



**SKILLS SHORTAGE AND CHALLENGES IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF  
FOREIGN PROFESSIONALS IN THE SELECTED KWAZULU NATAL  
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

By

Thulile Lillian Ngonyama

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree

**Doctor of Philosophy**

Supervisor: Prof. Johanna Hendrina Buitendach

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Kwaku Oppong Asante

**March 2016**

## **DEDICATION**

To my mom, Joyce Bhekisiwe Ngonyama for being the most supportive person that she has been over the years.

## DECLARATION

I, Thulile Lillian Ngonyama, student number, 209539922, hereby declare that the study on “Skills shortage and challenges in the employment of foreign nationals in the selected KwaZulu-Natal higher education institutions” reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated;

- Is my original research.
- It has not been previously submitted in full or partial fulfilment of the requirements for an equivalent or higher qualification at any recognised educational institution.
- All sources used or referred to have been documented and recognised.
- It is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for completing a Doctoral Degree in Industrial Psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.



Date: 3/4/2016

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to certain individuals and institutions that have, in different ways, contributed to my success. I would like to state that the effort, time and resources invested towards the accomplishment of this degree were worthwhile and had not gone unnoticed.

My appreciation is based on:

The strength and the courage that LORD has given me throughout my entire life up to the accomplishment of this Doctoral degree.

The understanding and warmth from my husband, son and daughter

The expert support from my husband (statistical advice)

The guidance and high level of professionalism and dedication from my supervisors; Prof Johanna Hendrina Buitendach and Dr Kwaku Oppong Asante, if it were not for them, I would not have made it. The wholehearted support and courage from the Ngonyama family and friends, especially from my uncle, Dr GN Donda, my brothers, sisters, mom and dad.

The administrative support and professional advice from the Postgraduate Office, School of Applied Human Sciences, Howard College, UKZN

The support from my current employer, UNISA especially the Research Department, the Library and colleagues in the Research and Innovation Portfolio.

The inspiration and genuine support from my line manager, Prof Greg Cuthbertson, my journey would not have been easy without him

My great appreciation to; Hennie Gerber (Statistician), Herbert Kanengoni (Statistician), William Mpofu (Critical Reader and Language Editor) and Field Workers, Tapiwa Mushosho and the team.

Lastly, my sincere thank you to MUT, UKZN, UNIZULU & DUT for opening the gates for me to conduct my research and also to all the participants for taking part in this study.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the challenge of academic skills shortage in South Africa as represented in the selected institutions of higher learning in the KwaZulu-Natal province. Further to the shortage of academic skills, the study examines the challenges encountered in the mediation of attracting and recruiting academic expatriates who in turn encounter their own obstacles in adjusting into and settling in their host country, host academic institutions and host communities. The term “academic expatriates” as reflecting throughout this study is being used interchangeable with the term “foreign professionals” reflecting in the title of this study. The selected institutions of higher education are the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), Durban University of Technology (DUT), Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) and the University of Zululand (UNIZULU).

Methodologically the study deploys a mixed methods approach to research. The merits of the mixed methods approach to research are chiefly that it employs both the quantitative and qualitative techniques of inquiry. For that reason, the study is able to examine and interrogate its subject from a multiplicity of quantitative and qualitative vantage points, yielding a much more enriched and enriching illumination. The results, observations, arguments and conclusions of a mixed methods study tend to enjoy more credibility, reliability and dependability than the outcomes of a study that employs a singular and narrow approach. Mixing the strengths of both the quantitative and the qualitative techniques delivers much more durable articulation and understanding of the subject.

The study used both qualitative and quantitative research measures to collect and analyse data. The explanatory sequential design approach was used. The researcher amended and validated a 5 point Likert scale questionnaire originally developed by Black to study expatriates' adjustment challenges. This questionnaire was then used to collect data relating to interaction adjustment, general adjustment and work adjustment from academic expatriates. One hundred and forty-two (142) academic expatriates from all the four institutions under study participated in the quantitative study. The qualitative study collected data relating to an academic skills shortage, disciplines that experience skills shortage, academic labour turnover, employment process and support offered to academic expatriate. Qualitative data was collected through a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. A total of 48 respondents; including, line managers, human resources practitioners and academic expatriates participated in the qualitative study.

The results revealed that the institutions under study are confronted by academic skills shortage in almost all academic disciplines especially in the disciplines associated with Science, Engineering and Accounting. As a result difficulties are experienced in attracting academic talent in these fields/disciplines. Therefore, academic talent is brought in from outside the borders of the country. But, delays in work permit application process makes it difficult for these institutions to finalise their recruitment and selection process on time. Furthermore, academic expatriates experience general and interaction adjustment challenges associated with the use of local language and understanding of local culture. However, female academic expatriates were found to be better adjusted in the two areas as compared to male academic expatriates. Moreover, significant mean differences were found between institutions suggesting that academic expatriates based at UNIZULU experience adjustment challenges differently from the academic expatriated based at DUT and UKZN. But, these institutions assist academic expatriates to adjust through their induction programme.

Additional to this, the results revealed that the institutions under study are faced with higher labour turnover which could be attributed to uncompetitive salaries for academic staff, poor job satisfaction and stringent academic appointment and promotion criteria. In summation, the study gestured to the need for policy revisions in the area of immigration, human resources and academic administration in the Republic of South Africa.

**Key words:** *academic skills shortage, academic expatriates, recruitment and selection, interaction adjustment, general adjustment, work adjustment*

# TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>Declaration</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENT</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF DIAGRAMS</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Management of academic expatriates	3
1.3 Problem Statement	4
1.4 Delimitation	6
1.5 Research Objectives	6
1.6 Research questions	7
1.6.1 Qualitative	7
1.6.2 Quantitative	8
1.7 Significance of the study	8
1.8 Outline of Chapters	10
1.9 Conclusion	12
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Skills shortage in academia	13
2.2.1 Global perspective	14



2.2.2 South African context .....	16
<b>2.3 Theoretical background.....</b>	<b>38</b>
2.3.1 Social Learning Theory .....	38
2.3.2 U-Curve Cross Cultural Adjustment.....	40
2.3.3 Work Adjustment Theory.....	41
<b>2.4 Organisational support and Adjustment.....</b>	<b>43</b>
2.4.1 Organisational support .....	43
2.4.2 Induction.....	46
2.4.3 Organisational climate.....	47
<b>2.5 Adjustment .....</b>	<b>49</b>
2.5.1 Individual Adjustment .....	49
2.5.2 Cultural adjustment .....	52
2.5.3 Language proficiency .....	54
<b>2.6 Conclusion .....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3.....</b>	<b>57</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	57
3.2 Research design .....	58
3.2.1 Explanatory sequential design .....	59
3.2.2 Phase 1: Quantitative phase .....	61
3.3.3 Population and sampling.....	61
3.3.4 Research Instrument.....	62
3.3.5 Pilot study.....	62
3.3.6 Final questionnaire .....	64
3.3.7 Data collection procedure .....	64
3.3.8 Data analysis.....	65
3.4 Phase 2: Qualitative phase .....	67
3.4.1 Population and sampling.....	67
3.4.2 Research instrument .....	68
3.4.3 Data collection procedure .....	70
3.5 Research ethical consideration.....	70
3.6 Data analysis.....	71
3.7 Conclusion .....	72
<b>CHAPTER 4.....</b>	<b>73</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	73
4.2 Demographic characteristics of the sample .....	74
4.3 Relationship among study variables in the study.....	77
4.4 Factor Analysis.....	79
4.4.1 General Adjustment .....	80
4.4.2 Work Adjustment.....	81
4.5 Descriptive Statistics of Measures .....	84

