them in engaging in training and development, as their salaries are being eroded by hyperinflation.

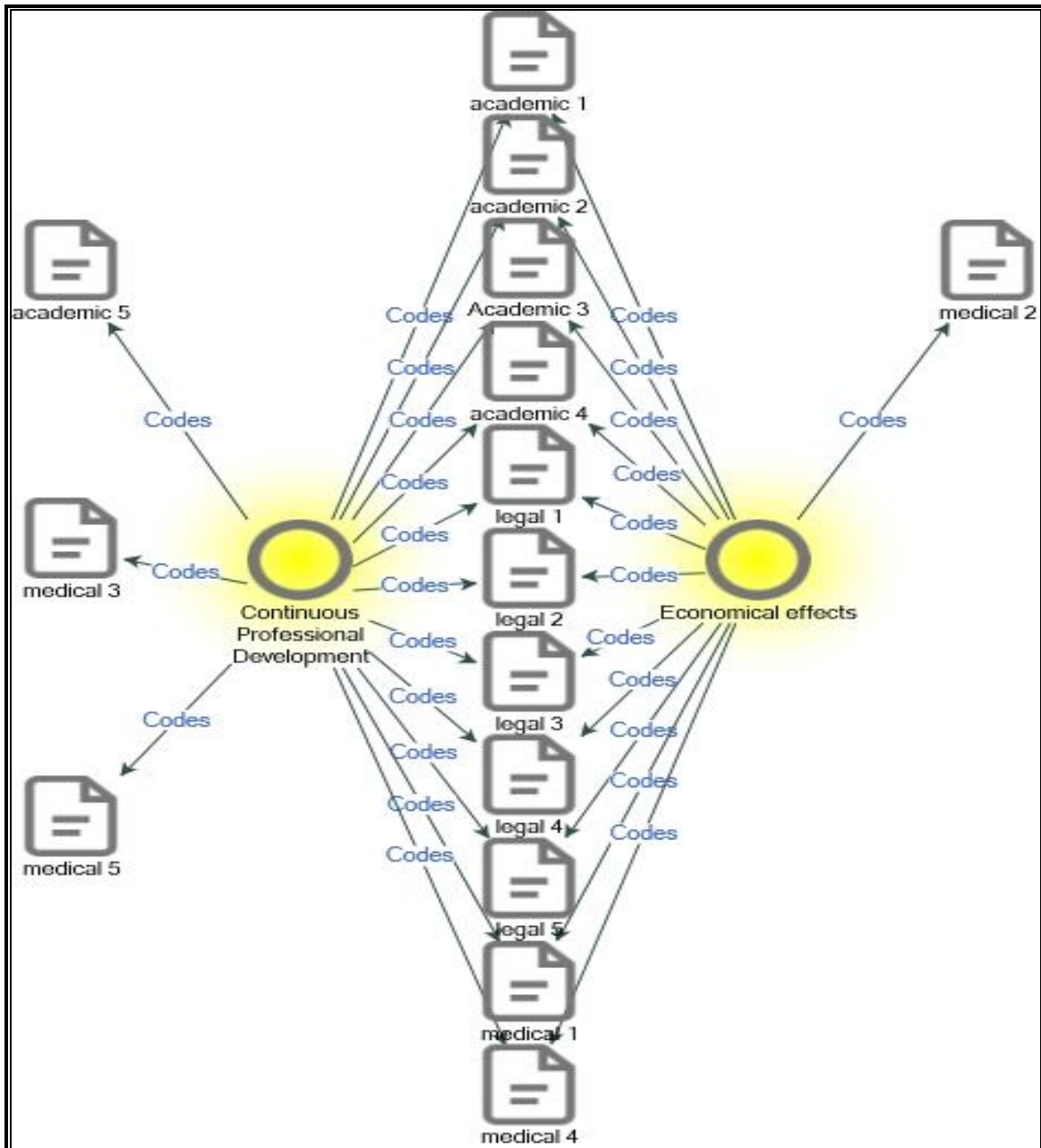


Figure 5.3: The impact of economic environment on elite professionals in Zimbabwe

Generated by NVivo version 12.

In addition, the majority of participants who highlighted the relationship between CPD and the economic environment were from the academic and legal professions. Five of the participants were from the legal profession, four of them were from the academic profession, and two of them were from the medical profession. This topic came up most frequently among the participants from the legal profession, which implies that the legal profession is the most affected profession. This is mainly due to the fact that the Law Society of Zimbabwe (2015)

stipulates that only lawyers who have accrued the required 12 points may renew their practising certificates. As a result of this, lawyers are bound to engage in training and development programmes, despite the unstable economic environment. With regard to the academic profession, Kangira (2023) highlighted that only PhD holders should be allowed to teach in tertiary institutions. Maponga (2015) also indicated that lecturers without PhDs risk losing their jobs. This implies that lecturers are being forced to enrol for PhD programmes, despite their low and un-motivating salaries, which are insufficient for them to enrol for doctoral studies. That is why one of the participants indicated she enrolled with Unisa, which is cheaper than Zimbabwean universities, due to the nature of her salary. As a result, academic professionals are less engaged in training and development since they are participating only for job security. Only two of the doctors highlighted the relationship between CPD and economic environment. This is mainly due to the fact that some doctors have their own surgeries, even though they are both private- and public-sector employees. Therefore, they have better income returns than other professions. However, they only use this income to maintain their social status. As a result, they give less attention to development programmes.

5.9 Chapter summary

This chapter was the first of the two chapters on data presentation. It focused on the first two objectives, namely, the extent to which the concepts of career planning and progression are applicable to elite professionals in Zimbabwe in their effort to maintain the middle-class status, and the extent to which capacity development programmes are applicable to elite professionals in Zimbabwe.

It has been indicated by the findings in this chapter that the precarious environment has reconfigured the social status of elite professionals who belong to the middle-class category. The biographical data has indicated that elite professionals Zimbabwe no longer qualify to be in the middle-class category.

In addition, the findings have revealed that elite professionals are less interested in development programmes, as they are busy focusing on other avenues to generate income. The next chapter will present the data in relation to the job satisfaction and job engagement of elite professionals in a precarious environment.

CHAPTER 6

DATA PRESENTATION: JOB SATISFACTION, JOB ENGAGEMENT AND COPING MECHANISMS OF ELITE PROFESSIONALS IN ZIMBABWE

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on data presentation on the professional development of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. This chapter continues with the presentation of data and it mainly addresses Objectives 3, 4 and 5, namely, to assess the level of job satisfaction of elite professions in Zimbabwe, to understand the level of job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe and to assess coping mechanisms employed by elite professionals in the context of a precarious environment. The presentation is mainly textual but, where necessary, figures generated by Nvivo version 12 accompany the text. The last section of this chapter focuses on cross-cutting aspects.

6.2 The impact of the precarious environment on job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

This section focuses on data presentation in relation to job satisfaction. The third argument of the thesis argues that elite professions no longer feel content with their jobs owing to the nature of their rewards. This is the reason that they are engaging in other forms of income generation to supplement their income. The first section focuses on academic lecturers and job satisfaction.

6.2.1 Academic lecturers and Job satisfaction in Zimbabwe

As highlighted in the previous chapter, the commercialisation of higher and tertiary education in Zimbabwe has affected the level of job satisfaction among academic lecturers in the country. The declining economic environment since 1997 resulted in the privatisation of universities (Garwe & Thondhlana, 2019), as highlighted in Chapter 2. Before the privatisation of public universities, the government was the major source of funding and therefore had control over the day-to-day running of state institutions (Watson et al. (2010). The state furthermore had control over the quality of students to be enrolled in universities. Zivengwa et al. (2011)

indicated that the government provided funding to university students selected by the state through the Cadetship Scheme. The elimination of funding necessitated a rise in the number of candidates at universities, as highlighted by (Matamanda et al., 2020). The rise of the informal sector, which was brought about by the unstable economic environment, resulted in many people joining informal trading. By virtue of this, people had the capacity to pay for their tuition fees. This helped to boost universities' income. Nevertheless, this increased number of students meant a greater workload for the lecturers. Chihombori (2013) and Kariwo (2007) noted an increase in university students. This increased workload furthermore came with decreased rewards that are not equitable with the amount of work and effort being rendered. This has resulted in low job satisfaction among academic lecturers.

Closely linked to the above, findings have also revealed that the privatisation of higher and tertiary education, which resulted in an increase on university students, played a major role in lowering job satisfaction among academic lecturers. Tshili (2018) highlighted that universities, produce an average of 2,000 graduates per university annually. This implies that there is mass production of graduates and thereby an increase in unemployment. However, as highlighted by Togo and Gandidzanwa (2021) the government has tried to reduce the unemployment rate by introducing Education 5.0. Nevertheless, nothing is being done on the side of the lecturers, as they no longer have work–life balance due to high workloads. Garwe and Thondhlana (2019) highlighted that students are now being enrolled for parallel programmes, conventional programmes, weekend classes and block sessions. This implies that, owing to high outmigration, as noted by Bigirimana and Sibanda (2016) and Robinson (2020), one lecturer has to teach the day-to-day students, weekend classes, evening classes and block classes, as well as supervising research projects. As a result, lectures are now finding it difficult to have flexibility and work–life balance, as they are expected to be at work most of the time. This has resulted in job dissatisfaction among academic lecturers. This is evidenced by A5, who indicated that:

We have a number of programmes. At times it is so draining, you need to teach parallel students in the evening, during the day you teach conventional students, weekends we have weekend classes in Harare so you need to drive there, not forgetting those who are on block sessions, so it is draining. You will not have enough time to rest and times you have your side hustles also calling so there is too much pressure on us.

This is also supported by the information advertising degree programmes, which was on the university website. Table 4 below indicates an extract from XYZ university website, which indicated advertised programmes by the University for Social sciences department.

Table 4: An extract from the XYZ university website for social science degree programmes

Programme	Entry requirement
<p>Bachelor of Science Honours Degree Programmes (4 years conventional/3 years on block release/4years weekend class-Harare only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resource Management • Psychology • Counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 5 O level passes including English language with a grade C or better. • at least 2 A level passes.
<p>Master in Science Degree Programmes (1 ½ years on block release)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resource Management • Educational Psychology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants must hold an appropriate Honours degree with a minimum of a 2.2 degree class

Table 4 above emphasises what has been highlighted by Garwe and Thondhlana (2019). This therefore implies that lecturers no longer have work–life balance, as they have a greater workload than ever before. As a result, lack of work–life balance has resulted in job dissatisfaction among academic lecturers in Zimbabwe.

In addition, findings have also indicated that women in these high professions experience high job dissatisfaction, which is also caused by a lack of work–life balance. By virtue of their occupying top positions, women find it difficult to manage their work and their social lives as a result of this privatisation. As a result, they end up dissatisfied with their jobs. A4 stated:

It is a bit difficult to go on vacations even if we have money, we have too much workloads you need to supervise students, you need to attend evening lectures and online lectures we end up doing some of the work late night because you also need to attend meetings during the day. You know how it is.

Academic lecturers are now engaging in a number of activities – such as being visiting lecturers – as a way to supplement their income. However, this is now causing job dissatisfaction since

they no longer have enough time with their families and away from their jobs. These findings have indicated that a lack of work–life balance is adding to the job dissatisfaction of academic lecturers, as they also need to focus on other income-generating projects to earn a better living, coupled with too-heavy workloads.

In addition, dissatisfaction among academic lecturers was noticed as lecturers indicated that they earn Zimbabwean dollars, yet their bills are in foreign currency. This has been highlighted by Dzirutwe (2018). This reduces the job satisfaction level of lecturers, as they are now earning ZW\$ to buy US\$ from the parallel market. Academics are so devastated by this state, as this does not motivate them to do their work. A1 said:

I would say in Zimbabwe it is the economic environment that has sucked the social status of lectures and the middle class. For example someone who is earning ZW 170 000 which is equivalent to USD \$ 210 somewhere there. Can this sustain me with my family? No. So basically this affects everything my bills my kids. I need about \$4 alone for transport. So for a week it is about \$20. So where will this take me? Obviously nowhere. Because for transport alone I will be left with nothing to support my family if I am to drive. That is why we engage in part time work so supplement our income, because we are earning in ZW dollars that we need to convert or buy USD from the black market because we pay bills in foreign currency but our salaries are in ZW dollars. This also applies to lecturers in the public sector those that are under state owned universities. They are also struggling. Our salaries are almost the same.

In addition, dissatisfaction of lecturers also stems from incapacitation, which is being triggered by the precarious environment. One of the memos which was directed to the Vice Chancellor indicated the incapacitation of lecturers. The memo, dated 18 June 2019, stated:

Subject: Declaration of incapacitation by lecturers.

We write on behalf of lecturers of the XYZ University. Lecturer’s salaries have drastically fallen to the equivalent of around US\$200 per month given that RTGS\$ continues to lose value against other currencies. We wish to notify you that we are now incapacitated.

In this regard we will also try our best to have finished marking of exams by the 30th of June 2019. Thank you.

Lecturers have indicated that they are incapacitated; however, they continue working despite this, simply to protect their jobs, since the country is characterised by a high unemployment rate. Chikandiwa (2023) highlighted that 2.8 million Zimbabweans of working age are unemployed, which puts the national unemployment rate at 21%. With such a high unemployment rate in Zimbabwe, lecturers are forced to go to work, despite their incapacitation. However, this has implications on their satisfaction level.

It has been also configured that, lecturers are not satisfied with their jobs since they do not have the zeal to upgrade themselves. Lack of career growth indicates that one is not satisfied and motivated by his or her work. Participant A5 said:

You know those juniors no longer have motivation and the zeal to write articles so that they can as well grow upward in the industry because the difference is just the same in terms of salaries...

As may be seen from the quote above, lecturers are now dissatisfied with their jobs and no longer consider their career growth an important aspect in their profession. Participant A4 enrolled for PhD degree simply to protect her job and not because she was satisfied. A1 has not yet enrolled but is still waiting for scholarship programmes, as he (and other lecturers) cannot afford to enrol in Zimbabwean universities owing to the nature of his rewards. All of these factors emphasise a serious level of dissatisfaction among lecturers.

Findings have also revealed that the unstable political environment is also leading to dissatisfaction of lecturers. Lecturers live in fear as their words they use in lecturers maybe used against them. Due to lack of political freedom lecturers are forced not give certain examples since spies are enrolled as students. This reduces the level of satisfaction among lecturers. A1 said:

We teach adults here who have money some of them are politicians some of them are company owners so if these offer you let's say a coupon of fuel you will grab with two hands because you can't afford. However you also need to be careful as some of these

students are not here to study but on a mission. We heard a number of incidences that happened ...

It has also been revealed by findings that lecturers are less satisfied with their jobs as they are not provided with the resources to work. The deteriorating working environments has resulted in them not being satisfied with their work as they find it demotivating to them. A3 said:

A3: *...Covid brought the online learning to our institutions so at least you can balance those weekend classes and evening classes, even though they are always silent about data, but as for me I use my own data.*

Researcher: *okay*

A3: *yeah not because I have money but I will be able to focus on other things I have a boutique in town so it will also give time to go for orders.*

Figure 6.1 below depicts the major causes of job dissatisfaction among academic lecturers in Zimbabwe. The word cloud depicts that high workload is one of the major reasons for lecturers' being dissatisfied with their work. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the privatisation of universities resulted in universities' implementing different learning modes, as indicated by Garwe and Thondhlana (2019). Tshili (2018) highlighted that that is the reason that a large number of university graduates are being produced. To reduce the high unemployment, the government, through the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, introduced Education 5.0, as mentioned previously. This increased the workload of academic lecturers, who are already underpaid, therefore reducing their satisfaction level since their peers abroad with the same qualifications are earning more than them.

In addition, the word cloud in Figure 6.1 depicts that lecturers are now comparing themselves with other lecturers beyond their borders and those in the informal sector. This comparison results in job dissatisfaction of lecturers, since they perceive a sense of inequality. Kwon and Jang (2012) highlighted that when people do not perceive equity, they will experience distress. Academic lecturers in other countries belong to the middle class owing to the nature of their income and consumption; however, Zimbabwean lecturers are struggling to earn a basic living – as indicated previously, they are “earning money to buy money”. As result, this leads to job dissatisfaction among lecturers in Zimbabwe.

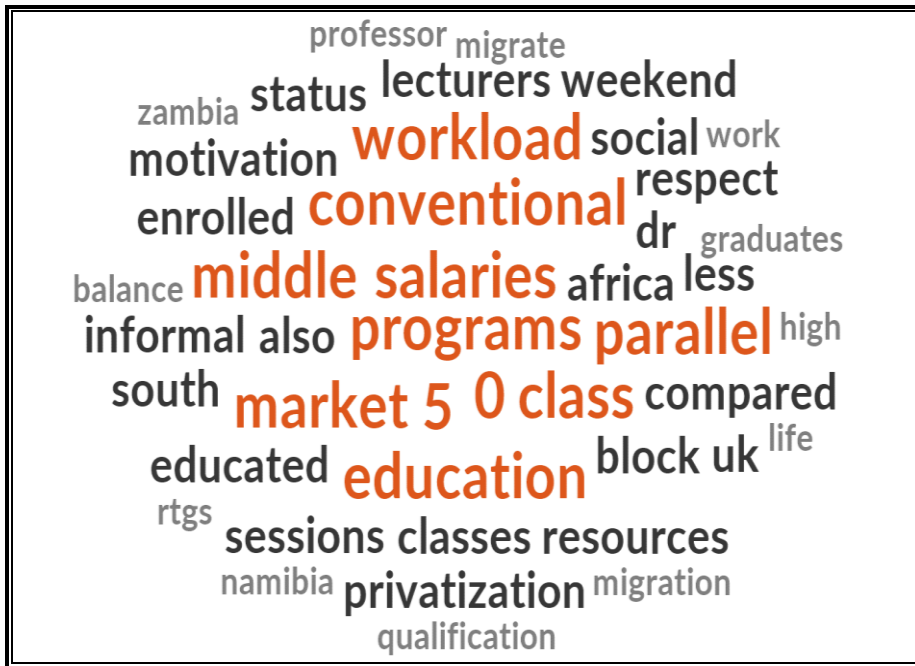


Figure 6.1: A word cloud on the causes of job dissatisfaction among academic lecturers in Zimbabwe

Source: Nvivo version 12

The inequality perceived by academic lecturers after comparing themselves with their peers has influenced their level of satisfaction. Lecturers are now dissatisfied with their jobs as they feel that their inputs and outputs are not on par, especially after comparing them with other peers. This has an effect on their class mobility. A1 stated that:

...I don't think we qualify to be in the middle class maybe in terms of education only. Look at other lecturers in other countries we are very far away from them in terms of material things I sometimes use public transport simply because my salary doesn't allow me to drive everyday...

The above paragraphs have indicated the level of dissatisfaction among lecturers in Zimbabwe, which is being necessitated by the declining economic environment.

6.2.2 Lawyers and job satisfaction in a precarious environment

Findings have revealed that there is high level of dissatisfaction among female lawyers as compared to male lawyers. Law is a profession which requires more time from an individual. This implies that married females will have less time, as they have the social aspect of life to

attend. There are also cultural responsibilities that they should perform as a result of this, female lawyers will be less satisfied due to lack of work–life balance. L4 stated that

...we also have social duties at home so it's difficult to have other activities that requires your attention...

In an attempt to address work–life balance the secretary of LSZ in the March newsletter indicated that:

Women are always expected to be home doing homework with the kids and cooking. If she decides to go out and she comes back home late and staggering and smelling a little bit of alcohol, this is then deemed as unacceptable while the men can do the same without being labelled. (Adapted from Law Society of Zimbabwe (2022b))

Closely linked to the above, Maunganidze (2020) highlighted that gendered professions are problematic for women's employment, as these professions require interpersonal networks. The process of creating interpersonal networks requires more time, mainly after working hours, through socialising. This indicated that female lawyers have poorer work–life balance than men.

In Chapter 3 of this thesis it was stated that the Law Society (2004a) reported that female attorneys make less money than male attorneys do. Choroszewicz and Adams (2019a) indicated that there are methods used to favour male-dominated professions in gendering occupations. Findings have also revealed that, there is also low satisfaction level in women due to the nature of cases they handle. Unlike men, women handle light cases such as divorce cases. These cases have low charges as compared to fraud cases handled by male practitioners. They also make them less prominent as compared to male lawyers who handle fraud cases. As a result reduces the satisfaction level of female practitioners as they make less money than their fellow male practitioners do. L5 said:

...the more famous you are the more money you get. Few women are famous in our field, we have only one who won a bigger case. So it's a bit challenging for us to earn more because divorce cases do not have much to offer...

It was also noted that male practitioners have higher levels of satisfaction than do female practitioners. Male lawyers have room to make informal relations with prosecutors after work

hours, unlike female professionals, who have social and cultural obligations. As a result, men will win most of their cases in court proceedings on account of their informal relations with prosecutors. This, in turn, increases their satisfaction level, as they are able to win more popularity than females in in the legal field.

It has also been revealed that the economic environment has affected the legal profession greatly as their clients no longer afford to pay for legal representation. This has caused dissatisfaction since lawyers are now working as per clients offer. Clients are now the ones offering what have and due to the economic environment lawyers will have to accept as it is their sauce of income. L2 said:

We depend on them but here in Zimbabwe the situation is different. Lawyers are struggling even to pay their bills because we no longer have clients. Our clients no longer afford to pay us what we charge because of the unstable environment and this has caused us to suffer. We now negotiate with our clients on what they can afford. But in actual fact we are not supposed to negotiate with clients because there are certain standards of charges set by Law Society of Zimbabwe that we should adhere to as lawyers. But in this case if my clients fail to meet that it means I will have to adjust for me to have income. So the economic environment has impacted our income as lawyers in Zimbabwe. If you charge considering Law Society rates they will go to court by themselves even the criminal court, but in other countries and other jurisdictions it is not allowed. So the need for doctors is not as the need for lawyers. The need is higher for doctors than lawyers because people can now go to courts by themselves if they do not afford to pay what we charge them.

This was also supported by the LSZ July 2022 newsletter, which stated that:

...The first half of 2022 is gone and we are well into the second half of the year. While the economic outlook remains bleak the turmoil that characterised May and June seem to have tailed a little. (Law Society of Zimbabwe (2022)c)

In addition, findings have also revealed that moonlighting is one of the factors that causes dissatisfaction among lawyers. Owing to the unstable economic environment, the “rent-a-chair” concept is becoming more prevalent in the legal profession (whereby people are being

given legal advice). This greatly affects the satisfaction level of lawyers, especially those who are not prominent. L1 indicated that:

...now these upcoming lawyers that joined the profession are now engaging in all sorts of unlawful acts as a result those that are not famous in the profession will end up without clients....

This is also supported by the LSZ newsletter, which stated that

In the past few months, the Law Society has had to deal with cases of professional assistants lodging and paying for the practicing certificates a law firm and running a parallel business without the principal or partner's knowledge and approval. (Law Society of Zimbabwe (2022b)

Findings have also revealed that lawyers are also experiencing some challenges in attending their continuing legal education, on account of a lack of resources. The LSZ indicated that:

Only 18% of the registered lawyers have managed to attend, trainings on constitutional and electoral litigation since 2018 to 2022. (Law Society of Zimbabwe (2022a)

The level of attendance clearly indicates that lawyers are incapacitated to fund training programmes. This results in the level of dissatisfaction among lawyers.

In addition, lawyers are expected to attend training programmes to acquire points so that they may renew their practicing certificates, despite the declining economic environment. LSZ must take into consideration that lawyers are living in an unstable environment in which their clients are failing to pay for them and are therefore struggling to earn a living. This may cause dissatisfaction among lawyers. L3 stated that

... it is a requirement by the Law Society of Zimbabwe that every lawyer should accrue 12 points so as to renew his or her practicing certificate. One has to attend these programmes despite your income.

by cultural barriers. Nevertheless, lawyers still perform their duties, despite this job dissatisfaction caused by the unstable economic environment. This is mainly because clients are their main source of income; therefore, if they lower their inputs, this will result in less or no income. As they say, “lawyers eat what they kill”. This indicates that lawyers need to work for them to earn a salary; a lack of clients means that they have no income.

6.2.3 Medical doctors and job satisfaction in a precarious environment

The unstable economic environment has affected the medical profession to the extent that doctors no longer enjoy their work but they go to work just to earn money. This the reason that they are now engaged in a number of activities that generate them income.

It is important to note that a lack of resources is one of the main factors that has affected the job satisfaction level of medical doctors in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwean medical doctors are operating in an environment in which there are no resources in most cases. This affects their level of satisfaction.

Researcher: What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as medical doctors in Zimbabwe?

M3: I am not sure if I should say it's the economic environment or it's the political environment

[Giggles]

Yes because what do you expect me to do, if you tell me that I should save the people when there is not even a paracetamol in a government hospital. I suppose you are aware that doctors went on strike in 2020 when Covid was killing thousands and thousands. They expected us to go to work without protective clothing the government could not even provide the protective clothing yet they knew Covid is deadly virus. In that case what do you expect from me?

Researcher: yeah, there was nothing you could do.