4.6 Assessing Academic Expatriates' Interaction Adjustment .....	85
4.7 Assessing Academic Expatriates' General Adjustment .....	87
4.8 Assessing the Academic Expatriates' Work Adjustment .....	89
4.9 Demographic Group Differences Pertaining to General Interaction, General Adjustment and Work Adjustment .....	91
4.10 Gender Differences in General Interaction, General Adjustment and Work Adjustment.....	94
4.11 Conclusion .....	95
<b>CHAPTER 5.....</b>	<b>95</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	96
5.2 Part one: Recruitment and selection of academics in scarce skills .....	96
5.3 Part two: Factors that influence recruitment and selection of academic expatriates and challenges of adjustment.....	100
5.3.1 Themes .....	100
5.3.2 Attraction of academics.....	101
5.3.3. Work permit application process .....	110
5.3.4 Labour turnover.....	113
5.3.5 Cultural diversity.....	116
5.3.6. Language barriers .....	118
5.3.7. Support and adjustment .....	122
5.4 Conclusion .....	125
<b>CHAPTER 6.....</b>	<b>126</b>
6.1 Introduction .....	126
6.2 Interaction Adjustment Challenges for academic expatriates.....	127
6.3 General Adjustment Challenges .....	132
6.4 Work Adjustment Challenges.....	137
6.5 Organisational support.....	141
6.6. Challenges associated with recruitment and selection of academics.....	143
6.6.1 Attraction of academics.....	143
6.6.2 Employment Equity Act.....	145
6.6.3 Academic Appointment and Promotion Criteria .....	147
6.6.4 Labour market competition.....	147
6.6.5 Academic remuneration .....	149
6.6.7 Labour Turnover.....	150
6.6.8 Retention and Talent Management.....	150
6.7 Conclusion .....	152
<b>CHAPTER 7.....</b>	<b>154</b>
7.1 Introduction .....	154
7.3 Recommendations for policy and practice .....	156

7.3.1 Induction.....	156
7.3.2 Training and development.....	157
7.3.3 Remuneration and benefits.....	159
7.3.4 Capacity development.....	160
7.3.5 Human Resources practices.....	161
7.3.6 Work permit applications for academic expatriates .....	162
<i>7.4 Contribution to academic knowledge .....</i>	<i>163</i>
<i>7.5 Limitations of the study .....</i>	<i>165</i>
<i>7.6 Conclusion .....</i>	<i>165</i>
<b>8. References .....</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>9. Appendices .....</b>	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

---

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b>	Country of origin	
.....		76

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1:</b>	Characteristic of the participants .....	75
<b>Table 2:</b>	Pearson's Product Moment Correlations for the variables .....	77
<b>Table 3:</b>	Factors Loadings of the General Adjustment Scale.....	79
<b>Table 4:</b>	Factors Loadings of the Work Adjustment Scale .....	81
<b>Table 5:</b>	Descriptive Statistics and Reliability for the scales.....	83
<b>Table 6:</b>	Percentages of the sample endorsing Interaction adjustment .....	84
<b>Table 7:</b>	Percentages of the sample endorsing general adjustment.....	86
<b>Table 8:</b>	Percentages of the sample endorsing work adjustment .....	87
<b>Table 9:</b>	ANOVA of General Interaction, General Adjustment and Work Adjustment ....	88
<b>Table 10:</b>	Differences between General Interaction, General Adjustment and Work Adjustment based on gender .....	91
<b>Table 11:</b>	HR Professionals Responses on challenges relating to recruitment and selection of academics.....	94
<b>Table 12:</b>	Themes and Sub-Themes.....	98

## LIST OF DIAGRAMS

**Diagram 1:**           Scree plot for general adjustment scale

**Diagram 2:**           Scree plot for work adjustment scale

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Ethical clearance

Appendix B: Letter requesting gate keeping permission at UKZN

Appendix C: Letter granting permission at UKZN

Appendix D: Letter requesting gate keeping permission at UNIZULU

Appendix E: Letter granting permission at UNIZULU

Appendix F: Letter requesting gate keeping permission at MUT

Appendix G: Letter granting permission at MUT

Appendix H: Letter requesting gate keeping permission at DUT

Appendix I: Letter granting permission at DUT

Appendix J: Consent letter for focus group discussion

Appendix K: Consent letter for pilot study

Appendix L: Questionnaire for pilot study

Appendix M: Consent letter for the actual study

Appendix N: Questionnaire for the actual study

Appendix O: Structured questionnaire for qualitative study

Appendix P: Structured interview questions





# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

---

### 1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The shortage of critical skills has been a concern across various professions, industries and disciplines throughout the globe (Daniels, 2007; Koen, 2003; Tettey, 2010; Woodlard, Kneebone & Lee, 2003). Both the developed and developing countries need a constant injection of qualified and skilled labour (Adams et al., 2005; Carr, Ennis & Baus, 2010; Fisher & Scott, 2011; HESA, 2011; Ilunga, 2010) so that their industries and economies can maintain sustainable competitiveness, growth and above all development (Bishop et.al, 2012; Boyle et al., 2011; Mateus, Allen-Ile & Iwu, 2014). In the Republic of South Africa, skills shortage has received attention at a very high level of government structures and policy-making circles from the time of the demise of apartheid in 1994 to date. It was no surprise that in 2005, then South African president Thabo Mbeki made the search and development of skilled personnel a top national priority (Mbeki, 2005). The private sector in South Africa has also put a significant investment in the development of and search for essential skills without which economic development would be jeopardised (Godsell & Faurie, 2007). The present South African government is giving the issue of skills shortage considerable attention and is seemingly committed to addressing it (Rasool & Botha, 2011). The governmental commitment to alleviating skills shortage is also evident from the number of government initiatives and interventions that have been made at a national level including the proliferation of legislations such as Employment

Equity Act no. 55 of 1998, Mining Charter for Women, Skills Development Act no. 97 of 1998, South African Qualifications Authority Act no. 58 of 1995, National Qualifications Framework Act no. 67 of 2008, Accelerated Growth and Shared Initiative for South Africa, Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition and Affirmative Action. In one way or another, these legislations and policies reflect the drive by the government to develop and sustain the human skills that industry requires.

Skills shortage in South Africa is not limited to the manufacturing industry, evidently if not most palpably, it is experienced in academic institutions where there is a shortage of academics in various disciplines such as accounting, natural sciences and engineering. The shortage of skilled academics in the higher education sector limits the production of skilled graduates and professionals that South African industries and the economy at large needs. Moreover, global competition compels organisations to utilise sophisticated technologies and highly talented labour for the attainment of competitive advantage. Over the years, South Africa has been under pressure to boost its pool of qualified and skilled professionals and this has created the need to recruit expatriates from beyond the borders of the Republic.

South Africa and other countries globally compete over limited and scarce human capital, particularly in the higher education sector, leading to the need to attract academic expatriates from other countries of the world (Daniels, 2007; Tettey, 2010). In the same vein, Maharaj (2010) points out that African countries have been forced to become increasingly reliant on foreign skills at a far higher cost. The higher education sector is no different from other sectors. It also requires expatriate labour to ensure that the core business which is teaching and learning produces the best calibre of graduates to serve

the country with ability, pride and confidence as well as contribute positively and effectively to the country's economic development.

Socially, the influx into the country of multitudes of expatriates that include academics has caused its own complications in terms of their integration into South African society and the lingering challenge of social cohesion and xenophobic in the Republic.

## **1.2 MANAGEMENT OF ACADEMIC EXPATRIATES**

Extensive studies on skills shortage have been done in multinational companies and firms. The shortage of skills in the academic sector, however, seems to have been neglected by researchers (Maharaj, 2011; Slemer & Luring, 2013). Moreover, Maharaj (2011) has pointed out that, research on expatriates has been minimal in South Africa. It is noted that academic expatriates, in terms of research, are further ignored compared to those in other industries. The nature of academic institutions is unique and different from multinational companies in manufacturing, retail, mining and automotive industries just to name a few. Academic expatriates to a great extent interact with students especially from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, conduct research which may involve interacting with rural communities and also engage in community engagement activities which may require a good command of African languages and understanding of local culture. Studies have shown that universities present a different organisational environment with different work tasks than business and therefore academic work may have unique characteristics (Slemer & Luring, 2013). In this sense, the academic expatriates have to also ensure a quick adaptation and socialisation into the culture and life in South Africa.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Presently in South Africa the field of higher education is confronted with a critical shortage of skilled academic staff, especially in the natural sciences, accounting and the engineering sector. The observation by Woodlard et al. (2003) is corroborated by Higher Education South Africa (2011) who note that only a third of the total of academic staff members in South African higher education hold Ph.D. qualifications. Further, Fisher and Scott (2011) argues that skilled academic staff is not fairly or evenly distributed across the South African higher education sector, indicating that the few Ph.D. holders are concentrated only in a few institutions within the South African higher education academy. For that reason, there is a critical need for South Africa to produce and recruit skilled academic staff. This critical need necessitates that South Africa recruits skilled academic personnel from other countries, (Daniels, 2007). Supporting the need to recruit academic expatriates, Wocke and Klein (2002) insist that the process of doing so should be carefully and systematically conducted after a scientific audit that establishes exactly which particular skills are in scarcity.

The foregoing suggests that a concerted drive by many institutions of higher education in South Africa is needed to improve staff qualifications. In addition, stringent requirements for academic appointments and promotions need to be developed. Since not enough researchers and academics are being recruited and trained a serious crisis is looming in the tertiary sector (HESA, 2011). As a partial solution to this challenge, skills are being brought in from other countries with increased reliance on academic expatriates are becoming a reality in South Africa (Daniels, 2007). Seemingly; because expatriate

professionals bring a wealth of knowledge and critical skills that are in short supply in the country, recruiting them has become a necessity in spite of the challenges it creates. The 2011 Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) data obtained from the Department of Higher Education and Training (via email correspondence) shows that every year academic expatriates are employed by higher education institutions in KZN. It has also been reported that institutions in small towns experience special challenges in attracting and retaining academics and there is evidence of large numbers of academic professionals leaving these areas. Moreover, within South Africa, academic migration has been shown to be prevalent at all levels of academic systems especially in the sciences, engineering, information technology and some management areas (Maharaj, 2011). The same study revealed that within the South African higher education sector, the University of KwaZulu-Natal is amongst the main recipients of academic expatriates.

The recruitment of academic expatriates while it might ameliorate South Africa's skills shortage, it creates its own challenges. In 2007, the then Minister of Home Affairs Mapisa-Nqakula (2007) confirmed that out of the 35 200 skilled expatriates that the country needed to recruit from other countries only 1010 were given work permits. Mulenga and Van Lil (2007) confirm that the South African Department of Home Affairs, because of its internal challenges and inefficiencies, is a major stumbling block to the effective acquisition of academic expatriates that are needed to produce local skilled academics.

Added to the challenge with the Department of Home Affairs, the institutions that recruit the academic expatriates to have the burden to induct the expatriates and adapt them to South African higher education. Further, the academic expatriates themselves have to make psychological, emotional and physical adjustments to a South African culture which are complicated by the challenge of xenophobia and xenophobic violence, (Mulenga & Van Lill, 2007). Given the foregoing context, the burden of this study is to examine the challenge of academic skills shortage in South African higher education and the intervention of recruiting academic expatriates. The challenges faced by the recruiting institutions and the academic expatriates themselves are also within the focus of this study.

#### **1.4 DELIMITATION**

The scope of this study is limited to the institutions of higher learning in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). In the province of KwaZulu-Natal the study is limited to the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), the University of Zululand (UNIZUL), Durban University of Technology (DUT) and the Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). Based on the observations, arguments and conclusions from these institutions, this study will be able to make sustainable inferences on the challenge of skills shortage and the recruitment of academic expatriates in the South African higher education sector at large.

#### **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study are:

- 1) To identify the specific disciplines that suffer skills shortage in the institutions of Higher Learning in KZN.
- 2) To identify the barriers in employing academic expatriates.
- 3) To establish the kind of support KZN institutions offers to their academic expatriates.
- 4) To identify the challenges, academic expatriates face in adjusting to South African life.
- 5) To establish if demographic variables have any impact on the adjustment of academic expatriates to South Africa and,
- 6) To determine psychometric properties of interaction adjustment, general adjustment and work adjustment.

## **1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions of this study are classified into two categories, the quantitative and the qualitative:

### **1.6.1 Qualitative**

- 1) Which academic skills are in shortage in the institutions of higher learning?

- 2) What are the challenges faced by KZN higher education institutions in employing academic expatriates?
- 3) What expatriate-support programmes are in place in KZN institutions of higher learning?

### **1.6.2 Quantitative**

- 1) What are the adjustment challenges facing academic expatriates in the selected KZN institutions of higher learning?
- 2) What role do demographic factors such as age, tenure, institution, occupational level, period stayed in South Africa, and nature of employment play in the adjustment of academic expatriates?
- 3) What are the psychometric properties of interaction adjustment, general adjustment and work adjustment?

### **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The subject of skills shortage has been highlighted by the South African government and the National Research and Development strategy has emphasised it. The shortage of academic skills specifically threatens the South African economy in that it affects the production by institutions of higher learning of a competitive calibre of graduates and professionals that industry needs. While Badsha and Cloete (2011) emphasise the



shortage of skills in the disciplines of science and engineering, this study goes further to examine the shortage of academic skills in other academic disciplines. There has been research on academic positions that already exist and need to be filled by skilled staff (Tettey, 2010) but there has not been enough examination of the positions that need to be created. Further, this study proceeds to examine the challenges of recruiting academic expatriates at the Department of Home Affairs, the obstacles in institutions of higher learning and those challenges that are faced by the academic expatriates themselves in adjusting to the life and culture in South Africa.

This study also explores the important issue of the challenges that confront the projects of attracting academic expatriates in certain critical disciplines. The challenges of managing the formalisation and stay of the academic expatriates are also explored. An abundance of scientific knowledge exists in the area of management of expatriates; however, such has mostly focused on other sectors except higher education (Maharaj, 2011; Selmer & Luring, 2009; Slemer & Luring, 2013). Moreover, Maharaj (2011) acknowledges a literature gap in the area of academic expatriation in South Africa. Also, the relevance of the existing literature and practices to academia is of concern due to the unique nature of higher education sector. Knowledge production and innovation are at the core of academia which presents a different focus from the manufacturing sector and other sectors of industry and the economy. Notably, the academic sector should be centralised in research because it is the sector that produces skilled professionals that are needed by other sectors of industry and the economy at large in any country.

On the one hand, the study contributes to our understanding of the extent of skills shortages in the KZN region while on the other hand the study draws the attention of KZN higher education institutions to critical issues that require intervention in the management of academic expatriates. However, this is not to say that academic expatriates should be given preferential treatment over the local academics. Rather, it is to emphasise and acknowledge that the needs and expectations of the host country nationals and those of academic expatriates, that need to be harmonised, may differ grossly.

## **1.8 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

### **Chapter one: Introduction of the study.**

This chapter presents the introduction and background to the study. The research problem statement, research objectives and questions are stated as well as the significance and rationale of the study, and its contribution to research and science. This chapter thus outlines the scope and focus of the study in its entirety.