M3: At one point doctors were fired for striking, does this mean we are not allowed to express ourselves for the government to improve the working

conditions, the whole country we only have one hospital with a radiotherapy machine. We are talking of a country here and you expect doctors to be dedicated to their work. We need better working conditions at least....

This indicated that working conditions and lack of resources are also some of the reasons that medical doctors reduce the level of enthusiasm and dedication. M1 added:

M1: sometimes they leave us with no choice you can't expect me to attend a patient if there are no resources to use, all you do is to prescribe for the patient to buy on their own. That is why we also refer them to our surgeries at least that way they can get better services.

It has been also noted that work–life balance has become a nightmare to medical doctors as they are looking into other avenues that generate them income. The majority of professionals who participated in this study (13) were not able to go vacation, which is one of the characteristics of middle class, owing to the nature of their income. This reduces medical doctors' degree of pleasure and happiness.

Researcher: Do you have the ability to go on vacation?

M5: uuum, this is work–life balance right?

Researcher: yes, yes

M5: I don't think work–life balance is applicable in our case. Everyone is busy doing something to earn extra income because honestly if you only wait for the government salary uuum even your kids will not go to school. Like in my case if I am done here I do some part time work at Crest Hospital (not the official name) just to earn extra money for my family. So there is no way I will balance my work. If I try to do that it will be at the expense of my income.

Researcher: Alright, meaning you cannot even go on a holiday to rejuvenate or refresh with your family.

M5: *I understand it is a requirement, but considering our income we have suspended some of these. You always need to be hands on for you to get extra income because salary alone is nothing. Can I think of a vacation whilst I am earning \$200 it is impossible. It is necessary but the expenses are more than my income. I am sure few people can afford maybe those with their surgeries.*

As noted above, the levels of job satisfaction among Zimbabwean medical doctors are low. They no longer enjoy their work because of the prevailing economic and political environment in the country. As a result, some of these practitioners are leaving the country to nations in which there are better working conditions that allow them to enjoy their work. This is supported by the Zimbabwean Hospital Doctors Association (ZHDA) report of 2019, which indicated that

Zimbabwe has lost more than 4,000 doctors and nurses to the UK and other countries since 2021, according to the Health Services Board, amid poor pay and worsening economic conditions.

The Herald also indicated that:

The health sector lost 2000 health workers in 2021 which was double than the health care professionals who left in the year 2020 (Zinyuke, 2021).

It has also been noted that the job satisfaction level is higher for men than for women in the profession. Men have more avenues for making money than women, and they can attend to patients at any given time, which is a different case when it comes to women. Women have a social role to play; therefore, when they get home, they need to attend to social aspects. Due to the cultural dimensions, women have lower levels of job satisfaction than men. M5 said:

...yeah we do other activities to generate income but honestly it is so draining particularly to women because you also need to attend your family at home. So you won't have enough time with your family with this part time work.

In addition, findings have also indicated that lack of autonomy, which is being caused by political interventions, is also one of the reasons medical doctors are dissatisfied with their work. Doctors no longer have a flexible working environment. All of their actions are attributed

to political actions even in the event of collective bargaining. This has reduced satisfaction levels of the medical profession.

*We call upon responsible authorities to equip our hospitals and create a conducive environment so that Zimbabweans can benefit fully from the available local expertise.
Zimbabwe Senior Hospital Doctors Association Website October 2021.*

As noted above, elite professionals are now dissatisfied with their work, especially those in the academic profession. This is due to the nature of their rewards as it is evidenced that they are now migrating in search of greener pastures while some of them are engaging in unorthodox means to supplement their monetary rewards. This emphasises that monetary rewards satisfy elite professionals in unstable economic environment.

6.2.4 Section summary

The findings revealed that the majority (12) of participants mainly from the academic and medical professions are not satisfied with their jobs. That is the reason that Zimbabwe is experiencing a high outflow of members of these professions to other countries. However, regarding the legal profession, the level of satisfaction is different from other professions. Lawyers need to engage more into their jobs, since they have more limited choices than other professions.



Figure 6.3: The impact of the precarious environment on job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

Generated by NVivo version 12

Figure 6.3 above depicts the major causes of job dissatisfaction among elite professionals in Zimbabwe as earlier on explained in this section. Findings revealed that the economic environment has affected the salaries and income of elite professionals, as a result they are less satisfied with their job. Elite professionals are also comparing themselves with informal traders and other peers beyond their borders, and this comparison has made them perceive the inequity between their income/salaries and their inputs. They are now less engaged in CPD, while other professionals in other countries are able to participate in CPD with or without support of their related institutions. This has therefore resulted in job dissatisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe, while others are now considering migration as an option to balance their inputs and outputs. The next section presents the findings in relation to job engagement and elite professionals in Zimbabwe.

6.3 Job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

This section presents the impact of the precarious environment on job engagement level of academic, medical and legal professionals. Text and figures that were adapted from NVivo are used to present data.

6.3.1 Academic professionals and job engagement

Moonlighting is one practice, among other activities, that shows that academic professionals have reduced their level of dedication to their work. Owing to incapacitation, which is a result of low salaries, academic lecturers are now engaging in other activities that generate income. This implies that they are no longer devoted to their work; they are now more focused on other money-making projects to generate income. One cannot serve two masters and remain loyal to them both. This is evidenced in A1:

Researcher: Outside your normal load what else do you do that generates income, be it formal or non-formal?

A1: Anything that brings income, uhm. Alright I am also a full-time lecturer with Avondale University [not the official name]. I also do some part time jobs with other universities as I'm sure you know what lecturers are earning right.

Researcher: yes

A1: so if you try to rely on that alone I bet you will not survive in Zimbabwe. So the best option is to have multiple ways of generating income. If you do not do that you won't even pay your bills...

Lecturers are now engaging into other income-generating projects to supplement their income, which has been eroded by inflation. As a result, lecturers are now less engaged in their work since they are also pursuing other activities that generate income. One lecturer can hold a full-time job and be a visiting lecturer in the other seven universities, just to earn extra income as highlighted by A5's biographical related characteristics. A1 is a full-time lecturer in two universities. This clearly indicates low engagement among lecturers, since they are concerned about generating more income to supplement their salaries.

In addition, the findings revealed that the privatisation of universities in a crippled economy has contributed to low engagement of lecturers, as the universities are now responsible for lecturers' salaries. This is evidenced by Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation Science and Technology Professor Murwira, who was quoted in *the Herald* saying:

Anything that turns to suggest Government as an employer is incorrect. Universities are creatures of statutes and separate legal entities with a right to sue and to be sued in their own right. This means universities as separate legal entities are capable of entering into contracts unassisted. The minister cannot and does not interfere with contractual obligations for universities. Don't mistake our salary support grant to be your salaries. Herald (2023)

The above quote strengthens the notion that the privatisation of universities came at a time when the economy was already underperforming. As a result, it affected the nature of the rewards of lecturers. Universities could not afford to pay lecturers' salaries in time. This reduces the level of engagement in lecturers, as they now consider money to be the only motivator.

The word cloud in figure 6.1 depicts that salaries, by virtue of being one of the most frequently appearing terms in the interviews (represented by its relatively large size in the word cloud), is the main reason that lecturers are not engaged. Lecturers are "earning money to buy money"; as result, this reduces their engagement level. Some are also into farming which also complements part time work which they do in other universities so as to supplement their income.

In addition, it is also depicted that, lecturers lower their engagement level since they are regarded as pauper people regardless their level of education. Lecturers have invested and are still investing in their education, however they are still earning low salaries despite their inputs. This in turn has a negative effect on their engagement as they will lower engagement levels to suit their salaries. A3 indicated that:

...it's better for me to buy data on my own so that I conduct online lectures when I am not at work. I am trying to balance my boutique and work...

A1 also added that:

And now comes these guys in the streets that are getting more if you talk to them they will tell you all sorts of stories that education does not pay. It will not give you anything. Which is true because they are earning more compared to recognised professions here in Zimbabwe. I have lots of my friends who are now into selling to supplement their income yet they are professionals. Some are into selling Avon products. I also have a colleague who is into mining as well. We do not have any choice that is our only way out because this education does not pay at all.

In this regard, lecturers are now comparing themselves with those who are less educated. Gosha (2020) indicated that the class mobility has shifted as a result of the unstable economic environment. This implies that informal jobs are paying more than formal jobs, despite the fact that those in informal jobs are less educated than those in the formal sector. Nevertheless, they are earning more than people with a higher level of education. As a result, this comparison has led lecturers to be less engaged in their work. A2 stated:

...look at those prominent people the like of Vincent (not the official name), they are not educated I have never heard that he went to college but he is driving a Lamborghini yet the educated ones are not driving. Look at those money changers they are even making a lot they will tell you all sorts of things. They mock us. The situation is so pathetic...

As indicated by above paragraphs the precarious environment in Zimbabwe has caused lectures to be less engaged in their work as they now engaging in other income generating activities to supplement their meagre salaries.

6.2.2 Job engagement of medical doctors in a precarious environment

In as far as job engagement on medical doctors is concerned; findings have revealed that, most of the medical doctors in the public sector have reduced their level of dedication to work due to the nature of their rewards. Medical doctors in the public sector are earning RTGS which is less of equivalent to \$300. Dzinamarira and Musuka (2021) highlighted health care professionals in Zimbabwe migrated to other countries as they are earning less than health care professionals in equivalent positions abroad. That is the reason doctors are engaging in unending industrial actions bargaining for their wages (Mwonzora, 2022). This implies that job

engagement is a result of motivation from financial rewards which are described as hygiene factors by Herzberg's two-factor theory. This was supported by M4:

Researcher: So what is your level job engagement as medical doctors in Zimbabwe?

M4: Let me say it like this motivation drives engagement

Researcher: Alright, alright

M4: When you are not motivated you will not dedicate your efforts to work. What we all want is survival so everyone puts extra efforts in rewarding work. Now that we are earning \$200 my level of dedication is automatically low. We need better salaries or let me say the economic situation should stabilise, this will be for the benefit of all Zimbabweans especially professionals because these are the ones earning less than those in the business sector.

Medical doctors are there to take care of the health of the public. However, doctors are interested in income generation and, as a result, they no longer offer their best when it comes to the health of the public, especially in public hospitals. They are more engaged to their work in private hospitals or their own surgeries so as to attract private clients. This suggests that doctors offer different services to patients in the public and in the private sector.

Researcher: Alright, I see. So does this reduce your morale as doctors?

M2: The problem with our profession is that we may down tools but human lives matter that is the reason why a number of doctors have their own surgeries. We might reduce our efforts in public hospitals but in private surgeries we do our best because clients pay in US\$. Even if they call you at night we do our best because there is motivation in it. But in the public sector you know there no motivation yes you may help clients but with less efforts.

M1 shared the same sentiments that doctors are now putting more of their efforts in private hospitals, since this is where they receive more or equitable rewards.

...I would not say I do not feel the passion. Passion is there but ehh you just work there with less let me say with half of your effort there. And more of your effort you put it here. Sometimes after hours you can say I have closed my private practice but you can simply help patients...

Figure 6.4 below presents a word cloud of factors that lead to decreased engagement among medical doctors in Zimbabwe.

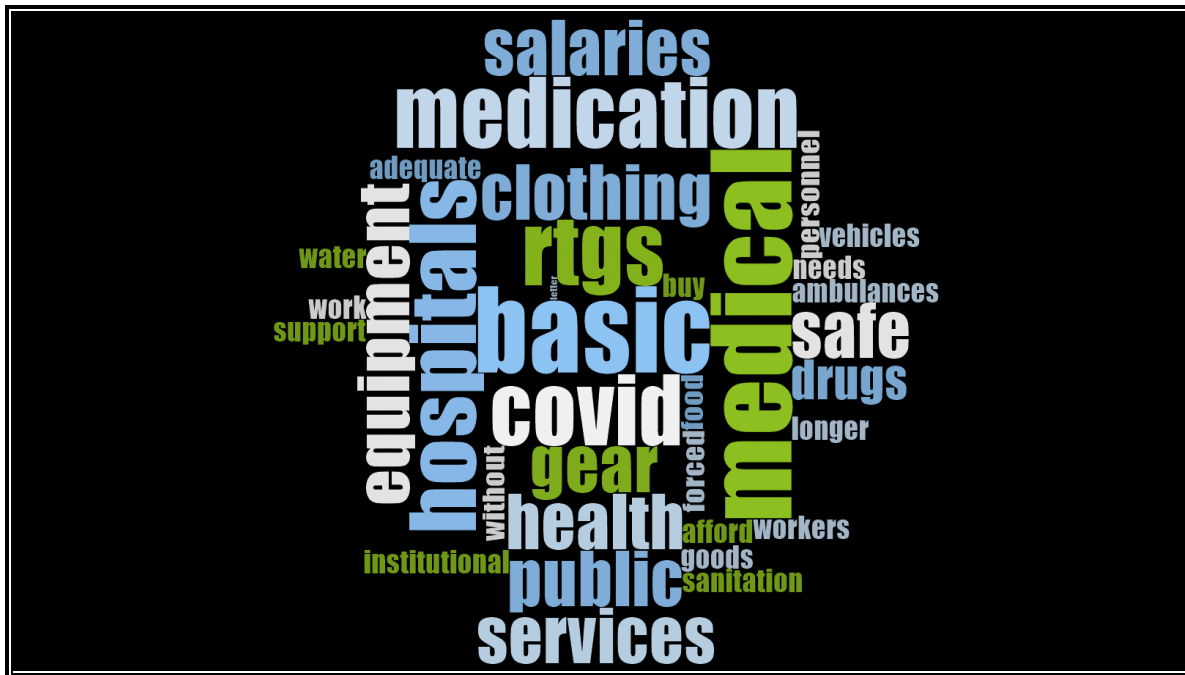


Figure 6.4: Factors that affect job engagement of medical doctors in Zimbabwe

Generated by NVivo version 12

The word cloud above indicates the major causes of job disengagement among medical doctors. It is indicated that lack of institutional support is one among other reasons that affects the level of engagement. The ministry of health is not supportive to medical doctors, particularly in public hospitals where there are no drugs for patients. As a result, this lack of medication in public hospital has resulted in them disengaging in their work because they cannot work without these. This is also evidenced by a petition that was raised by medical doctors before embarking on a strike which indicated that:

We are forced to work without basic health institutional needs like drugs, adequate water and sanitation, safe clothing gear, medical equipment and basic support services.

Health workers can no longer afford to buy food and other basic goods and services.
(Zimbabwe Hospital Doctors Association, 2019)

The petition above implies that doctors are no longer affording the basic cost of living and this is causing a reduction on their social status. Mudzonga (2022) earlier on highlighted that the increase in living expenses has resulted in the decrease of professional standards of living, henceforth skilled professionals are looking for other jobs in other fields. This implies that they are now less engaged to their work as they try to look for other jobs in other fields to protect their social status and improve the standard of living. As noted from the biographical related data, M3 is a medical doctor in the in public sector, he is also a lecturer in the school of medicine and owns a surgery. This suggests that he is only involved in the public sector but not engaged.

6.2.3 Legal practitioners and job engagement in Zimbabwe

It has been revealed that, although the legal profession is a prestigious profession, it does not promise money in a precarious environment like Zimbabwe. However, despite their low income, lawyers are always engaged to their work, since it is their professional way of earning money.

MM: What is your level of job engagement considering this unstable economic environment that we are in as Zimbabweans?

L1: Law is not just like any other profession like the doctors who have another alternative. They can go to other countries with better economies and you can still practise as a medical doctor. This is different from our profession. If I go to another country today I will not be able to practice law unlike the doctors. It will take me years to be in the same field in another country because law is based on different circumstances. You can operate of course in any English speaking country because the bases of their law is English law. So ours is Roman Dutch plus English law. Roman Dutch meaning the law which operate in South Africa which came from Holland so it is South Africa and Zimbabwe that Roman Dutch law. And then we because of the British influence we have the British law.

MM: Okay, Okay

L1: Yeah. If you join the profession you need to do your best despite the level of income because you eat what you kill. If you do not hunt no one will hunt for you.

Sharing the same sentiments, L2 indicated that:

L2: ...because we still have to exercise the due diligence in whatever work that we are doing irrespective of what the client might have given you...

It has also been found that legal practitioners are now engaging themselves in other activities for them to earn more money and income. They have room for informal connections with prosecutors as they socialise after work hours. As for women, they still need to perform their social duties if they married. L5 had this to say:

...as women we also need to be devoted to our families, even though it is difficult to balance these two but we have to...

This emphasises the idea that, despite the harsh economic conditions, coupled with the high inflation rate, which affects the income of lawyers, they still remain loyal and engaged to their jobs, since they do not have as many opportunities abroad as other professionals do.

6.2.4 Section Summary

The above findings indicate that elite professions in Zimbabwe are now less engaged to their work. Majority of participants who showed less engagement were from the academic and medical profession professions. Medical doctors and academic lecturers are now engaging in other income generating which results in reduction of their dedication. Figure 6.5 below indicates factors that lead to low job engagement among elite professionals in Zimbabwe.

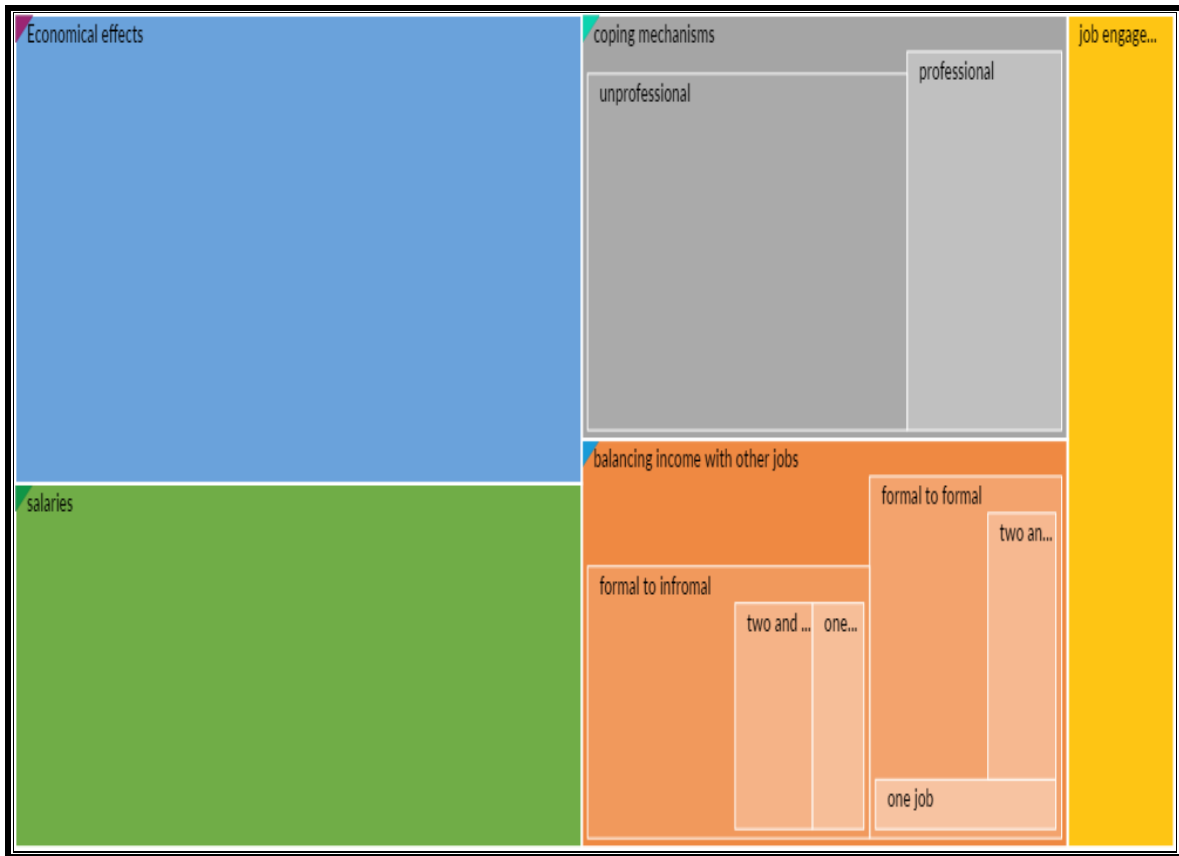


Figure 6.5: Causes of low job engagement on elite professionals in Zimbabwe

Generated by NVivo version 12

Figure 6.5 above depicts that the unstable economic environment has affected the salaries of elite professionals. As a result, they are falling short when comparing themselves with other professional and the informal sector. This has therefore forced them to engage in other income generating activities as a way of supplementing their meagre salaries. Some professional are even engaging in two jobs and activities. This helps them to boost their income since they have multiple income channels. However, this has a negative effect on their of engagement level as they have more masters to serve. The next section which is the last section of data presentation focuses on the coping mechanisms being employed by elite professionals in a precarious environment.

6.3 Coping strategies of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

The previous sections focused on the presentation of data related to the job satisfaction and job engagement of elite professionals in a precarious environment. This section continues with the presentation of data, focusing on Argument 5, which relates to the coping mechanisms employed by elite professionals in Zimbabwe. These coping strategies differ by gender, age and marital status, as evidenced by the biographical data. In addition, coping strategies also differ from one profession to the other.

6.3.1 Coping strategies for academic professionals in a precarious environment

Academic professionals are employing different strategies to cope with the prevailing economic environment in Zimbabwe. However, some of these coping strategies are formal and lawful, while others are not morally acceptable. Both formal and unorthodox means are employed as a way to survive the harsh economic conditions.

6.3.1.1 Formal mechanisms of survival by Academic professionals

It is indicated by the findings that academics are engaging into a number of activities for them to earn income to supplement their salaries. A number of lecturers are now visiting lecturers in different universities to supplement their income which has been eroded by inflation. A5 had this to say:

You can't survive with the salary alone, look here my salary is in RTGS and I have to go to the black market to buy US\$ so it's somewhere around \$200, you have a family, Its actually unbearable. That's why we engage into part time lecturing. We don't hesitate when there is an opportunity...

Migration has been indicated as one of the strategies that academic lectures are using: going to greener pastures, where they are paid according to their inputs. Academic lecturers indicated that they are moving abroad to where their inputs are being recognised and rewarded accordingly. This is evidenced by A3, who stated:

Yeah people are going abroad; we have a colleague who relocated to USA with his family after attaining his PhD. People just need experience once they feel they are experienced enough they secure their visas and leave the country.

Participant A4 stated:

From my own point of view, I think the system will suffer in the sense of recruitment. You know a number of academics are leaving the system. Some are going abroad for greener pastures where their education is being valued and some are resigning joining the private sector where they earn better salaries. Recently Midlands University had to advertise 13 posts from one department can you imagine the loss. People are running away to countries where they are recognised. So it is a loss to the organisation...

Academic lecturers are now engaging in research that enables them to gain more income. Through observation, the present researcher found out that some lecturers engaged in donor-funded studies that enable them to earn additional income. However, they engage in these studies only for monetary benefits and not for career progression. Some of them are now opening their consultation companies, while others conduct research for other companies. This allows them to gain more money for their survival. It is through these consultation companies that they are able to attract and engage themselves in research projects that are income generating.

Academic lecturers view these strategies as a coping mechanisms in a declining socio-economic environment. However, they have implications for the organisations and the country at large.

6.3.1.2 Unprofessional/unorthodox means of survival by academic professionals

Academic professionals are no longer interested in professional development, as a way of reducing their inputs to match their salaries. Owing to a lack of support in the form of research grants, coupled with the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe, academic lecturers now consider training and development programmes as secondary, instead focusing on other income-generation activities to supplement their income.

In addition, some of the academic professionals are ending up with two or more full time jobs from different universities. This has implications to the quality of work, as they will reduce their commitment level to strike a balance in all of their jobs. A1 said:

... it is possible I have a colleague who is doing the same but he is even worse he's a full lecturer here, he is a full-time lecturer at Mesh University and Borrowdale University. The same guy is also into part-time lecturing...

The findings revealed that lecturers are now incapacitated to the extent that they accept gifts from students. However, these gifts will end compromising lecturers' work, as they will end up giving the gift-givers higher marks than other students. A1 had this to say:

True, a student might come and offer you \$50 for lunch you will not have any choice but accept because you need money. You will be caught in between poverty and money. So at the end you will accept the money. This compromises our work. I will not be professional as I should. Because remember a lecturer should be responsible and care about their student's achievement, but when someone gives me money I will have to return the favours. How am I going to be fair in my assessments and giving constructive comments. It becomes difficult.

Findings have also indicated that some lecturers are now threatening students and forcing them to pay them extra money in return for marks. This is evidenced by an anonymous letter, which was found in one of the lecturer's files. The report indicated:

To the Chairperson

I am writing this letter seeking your advice and protection from Dr Melusi (not an official name). Dr Melusi refused to supervise me because I did not give him data to mark my project. He indicated that I should send him at least \$20 every time I submit my work for marking. I am afraid that this will implicate my results since I do not have the capacity to pay him the amount he requested. Attached is the proof of WhatsApp messages as he is also threatening me that I will fail my project if I do not adhere to his words. I seek your advice since he is also teaching me one of the modules I am taking this semester.

October 2022.