### **Chapter two: Literature Review.**

This chapter explores the existing and relevant literature in the subject of skills shortage in South Africa and the challenge of managing academic expatriates by the government and the institutions of higher learning in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as the

challenges of adjustment that confront the academic expatriates themselves. This chapter helps to locate this study as a contribution amongst other studies in the subject.

### **Chapter three: Research Methodology**

This chapter fleshes out the qualitative and quantitative techniques that are deployed by the study as its methodology. This chapter is important as it establishes the scientific layout of the study and its compliance with established academic research. It defends the reliability, validity and sustainability of the observations, arguments and conclusions that the study makes.

### **Chapter four: Results of Quantitative Data**

This chapter presents the quantitative data that the study has gathered. The presentation of the data lays a foundation for the discussion, analysis and interpretation of the data that follows in chapter six.

### **Chapter five: Results of Qualitative Data**

This chapter presents the findings of the qualitative data gathered through structured interviews. This chapter also lays a foundation for the discussion, analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data that is carried out in chapter six.

## **Chapter six: Discussion of findings of quantitative and qualitative data**

Centrally, this chapter discusses and interprets the research data of both the quantitative and qualitative methodologies that have been deployed in the study. In line with the research objectives and questions, the researcher discusses the findings of the study and the extent to which they address the research objectives and questions.

## **Chapter seven: Recommendations, conclusions and limitations**

Based on the observations, analysis and interpretation of the gathered quantitative and qualitative data, this chapter presents the academic and some policy suggestions and recommendations. This chapter responds to the justification and significance of the study as a contribution to science and society. The limitations of the study are also noted in this chapter.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has introduced the study by fleshing out the background and context of the research. Further, the chapter presented an exposition of the research problem, the research objectives and research questions. Finally, the chapter presented the justification and significance of the study followed by an outline of the chapters. Pursuantly, the following chapter delves into the literature review of the study.

# **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

---

## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is to interrogate literature that is relevant to the study and to examine those scholarly views that illuminate in one way or another, the objectives of this study. While the shortage of skills is an established challenge in many countries and in South Africa in particular, the shortage of academic and intellectual skills has not so much been examined. The recruitment of academic expatriates into South African institutions of higher learning therefore, together with the challenges it goes with for the institutions of higher learning and for the academic expatriates themselves, become a worthy intervention. The possible causes and consequences of skills shortage are outlined. Noteworthy, the higher education sector in South Africa has officially stated that amongst other factors, the ageing workforce inherited from the apartheid era and lack of appropriate academic qualifications of young South African academic staff worsen the academic skills crisis. This has necessitated the recruitment of academic expatriates. This chapter also notes the delays at the South African Home Affairs in processing immigration formalities of the expatriates as one of the factors that hinder the smooth expatriation of scarce academic skills in South Africa. The Social Learning Theory, the Work Adjustment Theory and the U-curve cross-cultural adjustment model are the theoretical and conceptual point of departure for this study in attempting to understand the challenge of skills shortage and the difficulties that are encountered in employing and formalising the retention of academic expatriates in South Africa.

## **2.2 SKILLS SHORTAGE IN ACADEMIA**

The following sections of the literature review seek to delve into the challenge of skills shortage in South Africa using some expressed scholarly views on the subject.

### **2.2.1 Global perspective**

According to the South African Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) (2002) skills shortage exists when an employer, in this case, an institution of higher learning fails to fill in existing vacancy. This creates a skills gap, which means that skills that are in demand are not supplied, economically speaking. According to the 1997 green paper on skills development strategy for economic employment growth in South Africa, skill refers to necessary competencies that can be expertly applied in a particular context for a defined purpose (Department of Labour, 2003). In a word, skills shortage implies a shortage of needed knowledge and that means the higher education sector is rendered the poorer with such shortages.

Based on this definition, skills shortage broadly is well documented both nationally and globally; however, the shortage of academics seem to be the least studied area as very few researches have explored this domain. At global level, Adams et al. (2005) reported about the challenges in attracting and retaining surgery specialists in academia in the United States of America (USA). Boyle, Hermanson and Menash (2011) established that many accounting and auditing practitioners in the USA have considered an academic career but view Ph.D. as a hindrance as their educational levels are far below Ph.D. level and they seem to attach less value to a Ph.D. because practitioners in the private practice generate more income without PhDs. Moreover, salaries of accounting professors were undermined by participants as they believed that if one has a Ph.D ones salary should be high as well. For that reason, in the United States PhD holders tend to feel over qualified and therefore under employed, which is the opposite in the South African case.

There was also a view that academia does not emphasize industrial experience but the emphasis is rather placed on research, publishing and bureaucracy. This limits access to practitioners into academia as they lack research experience (Boyle et al., 2011). Bishop, Boyle, Cune and Hermanson (2012) affirm that the severe faculty shortage in the auditing and tax areas are as a result of a shortage of accounting doctoral students, projected increase in retiring faculty and increased demand for Masters' in Business Administration (MBA). According to Carr, Ennis and Baus (2010) academic positions in Dental Hygiene remain vacant due to lack of suitable applicants and members of the department leaving academia for private practice. In the South African case, there is also the current of view that academia does not pay as much as private practice.

Furthermore, Carr et al. (2010) observed that almost half of full-time staff members were said to be approaching retirement and more vacancies were to be expected in the following decade. The shortage of skills in this area seems to be stemming from a lack of employees with masters as a minimum qualification. These low qualifications entail low salaries and this tends to sustain the impression that academia does not pay as compared to private practice. Loomes (2011) points out that in Australia experienced/senior academics are due to retire and highly skilled replacements are needed. In Australia, retired professors are enlisted to groom novice academics through mentorship projects. In the observation of some scholars, the private sector in Australia provides stiff competition for the academic sector in that it attracts most of the qualified candidates (Adams et al., 2005; Bishop et al., 2012; Boyle et al., 2011; Carr et al., 2010). This

competition from the private sector is noticeable in the South African case as well, most young professionals would rather seek opportunities in the private sector rather than resign to being academics, and this increases the challenge of academic skills shortage.

## **2.2.2 South African context**

The following section zeros into the shortage of academic skills in the South African context.

### **2.2.2.1 *The shortage***

In South Africa, shortage of skills exists in various professions, sectors and at different levels (Daniels, 2007; Mateus et al., 2014). In the case of higher education institutions the shortage exists, amongst other disciplines, in accounting, natural sciences and engineering (Daniels, 2007;; Fisher & Scott, 2011; HESA, 2011; Ilunga, 2010; Woodlard et al., 2003). Koen (2003) notes that in South Africa the higher education system is not producing enough young academics to meet the demand of the institutions of higher learning. In his view, academic reproduction is vital for knowledge production and economic growth. In a similar vein, Badsha and Cloete (2011) state that the three main functions of the higher education institutions are 1) education and training of professionals and other high-level human resources for a wide range of employment needs of the public and private sectors economy, 2) production of new knowledge and finding a new application for existing knowledge, and 3) providing opportunities for social mobility and simultaneously strengthening equity, social justice and democracy. Therefore, HESA



(2011) and Koen (2003) agree that in this era of globalisation and knowledge society, academics play a crucial role in producing new knowledge while enhancing the existing knowledge, providing innovative and creative solutions that respond to the societies' needs and contribute to addressing labour market demands thereby improving economic growth.

As South African higher education institutions have witnessed an abundance of students' enrolment over the past few years (Tettey, 2010), continued academic reproduction and recruitment of qualified academics is necessary. This should include attraction and recruitment of academic talent even beyond the domestic borders in order to strengthen institutional expertise and increase the diversity of intellectual as well as academic traditions and practices (Koen, 2003). On the other hand, it should strive to produce enough numbers of postgraduate candidates for future generations of academics, but also nurturing and mentoring young academics already in the academic system to take up professorial positions (HESA, 2011).

Tettey (2010) observed a slow growth of academics as opposed to students' enrolment growth in African higher education institutions; particularly, growth of academics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal between the years 2001 and 2007 was 9% compared to 11% of students' enrolment growth. Koen (2003) asserts that the rate of temporary academic staff members across higher education institutions in South Africa is about 50%. Although this is the case, Koen (2003) sees it as an advantage in the light that it minimises expenditure on staff; it allows flexibility in relation to changing students' enrolments and it

also affords institutions of higher education an opportunity to groom future permanent academic staff. However, Mokoditso (2011) argues that employment of temporary and part-time staff results in disrupted teaching and learning of students as the temporary staff are hired for short term periods and they also tend to invest little effort in their duties because their concentration is channeled on securing permanent jobs elsewhere.

Govender (2008) reported through the Sunday Times newspaper that staff from the 23 higher education institutions in the country were being poached by the private sector and that higher education institutions were battling to attract replacements, which left a wide gap in Accounting, Statistics, Engineering and Health Sciences. This survey found that there were almost 600 vacant posts for professors and lecturers in five universities, including the University of Johannesburg, University of Pretoria, University of Cape Town, University of Zululand, and the University of Limpopo. Furthermore, the survey revealed that various universities across South Africa confirmed that they are experiencing difficulties in recruiting academics in the field of Accounting, Actuarial Sciences, Sciences, Optometry and Engineering, especially senior black professors.

Govender (2014) further reported through the Sunday Times newspaper that universities in South Africa are battling to fill vacancies in the scarce skills areas such as Actuarial Sciences, Engineering, Veterinary Surgery, Health Sciences and Information Technology. Of particular concern is that vacancies in these fields take about a year to fill and the universities compete for same individuals and a pool of talent. Carr et al. (2010) observed that academic vacancies remain open for long because few applications

are received when posts are advertised and such applications are mostly from non-suitable applicants. Sometimes institutions are forced to lower the bar of qualifications and employ candidates with lower qualifications than they originally anticipated which impinges on the quality of academic service delivery. Furthermore, there is a small proportion of new entrants to academia compared to departures. According to Koen (2003), not all institutions of higher education would be able to replace the departing academics with suitably qualified academics as the available replacement pool of academics is insufficient. Also, future supply of academics in South Africa is worrying due to tight competition from the private sector (Samuels & Chipunza, 2013) and some public sector entities such as parastatals and government departments besides the education sector.

Concerned about the shortage of engineers, Ilunga (2010) observed that a huge number of academic engineers are to be recruited in institutions of higher education to ensure a steady flow of enough adequately trained engineering graduates to meet the skills shortage in the South African labour market. In his view (Ilunga, 2010), the insufficient numbers of academics in most higher education institutions lead to heavy workloads, over-subscribed staff-student ratios and young graduates that are overworked lose interest in academia. Tuition ends up often being offered after hours and on weekends by external or adjunct lecturers, resulting in compromised academic service delivery. Koen (2003) observed that about 29% of vacancies in academia arise because of new posts that are created because of increased student enrolment. A further 71% of vacancies result from academic staff leaving academia in retirement or resignations. As

Koen indicates, about 15% of academics leave academia yearly hence the workload of academic staff across higher education sector in South Africa remain unfairly distributed and the few academics that remain are overworked to frustration. Shortage of critical academic skills prevails. This therefore reveals that the higher education sector is battling to attract suitable replacements for departing staff.

However, the shortage of academics is not only limited to the Sciences and Engineering as Nkuna (2010) points out that African language departments appear to be battling to attract and retain young African language academics which in turn is hampering the contribution by the universities toward the country's agenda of promoting African languages. According to Tettey (2010), the gap between established academic positions and a number of filled academic positions is a reflection that higher education institutions do not have full staff complement to carry out their mandate.

A concern has been raised that, while institutions of higher education in South Africa are faced with skills shortage and therefore should utilise experienced senior professors to groom future generation of academics, very few such professors are available to fulfil the task (Koen, 2003; HESA, 2011). HEMIS (2011 & 2012) data reflect this trend in various KZN higher education institutions as Tettey (2010) also observed the same at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Moreover, women and black academics seem to be at the low levels of academic hierarchy reflecting demographic imbalances especially in key decision-making roles where the representation of women and blacks is crucial (Boshoff & Bosch, 2012; HESA, 2011; Koen, 2003; Tettey, 2010).

Whereas attraction of academic talent broadly is at the heart of any academic institution, promotion of and compliance with labour legislations that support equal employment opportunities bears almost the same weight. This has been amongst the top priorities in institutions of higher education in South Africa, almost without exception. However, as universities report difficulties in attracting talent, much difficulty is even reported in employing black academics especially females which in turn impact on balancing equity profile of academic institutions and therefore failure in complying with relevant labour legislations, Employment Equity Act no. 55 of 1998, in particular. But, Boshoff and Bosch (2012) are of the opinion that besides employment equity reasons, a fair representation of females in academia is crucial for, amongst other reasons, future society as women account for about more than 50% of the entire South African population. Badat (2009) is of the view that to avoid a form of apartheid in the South African higher education system, while striving to produce a new generation of academics; attention should also be given to redressing demographic inequalities through transforming the historical and social composition of academic workforce. On these grounds, attraction of and building capacity within the existing pool of blacks and female academics requires attention.

For that reason, the skills crisis should not only be viewed from one angle but it should also be viewed from a perspective of higher education institutions being unable to find suitable women and black candidates to take up academic positions. Boshoff and Bosch (2012) found that female academics only accounted for 44% of the entire academic population in South Africa in 2010 and only 3% of them were at full professorship level.

According to Subotzky (2001), the difficulties in attracting and retaining academics from under-represented groups are a result of a combination of factors which includes; structural factors, formal policies and informal practices, recruitment strategic approach and competition. The author elaborates this statement by indicating that:

- 1) Structural factors such as social stratification and a division of labour along race, gender and class lines constrain the pool of entrants into the higher education workplace,
- 2) At institutional level formal policies and informal practices create obvious barriers to the advancement of marginalised groups,
- 3) Strategies often involve an assimilationist rather than transformative approach to access and change, and
- 4) Eligible employees are headhunted by the private and public sectors that offer higher remuneration and status.

For these reasons, attracting academic talent from female and black applicants and or ensuring fair representation of these groups of employees becomes a serious challenge. Also, because of pressure exerted on higher education institutions by posts that remain vacant for long periods, ensuring an equitable spread of all racial groups and gender becomes a minimum concern. Therefore, in most instances when appointments are made less emphasis is put on race and gender equity but the suitability of candidates becomes a maximum concern.

From capacity building and talent management point of view, HESA (2011) proposed a holistic programme for development of the next generation of academics that would

provide blacks and women South Africans and Africans an opportunity to acquire the knowledge, expertise, skills and experience necessary to function as outstanding teachers, researchers and professionals through; 1) obtaining a PhD or undertake post-doctoral work, 2) enhancing disciplinary and professional knowledge, 3) building expertise and experience in teaching, research and community engagement, and 4) participating in other developmental opportunities including academic departmental activities and administrative processes. This programme may increase competencies of the existing academics which in turn may produce future academic leaders and outstanding knowledge producers and innovators. According to the Business Times / Sunday Times (18 May 2014) the National Research Foundation (NRF) has established innovation and development programmes and projects that supports capacity building of academics and facilitates the creation of knowledge. These NRF programmes and projects offer bursaries, grants and fellowships in three categories of academics/researchers; 1) next generation of scholars which consist of individuals studying towards PhDs, 2) emerging researchers consisting of post-doctoral candidates and early career researchers, as well as 3) established researchers. Moreover, a five-year Research Career Advancement Fellowship Programme has just been established to bridge a gap between post-doctoral research and becoming an established researcher. With this mentioned, the question remains, what causes the skills shortage in higher learning institutions. The next section therefore addresses the causes of skills shortage in the South African higher education landscape.