This clearly indicates that lecturers are now taking bribes from students. Those students who fail to give their lecturers a token of appreciation will end up failing. This has serious and

negative implications for the quality of students being produced by universities in terms of work ethics.

It has also been revealed by the findings that lecturers are now writing assignments and projects for students as a way of raising money. This is a way of supplementing income, but again, it has implications for the quality of university students, as these students will hold certificates without having learnt the necessary theory. A3 reported:

...I know of some lecturers who are into project writing for students. It is not ethical but people have got no choice; if you do not do that, life will be so difficult. I personally don't blame them; I blame our economy; it is now pushing us to the edges...

The findings in the foregoing section have indicated that the academic professionals are employing a range of activities as a way to cope with the prevailing economic conditions in Zimbabwe.

6.3.2 Coping strategies for the legal profession in a precarious environment

Due to the unstable economic environment the legal professionals are finding it difficult to survive as a result, they have different mechanisms that they employ to earn a living in an unstable economic environment. Some lawyers are finding it difficult to raise money for their practicing as it is beyond their reach due to unstable economic environment. *The Herald* (2022) stipulated that a number of legal practitioners expressed discomfort over the society's proposed 2023 fee structure. It further indicated that lawyers with 5 or more years in practice were asked to pay an annual fee of US\$950, while those with less than 5 years' experience were to pay US\$700 for a practicing certificate. This is a lot of money, considering the precarious environment that lawyers are living in and in which clients negotiate for legal representation. That is the reason lawyers engage in other activities – legal and illegal – to generate income for their practicing certificates.

Findings have revealed that legal professionals are now being involved in the informal trading sector to balance their income. Owing to the decrease in income, lawyers are now buying and selling goods to raise more income for themselves. This enables them to earn a living. However, this has a negative impact to the social status of the legal professional, as they are regarded as professions who should earn more than people in other occupations. L4 stated that:

I'm running a boutique in town and I am also into poultry farming. These projects help me to raise money for the family consumption...

In addition, some legal practitioners are also turning to farming to adapt to the prevailing economic environment in Zimbabwe. L1 said:

But of course as a professional you engage in some other callings some other profession or occupation like for instance I am a farmer. I have a farm where I am generating some income.

Findings have also indicated that lawyers are now abusing trust funds in an attempt to cope with the prevailing economic environment. This is an unlawful act, but on account of the fact that they are finding it difficult to survive or migrate, they end up using trust funds to support their income. L2 indicated that:

There are instances where lawyers ended up abusing trust funds due to that issue of status...

The Law Society president Mr Mhishi also shared the same sentiments as highlighted by Razemba (2015) that a number of lawyers were under investigation for stealing from trust accounts. This indicates the impact of the unstable economic environment and because of it, lawyers are now abusing trust accounts for them to earn income for their living.

In addition, moonlighting has been revealed as another coping mechanism employed by Zimbabwean legal practitioners in the quest to resolve their income challenges that have arisen as a result of the prevailing economic environment. The LSZ has indicated in a newsletter that:

In the past few months, the Law Society has had to deal with cases of Professional Assistants lodging and paying for their Practising certificates (PCs) under a law firm and running parallel firm business without the firm's principal or partners' knowledge and approval. Two such cases have been handled this year and disciplinary action has been taken against the errant lawyers. (LSZ, 2022c)

Findings have also revealed that, lawyers are now breaking rules and regulations which have been put in place by the LSZ about the minimum charges lawyers are still charging less. This is due to the fact their clients are not in position to pay for legal advice hence lawyers end up

accepting what the clients so as to have income since they only eat what they kill. L1 had this to say:

L1: *If you have been in the job for say 2 years you have a certain charge, there is a certain level of tariff which is said by the law society. If you have been in the profession for 30 years plus like me there is a certain amount we charge. My charges are quite high I do not charge less. So normally what we do is to negotiate with our clients. Because if we are going to charge what the law society wants us to charge very few clients of ours will be able to afford.*

L2 shared the same notion adding that:

Everyone now knows that lawyers are now cheap as avocados. The good thing about avocados the prices increases when they are off season. When we went to colleges we thought because we are doing law it will take us somewhere. I remember in 2009 somewhere there it was okay, even when I started it was okay. We knew the best we could do as lawyers was to still stay at home for at least 3 months and you will start working then you will be in a position to buy everything or households. But now you cannot do that. Now you can only get income after negotiating with the clients and even if it the least you won't have any choice because you want food on the table.

As evidenced above lawyers end up charging less than the required so as to put food on their table. Hence negotiations with the clients is one of the coping strategies used by the legal profession to earn a living in a precarious environment.

Findings have also revealed that the LSZ forbade legal practitioners to advertise their services. However due to the unstable economic environment being obtained in Zimbabwe there is now stiff competition on clients. Hence lawyers have resorted to advertising themselves as a way to earn income. L1 stated that:

... there are some who are engaging in unprofessional ways for them to have clients and income. That is the major problem we are now having in the legal profession. These upcoming professions. And when people then comment about this profession they identify us with those unprofessional youths who think law pays. You know when we joined this profession I remember where I did my law in 82 the professor in charge told

us we have joined a profession which does not pay eh unless you are going to break rules. That is exactly what he said. These youngsters got into the profession thinking that they will be millionaires. So to attain that goal they do all sorts of unscrupulous eh things and unscrupulous ways of making money.

It has also been revealed by findings legal practitioners, particularly male lawyers, are now engaging in fraudulent activities with prosecutors to gain popularity, thereby increasing their income. Male lawyers are now paying prosecutors for them to win cases so that they earn more money. This is due to the fact that male practitioners have more time than female practitioners for social activities after working hours, during which they can meet and discuss with prosecutors. As a result, prosecutors end up accepting bribes from lawyers which has implications to court rulings. L5 indicated that:

As females we face more challenges than males, you find out after work I have to rush home because I am also a mother, a wife and a daughter in law I need to protect my marriage. So those people need my attention, unlike men they can go out with prosecutors and go home late because they are males. So they end up sharing information with prosecutors and it is obvious that the judge will rule in favour of them...

In addition, L1 said:

...because it is your profession and is your office you are trying to protect so we pay them [LSZ] to audit us so that we can also renew our practicing certificates. You cannot renew practicing certificates if you are not audited.

This is a clear indication that fraud and bribery have become common coping strategies that lawyers are using to sustain themselves in this precarious economic environment.

Legal practitioners are now engaging themselves into corruption acts that allow them to earn money for their living. Razemba (2015) highlighted that a third of lawyers practising in Zimbabwe were under investigation for various cases of corruption and fraud. This was also supported by the researcher's diary, which stated that:

After interviewing L2 the researcher was referred to another law firm by the previous participant. However when the researcher arrived at the Law firm and discussed her

issue with one of sole partners of the firm, the potential participant indicated that he needed \$100 for him to participate and also to influence other lawyers to participate in the research study. The researcher tried to clarify that she is a student who is gathering data for academic purpose only. The potential participant indicated that no one was going to take part in the researcher's study. Hence the researcher had to go around looking for other participants who were willing to take part in the research study. (Researcher's Diary, 2022).

Munyoro (2023) indicated that a Harare lawyer was slapped with three years suspension from the legal practice over paying kickbacks to an official at a city bank for lucrative legal work from the bank with his law firm under curatorship. This shows that lawyers in unstable economic environments engage in unorthodox means of survival.

In addition, some lawyers are also practising without practicing certificates, as they do not have enough money to renew their practicing certificates. In the same vein, *The Standard* (2023) revealed another lawyer who was representing clients without a practicing certificates. The executive secretary of Law Society of Zimbabwe, Mr Mapara, testified against the lawyer that the lawyer was not licensed to practise.

6.3.3 Coping mechanisms by medical doctors

Due to the unstable economic environment, medical doctors are as well engaging in different activities to supplement their meagre salaries. Both legal and illegal activities are being used as coping mechanisms. These will be explained below.

6.3.3.1 Professional coping mechanisms by medical professionals

The findings revealed that migration is one of the most commonly used mechanisms in the health sector. There is a high outmigration of medical doctors, particularly junior doctors, to other countries with stable economies. This outmigration is being caused by the poor working conditions that medical doctors experience and the low salaries that they receive, particularly in the public sector. Medical doctors are finding it difficult to survive in line with their class mobility and, as a result, they are leaving the country to greener pastures. This is a formal way of coping up with the unstable economic environment, since the government gives them permission. However, it has implications for HR and the country, as it causes scarcity of doctors. M1 stated:

...yeah people left in their numbers. Right now we still have faith in the upcoming elections. We still have hope that in the next year our economy will stabilise but if the condition continues to deteriorate then surely one may have to look at the possibility of migrating especially junior doctors without side activities that give them income...

A number of health professionals are flocking out of the country in search of greener pastures. ZHDA report of 2019 revealed that:

Zimbabwe has lost more than 4,000 doctors and nurses to the UK and other countries since 2021, according to the Health Services Board, amid poor pay and worsening economic conditions.

The Herald provided evidence that there is high outmigration. It stated that:

The health sector lost 2000 health workers in 2021. (Zinyuke, 2021)

Medical doctors are resorting to migration as a way to balance their inputs and outputs since their salaries are being eroded by inflation. Medical doctors are earning less than their inputs; therefore, they find migration a better mechanism that allows them to have high outputs.

In addition, some medical doctors are engaging in multiple activities to balance their income. Almost all of the participants from the medical profession indicated that they have two or more jobs that help them to supplement their income. A number of them are government employees but they also work in private hospitals as visiting doctors and some of them own their surgeries. This is now a common norm in the medical profession as medical doctors are trying to live according to the middle class standards. M2 said:

Researcher: Besides your normal load, what else do you do that generates income?

M2: I am a government employee but I also work for the private sector. This is because there are better salaries in the private sector...

M4 also indicated that:

I am the owner of this dental surgery but I am also a government employee. Of course the government does not pay but as medical doctors we remain government employees

even though we have our surgeries for security reasons. A fish can't survive outside water even though the water is dirty...

In addition, findings have also revealed that medical doctors are now joining the academic profession as way to supplement their income in this declining socio-economic environment. The precarious environment has made medical professionals join other professions as a way to raise their standards through multiple channels. This reduces their engagement level. They will not offer their best due to lack of work–life balance. M3 said:

...yeah I go for vacations with my family at least two to three a times year, you need time away from work because you will be so much exhausted. Like in my case this is my surgery I also work here even though I have nurses, I also work as a government employee and I am now lecturing. So you definitely need time away from work.

The above paragraphs have indicated that medical professionals are engaging in other activities to supplement their income, while others, particularly junior doctors, are migrating to other countries that offer equitable rewards. However, all of these activities have implications for the country, even though they help medical doctors to improve their social status as per their class mobility.

6.3.3.2 Unlawful coping mechanisms by medical doctors in Zimbabwe

It has been revealed that medical doctors are also engaging in unorthodox means as a way to balance their services and the rewards. Owing to a lack of motivation in the public sector, doctors are now engaging in much unacceptable behaviour as a way of letting out their pain and grievances that are being caused by the unstable economic environment. M1 stated that

...at times end up using bad language to patients because you are frustrated you can even absent yourself unnecessarily you can even be very late as well you cannot even feature for some calls...

In addition, absenteeism is also another method that is being used by medical doctors in public hospitals so as to balance their services and remuneration. This is affecting the public sector at large and also the majority of citizens, since some of them do not afford private services.

Medical doctors are also into stealing of drugs as way to raise money that will supplement their income. Due to poor salaries, some doctors are now stealing and diverting drugs to private pharmacies where they will be resold in foreign currency. Some of the drugs are being diverted to private clinics. This has become a norm in the medical profession. However, it has implications to the public hospitals particularly in this crippled economy where the government fails to equip public hospitals with enough resources. M2 said:

...you know this saying mbudzi inodya payakasungirirwa (the goat feeds where it is tethered) is now common everywhere you go because our salaries aren't enough to sustain us...

This was also evidenced by *The Herald*, which stated that:

Masvingo Provincial Hospital medical superintendent Dr Julius Chirengwa together with a general surgeon Dr Noel Zulu and the entire management committee have been suspended pending investigations into a scandal that has resulted in critical drugs being diverted to private pharmacies for resale into foreign currency. Most of the drugs were donated to the hospital while others were sourced from the National Pharmaceutical Company (Natpharm). (Maponga, 2019)

In addition the Memo which was found at Cross Hospital (not an official name) also indicated that doctors are now diverting donated hospital drugs to their private pharmacies to earn extra income for their survival.

Cross Hospital memo February 2023

This serves to inform you that Dr Tim together with the entire security team are being suspended over allegations of drug theft.

Findings have also revealed that doctors also embark on industrial action as a way to demonstrate for their poor working conditions and salaries. Medical doctors embark on strikes to press for higher wages since high inflation has eroded their incomes. This is also one of the mechanisms which is being used in the medical profession even though it has implications to the public. *The Herald* stated that:

Government yesterday urged striking junior doctors to go back to work while it was looking into their grievances. Junior doctors at public health facilities downed tools on Saturday, citing several challenges such as unsatisfactory working conditions, low salaries and lack of basic medicines and equipment. (Maruta, 2018)

In addition, medical doctors in public institutions are now extorting extra money from patients so that they get medical attention. *Crime Reporter* (2023) highlighted that one of the medical doctors at Chitungwiza Central Hospital was facing disciplinary charges on the allegations of attempting to extort US\$350 from a parent's victim who was injured in a road accident. The disciplinary charges laid on the medical doctor implies that his/her actions were unlawful. If the actions were lawful, the doctor could not have faced disciplinary action.

Doctors use industrial action as a coping mechanism to reduce their inputs, such that the government will review their salaries. A lack of motivation among medical professionals has resulted in a number of unlawful coping mechanisms by medical doctors to reduce their inputs to match their outputs.

This section revealed that elite professionals are employing different strategies to cope in this unstable economic environment. Some of the coping mechanisms are formal and morally acceptable, while others are morally unacceptable. However, regardless whether they are morally acceptable or not, they have implications for the HRM profession and the nation at large.

Those in the academic and medical professions are the ones who are using more unorthodox means of survival to a greater degree than other professions. With regard to legal professionals, they are now bribing prosecutors to win cases, as it earns them both more income and popularity. Unorthodox means of survival are mainly performed by male practitioners in all professions, as these are male-dominated professions. Nevertheless, women engage in informal trading to balance their income.

Migration has been found to be common in medical and academic professions. Cases of legal professionals migrating to other countries and continuing in the same profession are rare. In the medical profession, migration is common among young medical doctors, owing to the high expectations they have about the profession. They migrate after gaining some experience in the public sector. Most of the academic professionals migrate once they feel they have enough

experience, and some of them after attaining PhD degrees. Migration is more common among male professionals than females across all professions.

It has also been found that it is now common for individual in top professions to possess two or more formal job. This is common in the medical and academic professions. Medical professionals are employed by both the private and public sector especially specialist and more experienced doctors. Some are now joining the academic profession to teach medical students. As for the academic profession they also possess two jobs from different universities both private and public. Some of them are visiting lecturers in a number of universities. However, this has been found to be common in male professionals as they have enough time to balance their work as compared to females who have some social needs to attend.

6.4 Section Summary

Findings from the above paragraphs highlighted that elite professionals are engaging in legal and illegal activities as a way of supplementing their meagre salaries which is being eroded by hyperinflation. Majority of professionals showed interest in migration particularly those from the academic and medical professions. However, legal professionals revealed that there are challenges incurred when a legal practitioner migrate to another country to practice law. Therefore, there is minimum rate of migration from the legal profession as compared to other profession. Figure 6.6 below depicts participants who mentioned migration as a result of poor salaries.

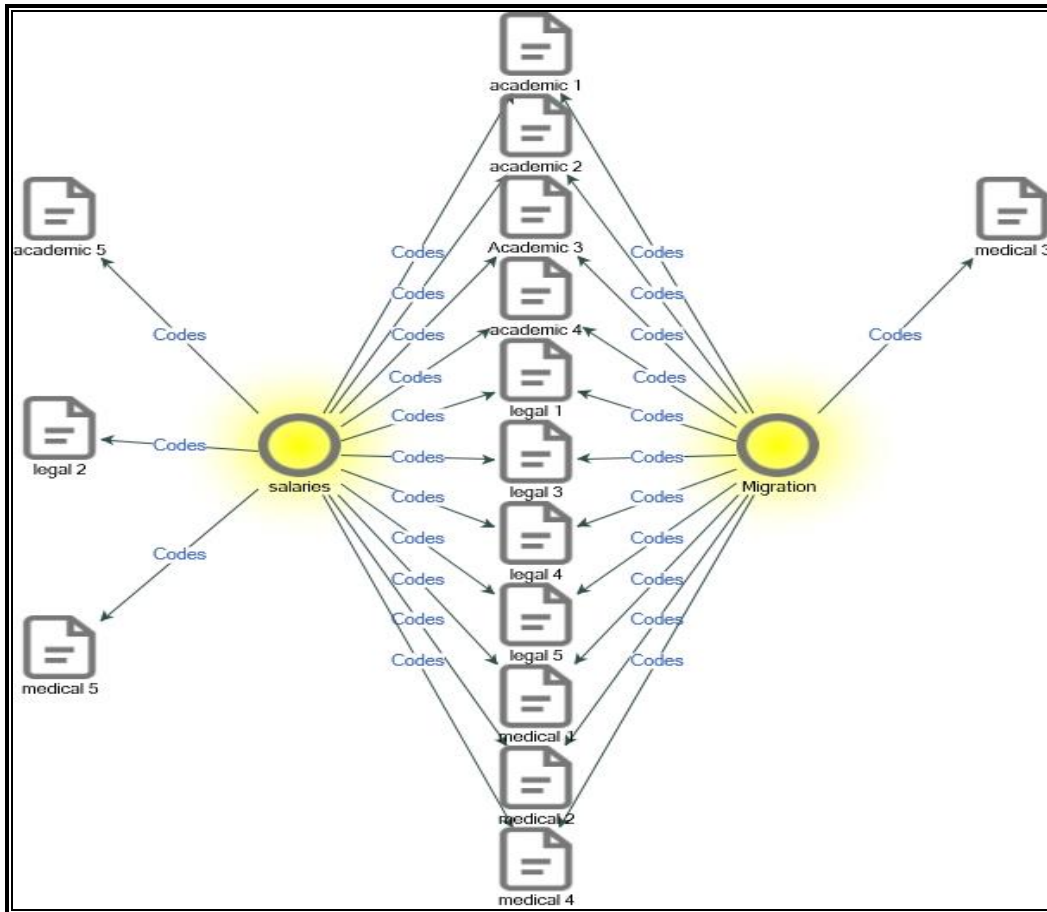


Figure 6.6: The effect of salaries on migration of elite professionals

Generated by NVivo version 12.

In addition, Figure 6.7 below depict that, the unstable economic environment has led professionals to look for another job in the same profession as part timers while others are engaging in more than two jobs from different professions. Some are formal while others are engaging in the informal sector. This is because they are comparing themselves with those in the informal sector as they earning more than them. Therefore, a sense of inequity is felt which therefore drives them to engage in more activities to protect their social status. Some are comparing themselves with those professionals in the same profession beyond their borders and due to inequity perceived they contemplate migrating to other countries. However, this has a negative effect from the country of origin as the country is being depleted of professionals.

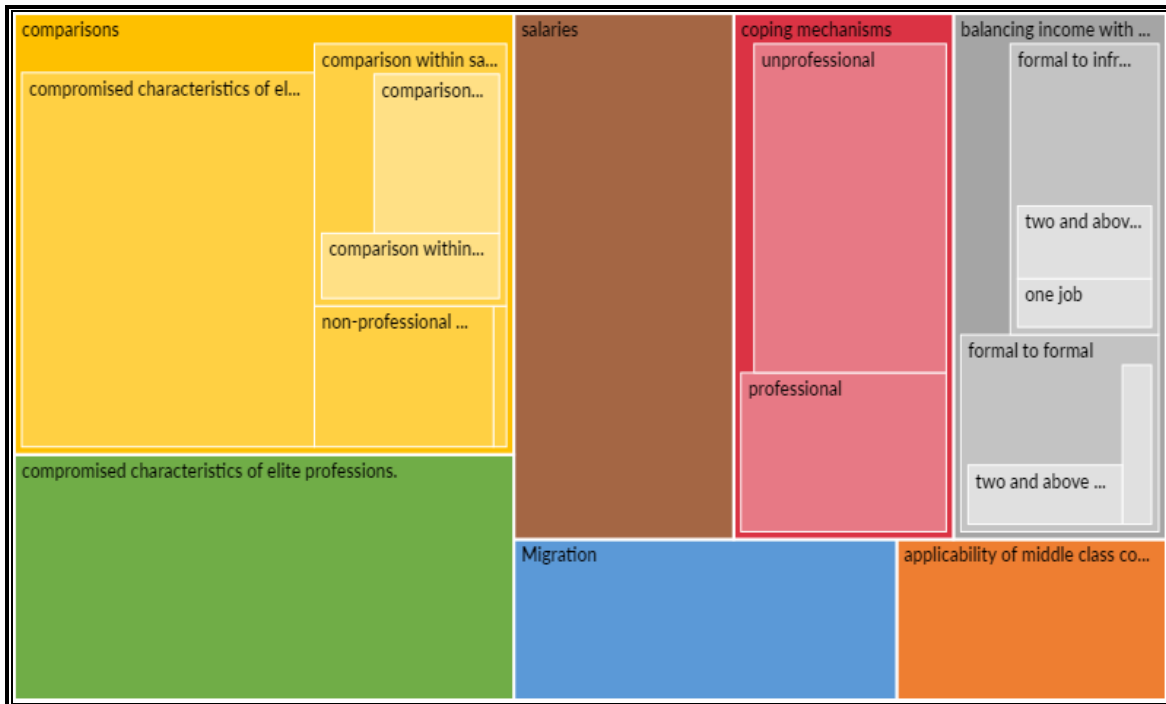


Figure 6.7: Elite professionals and their coping strategies

Generated by NVivo version 12.

The above paragraphs have indicated the coping mechanisms that are being employed by elite professionals in a precarious environment. The next section focuses on cross cutting themes.

6.5 Cross-cutting aspects

This section of data presentation presents some cross cutting themes. In this study, cross cutting themes refer to those themes, which affect all the three professions that this work focused on. The crosscutting issues to be discussed in this section include the impact of the economic effects on salaries and migration, the relationship between job satisfaction and professional autonomy.

6.5.1 *The impact of economic effects on salaries and migration*

Findings have highlighted that the economic environment has greatly affected salaries, which has ripple effects on the migration of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. The poor economic performance has also led professionals to compare themselves with other professionals outside the country's borders as well as comparing themselves with non-professional Zimbabweans operating in the informal market.

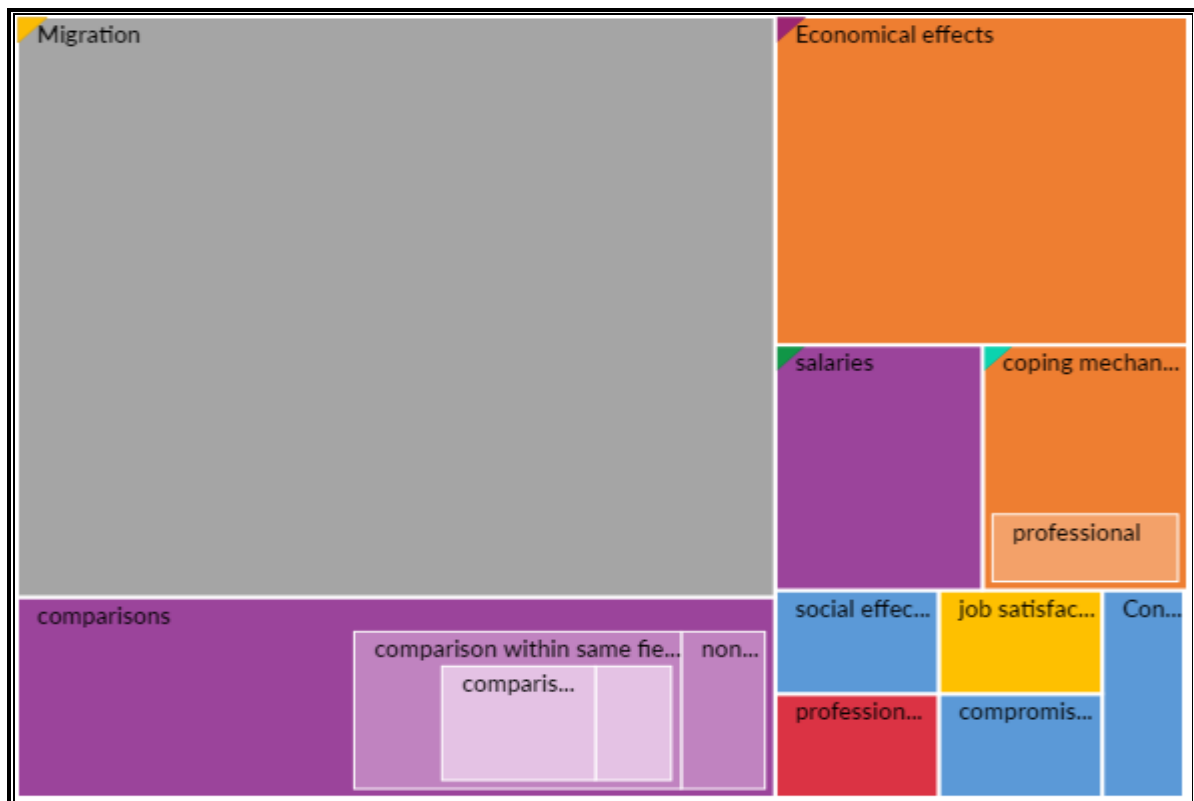


Figure 6.8: Comparison proportions of factors that lead to high outmigration of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

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The above figure depicts that the economic effects are affecting the social hierarchy of elite professionals as earlier on highlighted by Gosha (2020) that the informal business people in Zimbabwe are now the ones who belong to the middle class category due to their income. The Zimbabwean economy has been on a downward trend since the early 90s due failure of ESAP and other economic reforms such as ZIMPREST (Nyoni, 2018). The failure of these economic reforms together with corruption led to the emergence of the new political party the MDC as an opposition to the ruling party, which worsened the economic situation (Matamanda et al., 2020) This resulted in informal trading as earlier on highlighted in Chapter 2 by Kabonga (2020) as *kukiyakiya* economy.