#### ***2.2.2.1 Causes of the skills shortage in South Africa***

Amongst other factors; a dysfunctional education system, globalisation, and emigration have been cited as major factors contributing to the extensive academic skills shortage in South Africa (Mateus et al., 2014; Rasool & Botha, 2011). The stated factors are discussed in detail below:

#### **a) Dysfunctional education system**

The South African education system has been in many cases blamed as the main contributor to the academic skills crisis (Badsha & Cloete, 2011; Rasool & Botha 2011; Twalo, 2010). The education system is said to be characterised by amongst other factors; low education standards, lack of resources, under-qualified teachers, weak management, poor teacher morale, overcrowded classrooms with a teacher-student ratio of 1:32, and the shortage of teachers in the country. Modisaotsile (2012) noted that extreme shortage of teachers is a critical problem in South Africa. Teachers exit the teaching profession yearly for various reasons, while about 6 000 to 10 000 new teachers graduate some of whom might emigrate for a teaching career abroad. These factors, in turn, lead to high failure rates at all levels of education, but more crucially, high levels of drop-outs at university level, consequently lead to a low graduate turnover which exacerbates academic skills shortage

The Diagnostic Overview presented by the National Planning Commission (2012) also attests to this. Moreover, the Business Times / Sunday Times (2014) affirms that the National Development Plan (NDP) intends to improve the South African schooling system by promoting interest in and providing incentives for South Africans interested in careers



in academia. There is also a move, within the scope of the National Development Plan to put across measures that will prevent the closure of teacher training colleges which has also been impacting negatively on the attempts to produce enough teachers.

The drop-out rate of about 40%, attrition rate and poor academic achievement at tertiary level of education are a reflection of a poorly functioning education system. Fisher and Scott (2011) point out that not only tertiary level education is obstructed by the poor performance but the whole education system of South Africa. These authors observed that more than half of learners who entered grade 1 in 1995 dropped out before getting into matric and about 5% of them obtained senior certificates which enables them admission into tertiary education. Moreover, the tertiary education sector has witnessed an intake of underprepared first-year students instead of well talented, properly trained candidates with appropriate qualification to become future academics. Badsha and Cloete (2011) reflect that the current higher education system is impeded by low participation and high attrition rate with insufficient capacity for adequate skills production.

For that reason, the poorly functioning education system (Modisaotsile, 2012) has negative effects on the labour market and availability of skills. Daniels (2007) maintains that the majority of firms blame low quality of primary and secondary school education as a major factor to the labour market problems in South Africa. For this reason, the caliber of graduates produced is also a major concern to industry. Twalo (2010) points out that the South African education system fails to effectively respond to the skills crisis irrespective of government spending about 20% of its total expenditure on education and

the country having about 12.3 million learners and above a million students at tertiary institution. Hence, Badsha and Cloete (2011) are of the view that the massive investments in the education system have not produced better outcomes in terms of either level of academic performance or graduation rates. Assaf (2010) also points to the quality of incoming students and blockage in the graduate and postgraduate pipelines as a barrier to increased production of PhDs in the South African higher education institutions. Adding to these challenges is the globalisation of the knowledge economy, where global forces take full control of the local and global labour market.

#### **b) Globalisation**

According to De Wit (2011) globalisation is a process that increases the flow of people, culture, ideas, values, knowledge, technology and economy across national borders resulting in a more interconnected and interdependent world. Altbach (2013) is of the view that on this basis, organisations at this day and age have become borderless thus presenting opportunities for employees to freely move from one job to another as well as from one organisation to another within and across domestic borders. Cesyniene (2008) states that globalisation represents the structural making of the world characterised by the free flow of technology and human resources across boundaries as well as the spread of information technology and mass media presenting an ever-changing and competitive business environment. Therefore, competition for talent especially in areas of skills shortages has increased not only locally but globally as well.

Similarly, labour market demands have changed dramatically presenting new skills requisite and movement of talent within and across borders. Maharaj (2010) confirms

that globalisation of the world labour market has paved the way for the movement of skilled employees with scarce skills across national boundaries with relative ease. Okoli (2013) also points out that higher education policies and operations globally have been revamped due to globalisation. This has thus intensified competition over limited academic talent as South African universities no longer compete among themselves but also with other universities globally. For this reason, academia has witnessed the loss of academic talent due to global recruitment (Samuels & Chipunza, 2013; Robyn & du Preez, 2013; van Jaarsveldt, 2010).

### **c) Emigration**

The movement of people in and out of a country is known as migration. People could migrate out of their country of origin (emigration) and some could migrate from another country (immigration). The term “brain drain” is used interchangeably with the emigration of talent from the country of origin to another country, mostly from poor to rich countries. South Africa has witnessed numerous cases of emigration including emigration of talented academics (Benedict & Ukpere, 2012; HSRC, 2004). It is estimated that South Africa has lost approximately 20% of its skills through emigration and 70% of its skilled people consider emigrating.

Forty-three thousand (43 000) of highly skilled young graduates (between 24-34 years of age) emigrated between the years 1994 and 1997, while a number of about 41 496 skilled emigrants were recorded between 1987 and 1997, the majority of which were from the higher education sector has been reported (Benedict & Ukpere, 2012 & HSRC, 2004).

According to Statistics South Africa (2004) during 1997 – 2001 almost 310 000 South Africans, 50 000 of which were professionals, emigrated. Furthermore, in 2002 – 2003 almost 65% of economically active population, 26.7% of which were academic professionals, emigrated. Okoli (2013) raised a concern that African universities have lost talent and are still losing their best brains to Western countries that offer high remuneration and better conditions of service. Of more concern is that the very talent that African universities lose is the one that is needed the most for economic, social, scientific and technological progress on the continent. South African universities, in particular, are crippled by the establishment of a new university in Botswana and expansion of academic programmes at the Polytechnic of Namibia as South Africa is seen as a strong source of highly skilled and experienced academics (Samuels & Chimpunza, 2013). Furthermore, Kerr-Phillips and Thomas (2009) affirm that during 2006 – 2007 South Africans constituted the second largest sources of skilled migrants in New Zealand alone.

The continued loss of academic expertise through the brain drain occurs due to political and social conditions (HESA, 2011) as well as personal reasons (Benedict & Ukpere, 2012). The literature that is available on brain drain highlights various push and pull factors such as affirmative action, employment equity, crime, low wages, better quality of life, future for children, economic stability, improved health care, job scarcity, armed conflicts, political repression, devaluation of currency and poor educational system as some of the factors leading to emigration in South Africa (Benedict & Ukpere, 2012; Maharaj, 2011; Mateus et al., 2014; Rasool & Botha, 2011). Therefore, those who decide

to emigrate are pushed outside the country by some of these conditions and factors which they regard as unfavourable to them. Similarly, they are pulled into various destinations abroad by some favourable conditions and factors which they regard as important. Although South Africa may also gain from the brain of other countries through the employment of foreign skills, the brain resources that are lost have negative effects on the country's economic growth as it increases spending on education and training. Further, this puts enormous pressure not only on the institutions of higher education but on the country as a whole as means and ends are to be made on how to replace the lost talent. In addition to losing talent, the majority of current academics lack appropriate qualifications and arguably the much-needed motivation for performance.