The emergence of this informal employment, trade and market has overshadowed most professionals in Zimbabwe in as far as conditions of living and social hierarchy is concerned. Formal employment gradually became a less favourable means to earning as Kabonga (2020) highlighted that the informal sector sustained thousands of households as the Zimbabwean formal sectors collapsed. Furthermore, formal employment was affected by formal bargaining

processes, which in most cases, was overtaken by the economic decline, yet the informal side was quick to adjust to the changing economic landscape, thus the latter had an upper hand compared the former. This informal employment trade and the informal market took the country by storm and it has been known to involve a lot of unorthodox business practices (Mambiravana et al., 2022). The unorthodox means employed by the informal sector meant more money for them, for example, tax evasions.

Furthermore, it is also important to highlight that during the conducting of this study, Zimbabwe was mainly using two currencies, namely, the RTGS, its local currency, and the United States Dollars (USD). On account of its unstable nature and continuous loss of value, the general public shuns the use of the RTGS in favour of the USD. The RTGS has limited use as it is generally shunned by businesses. The local currency does not even buy such products such as fuel and gas, among other essentials. Products are basically indexed in USD. However, the majority of professionals are remunerated mainly in RTGS with a small percentage in USD. Therefore, they earn money (RTGS) to buy a more accepted currency (USD) on the parallel market since banks do not sell USD to the public. The exchange rate is also informally determined and is almost always on the increase and higher than the official rate.

In contrast, it is important to highlight that the informal sector generally trade their products and services in USD and their pricing is not governed; therefore, they are bound to make more money than those in the formal sectors, in this case, professionals. As shown below, the discrepancy between the formal and the informal employment and trade in Zimbabwe has had far reaching consequences on the social status of professionals in Zimbabwe.

The dominance of the informal employment and trade over the formal side, particularly in a precarious environment has led to a compromised middle-class status as salaries, specifically in RTGS, are continuously being eroded by hyperinflation due to the unstable economic environment. Although theoretically they belong to the middle class, limited incomes, both in value and quantity, elite professionals in Zimbabwe has suffered social mobility in the negative direction. As noted in the following paragraphs, the social mobility has led the majority of participants to look beyond Zimbabwe for their livelihood, thus migrating to perceived better countries where their services allow them to regain their middle-class position in the society.

As a result, majority of these elite professionals are contemplating leaving the country as they are now comparing themselves with other professionals in the same field but beyond borders

while others comparing themselves with non-professionals. This has been earlier on indicated by Dzinamarira and Musuka (2021) that the high rate of outmigration is being necessitated by low earnings as compared to similar professionals abroad.

On another note, as stated by Madimu (2020), the economic crisis has led some elite professionals to find alternative ways of subsistence. Mudzonga (2022) furthermore stated that the decline in professional standards as a result of poor salaries has made professionals look for other jobs in other fields to supplement their income. As a result, elite professionals are now engaged in different activities as a way to supplement their income and maintain their social status. This relates to the notion of coping mechanisms in Figure 6.8 above. That is why some of the elite professionals remain in the country, for example, one of the doctors in this study, who is an employee in the public sector but also has his own surgery at which he employs five nurses. In this case, the chances of migration are very slim, compared to an academic professional who is a fulltime lecturer and has some part-time jobs in other universities or a medical doctor who is employed by the government without any other part-time activity.

Closely linked to the above, as previously mentioned in Chapter 2 of this thesis, Gaidzanwa (1999) and Docquier et al. (2007) highlighted that economic factors are the push factors that have resulted in the increase of high outmigration of skilled professionals from developing countries to industrialised nations. Figure 6.9 below depicts that the majority (11) of participants who mentioned economic effects also mentioned issues to do with migration. This was particularly prevalent among the academic professionals. As highlighted by Hwami (2022), the higher and tertiary education sector has suffered from the exodus of professionals. This is mainly because they compare their inputs and outputs. They have more inputs than others, as they are supposed to be PhD holders for them to be in the higher and tertiary education. Kangira (2023) reported in the *New Zimbabwe* that only PhD holders should lecture at universities. Maponga (2015) indicated that lecturers in state universities must upgrade themselves to holding doctoral degrees by 2017 or else they risk losing their jobs. This means there is an increase in inputs without corresponding income, as they are in an unstable economic environment. The legal professionals highlighted that the economic environment has affected them greatly. However, it is difficult for them to migrate because of the differences in laws practiced in other countries.

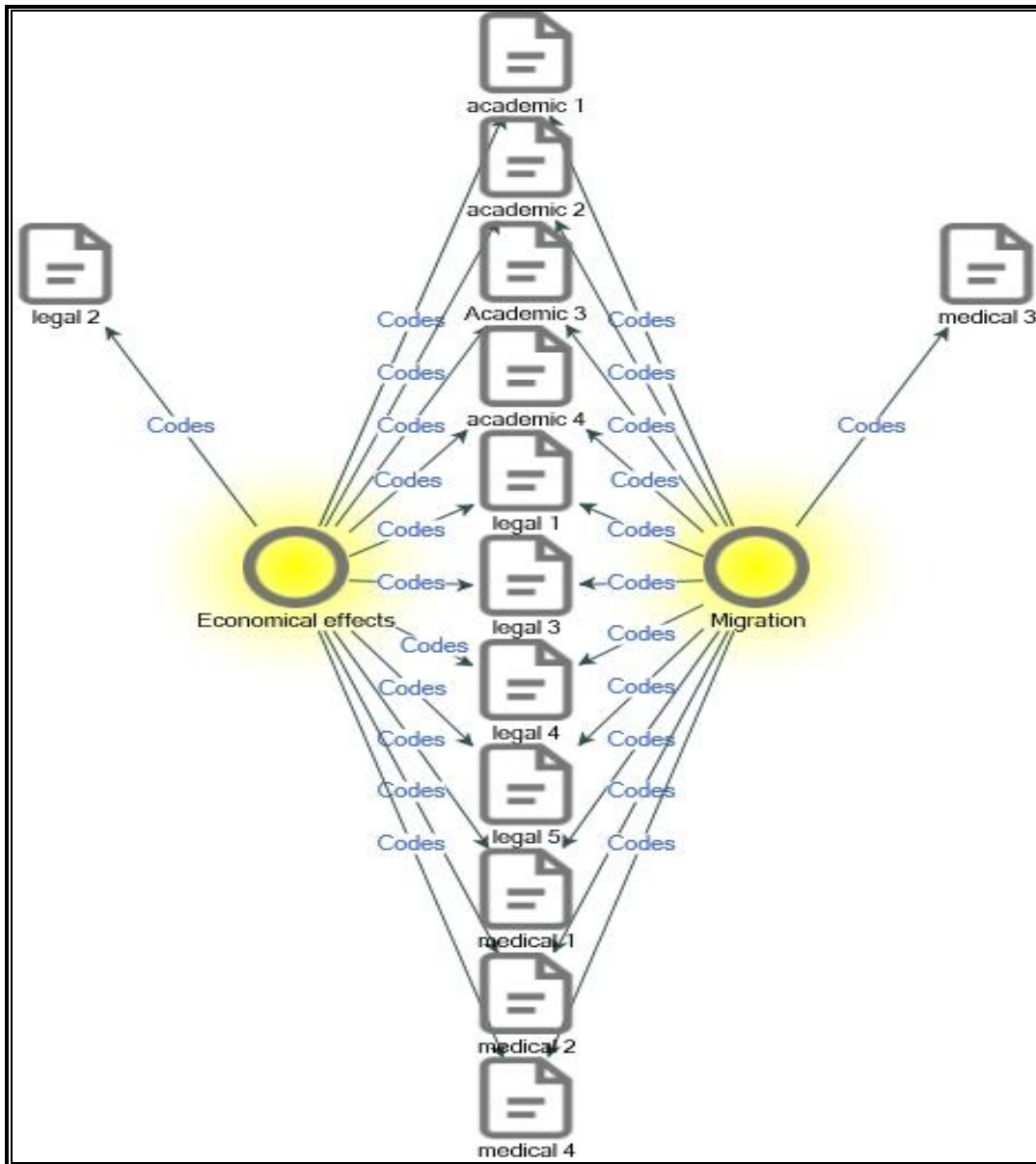


Figure 6.9: The impact of economic environment on migration

Source: NVivo version 12

Figure 6.9 shows that four of the participants from the legal profession indicated that the economic environment has greatly affected their profession. Medical doctors and academics indicated that the economic effects are a major push factor for migration.

6.5.2 Comparison between professional dignity/autonomy and job satisfaction

Figure 6.10 below depicts the comparison between middle-class characteristics and how they affect the job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. Participants who mentioned job

satisfaction (five) also mentioned something related to professional dignity. The majority (four) of participants who mentioned the relationship between professional dignity and job satisfaction were mainly from the legal profession. This implies that there is low job satisfaction among elite professionals in Zimbabwe as a result of lack of professional dignity.

The unstable economic environment, which is coupled with political instability that can be traced back to the formation of the new political party the MDC, as previously mentioned, is also affecting elite professionals in Zimbabwe. Professionals are now being associated with politics, and they are being seen as rivals of the state and supporters of the opposition party (Chikanda, 2007; Gukurume, 2018). As discussed in Chapter 3, Chingono (2023) highlighted that this is the reason that lawyers are being arrested and being accused of initiating violence. Regarding the same issue, the Zimbabwe Law for Human Rights (2019) highlighted that lawyers are being manhandled at police stations while trying to settle justice. This reduces the dignity of the profession.

Academic profession as well as the medical profession are also not spared from this political association. Gukurume (2019b) earlier on indicated that the academic professional autonomy seems to be on paper and not on practice as state security agencies and spies are deployed in universities to monitor lecturers and students at the campus. Mashininga (2018) also highlighted that the former Vice Chancellor Professor Nyagura was arrested for awarding former First Lady Grace Mugabe a doctoral degree. Kadirire (2018) highlighted that Professor Nyagura was charged with the criminal abuse of office after unprocedurally conferred a doctoral degree on the former first lady. Nevertheless, there was nothing the vice chancellor could have done, as he was trying to protect his job, since the late Robert Mugabe was the president and chancellor of all universities at the time his wife was awarded a doctoral degree. This shows lack of autonomy of professions in Zimbabwe. As a result, it reduces job satisfaction, as elite professionals are afraid of victimisation. This also implies that there is less respect of professionals and professional autonomy, particularly in an unstable economic environment.

Closely linked to the above, Section 65(3) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe provides for the right to engage in collective job action. The Labour Relations Act (28:01): 104(1) governs employment relationships in Zimbabwe and provides the right to strike for workers' committees and trade unions. Section 65(1) of the Constitution states that only members of the

security are not allowed to strike. However this is controversial because, as Madzimure and Chipunza (2019) highlighted, medical doctors were once fired by the vice president after embarking on a collective job action due to poor salaries which were continuously being eroded by inflation. This indicates a lack of autonomy, as the vice president intervened, firing the professionals for exercising their right, as they linked it to the political affairs of the country. This, in turn, reduces the dignity of the doctors.

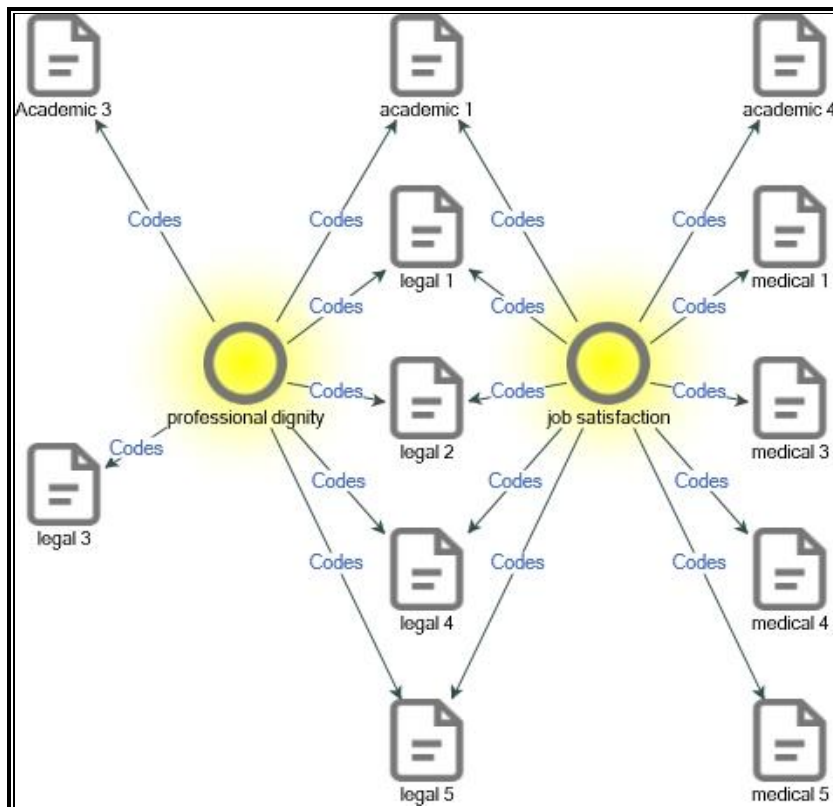


Figure 6.10: The relationship between job satisfaction and professional autonomy

Source: NVivo version 12

6.5.3 The interlinkage between middle class and job engagement in a precarious environment

This section provides the role being played by the compromised middle class status in lowering job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. The majority (11) of participants revealed that there is relationship that exist between compromised middle class and job engagement. Figure 6.11 below depicts the relationship that compromised middle class and job engagement have.

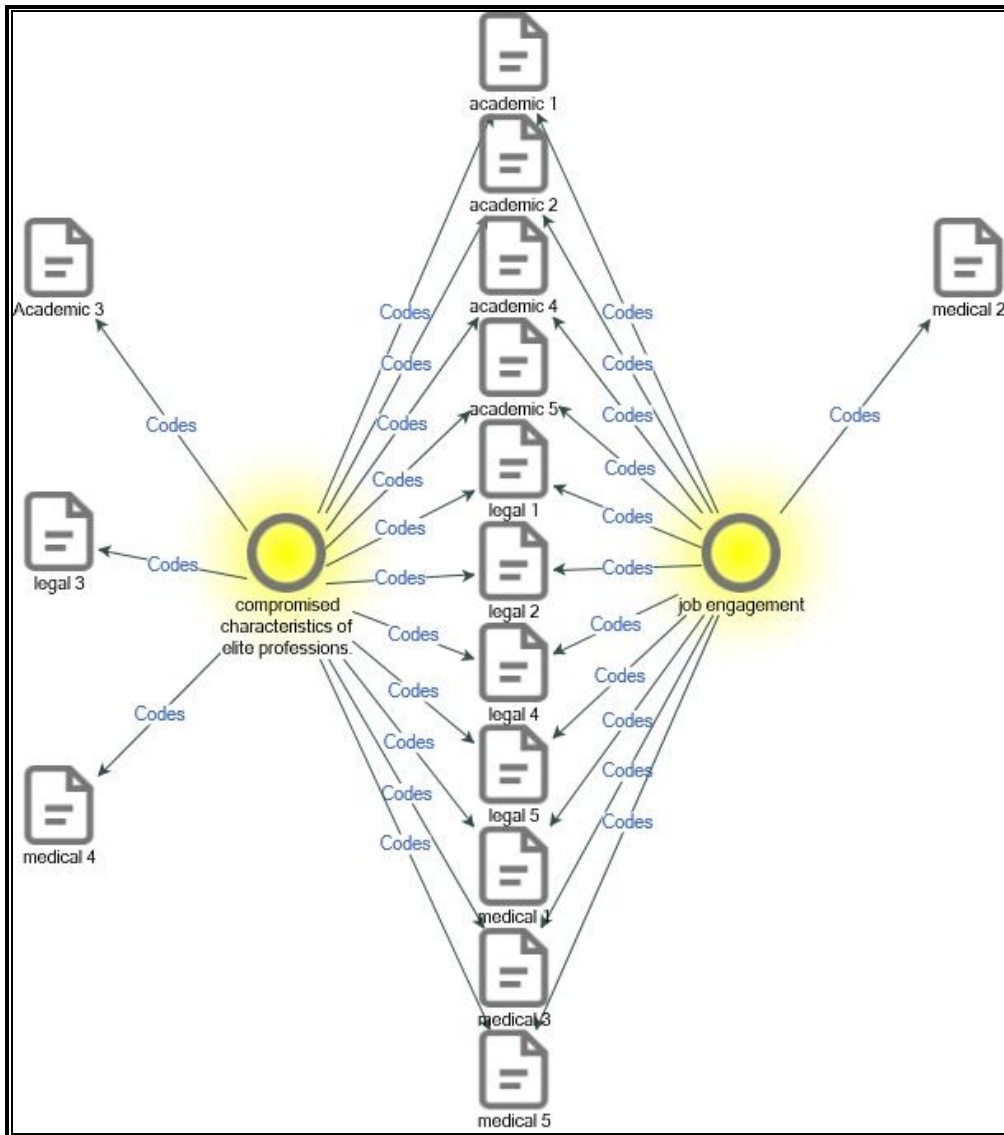


Figure 6.11: The relationship between job engagement and compromised middle class

Generated by NVivo version 12

Closely linked to the above, Figure 6.11 above illustrates how the unstable economic environment has affected elite professionals, who are now less engaged to their work as they are supplementing their salaries, which are continuously being eroded by hyperinflation, with other income-generating projects.

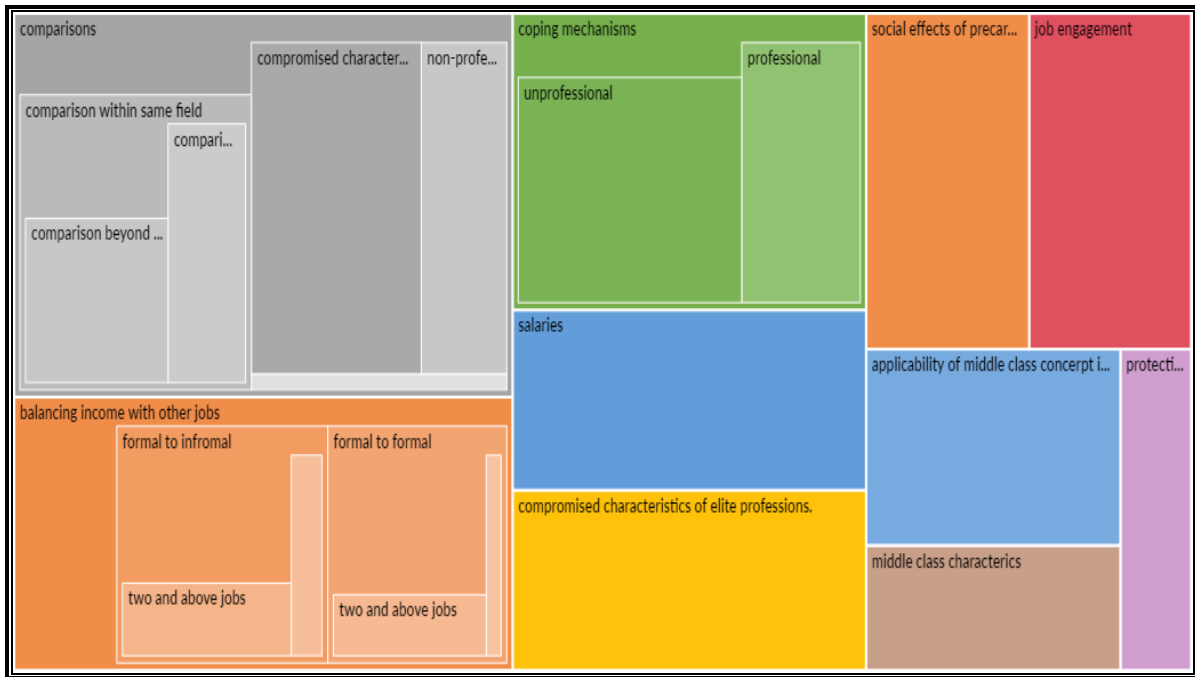


Figure 6.12: The relationship between job engagement and compromised middle class
Generated by NVivo version 12.

Figure 6.12 above depicts that the compromised middle has an effect on job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. Low job engagement is as result of professionals engaging into other activities to generate income. In addition, elite professionals are also comparing themselves with other occupations that are less educated but earning more income. This has therefore led to low engagement. Poor salaries is also noted as another reason for elite professionals' being less engaged.

In addition, Chagonda (2016) and Gukurume (2015) indicated that the economic situation has reached a point where people are now earning money (RTGS) to buy money (US dollars). This, as Dzirutwe (2018) highlighted, is because people are earning RTGS but many goods and services are charged in foreign currency. The formal sector is now being forced to buy money from the parallel market for them (formal sector) to purchase goods and services. As a result, they are being forced to consume cheaper and lower-quality goods or services. This is against the global middle-class status, which is emphasised by Bennett et al. (2009) as being the consuming class. This has forced professionals to seek other alternatives to supplement their income as their social status is declining.

Madimu (2020) highlighted that people have found that they have a need for alternative means of subsistence. As result, elite professionals are now engaging in various other activities, both formal and informal. This engagement in various activities to supplement their meagre salaries reduces their engagement, as they are busy with other income-generating jobs. This therefore implies that there is decreased job engagement of elite professionals and employees in general in an unstable economic environment, particularly in Zimbabwe.

6.6 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the presentation of data about job satisfaction, job engagement and the coping strategies of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. It emerged from the findings that elite professionals are now less engaged in their work. Elite professionals are now engaged in other income-generating activities to supplement their salaries, which are being eroded by inflation. However, this has caused them to lower their engagement level so as to balance it with other income-generating activities.

Findings have also indicated that, lack of resources has also forced elite professionals to lower their engagement levels. Elite professionals have indicated their dedication is derived by the availability of resources in their institution. However, a lack of these resources has resulted in high levels of disengagement among elite professionals in Zimbabwe.

In as far as job satisfaction among elite professionals is concerned, the findings revealed that there is job dissatisfaction among elite professionals in a precarious environment. Elite professionals in Zimbabwe no longer have work–life balance, as they are engaged in other income-generating activities. The changing nature of their work is causing them to be dissatisfied, as their work requires more effort than they are being rewarded for.

The findings indicated that job dissatisfaction and job disengagement among elite professionals is as a result of the unstable economic and political environment in Zimbabwe. Their problems are rooted in their low salaries that are being eroded by hyperinflation. Therefore, high levels of job dissatisfaction and job disengagement is being experienced.

It has also been revealed that elite professionals are employing different coping strategies in this unstable economic environment. Some of them are using lawful strategies, while others use morally unacceptable behaviours. All this is being done to supplement their income, which

is continuously being eroded by inflation. Nevertheless, these mechanisms make these elite professionals less engaged in their work, as they need to balance all of their income-generating activities with one another.

The next chapter will focus on the discussion of findings.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ELITE PROFESSIONALS IN ZIMBABWE

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapters focused on the presentation of findings in relation to the objectives of the thesis. This chapter and the next provide a discussion on the data in relation to the literature. This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 5, which are related to Objectives 1 and 2, namely, to establish and explain career planning and progression in elite professions in Zimbabwe and to explore the extent to which elite professionals engage in training and development programmes in Zimbabwe. The chapter will begin by discussing how the economic environment has reconfigured the middle-class status.

7.2 Overview

Maunganidze (2020) asserts that women are now finding ways to enter high professional jobs despite the cultural and structural restrictions of the professions. Women are still rising to these demanding professions, which are believed to be male dominated. This is the reason that women constituted a smaller proportion of the study sample with regard to gender. However, it has been stated as a fact that women are now rising to top positions, as these professions are also associated with high income.

7.3 Reconfigured middle class of elite professions in Zimbabwe

The findings presented in Chapter 5 highlighted that the unstable economic environment has reconfigured the status of elite professions. Southall (2020) purports that the middle class is one of the social classes in the nation that struggles to maintain its status. Elite professionals in Zimbabwe who belong to the middle class are now finding it difficult to cope with being in the middle-class category. They are now living in high- and medium-density suburbs as a result of the unstable economic environment, which differs greatly from countries that have stable economies. Therefore, elite professions in developing countries no longer qualify to be in the global middle-class category.