#### **d) Academics' qualifications**

The researcher's assumption is that production of the best calibre of undergraduates and postgraduates students requires the input of quality education and training of academics. Traditionally, at least a master's degree was a minimum requisite qualification for lecturing at tertiary level. Presently, the growing trend in higher education institutions in South Africa is the movement towards putting emphasis on a minimum requisite of a Ph.D. Ph.D. holders are better suited to generate new knowledge through research and innovation, therefore, contribute towards economic development. Ph.D. candidates are equipped with skills that prepare them to start their academic career, at a level that is equal to the task of producing new knowledge and innovation. The lack of Ph.D. candidates in the current education system gives little hope that speculated vacancies in higher education institutions could be filled. Available data shows that most academic

staff in higher education institutions have no PhDs (Assaf, 2010; Boschhoff & Bosch, 2012; HEMIS 2011, 2012; HESA, 2011; Koen, 2003; Tettey, 2010). This indicates a dearth of quality academic skills.

Badsha and Cloete (2011) attest that only 35% of academics in South Africa hold PhDs while HESA (2011) and Assaf (2010) reflect almost the same figure. However, the Business Times / Sunday Times (18 May 2014) through NRF indicates an improvement of this figure by 2%. Tettey (2010) observes that in 2006 at the University of KwaZulu-Natal only 27% of academic staff had master's degrees and 31% had doctoral degrees. Therefore, lack of appropriate academic qualifications especially master's and doctoral degrees amongst academics should be a concern for every higher education institution in South Africa as present statistics indicate a worrying shortage of quality academic skills.

It is in this context that, as a way forward, the National Development Plan strategy of 2030 intends to increase PhD holders amongst academic staff in universities up to 75% by the year 2030. Furthermore, the Business Times / Sunday Times (2014) affirms that since 2008 the NRF embarked on a mission to increase PhDs in the institutions of higher learning across the country through the SA PhD Project which intends to improve both the quality and quantity of PhDs in the Republic. It was reported that (Business Times / Sunday Times, 2014) when the SA PhD Project was initiated South Africa was producing at least 27 doctoral degrees per one million of the population. Assaf (2010) reflects almost the same figure. However, this figure has improved as it currently stands at 34 doctoral

degrees per million of the population. Despite the indications of an increase in the production of PhDs, the next five years are projected to remain characterised by severe shortage of quality academic skills.

#### **e) Ageing academic workforce**

One of the contributing factors to academic skills shortage is ageing workforce. It has been observed that a large number of experienced academics are due to retire in about a decade (HESA, 2011), including the professoriate and leadership (Boshoff & Bosch, 2012, Tettey, 2010), and the prospects for replacements in the existing academic and postgraduate pipeline are limited (Herman, 2011; HESA, 2011). On these grounds, the current skills crisis in South African universities may intensify. According Govender (2014) through the Sunday Times, more than 1430 professors and associate professors from thirteen (13) higher education institutions are due for retirement in the next decade. Badat (2009) estimates that about 4000 (27%) of the total of academics will retire in 2017 and about 50% of associate professors and professors who are active knowledge producers are above the age of 50.

Consequently, the gap between the demand for academics and the supply will never be bridged in the medium term. Therefore, a serious academic skills crisis is imminent in higher education sector in South Africa as various sources allude to the possibility of having these posts unfilled for long periods due to unavailability of replacements (Govender, 2008; HESA, 2011; Koen, 2003, Tettey, 2010). Moreover, there is obvious need for the senior academics to groom upcoming and emerging academics for continuity

of knowledge production and tuition. This has led to some higher education institutions employing retired academics and some proposing extension of retirement age to eighty (80) years (Govender, 2014). As such, while striving to attract new academic talent, retention of the current and existing talent is crucial.

#### **f) Retention of academics**

The attraction of new talent into academia proves to be challenging, retention of existing talent also tends to present almost similar difficulties (Keer-Phillips & Thomas, 2009; Ngobeni & Bezuidenhout, 2011; Robyn & du Preez, 2013; Theron, Berkhuzen & Du Preez, 2014). Attracting new entrants into academia especially in the fields of natural sciences, engineering and accounting have been a battle (Govender, 2008). The attraction of academic talent would be a futile exercise if it was to be done with no means of retaining that talent which would have been secured. As Koen (2003) observed that 71% of the vacancies in academia result from the termination of services by staff leaving for greener pastures and about 15% of academics leave academia yearly. Therefore, while striving to attract the best talent, universities should also strive to retain their existing talent. As a result, retention strategies should be devised. Naris and Ukpere (2010) support retention of academic talent and that retention strategy should be put in place. However, these authors argue that for retention to occur one should first establish what push factors lead to the termination of service and what motivation factors lead to prolonged tenure.



Various scholars and researchers have shared their observations in relation to why employees quit their jobs (Keer-Phillips & Thomans, 2009; Robyn & du Preez, 2013; Theron et al., 2014). Motivational theorists such as Maslow, Herzberg, ERG and others shed some light in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic factors that motivate employees. These theorists go further to state that intrinsic factors such as better working conditions, growth opportunities are more likely to contribute towards long tenure and producing academics that become stable ambassadors of a particular institution. Furthermore, scholars and researchers such as Robyn and du Preez (2013) argue that generational differences may lead to different motivational factors as motivational factors of Generation “Y” may be different from those of Generation “X”.

It is an inevitable reality that employees have their own unique needs and expectations as Lieber (2010) suggests that in order to recruit, retain and motivate different groups of employees; different fringe benefits should be designed. For instance, he suggests that generation X would value flexibility in almost every aspect of work while older workers would want to work towards preparing their retirement and would value benefits like, adequate time off, health care benefits, insurance and good pension benefits. Furthermore, academia presents a different work environment which consists of tuition, research and community engagement. Therefore, motivational factors of academic staff maybe different from the generic factors presented by different motivational theories that apply to other industries. As such, research funding opportunities could be one of the motivating factors for academics (Robyn, 2012; Theron et al., 2014). For that reason, all

the above factors are to be taken into account when devising retention strategies for academics.

From this discussion, it is clear that higher education institutions in South Africa need to reduce the number of academic vacancies resulting from the termination of employment. Or, the retirement age of academics should be revised upwards to allow senior academics to impart skills before they retire. The attraction of academic talent may to a greater degree be determined by the availability of skills in the labour market; therefore, higher education institutions may have little or even no control over it presently. But, retention of talent is space that higher education institutions may take full control of. What may be required are policy changes. On this basis, this is an option that higher education institutions may want to exploit in addressing the academic skills shortage. Similarly, retention strategies should involve an element of revision of remuneration strategies and incentive schemes to make academia an attractive occupation.

#### **g) Remuneration of academics**

Salaries of academic staff have been said to be uncompetitive hence the poaching of academics by private and public sector entities in South Africa (HESA, 2011; Robyn & du Preez, 2013; Samuels & Chipunza, 2013; 2014; Theron et al., 2014). According to Kubler and Lennon (2007) although the South African government has recommended that institutions of higher education should offer salaries that are comparable to the public and private sectors, these institutions are still unable to effectively compete with the non-academic sectors because the responsibility of determination of salaries that balance

resources available with the need to attract and retain suitable and sufficient academic talent still rest with the discretion of an individual institution., and different institutions face different opportunities and threats in terms of budgets and other resources.