McEwan et al. (2015) indicated that many people in developing countries are experiencing an increase in their income and purchasing power. This research that established many business

people who are less educated than elite professionals are now receiving more income than elite professionals. As a result, elite professionals no longer qualify to be in the middle-class category. However, if one is to use income and purchasing power as the determinants of middle class, only businesspeople will fall into this category. This concurs with Gosha (2020), who stated that the traditional division of society into the upper, middle, and lower classes is fading into obscurity, as new categories emerge from the constantly shifting environment.

The findings also established that many elite professionals, who are in the middle class, do not have immovable properties. Owning immovable properties is one of the characteristics that indicates that individuals belong to the middle class. Elhefnawy (2021) posits that home and car ownership are middle-class indicators. However, the prevailing economic environment has made it impossible for elite professionals to acquire immovable properties. This indicates that the middle-class status has been redefined, particularly in developing countries like Zimbabwe.

A low income rate is one of the factors that has reconfigured the middle class category in unstable environments. Savage et al. (2013) associated middle class with earning. Rewards and salaries in Zimbabwe are continuously being eroded by high inflation. This has caused the more educated people with professional jobs to earn less, as they are paid in Zimbabwean dollars. As a result, elite professionals no longer qualify to fall under the global middle-class category, if one is to use income as an indicator of middle class. This also concurs with Lentz and Melber (2016) and Neubert (2014), who indicated that associating middle class with income in Africa is a moot point.

In the Zimbabwean context, educational qualification is the only global characteristic that defines the middle class in the country. The findings revealed that elite professionals are well educated; owing to this high education, they fall under middle class. This agrees with Pratomo et al. (2020), who defined middle class in terms of educational level. Therefore, elite professionals in Zimbabwe qualify as middle class only if one uses educational level indicator.

Bennett et al. (2009) define middle class in terms of consumption. Evans (2011) argued that prioritising cheaper goods can be seen as a person's ethical decision to avoid wasting money. However, the findings have revealed that elite professionals in Zimbabwe are no longer in a position to prioritise quality on account of the high inflation rate and economic instability. They are now living like the majority of society do, simply because their salaries do not allow them to do so.

7.4 The impact of the redefined middle class on career planning and progression

This section focuses on the impact of the redefinition of the middle class on the career planning and progression of elite professionals in their respective professions. Findings have indicated that career planning and progression in Zimbabwean elites is now being given less priority. However, Chebet (2015) postulated that effective HRM encompasses career planning and progression. This implies that HRM in the legal, academic and health professions in Zimbabwe is weak, since these professions place less focus on career planning and progression.

Lim (2020) highlighted that individuals seek to maximise their outputs. In other words, when professionals perceive an element of inequity, they will not quit simply their jobs, but instead find other means to balance their inputs and outputs. This is in line with Adams's 1963 theory, which calls for balance between inputs and outputs. In this case, the findings revealed that elite professionals are less concerned with career planning and progression because there is no balance between their level of education and their benefits, particularly financial rewards. This affects HRM procedures and casts a gloomy outlook for the country due to lack of career advancement of these elite professionals.

7.4.1 Redefined middle class and career planning and progression in academics

Zhou et al. (2020) pointed out that, in order to ensure the highest levels of motivation, engagement and performance, fairness should be created. In the same vein, the equity theory emphasises that individuals desire equal compensation for their contributions to the working population, of which they are a part (Twalib & Kariuki, 2020). However, the findings revealed that academic lecturers are less concerned about upward growth, since there is not much difference between the different levels of post with regard to their salaries. There is a little difference between the salaries of senior lecturers, PhD holders and professors; as a result, academic professionals are now concentrating less on career development. This implies that there is now a comparison between top achievers and their salaries, and these comparisons are being made by employees who are not yet professors. As a result, those employees who are below the level of professorship are now withdrawing and engaging less in career planning, which has an implication for organisations. Therefore, this thesis argues that the equity theory has gone beyond comparisons between two individuals who share the same job. Employees compare the top achiever and their rewards and reduce their inputs accordingly.

In addition, from an equity theory perspective, Kollmann et al. (2020) indicated that the theory emphasises striking a balance between the inputs and the outputs of employees in the same organisation. Findings have revealed that academic professionals are less engaged in career planning and progression owing to the nature of requirements needed for one to advance. Participants have indicated that there are number of requirements that one needs to progress from being a lecturer to a senior lecturer and from being a senior lecturer to a professorship position. This implies that academic lecturers are now comparing the requirements for promotion and tenure with those in other countries. As a result, this demotivates them from participating in career progression for promotion. Therefore, they end up withdrawing and engaging less in career progression. This calls for the HR management profession to reconsider the promotion policies of academic lecturers to suit the unstable economic environment.

The findings unveiled that academic professionals in Zimbabwe are less engaged in career progression as the result of a lack of support from their institutions. Yet the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (2013) emphasised that research and publication is linked to tenure and promotion. The economic instability in the country has made universities to be incapacitated to such an extent that they no longer provide academics with research funds. This has caused lecturers not to focus on publications, since they need money to cover page fees. Sułkowski et al. (2020) stated that the publication of fewer articles could be the result of a funding shortage, particularly in unstable environments. This research emphasises that a lack of research grants in developing countries has a negative effect on the career planning and progression of academics. For this reason, universities, in conjunction with the government, need to prioritise research grants, as this help to boost the future of the country.

The findings have also revealed that a lack of time, owing to high teaching loads, has also made academic lecturers less concerned about career planning and progression. Universities are enrolling large numbers of students in a bid to increase their income. Mabaso and Dlamini (2021) indicated that there is a critical shortage of academic staff in HEIs. This has led to less time for research, as the staff also need to focus on the teaching components. The Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education (2018a) highlighted that it introduced Education 5.0 as the new curriculum, following Education 3.0. Education 5.0 has five pillars, namely, research, teaching, community service, innovation and industrialisation. In this regard, academics are being overloaded with the teaching component at the expense of research. This implies that there will be less career planning and development in the academic sector as a result of

commercialisation. Therefore, universities should consider the number of academics when enrolling students so as not to compromise career planning and progression in the academic field. This also correspond to Yankholmes (2014) who stated that the growth of student enrolment without a corresponding increase in academic staff compromises university quality.

It has been revealed by findings that there is less motivation in the academic field than in other professions. As a result, lecturers are less motivated to focus on their upward growth. The upward growth is associated with financial rewards, as lecturers are living in a precarious environment. There is a mismatch between their salaries and their level of education. Dzirutwe (2018) indicated that people are earning RTGS, while their expenses are in US dollars. This has made lecturers to reduce their inputs by engaging less in career progression. This implies that academics are motivated by monetary rewards. The two-factor theory of Herzberg is therefore not applicable in an unstable economic environment, as academics are mainly motivated by monetary rewards, which are hygiene factors. In other words, the theory needs to be revisited to take into consideration people living in an unstable economic environment. Individuals in an unstable economic environment need money to motivate them towards their growth. The two-factor theory emphasises that people need intangible rewards to motivate them. When one considers developing countries that are characterised by an unstable economic environment, one should take into consideration that employees value financial rewards more, as these rewards enable them to live according to middle-class standards.

The equity theory also emphasises that when a disequilibrium is felt, employees will quit their jobs (Hu, 2021). However, findings have revealed that lecturers are less concerned about institutional positions as this deprives them of engaging in other activities that help them to generate income, as positions are too demanding. This suggests that, in unstable economic environments, employees have gone beyond quitting their jobs, as the environment is characterised by high unemployment rate. They rather forego the institutional positions, through engaging less in career planning and progression, so that they will have enough time to engage in other activities that supplement their income. Madimu (2020) stated that the Zimbabwean currency crisis has led people to focus on alternative means of subsistence. This implies that the equity theory has gone beyond the quitting phase, particularly in unstable environments, as employees no longer quit their jobs but rather engage in other income-generating activities to supplement their income.

The findings have indicated that academics are now comparing themselves with the informal traders and less educated workers; therefore, they regard career progression as secondary. However Adams's equity theory emphasises the balance of inputs and outputs of people only within the same profession (Mira et al., 2019). In this thesis it has been deduced that academics are now even comparing themselves with other people outside of their profession, to the extent of comparing themselves with other occupations and informal traders, who are less educated than them. Owing to this, they end up lowering their inputs, since the less educated are now considered to qualify to be in the middle class especially in this unstable environment. This implies that Adams's equity theory should take into consideration that individuals compare themselves with other individuals from different occupations and if these occupations earn more than the academic professionals, lecturers will be demotivated thereby engaging less in career progression.

Academics are now less interested in career planning and progression do due to lack of support from their institutions. On account of the unstable economic environment, academic institutions have poor infrastructure to support the career progression of lecturers. Universities have dilapidated infrastructures that are not supportive for high-quality personnel to use for their research purposes. This concurs with Imhonopi and Urim (2013), who echoed that research initiatives cannot take place in obsolescent and insufficient and poor infrastructure. In this regard universities should ensure that academics have enough resources and infrastructure that help support career planning and progression of lecturers.

The findings have also indicated that academics are not in a position to fund themselves to publish their articles, owing to their poor salaries that are being continuously eroded by hyperinflation. Academics are finding it difficult to engage in article-writing on account of a lack of funding. As a result, lecturers are now publishing for the sake of job security and generally during the probation period only. This implies that there is no career growth in the academic profession, as academics are not able to fund the page fees themselves. In this regard, Atieno et al. (2022) assert that allocations for research publication funds are zero because of the need to balance limited resources in this economy. Similar sentiments were also echoed by Thondhlana and Chirume (2016), who indicated that professorship is now attained only by those who have stable financial backup to pay for page fees with recognised publishers. Therefore, institutions need to consider and redesign their policies, practices and procedure to

suit academic lecturers in a precarious environment, as this has implications for career planning and progression in the academic profession.

7.4.2 The impact of the redefined middle class on career progression of medical profession in Zimbabwe

The findings revealed that medical professionals, just like academics, are also less concerned about career progression, as they are focused on increasing their income for survival. Medical doctors in public institutions are earning less than their peers abroad. As a result, they consider migration as an alternative to balance their inputs and outputs. Kwon and Jang (2012) indicated that when a disequilibrium is felt, individuals will be demotivated. In this case, medical practitioners are now resorting to migration as an alternative to match their inputs with their outputs. As a result, the health sector will be in short supply of medical personnel, as these professionals are considering moving abroad to greener pastures. This implies that the equity theory is no longer applicable to the health sector, as medical professionals now compare themselves with doctors in other countries. As result, they end up migrating to other countries. This will leave Zimbabwe understaffed, thereby causing high loads on medical doctors in the public institutions. As a result, they will not have enough time for career progression. This is supported by Ali (2019), who stated that doctors and nurses suffer from a heavy workload brought on by staff shortages.

Closely related to the above, Chimbari et al. (2008) postulated that there is a lack of career planning and advancement in Zimbabwe's healthcare sector. As a result, the future of the healthcare sector looks bleak. Medical doctors are now moving abroad, where they are offered sound rewards. As a result, they end up focusing on upgrading their skills to meet the international standards, foregoing the needs and requirements of their country. This is also supported by Mkandatsama and Nyanhete (2017), who indicated that career planning helps an employee in making career decisions while taking into account their skills and the needs of the company. This implies that the Ministry of Health and Child Care should ensure that doctors have opportunities for career progression, as this will minimise skills flight in the country. This also concurs with Delobelle et al. (2011), who indicated that the only way to improve the job satisfaction of physicians in urban primary care was through wages and unblocking promotion channels.

Findings have revealed that professions in Zimbabwe are now being politicised. Politicians and the ruling part politicise professions to an extent that employee grievances over poor working conditions and salaries are now being regarded as political threats to the ruling party. A lack of professional autonomy causes these professionals not to qualify under the middle class category. Landry and Marsh (2011) note that the middle class is a sector of society with the possibility of upward mobility and achievement above the level of subsistence, as well as an open rather than a closed opportunity structure. Instead of professionals' controlling the political and economic environment for the nation's growth, they are the ones that are being controlled by the politics of the country. This therefore implies that they no longer qualify to be in the middle class. As a result of this, medical doctors are now much more concerned about earning more money for their survival.

It has been revealed that doctors are finding it difficult to consider career planning and progression considering the environment they are living in. Medical doctors are less concerned about career planning and progression, as they are busy maximising their outputs so match their social status. By virtue of their being in the medical profession, they are regarded as people with a lot of money. Owing to this, they are now trying to maximise their inputs to match middle-class standards. This therefore implies that there is no work–life balance in the medical profession, as these professionals now supplement their income with other money-making activities.

7.4.3 Career progression of the legal profession in Zimbabwe

Findings have revealed that there is less career planning and progression for women in the legal field. Due to cultural and social barriers women are not able to participate in training and development programmes that are required by the profession for one to be upgraded. As a result it is taking time for them to be partners in the legal firms, as majority of them are still employees despite their experience in the legal profession. Similar sentiments have also been echoed by Hersch and Meyers (2018) who stated that working conditions for female lawyers are worse than for male lawyers. This implies that there is lack of career progression for women in the legal field which is also indicated by Jackson (2016) that women in the legal field are subjected to lower pay and promotion.

There less of career progression in the legal field as lawyers are merely concerned about their income. The socio-economic environment has had an impact on lawyers to an extent that they

are now concerned about income generation for their survival. Career development has become secondary. This agrees with the views of Sasinsky (2020), who indicated that there is lack of career planning in the legal profession.

Legal professionals are suffering from the ripple effects of unstable economic environment. As revealed by findings, majority of people do not have the capacity to pay legal representation, some are now settling for legal advice from legal advisers as it is cheaper and affordable than legal representation. However, the Equity theory emphasises that individuals quit their jobs when there is a mismatch between the inputs and the outputs (Hu, 2021). In this lawyers are not quitting their jobs instead they are now engaging in providing advice to clients because clients no longer afford their services. This implies that there is less career planning and progression as professionals are now taking into consideration the needs of the clients so as to earn quick money for survival.

It has also been revealed that the unstable economic environment, which is characterised by political instability, has made it difficult for lawyers to have professional freedom. Lawyers are less concerned than they were before the unstable economic environment about career progression, as this profession does not have political freedom. Bonnin and Ruggunan (2013) emphasised the professional closure of professions. However, legal practitioners, especially prominent lawyers, are now being oppressed. This is forcing the legal practitioners to focus less on career planning and progression.

As noted in the preceding discussion, elite professionals are now engaging less in career planning and progression as a result of the number of challenges that they encounter in their profession. However, all of their problems emanate from the unstable socio-economic environment in Zimbabwe. These professionals no longer qualify to be in the middle-class category, despite the level of their education. As a result, they are now finding other means to supplement their incomes in order to protect their professional status.

7.5 The impact of the precarious environment on Training and development of elite professionals

Findings have indicated that elite professionals are now less concerned about training and development programmes because of the unstable environment. Baran and Woznyj (2020) revealed, however, that employees who consistently participate in training and development

programmes are necessary for a company to meet the demands of the environment's constant change. This implies that elite professionals are becoming obsolete, since they are not participating in training and development programmes. It also has implications for the service delivery of these professionals. That is also one of the reasons Zimbabweans are now seeking international services for their health issues and educational needs. It lies in the hands of the respective organisations and the country to ensure that elite professionals are living in line with the global middle class, as this will help to enforce training and development policies that will benefit the country and its citizens. As Armstrong (2020) revealed, employees are the integral part of the organisation who requires continuous development.

Gold et al. (2007) revealed that Continuous Professional Development helps employees to stay current in order to safeguard professional autonomy and keep their position in society. However, as indicated by the finding that elite professionals are less concerned about training programmes, it suggests that they are not in a position to safeguard their professional autonomy. This lack of CPD is therefore weakening elite professionals as a result the citizens are now opting for international services.

7.5.1 The impact of the precarious environment on the training and development of academic professions

CPD continues to gain significance in a European context, putting more of a focus on lifelong learning and educators improving their performance (Alexandrou et al., 2005). However, findings have revealed that continuous development programmes have become secondary to academic lecturers, as they are now focusing on balancing their rewards since their salaries are being eroded by inflation. This implies that academic lecturers are no longer much interested in CPD owing to the nature of their salaries. They are now focusing on means of survival to complement their salaries. This suggests that comparisons are now being made at individual level. An individual will lower his or her efforts if the rewards are not motivating. Therefore, this affects CPD of lecturers in the country.

On account of the lack of support from their institutions, academics are not very concerned about training and development. This is unlike the case in well-developed economies, in which universities provide support to their academic staff to attend seminars and other continuous development programmes. Masango (2015) indicated that academics' access to conference funding serves as a significant source of motivation for their research. This implies that a lack

of funding demotivates academic professionals from participating in development programmes. Chitanana et al. (2008) support the notion that lecturers are not engaging in seminar programmes as these seminars require funding, yet lecturers in Zimbabwe are living in an unstable environment in which their salaries are not matching their inputs. Therefore, they reduce their inputs. This implies that institutions should ensure that lecturers have enough funding for them to participate in development programmes, as these programmes help institutions to achieve a competitive advantage through their human capital.

Findings have indicated that academic professionals are motivated by financial rewards to participate in continuous development programmes. This implies that they are more likely to engage in continuous development programmes if monetary rewards are available. This therefore overrides Herzberg's two-factor theory, which emphasises that monetary rewards are hygiene factors (Nickerson, 2023). However, financial rewards are motivators, especially in an unstable environment. It has been noted that academics are no longer motivated to participate in CPD programmes due to lack of financial rewards.

Owence et al. (2014) indicated that employees must continue to pursue academic goals in order to improve their organisations. However, findings have revealed that there is a lack of training and development programmes in the academic field. This causes challenges to the academic profession, as it will be difficult for academics to cope with the demands of the ever-changing environment. This calls for institutions to revisit their training and development policies in the academic profession, taking into consideration the unstable economic environment.

7.5.2 The impact of the precarious environment on the training and development of medical professionals in Zimbabwe

The findings revealed that medical doctors do not regard training and development as a necessity, even though it is very useful to them. Medical doctors are attending only funded workshops, since their salaries do not allow them to pay to attend these capacity development programmes. However, Henderson and Tulloch (2008) stated that training and development, career planning and performance management help to build the knowledge and skills of employees in the middle class. This implies that medical doctors in Zimbabwe no longer qualify for middle-class status, as they are no longer paying much attention to the development programmes.

Chmielewska et al. (2020) stated that more training and development initiatives for medical staff should be carried out by hospitals. However, findings have indicated that Continuous development programmes in the medical profession occur at a minimum level. Due to poor salaries that are not equitable to the level of their education, medical doctors no longer treat capacity development programmes as of paramount importance to their profession.

It has also been revealed by findings that women in the healthcare sector are more disadvantaged from participating in development programmes, as they do not have as much time as men to pursue other activities that generate income. The men in this study, for example, owned surgeries and had a variety of part-time jobs that generate income. They are able to participate in development programmes, as the Ministry of Healthcare requires them to earn 5 points to renew their certificates. However, due to lack of funding, capacity development programmes are of less importance to them.

The findings also revealed that the unstable socio-economic environment in Zimbabwe has caused the government to reduce its budget for healthcare. This concurs with Mhazo and Maponga (2022), who highlighted that the health financing reform process in Zimbabwe is heavily influenced by political economy characteristics that favour certain financing arrangements over others, with profound implications for health system performance. As a result of this, medical doctors are no longer participating in continuous development programmes, as they rely on funding from the government. Chimbari et al. (2008) stated that medical professionals who are interested in furthering their professional development should be provided educational allowances and low-interest student loans. This implies that healthcare professionals need support from the government, as this help them to engage in development as they help to strengthen the healthcare system in Zimbabwe.

It has been also revealed that medical doctors are now engaging in other income-generating activities in a quest to improve their standard of living. Nevertheless, this reduces the time that the doctors need to engage in training and development programmes, as they may find these less necessary than income-generating activities. This is also indicated by the finding that some medical doctors have turned to lecturing, all in an attempt to improve their standard of living. Mudzonga (2022) indicated that the increase in living expenses and the decline in professional standards has made professionals to seek jobs in other fields. Engaging in academic lecturing reduces the time that doctors have to focus on capacity development programmes.

7.5.3 Effects of the precarious environment on training and development of legal professionals

From the findings, it has been noted that legal professionals are mandated to engage in training and development programmes, despite the harsh prevailing economic environment in Zimbabwe. Continuous professional development is mandatory for all legal practitioners, as it is used for renewing practicing certificates. Statutory Instrument 37 of 2015 indicated that a lawyer who has finished their pupillage must complete a minimum of 12 hours of professional academic engagements, including mandatory pupillage training, to qualify for the renewal of their practicing certificate for each year of practice.

Closely linked to the above, it has also been revealed that lawyers engage in conversion examinations, which are part of capacity development programmes. Despite the nature of their incomes, lawyers are required to retrain after finishing their courses with international universities. This forces potential law students to study law in Zimbabwe. As a result, they will invest more in their education, with the expectation of high outputs. However, the equity theory suggests that people are motivated when there is an equilibrium or balance between the inputs and outputs. In this case, however, legal practitioners are engaging in development programmes only because they need to have their practicing certificates renewed, as they cannot practise without them.

However, it was further revealed by findings that, despite the fact that CPD is mandatory in the legal profession, lawyers are still finding it difficult to engage in these training programmes. The nature of their income has forced them to engage only in programmes that allow them to accrue points towards the renewal of their practicing certificates. This concurs with Gold et al. (2007), who indicated that CPD may not be prioritised, particularly in challenging environments. The LSZ newsletter of July 2022 indicated that only 362 out of 2,000 legal practitioners registered by LSZ managed to attend training on constitutional and electoral litigation from 2018 to 2022. Therefore, 18% of the lawyers only attended development programmes during that period. This strengthens the notion that the precarious environment in Zimbabwe has forced lawyers to focus only on development programmes that allow them to accrue points towards their practicing certificates.

Unlike men, women have cultural barriers that are hindering them to participate in training and development programmes that are required by the profession for one to be upgraded. That is

the reason it is taking time for them to be partners in the legal firms. Female lawyers who took part in this study are still employees despite their experience in the legal profession. Hersch and Meyers (2018) stated that working conditions for women are less than for men. This implies that women have fewer opportunities as they do not have enough time to consider developing themselves and their career.

It has been indicated that majority of citizens in Zimbabwe no longer afford legal representation. This implies that lawyers are now earning less since there is less work for them as people are living under a precarious environment. Their level of income has affected development programmes as they no longer afford capacity development due to insufficient income.

7.6 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the discussion of the findings that were presented in Chapter 5 of this thesis. The findings were discussed in relation to the literature that was presented in Chapters 2 and 3. It has been revealed through the findings that the unstable economic environment has negatively affected elite professionals in as far as development is concerned. Elite professionals are less concerned about development programmes and career planning owing to a lack of motivation. Their incomes are continuously being eroded by hyperinflation. Therefore, this thesis challenges previous scholars and theorists such as Herzberg, who indicated that money is a hygiene factor. Financial rewards must be considered as motivators, especially in unstable economic environments. A lack of financial rewards for employees has a negative effect on career progression and training and development, which are important HR concepts that determine the survival and growth of organisations.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: JOB SATISFACTION, JOB ENGAGEMENT AND COPING MECHANISMS OF ELITE PROFESSIONALS IN ZIMBABWE

8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the discussion of findings about the professional development of elite professions in Zimbabwe. This chapter continues with a discussion of data in relation to Objectives 3 and 4, namely, to ascertain the level of job satisfaction of elite professionals and to determine the level of job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe.

8.2 The impact of the precarious environment on job satisfaction of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

The findings have revealed that there is little job dissatisfaction among academic and legal professionals. On account of this job dissatisfaction, elite professionals are migrating to other countries in search of greener pastures and equitable rewards. This implies that elite professionals are looking beyond Zimbabwe's borders, comparing themselves with similar professions in other countries. The equity theory of motivation stipulates that individuals will compare themselves with the people in the same organisation. However, owing to international comparison, elite professionals are now dissatisfied with their jobs.

8.2.1 Academic professions and job satisfaction in Zimbabwe

Academic lecturers are now engaging in a number of activities, such as being visiting lecturers, as a way to supplement income. This shows a high level of job dissatisfaction as salaries no longer match their inputs; therefore, they are now venturing into other activities to supplement their income. A number of academics are now venturing into professional and non-professional activities to generate income. The equity theory emphasises that if an individual perceives themselves to be under-rewarded then they will be motivated to decrease this inequity by decreasing their performance. In this case, academics are now venturing into other activities to support their incomes, since they are no longer able to live by middle-class standards. This is echoed by Hardré et al. (2007), who indicated that lecturers are now devoting their research time to moonlighting in order to support their meagre salaries.

In addition, Herzberg's two-factor theory emphasises that there are two workplace variables that are mutually exclusive and lead either to job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction (Alshenqeti, 2014). In this theory, salary is among hygiene factors that do not motivate an individual. Non-monetary rewards are categorised as motivators, and their absence may lead to job dissatisfaction. However, the findings of this research revealed that academic lecturers are not satisfied with their jobs as they perceive inequality between their inputs and the outputs. This emphasises that Herzberg's two-factor theory was developed in an economically stable environment. Zimbabwe, however, is a developing country with an unstable economic environment and therefore differs greatly. In Zimbabwe, individuals are satisfied by monetary rewards, as they thrive to supplement their salaries with other income-generating activities. The precarious environment has reconfigured the middle-class status and, as a result, there is low job satisfaction among academics.

Findings have also revealed that the unstable socioeconomic and political environment is also leading to high levels of dissatisfaction among academics. Academics are now living in fear because of a lack of professional autonomy. Spies are planted in learning institutions to monitor the movements of academics, particularly those in the public sector, and security agents monitor them at their workplaces. Moyo (2016), for example, has described the surveillance of public-institution lecturers. Academics have lost their middle-class status and their professional autonomy. This lack of professional freedom reduces the level of satisfaction among academics.

The findings revealed that commercialisation in the higher and tertiary education sector has affected the level of job satisfaction among academic lecturers in Zimbabwe. Owing to privatisation, there are now different categories of programmes, which results in the mass-production of graduates. Universities are enrolling students for a number of different sessions in a bid to increase their income. Students are now being enrolled for parallel programmes, conventional programmes, weekend classes and block sessions. This reduces the flexible work-life balance of academics, as they are expected to be at work most of the time. However, this reduction in work-life balance comes without a salary increase, which has an effect on the satisfaction level of academics.

The equity theory emphasises that employees are more likely to stay motivated and find satisfaction in their position if they receive fair payment at their workplace (Ghazi et al., 2013).

The findings have revealed that lecturers are now comparing themselves with lecturers abroad. As a result of this comparison, they feel a disequilibrium regarding outputs, as some of them are not in a position to save, some do not have immovable properties, and some of them are not able to acquire motor vehicles or service their existing vehicles. This automatically defeats the notion that they belong to a middle class. This has an effect on their level of satisfaction, as they are not being rewarded as other academics in stable environments are. This therefore bridges the gap that has been left by Adams's equity theory, as the comparisons now extend beyond borders.

In addition, the findings have revealed that academics are dissatisfied with their jobs, as they earn Zimbabwean dollars, while their expenses are in US dollars. This implies that lecturers are now "earning money to buy money". They are earning Zimbabwean dollars, which they have to convert to United States dollars through parallel markets for them to be able to pay their expenses. This has caused dissatisfaction, as the Zimbabwean currency is being weakened by inflation. Ultimately, academics will earn only approximately \$200 per month. This causes dissatisfaction among academics, as they are regarded as learned people who should earn more than other less educated occupations. This concurs with Mabaso and Dlamini (2021) assertion that salary is one of the primary reasons employees leave their organisation. Therefore, it refutes Herzberg's two-factor theory that money is a hygiene factor.

Employees need opportunities for training and development for them to be satisfied with their work as it improves their knowledge and skills. Costen and Salazar (2011) revealed that employees who perceive they have opportunity to develop new skills are more satisfied with their jobs. Chaudhary and Bhaskar (2016) depicted a strong relationship between training and development and job satisfaction. Nevertheless, findings from this study revealed that academics in Zimbabwe no longer have the zeal for career growth development. This implies that academics are no longer satisfied with their jobs as they are now less concerned about development and career growth.

Kanonge and Bussin (2022) stated that academic institutions in Zimbabwe are encountering a new wave of brain drain. However, owing to the unstable economic environment, they are not able to recruit highly qualified personnel. As a result, lecturers have high workloads to cover other people's workloads. This implies that there is no work-life balance among lecturers in Zimbabwe. As a result of this, employees will be dissatisfied with their work.

It has also been revealed by findings that lecturers are not satisfied as they are not provided with the resources to work. The deteriorating working environments has resulted in them not being satisfied with their work as they find it demotivating to them. Employees need to work under conducive environment for them to be motivated. In this case academics are working in unsupportive environment where their employers are no longer in a position to provide them with resources as they are also incapacitated.

8.2.2 Legal professions and job satisfaction in Zimbabwe

Bolton and Muzio (2007) state that there has been a growing interest among women in the legal profession. This study found out that there are still fewer women in the legal profession than their male counterparts. These few women are earning less than their male counterparts, which causes them not to have a feeling of enjoyment as they earn less, despite their experience. This gender stratification makes it impossible for women, especially those in a precarious environment, to enjoy their work. That is the reason that they end up engaging in some professional and non-professional acts to earn more money. This implies that female attorneys in precarious environment are motivated by monetary rewards. Therefore, strengthening the notion that Herzberg's two-factor theory is applicable only to countries that have stable economies.

Maunganidze (2020) states that the legal profession is an example of gender stratification. Bolton and Muzio (2007) emphasise about professions having homogeneous identity. In this study it has been revealed that female practitioners are handling lighter cases like divorce cases that have less charges as compared to those cases that are being handled by male attorneys. Male attorneys are handling bigger cases such as fraud cases. As a result of this they are earning more income and they are also becoming more prominent which is also a way of gaining more clients. This therefore implies that male practitioners have a higher level of satisfaction than women as they have more income and they are also able to attract more clients.

Findings have revealed that there is more of job dissatisfaction among female lawyers who participated in this study as compared to male lawyers. Law is a profession, which requires more time from an individual. English (2003) highlighted that work-life balance was the major problem among women in the legal profession. This implies that married females will have less time, as they have the social aspect of life to attend to. There are also cultural

responsibilities that they should perform as a result of this female lawyers will be less satisfied due to lack of work–life balance.

Stainback et al. (2016) state that gendered professions require interpersonal networks. Maunganidze (2020) states that gendered organisations are problematic for women in employment. This research found out that women are more affected by job satisfaction than male practitioners because of cultural barriers. By virtue of their being women in an African society, they have cultural roles they must play, despite their being in higher professions or earning income for the family. They are still expected to perform house chores after work, while their male counterparts will be socialising with potential clients and the prosecutors. This implies that their male counterparts will gain more clients through socialising with them in different domains. Male lawyers have opportunities to make informal relations with prosecutors after work hours, unlike female lawyers', who have social and cultural obligations. Men will win most of their cases in court proceedings as a result of informal relations with prosecutors and judges. This, in turn, increases their satisfaction level, as they are able to win more popularity than women in the legal field.

Maunganidze (2020) revealed that the legal profession has become commercial and profit oriented, operating like a business. The focus has shifted from helping clients to an emphasis on competition among lawyers through maximising billing of clients and making profits. This research has found that the economic environment has affected the legal profession greatly, as their clients can no longer afford to pay for legal representation. As a result, clients are instead opting for legal advice without legal representation, which is more affordable to many people as a result of the unstable environment. This has therefore caused some lawyers, especially those with less experience, to shift their focus to giving legal advice to clients. This therefore increases competition among lawyers, who are already living in an unstable environment. This leads to high levels of dissatisfaction among lawyers, as they are not bringing in the desired rewards that are equitable to their inputs.

The LSZ (2021) stipulates that those who have 2 to 4 years' experience in the service should be charging \$240 to \$720 per hour for legal service. Those with 10 to 14 years should charge \$750 to \$1,200. Findings have revealed that clients in Zimbabwe are now the ones who determine the charges that the lawyers are paid. Clients are now negotiating for legal advice, which is against the LSZ's standards, which stipulate the minimum charges that lawyers should

earn per hour. However, owing to the precarious environment, clients can no longer afford these fees, and lawyers are caught between accepting low offers by clients and protecting the standards of the profession. Ultimately, lawyers will accept low offers, as they need money to survive in this unstable environment. However, this has an impact on their satisfaction level, as their income is now below that of those in “less-educated occupations”, who are now earning more than lawyers.

The LSZ (2022) July newsletter indicated that 18% of the legal practitioners have attended training programmes from 2018 to July 2022. Findings of this research revealed that lawyers are now less concerned about training programmes as they are now incapacitated to attend these programmes due to the nature of their income. They no longer consider development programmes and only focus on programmes that allow them to accrue 12 points to renew their practicing certificates. The level of attendance implies that lawyers are dissatisfied with their work as they no longer consider development programmes due to incapacitation. This concurs with Anwar and Shukur (2015) who stated that development programmes have a positive effect on employees satisfaction level.

O'Donnell and Mirtcheva-Broderson (2015) revealed that the legal and medical professions are the most prestigious professions, with high income. However, this research has deduced that the legal profession is a prestigious profession without money, particularly in a precarious environment like Zimbabwe. Lawyers are no longer able to serve as they used to. They can no longer afford to consume quality goods of their choice and, in some cases, they use public transport, as they are no longer able to fuel and repair their cars. In addition to this, some of them are not in a position to pay their monthly bills, while others are not in position to go on vacation. Yet they are seen as prestigious professions with high income. This is supported by Flores and Arce (2014), who indicated that lawyers have high rates of unhappiness that are related to their professional paths. This is due to their level of income, which is not equitable to their level of education.

This section revealed that women are more dissatisfied with their jobs than their male counterparts, which is caused by cultural and social barriers. For both women and men in the legal profession, the nature of their income is affecting their job satisfaction. Nevertheless, men have other means by which they can improve their satisfaction level, despite their low incomes. Male practitioners are able to acquire more clients than female practitioners as they have more

time to make informal relationships with prosecutors who will always make rulings in favour of them.

8.2.3 Medical professions and job satisfaction in Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2018) reported that Zimbabwean medical professionals, including junior doctors, embarked on a 9-month strike on account of a variety of workplace complaints, including low pay, a lack of medicine supply, and crumbling hospital infrastructure. Findings of this study have revealed that medical doctors in Zimbabwe no longer have the enthusiasm to work as they are being forced to work under harsh and uncondusive environments. Medical doctors in Zimbabwe are now being forced to work without proper equipment and resources. Public institutions do not have drugs for medical doctors to prescribe to their clients. As a result, medical doctors end up engaging on strikes to demonstrate that they need enough resources for them to work.

Saunders and Nyamunda (2016) stated that the Zimbabwean currency crisis has led to a number of issues, including the need for people to find alternative means of subsistence. Findings have revealed that there is no longer work–life balance in the medical profession. Work–life balance has become a nightmare to medical doctors, as they are looking for other avenues to earn extra income. Most of these professionals no longer afford to go for vacation with their families. Instead, they have diverted their time to focus on other activities that allow them to have more income for their consumption. Some doctors are now engaging in other professions such as academics, while some work both for the public and private sector. This therefore reduces their satisfaction level as they no longer have work–life balance.

In addition, the findings have also indicated that the lack of autonomy that is being caused by political interventions is causing dissatisfaction among doctors. Medical doctors no longer have the freedom to exercise their rights, as these actions have been politicised. Medical doctors are now considered as opponents of the government. That is why they have lost their rights to bargain using industrial action. The African News Agency (2019) revealed that the vice president allegedly accused medical professionals of engaging in poor negotiating tactics, proving that their strike was driven by politics. Dzirutwe (2019) stated that striking doctors were threatened with death, and security agents blocked them from striking against the disappearance of their union leader. This implies that professions in Zimbabwe no longer have autonomy and those that exercise their rights will be thrown in prison. This therefore reduces

the flexibility in the working environment, which then causes dissatisfaction among those in the medical profession.

The neoclassical theory of international migration posits that the differentiation in wages and employment conditions between countries pushes individuals to maximise their income (Miladinov, 2020). Bloom and Standing (2001) state that Africa has lost up to 60,000 middle- and high-level managers and nearly one-third of its skilled workers. The Ministry of Health and Child Care (2019) furthermore stated that 34% of doctor positions were vacant as of December 2019 and that this high rate remains the case at present. This research found out that there is a high level of outmigration in the medical profession owing to poor salaries and working conditions. Medical doctors are now migrating to other countries where their skills and inputs are being appreciated. This high outmigration indicates that doctors are dissatisfied with their jobs as they are now comparing themselves with other medical doctors in the UK and other developed countries with stable economies. As a result they are now being attracted by high financial rewards in other countries, hence migration. The prevailing environment has made it difficult for them to enjoy the benefits of the middle class. Some doctors are still successfully navigating the unstable environment, as some of them are able to drive to work. However, this does not mean that they are satisfied with their jobs. There still an increase in the outflow of doctors despite the measures that have been implemented by the government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Health and Child Care to restrict doctors from leaving the country. Ndlovu (2020) highlighted that the Medical and Dental Practitioners Council of Zimbabwe may now need prior approval by the state to migrate to other countries. This is one of the measures that the government has put in place to reduce the exodus of doctors, as the certificate of good standing must be approved by the state.

Maunganidze (2020) indicated that women in gendered professions always face challenges. This research found out that there is less job dissatisfaction among men in the medical profession than women in the medical profession. Men have more avenues for making money than women, and they can attend to patients at any time, which is a different case for women. Women have a social role to play, and when they get home they need to attend to social aspects. Owing to the cultural dimension, women have lower levels of job satisfaction than men. This therefore implies that males in the medical profession have higher satisfaction levels than women in the same profession.

As noted in the preceding discussion, there is greater job dissatisfaction in the academic profession than the other professions considered in this study. However, women in the legal profession have also higher levels of dissatisfaction than their male counterparts. Those in the medical and academic professions have greater opportunities for migrating to other countries with fewer challenges when they are dissatisfied with jobs than those in the legal profession do. Despite the dissatisfaction levels in the legal profession, lawyers still need to navigate the unstable economic environment as they are not recognised as legal professionals if they migrate to other countries with stable economic environments. That is the reason lawyers end up in bribery scandals with their prosecutors for them to earn a living.

8.3 The impact of the precarious environment on job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

The findings of this study revealed that professionals in Zimbabwe are now serving more than two organisations at a time. In the Zimbabwean context, it is now common for an individual to have two or more formal and informal jobs that enable them to earn a basic living. Those who rely on their salaries only, without other avenues, struggle even to pay their bills and lead a basic life. However, engaging in two or more jobs reduces one's level of commitment since these professionals are not focused on attaining and completing the vision and mission of the organisation. They are being driven only by financial rewards to earn a living in this precarious environment.

8.3.1 Job engagement and academic professions in Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwean economy crisis led to a number of issues, including the need for people to find alternative means of subsistence (Madimu, 2020; Saunders & Nyamunda, 2016). People are now looking into other activities that enable them to generate income for survival. This study found out that most of the male lectures were visiting lectures in other universities. Some of them even held two permanent posts of lectureship at different universities. Moonlighting is now a common thing in the academic field as lecturers struggle to earn a basic living in a declining economy. However, the level of moonlighting clearly shows that most of the lecturers, particularly men, who have more time to handle part-time work in different universities, are not engaged, as they seek only financial rewards to supplement their income. One cannot serve two masters and still remain loyal to them. Mushonga and Nyakudya (2011) referred to academics as the “walking dead”, as they are said to be to be physically present at

the workplace but psychologically absent. This therefore indicates that there is now less engagement in the academic profession.

Kahn (1990) denotes that work engagement is the degree to which a person shows self-preference in job tasks to promote connections between self and job through cognitive, emotional and physical self-investment. This research found out that academics in Zimbabwe are now less concerned about career progression and progression. They no longer invest their resources into development programmes due to the nature of their salaries. This implies that they are no longer interested in promoting connections between them and their jobs. They are now concerned on how best they can earn more money.

Iqbal et al. (2017) stated that employees value safety for them to be fully engaged in their organisations. This study found that academic lecturers are now living in fear, as spies and security are now planted in universities to monitor them. Academics no longer have the freedom and safety that professionals in a middle-class category should enjoy; this therefore lowers their engagement levels. They will be physically engaged but not emotionally and psychologically engaged.

The findings also revealed that the privatisation of universities in a crippled economy worsened the situation. Weak reward structures have contributed to the low engagement of lecturers, as universities are now responsible for lecturers' salaries. The Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, Professor Murwira, was quoted in *The Herald* (2023) as indicating that universities are now responsible for lecturers' salaries. This, however, worsens the situation that has arisen as a result of the unstable environment. This causes academics' salaries to continue deteriorating and, as a result, will affect their engagement level as they are not motivated to work.

Academic lecturers are now comparing themselves with other occupations in which people are generally less educated. The findings also revealed that informal jobs are paying more than formal jobs. Those in the informal sector are often less educated but they are earning more than the educated people. This therefore weakens academics' engagement levels, as they comparing themselves with those that are not in the same profession but who are below them with regard to educational qualification. This automatically reduces their level of engagement as they feel that their educational qualifications are not being valued by their respective organisations. Iqbal et al. (2017) stated meaningfulness is a psychological condition that enables engagement of

employees in an organisation. In this case academics no longer feel that they are being valued by their organisations since those that have less inputs are earning more than them.

This research found that lecturers are now having high workloads owing to high rates of migration as universities are incapacitated to recruit new employees. At the same time the introduction of modularisation in Zimbabwean universities tries to reduce this pressure on academics. However, lecturers are now devoting this time to other income generating activities which therefore reduces their work and life balance. This therefore has an impact on their engagement level since Jaharuddin and Zainol (2019) states that work–life balance has an impact on an individual’s engagement level.

Lecturers have lowered their engagement level since they are regarded as pauper people regardless their level of education. Lecturers have invested and are still investing in their education, however they are still earning low salaries despite their inputs. This in turn has a negative effect on their engagement as they will lower engagement levels to suit their salaries

8.3.2 Job engagement of Medical professionals in Zimbabwe

Regarding job engagement among medical doctors, the findings revealed that most of the medical doctors in the public sector have reduced their level of dedication to work as a result of the nature of their rewards. Medical doctors in public institutions have reduced their engagement levels as they are no longer motivated by their salaries. Medical doctors in public institutions are earning their salaries in ZWL. That is why they are now working in private hospitals, where they are rewarded in US dollars. Kumaranayake et al. (2000) indicated that the healthcare systems in low- and medium-income countries are characterised by extensive private sectors. This indicates that those medical doctors in the private sector are more engaged than those in the public sector. This is supported by Kankaanranta et al. (2007), who indicated that general wages in the private sector are higher than in the public sector. This implies that medical doctors are motivated by monetary rewards for them to be engaged in their work.

Gaidzanwa (1999) and Mudzonga (2022) states that individual health workers’ performance suffers when they lack motivation. Findings of this study revealed that medical doctors are there to serve the health of the public; however, a number of deaths have been experienced in the country as a result of the negligence of the doctors. Nemukuyu (2019) highlighted that the government set up an office of the coroner-general to carry out investigations into deaths in

hospitals. Nemukuyu (2019) furthermore stated that this comes amid an outcry over the negligence of surgeons. The extent of this negligence includes one extreme case in which a pair of scissors was left in a woman's uterus. Doctors are now interested in income generation; as a result, they no longer offer their best when it comes to the health of the public, particularly in public hospitals. They are more engaged to their work in private hospitals or their own surgeries so as to attract clients. This is supported by WHO (2006) which states that the ability and willingness of health professionals to deliver high-quality and pertinent services is crucial for the success of efforts to improve the performance of health services.

In addition, poor service delivery in the public sector institutions is attributed to lack of engagement by medical doctors. Medical doctors are no longer motivated to work due to poor salaries and working conditions. They are now being forced to operate in hospitals that do not have medical drugs for clients and the same time they are not being provided with enough resources for them to use. This therefore affects their engagement levels that is why medical doctors are engaging in unending strikes so that they will have better working and supportive environment for them to work. Millán et al. (2013) states that workers will only exhibit pleasurable positive attitudes if they are satisfied with their job.

Findings indicated that medical professionals have lost the privileged of an autonomous profession. The profession is now being associated with political activities as they were once fired for demonstrating for poor salaries and working conditions. Dzirutwe (2019) revealed that medical doctors received death threats from state agencies after they protested against abduction of their union leader. This suggests that doctors no longer have professional freedom, particularly those in the public sector, as they no longer allowed to embark on collective job actions.

Kahn's theory of engagement stipulates that safety is a psychological condition that improves employee engagement in a work place (Iqbal et al., 2017). Findings from this study revealed that doctors, especially those in the public sector, are now living in fear, as they longer have the freedom to express their opinions. They are now being reprimanded for engaging in collective job action. As a result, they are now less concerned about patients in public hospitals as they grievances about the government's not providing enough resources are not being resolved.

8.3.3 Job engagement of legal professionals in Zimbabwe

Noor (2003) stated that despite having demanding full-time jobs, women are expected to be fully responsible for household duties. The findings revealed that the engagement of women in the legal profession is low, as they have cultural and social hindrances. There is lower job engagement among female practitioners than male practitioners, since males have more time to perform their work-related duties. Women must perform other social duties; therefore, their engagement level is low. Sigurdson (2018) indicated that this is why the divorce rate among women in the legal profession is higher than for women in other professions. Female practitioners will prioritise their marriages over their careers. If they prioritise their careers, this means that they will be more engaged in their work, at the expense of their marriages. Therefore, women end up prioritising their marriages at the expense of their careers. As Chabaya et al. (2009) revealed, women are expected to follow gender norms.

Legal professionals are bound to engage into their work since they can only earn income after succeeding through their court sessions. However, they are now into bribery with the prosecutors so that they earn more income. This implies that there is now less of engagement as they are more concerned about winning the cases to become more prominent there by attracting more clients as well as more income. International Bar Association (2010) found out that 70% of the legal professionals are involved in corruption. Lawyers are no longer concerned about justice but all they want is money for them to earn a living.

Drew et al. (2015) asserted that the practice of law is both rewarding and challenging. The findings indicated that clients can no longer afford to pay gazetted legal fares; therefore, they negotiate for lower fares for legal representation. This implies that clients are the ones that determine the fees that lawyers charge. This therefore indicates that there is a reduction in lawyers' income, as clients can offer only what they have available to spend. Because of the precarious state that lawyers are in, they are bound to accept the low offers presented by their clients. However, this does not mean that they are well engaged in their jobs. They perform their tasks in return for money, without engagement.

Kirkebøen (2012) stated that expected earnings influence an individual's choice of education. The legal profession is considered a high-income profession, which is why many people try to maximise their entry qualifications to enrol into the profession. However, the economic environment has affected this profession through the clients, as they are no longer able to pay

for services. This therefore has resulted in lawyers engaging in other income generating activities for them to maintain their social status. As Duri (2020) noted, lawyers are now engaging in money laundering to increase their income.

8.4 Coping strategies of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

The previous sections focused on the discussion of findings about professional development, job satisfaction and job engagement of elite professionals in Zimbabwe. This section continues with discussion of data about the coping strategies that are being used by elite professionals in Zimbabwe.

Coping mechanisms differ with gender, age and also from one profession to the other. They also vary continuum. Some of the coping strategies are legal and formal while some of them are unprofessional and illegal. All these will be discussed as the chapter unfolds.

8.4.1 Coping mechanism used by academic lecturers in Zimbabwe

8.4.1.1 Professional/Formal mechanisms

Stacey Adams's 1963 equity theory of motivation states that when employees feel a sense disequilibrium, they may quit their jobs or reduce their inputs to match the outputs (Inuwa, 2017). This research uncovered that academic lecturers are engaging in a number of activities to earn income to supplement their salaries. A number of lecturers, mainly male academics, are now serving as visiting lecturers at different universities to supplement their income, which has been eroded by inflation. This implies that academics are being motivated by financial rewards which is against Herzberg's two-factor theory which states that financial rewards are hygiene factors they do not motivate an individual (Thant & Chang, 2021). This research therefore argues that financial rewards are motivators, particularly among academics who are a declining economic environment.

The equity theory emphasises that individuals need to feel that the levels of rewards that they receive are similar to those received by their peers in the organisation (Adams, 2010). This research has found that there is high outmigration of academics to counties that offer better rewards that are equitable to their inputs. This implies that academics are now comparing their inputs and outputs with academics in stable economies. As result, they feel a sense of disequilibrium; therefore, they resort to migration to bridge the gap that they feel between their

inputs and their outputs. This is strengthened by Robinson (2020), who revealed that Zimbabwe has lost a sizable number of academic professionals to other nations over the past few decades owing to economic factors.

Mkandatsama and Nyanhete (2017) stated that several lecturers are now working additional jobs as part-time lecturers, while others are privately engaged as tutors in exclusive colleges. This research found that some academic professionals even hold two or more full-time jobs at different universities in their quest to supplement their income. This act is common among male lecturers, as they have more time than female lecturers. This sounds professional, but it is morally unacceptable behaviour, which is why they engage in such actions privately. This has also implications for the engagement level of academics, as they need to balance their work and physical presence. It also compromises the quality of students as a result of the lack of lecturer engagement.

It was also revealed by the findings that lecturers are engaging in research for financial rewards. Lecturers are earning quick money through research projects. Companies are engaging lecturers as their researchers because of their qualifications. As a result, some lecturers are now running their own consultancy firms that enable them to supplement their meagre salaries in this unstable economic environment. This is strengthened Mushonga and Nyakudya (2011), who stated that several lecturers have shifted their focus to consulting work and donor-funded research projects. Lecturers are now trying to protect their social status at the expense of their institutions.

8.4.1.2 Unorthodox/informal means of survival

It has been revealed that some lecturers are engaging in informal trading as a way of supplementing their income. The women from the academic profession who participated in this study engaged in informal trading, as they did not have enough time to consider part-time lecturing by virtue of the cultural barriers that exist. Lecturers may become petty traders (Kabonga, 2020) or foreign currency dealers (Gukurume, 2019a; Mambiravana et al., 2022). However, even though these activities enable academics to supplement their meagre salaries, they also reduce the social status of the profession.

It was also revealed by the findings that academic lecturers are threatening students and forcing them to pay them extra money for project supervision, as they are incapacitated to purchase

data bundles and airtime to monitor and supervise students' work. This is a morally unacceptable behaviour, as students have the obligation to pay their tuition fees but not extra money for supervision. However, on account of fear of victimisation, students end up paying this extra money to create good relationship between them and their mentors.

In addition, lecturers are now accepting gifts from their students. As they are incapacitated, they have no option but to accept the gifts. This is because universities are comprised of students who come from different backgrounds. Some of the students are financially stable and, as a result, these students end up offering gifts to lecturers such as money, fuel coupons and other related gifts. By virtue of lecturers' not being in a position to fuel their cars to drive to work, they accept these gifts. However, this compromises the relationship between the lecturer and the student. Lecturers will be forced to return the favour to the students in the form of higher marks. This implies that these gifts will coerce lecturers into giving students extra marks. This also deprives those that come from poor backgrounds, as lecturers will have a negative attitude towards them.

Lecturers are also engaging in unprofessional ways of earning money. They are now writing projects and assignment for students as a way to supplement their income. Lecturers are aware that it is not professional, nevertheless they need money for survival hence they are forced to engage in these activities to generate income. However, this compromises the quality of students that are being produced by universities. They will be graduates on paper without tacit knowledge. These students are also not competent in the labour market.

8.4.2 Coping mechanisms employed by the medical professionals in Zimbabwe

8.4.2.1 Professional/Formal mechanisms

Medical doctors are now resorting to migration as a way to balance their inputs and outputs, as their salaries are being eroded by inflation. There is high outmigration of medical doctors, particularly junior doctors, to other countries with stable economies. This outmigration is being caused by the poor working conditions and low salaries that medical doctors, especially those in the public sector, receive. Medical doctors are finding it difficult to survive according to their class mobility, as a result they are now leaving the country to where there are greener pastures. Nickson et al. (2021) stated that the introduction of the Health Care Visas by the British Secretary and Secretary of the state for Health and Social Care made it easier for

medical doctors to migrate to well stable economies. That is a possible reason for 34% of medical doctor positions in the public sector being vacant, as of December 2019, as recorded by the Ministry of Health and Child Care (2019). However, this number continues to increase as the situation continues to worsen. This implies that the Ministry of Health and Child Care is now understaffed. This therefore implies that service delivery will be poor, as the doctor-to-patient ratio will be very high.

In addition, some medical doctors are engaging in multiple activities so as to balance their income. Almost all of the participants from the medical profession indicated that they have two or more jobs that help them to supplement their income. A number of them are government employees but they also work in private hospitals as visiting doctors, and some of them own their surgeries. This is now a common norm in the medical profession, as medical doctors are trying to live according to middle-class standards. Berman and Cuizon (2004) stated that some doctors will even work for both private and public institutions to maximise their income. Makoni (2019) indicated that this is because the private healthcare system offers US dollars to its employees. Therefore, doctors are engaged in both sectors to supplement their income. That is why almost all of the medical doctors in this study are in the position to drive their cars to work. As also indicated by the findings, the some of the medical professionals in this study were the only group who had modern cars.

In addition, findings have also revealed that medical doctors are now joining the academic profession as way to supplement their income in this declining socio-economic environment. The precarious environment has made medical professions to join other top professions as a way to raise their standards through multiple channels. However, this has implications to the country since it lowers their engagement levels. They will not offer their best services due to lack of work–life balance.

8.4.2.2 Unorthodox/Informal means of survival

It has been revealed that medical doctors are also engaging in unorthodox means of balancing their services and the rewards. On account of a lack of motivation in the public sector, doctors are now engaging in much unacceptable behaviour. Some doctors are ill-treating and neglecting clients in public hospitals, while some refer them to their private surgeries. Dandadzi et al. (2022) alluded that doctors in Zimbabwe refer patients to their own surgeries. However, this is

morally unacceptable, as some of the patients might not be able to afford private health care. Brekke and Sørsgard (2007) stated that private health care is more costly than public health care.

In addition, absenteeism is another method used by medical doctors in public hospitals to balance their services with their remuneration. This is affecting the public sector at large and the majority of citizens, since some of them cannot afford private services. Medical doctors no longer show up or attend to emergency calls for patients in public hospitals after their working hours. Millán et al. (2013) assert that this is because workers will exhibit pleasurable positive attitudes only if they are satisfied with their jobs.

Medical doctors also steal drugs as way of raising money that will supplement their income. Owing to their poor salaries, some doctors are now stealing and diverting drugs to private pharmacies, where they will be resold in foreign currency. Some of the drugs are being diverted to private clinics. This has become a norm in the medical profession. Maponga (2019) indicated that some members of top-level hospital management were fired over a drugs scandal, as they stole medical drugs from the public hospital to resell them in their pharmacies in US dollars. This has implications for the public hospitals, particularly in this crippled economy in which the government fails to equip public hospitals with enough resources.

The Herald of 2 June 2023 revealed that doctors attempted to extort \$350 from an accident victim. This implies that doctors are now charging extra money to clients in the public hospitals to attend them. This implies that those that are not in position to top money for medical attention may not get medical services from doctors. This has a negative effect to the public healthcare system in Zimbabwe.

Findings have also revealed that doctors also embark on industrial action as a way of protesting poor working conditions and salaries. Medical doctors embark on strikes to press for higher wages, since high inflation has eroded their incomes. This is supported by Mwonzora (2022), who indicated that medical doctors are constantly engaging in industrial action for the government to address their poor salaries and working conditions. However, this has implications for the public, as they will not receive any attention from doctors while they are on strike.

8.4.3 Legal professionals and their coping mechanisms in a precarious environment

8.4.3.1 Professional/formal mechanisms

Findings have revealed that lawyers are now breaking the rules and regulations about minimum charges, which the LSZ has implemented. Lawyers are still charging less than the prescribed fees. Clients can no longer afford legal representation; therefore, lawyers end up accepting what the clients offer, just so that they may earn some income. The LSZ sets minimum fares that legal practitioners must charge. Nevertheless, clients are living in a precarious environment in which they cannot afford legal representation; therefore, they negotiate with the lawyers. Lawyers are bound to agree because, as Susskind (2023) stated, the great profitability of law firms comes from its clients.

8.4.3.2 Unorthodox/Informal means of survival

It has been revealed by findings that legal practitioners, particularly male lawyers, are now engaging into fraud activities with the prosecutors for them to gain popularity, thereby increasing their income. Male lawyers are now paying prosecutors for them to win cases so that they earn more money. This is due to the fact that male practitioners have more time to social life after working hours where they can meet and discuss with prosecutors as compared to female practitioners. As a result, prosecutors end up accepting bribes from lawyers which has implications to court rulings. Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information Publicity and Broadcasting was quoted by Kwaramba (2020) in *the Herald* stating that:

We have a coterie of very corrupt lawyers who buy out our, investigating officers, prosecutors, magistrates and judges. They adulterate our whole justice delivery system. They are not above the law they are supposed to uphold. They help derail our anti-corruption fight.

It was also revealed that legal professionals are becoming involved in the informal trading sector to balance their income. On account of the decrease in income, lawyers have turned to the buying and selling of goods to raise additional income. This enables them to earn a living; however, this has a negative impact on the social status of the legal profession, as lawyers are regarded as professionals who earn more than most other occupations.

The findings also indicated that lawyers are abusing trust funds to cope with the prevailing economic environment. This is an unlawful act, but they do so because they are finding it difficult to survive or migrate. Duri (2020) revealed that some lawyers are now engaging in money laundering. All of this implies that lawyers are living in an unstable environment and will therefore do all it takes to obtain money, since the clients are their only true source of income.

The LSZ forbids lawyers from advertising their services. However, this study found that, owing to the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe, there is stiff competition for clients. Therefore, lawyers have resorted to advertising themselves as a way to maximise their income. Galanter and Palay (1995) stated that law practice has become the “business” of law, as the “profession” has become more commercial and profit oriented, operating more like a business. This emphasises that legal practitioners are now competing for clients, especially in this unstable environment. Therefore, they are now advertising to attract clients, while others are now using “rent a chair”, referring clients to practitioners they have a connection to.

8.5 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the discussion of findings that were presented in Chapter 6, which were related to the impact of the precarious environment on elite professionals’ job engagement and job satisfaction levels. It has been revealed that women in higher professions are less satisfied with their jobs; most affected are those in the legal profession. Women in these top professions are not able to engage in additional activities that allow them to gain extra income, on account of cultural and social barriers. As a result, their satisfaction levels are lower than those of male professionals.

It has also been indicated that all professionals are dissatisfied with the nature of their income, as they no longer qualify as middle class. The academic and medical professionals are now migrating to other countries. This is the result of their dissatisfaction, caused by poor salaries as they are earning ZWL and need to purchase US dollars from the parallel market. With regard to lawyers, their clients can no longer afford the charges gazetted by the LSZ. As a result, clients are now offering what they can afford for legal representation, and lawyers have no choice but to accept this. This therefore reduces the levels of satisfaction among the legal profession.

Regarding job engagement, it was revealed that almost everyone in the professional industries engages in professional activities that supplement their low incomes. Most of the professionals in the academic and medical profession are less engaged than the legal professionals. Legal professionals have to be engaged, as they want to gain more income and clients. Medical doctors are neglecting the public institutions, focusing more on the private institutions, where they earn more money. Lecturers focus on balancing their part-time jobs and not on the way in which they deliver their lectures. This indicates that the precarious environment has negatively affected the level of job engagement of elite professionals.

This chapter focused on the coping mechanisms that are being employed by elite professionals for them to maintain their social status. It has been revealed that migration is one of the most common used strategies particularly by health and academic professionals. The legal profession has less room for lawyers to migrate to other countries as it takes time to be recognised in other countries due to different types of laws practiced in different countries.

It has also been revealed that professionals are now engaging in informal activities such as farming or the buying and selling of products. Mainly those in the legal and academic professions are involved in these activities, as they are ones mostly affected by the precarious environment. Doctors engage in formal activities, as they are active in both private and public institutions. This helps them to earn better income than the legal and academic professionals.

The findings of the study concur with the related literature which states that elite professionals are now engaging in some unorthodox means to survive and supplement their meagre salaries. Almost all of the professionals, especially male professionals, are involved in corruption cases as they have more time than females in these professions. By virtue of males' being the breadwinners in an African society, they need to ensure that their families have food on the table. Therefore, they do all that it takes to have enough income for their family's consumption and needs.

The next chapter focuses on the conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Introduction

Chapter 9 marks the end of this thesis. It dwells on the contributions that have been made by this study and the recommendations emanating from the research. The chapter begins by giving an overview of the thesis. It furthermore provides a summary of the findings. Followed by the contributions of the study. The contributions are classified into three categories, namely, empirical, methodological and theoretical. Finally, it gives recommendations for responsible organisations that deal with elite professionals and recommendations for future studies.

9.2 Thesis overview

This section provides a structural overview of the thesis.

- Chapter 1 of this thesis provided the background to the study, the research problem and the research question and objectives. It furthermore explained the arguments of the thesis in the context of middle-class and elite professions from an HR perspective.
- Chapter 2 focused on the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guided the thesis.
- The aim of Chapter 3 was to review the related literature about middle-class and elite professions.
- Chapter 4 looked into the research approach, design and data-gathering instruments that were employed in this qualitative thesis.
- Chapter 5 presented the findings related to Objectives 1 and 2, which were categorised as professional development of elite professions.
- Chapter 6 continued with data presentation, focusing on Objectives 3, 4 and 5, namely, job satisfaction, job engagement and coping mechanisms of elite professionals.
- The findings related to Objectives 1 and 2 were discussed in Chapter 7.
- Chapter 8 presented a discussion of the findings related to Objective 3, 4 and 5.
- Chapter 9 marks the end of the research thesis. Conclusions are given and recommendations are made.

9.3 Summary of research findings

The main objective of this study was to explore the impact of the reconfigured middle class status on elite professionals in Zimbabwe. It was guided by the specific objectives, namely:

- to assess and explain the career planning and progression of elite professionals in Zimbabwe;
- to evaluate the extent to which elite professionals engage in training and development programmes in Zimbabwe;
- to understand the level of job satisfaction among elite professionals in Zimbabwe;
- to establish the level of job engagement among elite professionals in Zimbabwe;
- to assess the coping mechanisms of elite professionals in the context of a precarious environment; and
- to offer recommendations on how HR policies, practices and procedures can be tailor-made to accommodate elite professionals.

9.3.1 Career planning and progression in elite professions in Zimbabwe

Chebet (2015) stated that effective Human Resources Management encompasses career planning and progression. However, findings of this thesis revealed that elite professionals are now less concerned about career planning and progression. They are no longer concerned about promotions as it hinders them to balance their rewards with informal rewards. This therefore implies that there is now weak and ineffective HRM in legal, academic and health profession in Zimbabwe, since these professions put less focus on career planning and progression.

Elite professionals are seeking to maximise their outputs to match their inputs. They are feeling a sense of inequality between them and their peers abroad and those who they consider below them with regard to educational qualification. Maximising their outputs means that they focus less on their personal growth and the growth of the organisation, since it is now a competition for the survival of the fittest. This lack of career advancement among elite professionals affects the HRM profession and causes the future of the country to look gloomy.

9.3.2 Training and development of elite professionals in Zimbabwe

In as far as training and development is concerned the study revealed that, elite professionals are now less concerned about training and development programmes because of the unstable

environment. But Baran and Woznyj (2020) revealed that employees who consistently participate in training and development programmes are necessary for a company to meet the demands of the environment's constant change. This implies that elite professionals are becoming obsolete since they are not participating in training and development programmes.

In addition, the services being delivered by these professions are of poor quality that is why citizens are now opting for international services like education and health care. All this lies in the hands of the respective organisations and the country to ensure that elite professionals are living as per the global middle class as this will help to enforce training and development policies that will benefit the country as well as its citizens. As Armstrong (2020) revealed that employees are the integral part of the organisation who requires continuous development.

9.3.3 Job satisfaction of elite professions in Zimbabwe

In as far as job satisfaction is concerned the study revealed that there are high levels of job dissatisfaction among academic and legal professionals. Job dissatisfaction is better in medical professions as they are able to work in both public and private institutions where they earn United States dollars. Job dissatisfaction is now causing international migration of elite professionals in search of greener pastures and equitable rewards. This implies that elite professionals are going beyond borders comparing themselves with the similar professions in other countries. Yet the equity theory of motivation stipulates that individuals will compare themselves with the people in the same organisation. However due to international comparison elite professionals are now dissatisfied with their jobs. It also indicates that elite professionals are satisfied with monetary rewards, which are categorised under hygiene factors by Fredrick Herzberg.

9.3.4 Job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe

The study revealed that elite professionals in Zimbabwe are now serving two and in some cases several masters. It is now a common thing that an individual has two or more formal and informal jobs that enable him or her to earn a basic living in the Zimbabwean setup. Those that rely on their salaries only without other avenues struggle to even pay their bills and having a basic life. However, engaging in two or more jobs reduces one's level of commitment since these professionals are not focused on attaining and completing the vision and mission of the

organising. Their engagement levels are being driven by financial rewards such that earn a living in this precarious environment.

9.3.5 Coping mechanisms of elite professionals in the context of precarious environment

Regarding the issue of coping mechanisms, the study revealed that migration is one of the most commonly used strategies, particularly by health and academic professionals. The legal profession has fewer opportunities for lawyers to migrate to other countries as it takes time to be recognised in other countries owing to the different types of law practised in different countries.

It has also been revealed that professionals are now engaging in informal activities such as farming and informal trading. Mainly those in the legal and academic professions are involved in these activities, as they are the ones mostly affected by the precarious environment. Doctors engage in formal activities in both private and public institutions; this therefore helps them to earn a better income than the legal and academic professionals.

It was also revealed that elite professionals are engaging in some unorthodox means to survive and supplement their meagre salaries. Many professionals, especially male professionals, are involved in unorthodox means of survival, as they have more time than the women in these professions. They will do all it takes to have enough income for their family's use.

9.4 Contributions of the study

The empirical contributions concentrate on the people and categories of individuals who stand to benefit from this thesis, as well as how they will benefit. The methodological contributions focus on how the methods used in this study differ from similar studies in the area of elite professions and the middle class. Lastly, the theoretical contributions provide emerging themes and concepts that help us to see the impact of the redefined middle class on elite profession in a precarious environment, from other angles besides the usual Global North. New ways of explaining the impact of the redefined middle class on elite professions from an HR perspective are highlighted in this section.

9.4.1 Theoretical contribution

It is important to note that the study was underpinned by Stacey Adams's equity theory of 1963, which was seconded by Herzberg's two-factor theory of 1959 and the neoclassical theory of migration of 1969.

9.4.1.1 From an equity perspective

The equity theory focuses on comparison of an individual outputs with the same people that they share the same inputs within an organisation and outside the organisation (Miner, 2015). This implies that it is mainly centred on the organisational justice. However, this is a different case when we came to the Zimbabwean setup. People are now comparing their outputs within their respective fields in other countries. This implies that equity theory has gone beyond geographical confinements, but it is currently silent on that. This is the main reason there is a high level of brain drain in Zimbabwe.

In addition, the theory also emphasises on inputs (level of education, skills and competences) as the moderating variables (Ryan, 2016). In this case, elite professionals are now taking into consideration informal rewards. That is why most of the elite professionals especially those from the academic profession are not concerned about career planning and progression as it hinders them from getting informal rewards. Figure 9.1 below clearly indicates the moderating variables of the theory in a precarious environment.

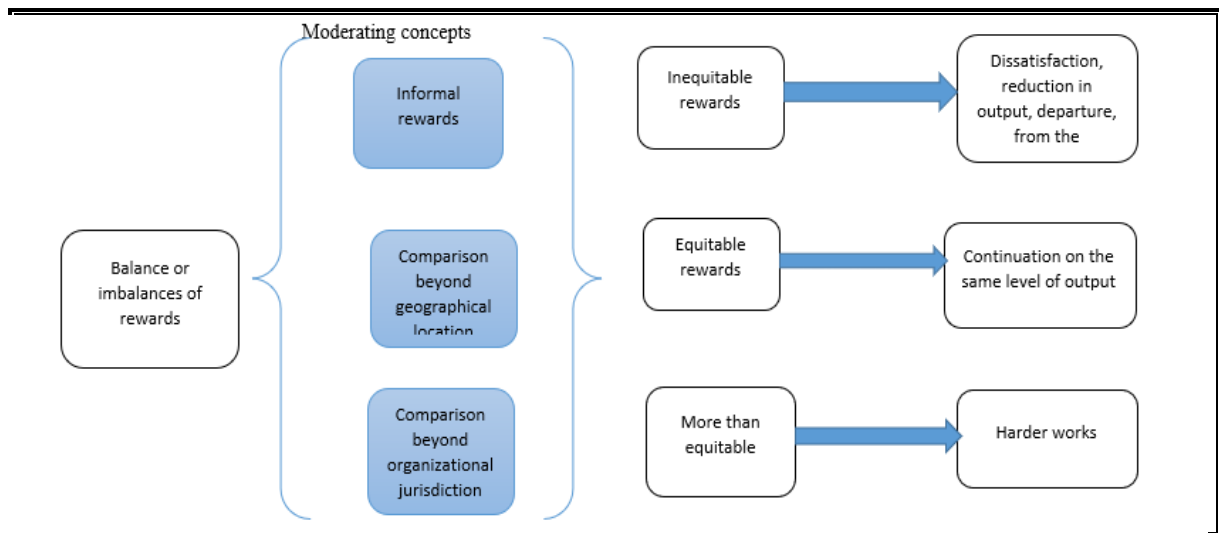


Figure 9.1: The model of the revised equity theory in the context of a declining economy.

(Researcher's compilation)

The outputs of the equity theory are being viewed from a different a perspective, for instance, promotion and recognition. These differ in the Zimbabwean scenario, as an element of informal rewards is included. Professionals are now increasing their outputs through informal means. Therefore, they no longer consider promotions, as they hinder the professionals' ability to gain more informal rewards. For instance, lecturers no longer consider promotions, as career growth will limit the time they have available to supplement their income with informal rewards. Equity theory is silent on the informal dimensions that differentiate individuals in the same profession.

The theory also states that when a disequilibrium is felt employees will seek for another job (Kollmann et al., 2020). In this case, due to the economic instability, which is characterised by high unemployment rate, elite professionals do not quit their jobs. Instead, they are now looking into other means that enables them to generate more income to supplement their salary. However, through this it automatically reduces their contribution, as they will need to balance all of their jobs to make their ends meet.

Lastly, equity theory emphasises that people compare themselves within their particular field. It restricts people from comparing themselves with people from a different field in terms of inputs and outputs. However, owing to the unstable economic environment in Zimbabwe, elite

professions are now comparing themselves with non-professionals and professions that are perceived to be less important because of their level of education. Although they are perceived to be less educated, informal traders earn more money than elite professionals through informal ways.

This contributed to the development of new ways by elite professions to balance their income in an unstable economic environment. It has been indicated by the theory that, there should be a balance between the inputs and the outputs for an individual to be motivated. When a disequilibrium is felt, individuals will alter their performance to suit the outputs. The situation is different when it comes to Zimbabwe, elite professionals are earning less than the inputs. Therefore, this theory has been used in economically and stable environments where people are being rewarded formally. But when it comes to the Zimbabwean setup elite professions can earn informal outputs due different privileges to execute through informal ways.

9.4.1.2 Theoretical contribution from Herzberg's two-factor theory

The two-factor theory by Fredrick Herzberg emphasises that there are two variables that contributes to motivation of an employee which are hygiene and motivators. The theory states that lack of hygiene factors (salary, working conditions, fringe benefits, status, and job security) cause job dissatisfaction while motivators (responsibility, achievement and recognition) ensures job satisfaction (Thant & Chang, 2021). This has become a different setup when it comes to the Zimbabwean precarious environment. Elite professionals are now being motivated by financial rewards that is their salaries. They are now finding satisfaction in salaries. Poor salaries and working conditions are now forcing them to migrate to other countries while some seek other avenues to generate more that satisfies their needs. They are now engaging in both formal and unorthodox means to maximise their income.

This implies that Herzberg' two-factor theory has been used in economically stable environments where people are not concerned about monetary benefits but non-financial rewards like recognition. Figure 9.2 below indicates the two-factor theory in a precarious environment.

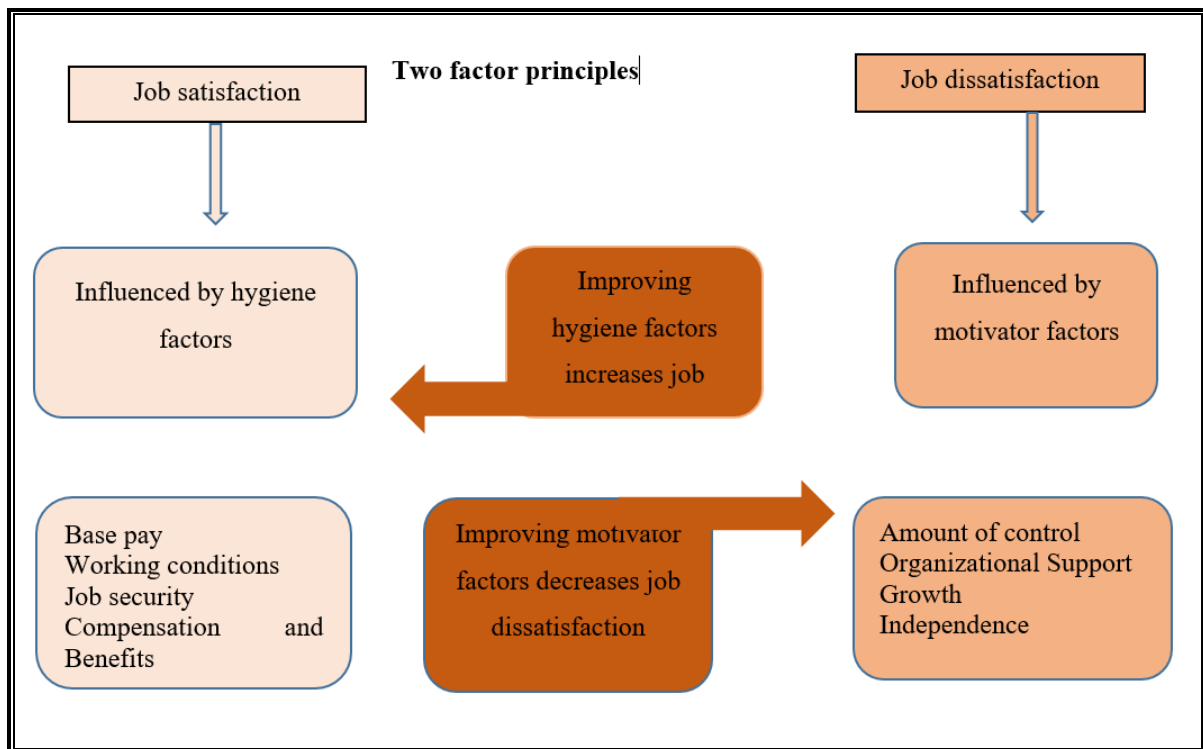


Figure 9.2: The revised two-factor theory in a precarious environment

9.4.1.3 Theoretical contribution from the neoclassical approach to international migration

Neoclassical approach to international migration emphasise that the differentiation on wages and employment conditions between countries push individuals to maximise their income through migration (Bauer & Zimmermann, 2018; Miladinov, 2020; Tarasyev & Jabbar, 2018). However, when it comes to Zimbabwean elite professionals, not all of them have the privilege to migrate to other countries. It is difficult for some professions like the legal profession to migrate to other countries due to different types of laws being practised by countries. As a result, professionals are finding means to maximise their income without migrating to other countries.

9.4.2 Methodological contribution

It is also important to note that the study contributed in some methodological ways to the fields of elite professions and HRM. Previous studies in this area were primarily grounded in positivism and were quantitative in nature. This may be connected to the fact that the majority of studies have been conducted in sociological perspective or by academics who had better understanding of quantitative methodologies. This is mainly true when considering the Southern African context. This study used a qualitative methodology in order to fully and

completely comprehend the issue from elite professionals themselves and in their own words. In addition to this, the researcher used phenomenology to analyse the data, which is a method that has been used infrequently in previous research. It is classified under four categories, namely, narrative, hermeneutic, descriptive and interpretive. The present research used the descriptive method, which is also known as the transcendental phenomenology, and hermeneutics, which is also known as philosophical phenomenology. The research gained greater inquiry through the use of these approaches to phenomenological analysis.

Another significant methodological advancement made in this study was the use of documentary research in relation to middle-class and elite professions in a precarious environment. The research used documents such as newspapers, annual circulars and reports from the entities of the groups under study. A wealth of information about the elite professions was derived from these documents. Content analysis was used in analysing these documents. It is not commonly used in qualitative research, however, as it is believed to be more quantitative in nature. In this research, content analysis was used to identify word and themes from documents. Therefore, rich qualitative data was derived from this study.

To comprehend the interviews, the study also used observations to fill in the gaps that were left by interviews. The researcher felt that the participants could have left some information during interview sessions, hence the use of observations. Observation was used in considering where they live and other middle class related aspect. This contributed to rich qualitative data derived from this research study.

9.4.3 Empirical contribution

From an empirical contribution perspective, the study has advanced knowledge and literature on the impact of the unstable socio-economic environment on elite profession and the consequences for the HRM profession. Most of the work on middle class and elite professions has been done from the Global North and is done from a sociological perspective. From an HR standpoint, this research was conducted in the Global South, specifically in the Zimbabwean context, which is characterised by an unstable economic environment. Elite professionals are also employees, even though they hold managerial positions in the country. They still need good working conditions and high salaries. It has been established that failure of the employer to provide high salaries leads to less engagement in development programmes and poor job

satisfaction and job engagement, as employees will be looking into other alternatives to increase their income.

It has also been established that failure by the employer to provide high salaries leads to migration. However, the remaining employees will engage in unorthodox means to maximise their outputs. This has an effect to the organisation and the country at large since these are high professionals that have an input in the socio-economic state of the country.

The factors of elite professions operating in the Global North are quite different from those in the Global South especially in Zimbabwe. According to the study, Zimbabwe's elite professions are no longer eligible to be classified as belonging to the global middle class. This is due to the unstable economic environment which is continuously eroding their income. They are only left with one characteristic of the middle class, which is a high level of education. This supports the argument by Ravallion and Chen (2019), who revealed that the categorisation of middle class, like poverty, is defined differently in different nations with different stages of economic development. This implies that there is a different definition of middle class, including its defining characteristics, specifically for developing countries with unstable economic environments.

9.5 Recommendations for responsible organisations

The study offers a number of recommendations to the responsible authorities that deal with elite professions.

Firstly, it is important to note that elite professionals are also employees. Furthermore, they should be considered as top managerial employees who deserve to work under good working conditions so as to maximise the performance of the country. Owing to that, responsible authorities should ensure that they differentiate these managerial employees from other occupations. They also need to continuously involve these professionals in decision-making, not simply “managing” them and ensuring that they work in the best interest of the organisation.

Responsible authorities must revise their reward policies, practices and procedures so that they are in line with the income that an individual in the middle class obtains. Rewards policies, practices and procedures must be tailor made to suit those that are being obtained in other

countries, as this will help to reduce international migration of elite professional. It will also help boost their engagement level in development programmes that will also improve the socio-economic status of the country.

It is also important for organisations responsible for elite professions, to consider providing loans to these high professional employees. This will enable elite professionals to acquire immovable properties, such that will possess some middle class characteristics despite of the country being under economic instability. Currently elite professionals are not able to acquire immovable properties or purchasing new cars to improve their social status. Hence, loans specifically for social development should be granted to them so as to improve their status.

There is a need for professional freedom. Elite professionals need the right to exercise their professional freedom, as it improves their satisfaction level. Currently, elite professionals are bound to the political environment. They are being regarded as the enemies of the state, which is why spies are enrolled in universities, while doctors are being fired for negotiating for better salaries and working conditions through collective job action. Lawyers are being thrown in prisons for representing the right of citizens. This also reduces their social status as high professionals who belong to the middle-class category.

Organisations and responsible authorities should also ensure that elite professionals are working in conducive working environments to improve their productivity and the performance of the country. Organisational infrastructure plays a pivotal role in employee satisfaction, acting as motivators.

In addition, elite professionals need institutional support, for instance, in development programmes. Currently, the low engagement of elite professionals in continuous development programmes is the result of a lack of financial support from their institutions, since they can no longer afford to use their own salaries for development programmes. Therefore, institutions need to provide continuous development grants to elite professionals to motivate them to engage in CPD to improve their skills and capabilities.

Responsible authorities must also ensure that they provide motivational rewards to promote career planning and progression among elite professionals. Elite professionals need to be motivated with financial rewards to differentiate the gap between those that are in top positions

and those that are in lower positions. This can act as a positive reinforcement for elite professionals to consider promotions in their institutions.

Regarding future studies, it is important for researchers to consider the impact of the redefined middle class on elite professions in a precarious environment from an HRM perspective, using a quantitative research methodology, as this study was purely qualitative in nature. Quantitative research could fill any gaps that might have been left by this qualitative research. Previous quantitative studies have been undertaken from a sociological perspective and mainly focused on the Global North. This study was qualitative, which focused on elite professions in the Global South, specifically in the Zimbabwean setup from an HRM perspective. Therefore, researchers need to focus on the Global South using a quantitative method. It could also be beneficial for researchers to consider other developing countries, as they might be in different their economic setups.

9.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter marked the end of this thesis and focused on the summary of findings. This was followed by the contributions, which were classified into three categories, namely, empirical, methodological and theoretical. Empirical contributions concentrated on the people and categories of individuals who stand to benefit from this thesis, as well as how they will benefit. The methodological contributions focused on how the methods used in this study differ from similar studies in the area of elite professions and middle class. The theoretical contributions provided emerging themes and concepts that help us to see the impact of the redefined middle class on elite professionals in a precarious environment, from other angles besides the usual Global North perspective.

The last segment of the chapter focused on recommendations for responsible organisations of elite professionals and for future studies. Recommendations for responsible organisations that deal with elite professionals looked into how best they can motivate elite professionals to improve their development as well as their job satisfaction and job engagement levels. As for future studies it looked into possible dimensions that future researchers could use to strengthen their research.

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ANNEXURE 1: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

I was working as a receptionist on a contract basis and it is during this period that I thought investing in education despite the harsh economic environment. I enrolled for a Master Degree in Human Resource Management and I became so passionate to further up my education. Soon after my graduation in 2020 I got an offer in the middle of the semester to work as a visiting lecturer in one of the private universities. In 2021 I also got another offer from a public institution to work as visiting lecturer as well. This gave enough opportunity to fulfil my dream since I had stepped into academic's field. The idea of being offered the opportunity to lecture in the midst of the semester brought the idea to me to focus on why academic lecturers were flocking out of the country even in the midst of the semester. As I was developing this interest through sharing with my friend and colleague, my mind began to open up so wide that I ended up developing interest in medical doctors and lawyers since I had developed interests in professions and professional work from my Master's thesis. This is how I came up with the research topic.

Through exposure into the academic field, it made me realise that only those in the profession understands their situation. The society simply admires the profession without knowing what really transpires in those professions. That is why there are still large numbers of students who are fighting very hard to enroll in top professions such as law and medical profession. This are the same professions that will end migrating after completion of their degree programmes as they will find a disequilibrium of their efforts and the rewards they will be getting. The researcher then used the information that she gained through exposure and experience to then analyze the interviews and the documents, as she was now exposed to both the private and public setups in the academic field.

Being a visiting lecturer at Great Zimbabwe University and Women's University in Africa made it easier to associate with colleagues that had a consultation company. I became a research assistant and I ended up publishing combined articles with colleagues. High rate of industrial action and migration prompted me to go deeper with the medical profession. On the other side a number of citizens were also being thrown into prison without fair judgments by prosecutors. This necessitated the researcher to focus on these high professions.

In addition, the researcher had also zeal to figure out the impact of the economic environment to their profession as some of these professionals were using public transport yet the society view them as high earned professions.

The journey had some huddles since I had to sacrifice my job as receptionist for my PhD studies. But I thank God who gave me a supportive family and friends who encouraged me to go through this journey, I would not have been able to complete this journey without their support. I also kept the wish of my late father who so passionate about educating a girl child. This gave me the strength to soldier on despite the huddles to fulfill his wish.

ANNEXURE 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS

Introduction:

My name is Mapuranga Martha, I am a doctoral student, in the management profession of Human Resources Management at the School of Management, IT and Governance, of the University of Kwazulu Natal. I am here to collect information for the completion of my doctoral thesis and my topic reads: **The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and the elite professionals in Zimbabwe.** Your cooperation will be greatly achieved.

Section A: Biographical Data

- What position are you holding?
- How many years have you been working for this profession?
- What is your marital status?
- Outside your normal load do you have something else?

SECTION B:

Overview of middle class: application of the middle class idea to academic professions.

- ✓ What do you think of the idea of the middle class as someone in a high position of authority?
- ✓ Describe what a lecturer middle-class person in other countries would look like
- ✓ Do you have enough money on hand to take a family vacation?
- ✓ Where do your kids go to school upper top, A class, or B class?
- ✓ Do you have the means to make prompt payments on your bills?

Question1: Concept of career planning and progression to elite professions.

- ✓ How well does the concept of career planning and progression apply to you as lecturers?
- ✓ Does the organisation prioritise career planning and progression?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic landscape to your career planning and progression as a lecturer?

Question 2: Elite professionals and training and development programmes

- ✓ Do you engage in training and development programmes as lecturers here in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on training and development of lecturers?
- ✓ What are the challenges being faced in as far as training and development of academic lecturers in Zimbabwe is concerned?

Question 3: Job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe with respect to middle class

- ✓ What is your level of job engagement as an academic lecturer?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as a lecturer in Zimbabwe?

Question 4: the degree of job satisfaction in Zimbabwe's elite professions relative to middle class status.

- ✓ What is your level of job satisfaction as a lecturer?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement?
- ✓ What is the impact of the precarious environment to reward and motivation lecturers?

The effects of the socioeconomic environment on elite professions.

- ✓ What are the effects of socio-economic environment on you as lecturer?
- ✓ What are the consequences redefined middle class on professionalism of lecturers?

- ✓ Do academic lecturers migrate to other countries?

Section C: Closing questions

Question 5: Coping strategies used by eminent professionals in a precarious environment by people of middle class status.

- ✓ How are you coping up as a lecturer in this unstable economic environment?
- ✓ Besides your normal load, what else do you do that generates income?
- ✓ What can be done by the government through the ministry to maintain the social status of academics in Zimbabwe?

ANNEXURE 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

Introduction:

My name is Mapuranga Martha, I am a doctoral student, in the management profession of Human Resources Management at the School of Management, IT and Governance, of the University of Kwazulu Natal. I am here to collect information for the completion of my doctoral thesis and my topic reads: **The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and the elite professionals in Zimbabwe.** Your cooperation will be greatly achieved.

Section A: Biographical Data

- What position are you holding?
- How many years have you been working for this profession?
- What is your marital status?
- Outside your normal load do you have something else?

Section B

Overview: application of the middle class idea to elite professions.

- ✓ What do you think of the idea of the middle class as someone in a high position of authority?
- ✓ Describe what a medical doctor middle-class person in other countries would look like.
- ✓ Do you have enough money on hand to take a family vacation?
- ✓ Where do your kids go to school upper top, A class, or B class?
- ✓ Do you have the means to make prompt payments on your bills?

Question 1: Concept of career planning and progression to elite professions.

- ✓ How well does the concept of career planning and progression apply to you as doctors?
- ✓ Does the organisation prioritise career planning and progression?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic landscape to your career planning and progression as a medical doctor?

Question 2: Elite professionals and training and development programmes

- ✓ Do you engage in Training and Development programmes as medical doctors here in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on training and development of medical doctors?
- ✓ What are the challenges being faced in as far as training and development of medical doctors in Zimbabwe is concerned?

Question 3: Job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe with respect to middle class

- ✓ What is your level of job engagement as a medical doctor?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as medical doctors in Zimbabwe?

Question 4: the degree of job satisfaction in Zimbabwe's elite professions relative to middle class status.

- ✓ What is your level of job satisfaction as a medical doctor?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as a medical doctor in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ What is the impact of the precarious environment to reward and motivation of medical doctors?

The effects of the socioeconomic environment on elite professions.

- ✓ What are the effects of socio-economic environment on you as a medical doctor?
- ✓ What are the consequences redefined middle class on professionalism of medical doctors?

- ✓ Do medical doctors migrate to other countries?

Section C: Closing question

Question 5: Coping strategies used by eminent professionals in a priceless environment by people of middle class status.

- ✓ How are you coping up as a medical doctor in this unstable economic environment?
- ✓ Besides your normal load, what else do you do that generates income?
- ✓ What can be done by the government through the ministry to maintain the social status of medical doctors in Zimbabwe?

ANNEXURE 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

Introduction:

My name is Mapuranga Martha, I am a doctoral student, in the management profession of Human Resources Management at the School of Management, IT and Governance, of the University of Kwazulu Natal. I am here to collect information for the completion of my doctoral thesis and my topic reads: **The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and the elite professionals in Zimbabwe.** Your cooperation will be greatly achieved.

Section A: Biographical Data

- What position are you holding?
- How many years have you been working for this profession?
- What is your marital status?
- Outside your normal load do you have something else?

Section B

Overview application of the middle class idea to elite professions.

- ✓ What do you think of the idea of the middle class as someone in a high position of authority?
- ✓ What are the characteristics of a lawyer in a middle class in other countries?
- ✓ Do you have enough money on hand to take a family vacation?
- ✓ Where do your kids go to school upper top, A class, or B class?
- ✓ Do you have the means to make prompt payments on your bills?

Question 1: Concept of career planning and progression to elite professions.

- ✓ How well does the concept of career planning and progression apply to you as lawyers?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic landscape to your career planning and progression as a lawyer?

Question 2: Elite professionals and Training and Development programmes

- ✓ Do you engage in Training and Development programmes as lawyers here in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on training and development of lawyers?
- ✓ What are the challenges being faced in as far as training and development of medical lawyers in Zimbabwe is concerned?

Question 3: Job engagement of elite professions in Zimbabwe with respect to middle class

- ✓ What is your level of job engagement as a medical doctor lawyer?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as a lawyers in Zimbabwe?

Question 4: The degree of job satisfaction in Zimbabwe's elite professions relative to middle class status.

- ✓ What is your level of job satisfaction as a lawyers?
- ✓ What is the impact of the economic environment on your job engagement as a lawyers in Zimbabwe?
- ✓ What is the impact of the precarious environment to reward and motivation of lawyers?

The effects of the socioeconomic environment on elite professions.

- ✓ What are the effects of socio-economic environment on you as a lawyer?
- ✓ What are the consequences redefined middle class on professionalism of lawyers?
- ✓ Do lawyers have the opportunity to migrate to other countries?

Section C: Closing questions

Question5: Coping strategies used by eminent professionals in a priceless environment by people of middle class status.

- ✓ How are you coping up as a lawyer in this unstable economic environment?
- ✓ Besides your normal load what else do you do that generates income?
- ✓ What can be done by the government through the ministry to maintain the social status of lawyers in Zimbabwe?

ANNEXURE 5: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS

COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date:

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is **Mapuranga Martha**, I am a doctoral student, at the School of Management, Information Technology and Governance, of the University of Kwazulu-Natal. My contact details are as follows: Cellphone number: +263 773523383; email address: marthamaps2020@gmail.com

You are being invited to participate in a research project entitled: **The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and elite professionals in Zimbabwe**. The aim and purpose of this study is to investigate how a precarious socio-economic environment has reconfigured the status of elite professionals who ideally belong to the middle-class. The study is expected to have a minimum of thirty-eight participants. The research sites where the study is going to be carried out include: Great Zimbabwe University in Masvingo, Women's University in Africa, Harare, Law Society of Zimbabwe, Masvingo General Hospital. It will involve the following procedures: phase 1 of this study is to investigate the impact of socio-economic landscape on elite professions. Phase 2 of this study is to investigate the implications of uncertainty of the elite profession on HR and phase 3 of the study is to investigate the coping mechanisms of elite

professionals in the context of precarious environment. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be 60 to 90 minutes. This study is not funded by the organisation participating in the research.

The study does not involve risks and/or discomforts. Through your participation I hope the study will help understand how a precarious socio-economic environment has reconfigured the status of doctors, lawyers and academic professions who ideally belong to the middle-class. The results of the survey are intended to contribute to the management profession of HRM and to the policy makers in redesigning reward policies that are specifically for elite professions.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at (cellphone number: +263 773523383; email: marthamaps2020@gmail.com) or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your participation in this study is voluntary. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence and that in the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation you will not incur penalty or loss of treatment or other benefit. As this study requires 3 phases, you may withdraw from one or both. All information contributed up to date of withdrawal will be disposed. The researcher should be informed of your wish to withdraw. Participation will be terminated should ethical practices be breached.

Confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, IT and Governance, UKZN. All collected data will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed after 5 years.

CONSENT

I_(name)have been informed about the study entitled:
The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and elite professionals in Zimbabwe, by
researcher: Mapuranga Martha.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (participation in an interview and/or focus group). I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (cellphone number: +263 773523383; email: marthamaps2020@gmail.com).

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researcher then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent,

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Witness

Date

(Where applicable)

Signature of Translator

Date

(Where applicable)

ANNEXURE 6: OBSERVATIONAL CHECKLIST

- Residential location
- Type of car
- Office site
- Type of schools for children
- Dressing of elite professionals
- Gestures while responding

ANNEXURE 7: ETHICAL CLEARANCE FROM UKZN



20 July 2022

Martha Mapuranga (221117342)
School Of Man Info Tech & Gov
Westville Campus

Dear M Mapuranga,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00004466/2022

Project title: The emergence of a new precariat? Middle class and elite professionals in Zimbabwe

Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 07 July 2022 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**.

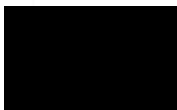
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further 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 20 July 2023.

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 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

ANNEXURE 8: SUPERVISOR'S GATEKEEPER REQUEST

28 October 2021

Discipline of Human Resources Management

School of Management, Information technology and Governance

College of Law and Management

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban

South Africa



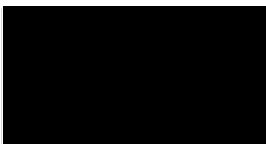
Request for permission to conduct interviews for a doctoral thesis.

To whom it may concern:

This letter confirms that Mapuranga Martha Student number 221117342 is a doctoral candidate in the discipline of Human Resources Management at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As part of this thesis she is required to conduct qualitative research using method such as interviews. Her thesis focuses on "Redefining middle-class in elite professions. A case of the medical, legal and academic professions in Zimbabwe." Your assistance in granting her access to conduct her research will be much appreciated. This access is required for her to gain ethical clearance and commence her fieldwork. All research done will follow the strictest ethical guidelines. Interviews will be anonymous and participants can withdraw at any point from the study.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries in this regard.

Prof. Shaun Ruggunan



Thesis supervisor

ruggunans@ukzn.ac.za

Cell: +27791970743

ANNEXURE 9: RESEARCHER'S GATEKEEPER REQUEST

4303 Manyame Park

St Mary's

Chitungwiza

Harare

08 November 2021

To whom it may concern.

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS FOR DOCTORAL THESIS.

My name is Mapuranga Martha Student number 2211I7342 a doctoral student in the management profession of Human Resource Management at of the University of Kwazulu Natal. As part of my thesis I am required to conduct qualitative research using method such as interviews. So I am kindly asking for permission to conduct my research at your institution. My thesis focuses on "Redefining middle-class in elite professions. A case of the medical, legal and academic professions in Zimbabwe."

Your assistance in granting me access to conduct her research will be much appreciated. This access is required for her to gain ethical clearance and commence her fieldwork. All research done will follow the strictest ethical guidelines. Interviews will be anonymous and participants can withdraw at any point from the study.

I have attached my proposal, letter from my supervisor, informed consent forms and my research instrument.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Mapuranga Martha

0773523383 (marthamaps2020@gmail.com)


ANNEXURE 10: AUTHORITY LETTER FROM A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY



ANNEXURE 11: AUTHORITY LETTER FROM A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY IN AFRICA

Stand No. 549 Arcturus Road,
Manresa Park, P.O. Box GD 32
Greendale, Harare, ZIMBABWE



Tel: +263 242 459 601/47
Cell: 0772 210 895
Email: REGISTRAR@WUA.ZW
REGISTRAR@WUA.ZW

Addressing Gender Disparity and Fostering Equity in University Education

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

20 June 2022

Martha Mapuranga
4303 Manyame Park
St Mary's
Chitungwiza

Dear Martha

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH AT WUA

Reference is made to your request for permission to carry out research on the following topic: **"Redefining Middle-Class in Elite Professions, A Case of the Medical, Legal and Academic Professions in Zimbabwe"** in fulfilment of Diploma in Social Work which you are undertaking with WUA.

After due diligence of your research proposal, you are hereby granted permission to carry out your research. However, the findings of your study should be confined to your original intentions only i.e. research. Any breaching of this understanding can constitute an act of misconduct.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

B. Mugwisi (Mrs)
REGISTRAR





WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY IN AFRICA
REGISTRAR
20 JUN 2022
P O BOX GD 32
GREENDALE, HARARE, ZIMBABWE

cc: WUA Research Board Chairperson

Addressing Gender Disparity and Fostering Equity in University Education

Board of Trustees-Chairperson: Dr Fay King Chung; **Trustees:** Prof. Hope C. Sadza, Dr. Unesu Ushewekunze-Obatolu, Mrs Fidelis Gandiya, Mrs Doreen T. Sibanda, Mrs Fatma Traquino, Prof David J. Simbi, Prof Evelyn C. Garwe

ANNEXURE 12: AUTHORITY LETTER FROM LAW SOCIETY OF ZIMBABWE

 <p>South Wing, 5th Floor, Law Society House 16 Kwame Nkrumah Avenue, P.O. Box 2595, Harare, Zimbabwe</p>		
Our Reference:	EM/pc/Martha Mapuranga/2021	
Your Reference:		
<p>2 December 2021</p>		
<p>Martha Mapuranga 4303 Manyame Park St Mary's Chitungwiza HARARE</p>		
<p>Cell: 0773 523 383</p>		
<p>Dear Madam</p>		
<p>re: <u>REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS FOR DOCTORAL THESIS</u></p>		
<p>I refer to your letter of the 8th November 2021 regarding the above. I advise that I have no objection to your request.</p>		
<p>Yours faithfully</p>		
<p> <u>E. MAPARA</u> <u>EXECUTIVE SECRETARY</u></p>		
<p>Incorporated in terms of the Legal Practitioners Act Cap 27:07</p>		
<p>Harare: Tel: +263 (0)242 751 000, 779 204-5, 779 207-9, Fax: +263 (0)242 750 327, Bulawayo: +263 (0)9 60861, 60843. E-mail: admin@lsz.co.zw, secretary@lsz.co.zw www.lawsociety.org</p>		

ANNEXURE 13: AUTHORITY LETTER FROM A PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL



Telegraphic Address
E-mail: masvingo provincial hospital@gmail.com
Fax: +263 (039)264325

MASVINGO PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL
P O BOX 114
MASVINGO

10 NOVEMBER 2021

ATT: MARTHA MAPURANGA

RE: AUTHORITY TO DO RESEARCH: PHD HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Reference is made to the above issue.

Authority has been granted for you to do your research on **(Redefining middle class in elite professions. A case of Medical, Legal and Academic professions in Zimbabwe).**

MASVINGO PROVINCIAL
HOSPITAL
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
4 6 NOV 2021

DUMBU E
HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT
For: **MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT.**