Budgetary and resource challenges, however, seem to be a global reality (Carr et al., 2010). In this case, the attraction of quality academic talent maybe challenging for academic institutions as the best academics who attach more value on monetary rewards will have private and public sectors as their employer of choice. Although many argue that monetary rewards have little impact on job satisfaction and intention to quit, Theron et al. (2014) found that compensation of academics remained a recurrent theme and factor that caused academics to leave an institution. For that reason, Koen (2003) argues that uncompetitive remuneration in academia leads to the higher education sector in South Africa being unable to attract young competent academics, and it also contributes to the unattractiveness of the academic career compared to other sectors. Therefore, remuneration strategies of higher education institutions are partly to blame for the persisting skills shortage in the sector.

#### **h) Recruiting/Attracting expatriate academics**

According to Slemer and Luring (2013), universities are increasingly joining the global job market in search of new academic talent through the use of various media platforms. Unlike sectors with strong multinational focus, expatriates in the academic sector often initiate their foreign jobs themselves achieving the status of self-initiated expatriates. Self-initiated expatriate refers to any individual who is gainfully employed abroad and has

acquired his or her job out of own choice without being assigned to the host country by his or her organisation (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010; Slemer & Luring, 2010). Among other factors, some pull factors that attract foreign talent into a country may include travel and adventure, career growth, family reasons, financial incentives, life change (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010; Slemer & Luring, 2010).

Any recruitment and selection process intends to appoint the best suitable candidate for the job, which is, matching candidates' competencies with the requirements of the job. This is a complex process that calls for the use of various selection techniques and methods. However, in the South African context, employment of expatriate professionals can only take place after various initiatives have been undertaken to ensure that no South Africans have been prejudiced. Unlike the employment of South African candidates, employment of expatriate professionals can only be finalised after certain requirements of the Department of Home Affairs have been satisfied as stipulated in the Immigration Act no.3 of 2007. Challenges relating to delays in work permit applications have been reported in the Home affairs processes (Mulenga & van Lill, 2007). Further, the requisite verification of foreign academic qualifications and the ascertaining of work experience for academic expatriates tend to take time as it involves contacts and communication of South African academic institutions with institutions in other countries.

Nonetheless, Vogel and van Vuuren (2008) maintain that expatriate professionals are employed for various reasons which may include their knowledge, lack of competent host country candidates and the need for skills exchange. According to Mulenga and van Lill

(2007) attraction of expatriate professionals as a source of talent has been used extensively elsewhere in the first world countries resulting in positive skills arriving in the host country, although such talent comes at a far higher cost (Benedict & Ukpere, 2012; Maharaj, 2010). In light of the skills shortage challenges experienced by the South African labour market especially in academia, expatriate academics are seen as a great pool of talent that could alleviate skills shortage challenges within academia and could possibly build a strong pool of academic talent if their skills are utilised appropriately. Ojong (2012) attests that due to a skills shortage, in all South African universities expatriate academics occupy strategic academic positions such as Vice-Chancellor, Head of School, Head of Department and Dean of Faculties which were previously occupied by South African white candidates.

The Higher education sector in South Africa is expected to solve the labour market skills demand and supply challenges (HESA, 2011), by producing qualified graduates and postgraduates and by generating research and innovation (Fischer & Scott, 2011). To achieve this, the sector should have enough academics to perform at an appropriate level. However, the number of academic vacancies at South African higher education institutions is tangible evidence that there are not enough numbers of academic staff to respond to such demand. Hence the failure of the higher education sector to produce enough quantity and calibre of skilled staff to address the skills crisis in the country, therefore, the increased reliance on expatriate staff skills. Given this background, recruitment and selection of expatriate professionals becomes vital. But, sufficient support should be offered to expatriate academics to enable them to adjust to their new

environment in South Africa. The theoretical framework that informs the strategies of adjustment and socialisation of expatriate academics in their new work environment is discussed in the section below.

## **2.3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

This part of the study focuses on the adjustment of academic expatriate employees in a new academic work environment, which is, their interaction, socialisation and integration processes in discovering their footing. Therefore, this part of the study is informed by the Social Learning Theory, the U-curve adaptation model (cross-cultural adjustment model) and the Work Adjustment Theory. This implies that expatriate professionals and employees go through a learning process to understand, and master the culture of the host country so that they can integrate, interact and adjust to the new work environment. In achieving this, they should adjust in three adjustment spheres, namely; work adjustment, general adjustment and interaction adjustment by experiencing the four stages of cross-cultural adjustment, that is, honeymoon, cultural shock, adjustment and mastery. Furthermore, although expatriate professionals are expected to adjust at all levels of their lives such as; in the community where they live, at home and at work, the most crucial environment they should adjust to, is work environment where their maximum productivity is expected.

### **2.3.1 Social Learning Theory**

Social Learning Theory asserts that in addition to individuals learning as a consequence of their actions, individuals could also learn and behave through their observations of

other people's behaviour and by imitating the modeled behaviour (Bandura, 1977). This author, Bandura, maintains that observers pay more attention to models and modeled behaviours. Observers have higher expectations of efficacy and outcome of behaviours that are easy to emulate. According to Bandura (1986) and Rotter (1982) behaviour is the result of interaction between the characteristics of the individual and characteristics of the situation and such interactions represents the opportunity for self-development but within established boundaries. In this sense academic expatriates could learn through interacting, watching and mentally rehearsing behaviours of South Africans in the work and home environment. Therefore, it is critical that in their interaction with host country nationals (co-workers, students and community members) they observe and learn acceptable behavioural patterns, language, culture and so forth. However, the theory accords that individual differences and the willingness to learn should be taken into account when individuals go through a learning process.

According to Black and Mendenhall (1991) Social Learning Theory, unlike other theories of learning, integrates elements of both behavioural and cognitive theories of learning. In a strong way, cognitive learning theories explain how individuals learn and how they utilise the knowledge they acquire through learning. Behavioural learning theories argue that learning is determined by behaviour, its consequences and the associations individuals make between the two. Therefore, in their view, Social Learning Theory is a reasonable theory to use in examining cross-cultural learning process as it mediates the two ideologies. Moreover, Black and Mendenhall (1991) maintain that when expatriates take up jobs in host countries they do not know how to appropriately and effectively

behave in the host country so it becomes vital for them to learn about the country and social norms before personal and job productivity occurs. Academic expatriates, as may be the case in other adjustment cases, should learn by going through certain adjustment levels and stages as the U-Curve Cross-Cultural Adjustment model stipulates. This model is unpacked in the next section.

### **2.3.2 U-Curve Cross Cultural Adjustment**

The U-Curve cross cultural adjustment mode that was conceptualised by Lysgaard (1955) indicates that there are four stages of cross-cultural adjustment; honeymoon or euphoria, cultural shock, adjustment and mastery. According to this model an individual goes through each stage sequentially. The honeymoon or euphoria stage entails excitement about the new encounters in a new country. After this comes cultural shock whereby one gets surprised by the culture of the host country. The next stage is an adjustment stage which entails an understanding of the culture leading to the final, mastery stage. At mastery stage an individual masters the culture of the host country and can adjust to it. Further, Black and Mendenhall (1991) argue that it is possible that all individuals go through a U-curve pattern of adjustment but individual differences would cause the amplitude of the different stages to be different and also would cause these stages to occur at different points in time. For this reason, in some cases the adjustment may take a different form other than U-shape. Takeuchi and Chen (2013) observe that adjustment may also be influenced by prior international experiences of the expatriate academic. Therefore, individuals with prior international experience may experience the cross-



cultural model differently especially at work adjustment level. The work adjustment theory discussed below therefore addresses work adjustment of academic expatriates.

### **2.3.3 Work Adjustment Theory**

Work Adjustment Theory conceptualised by Dawis, England and Lofsquist (1964) states that each individual seeks to achieve and maintain correspondence with his/her environment and such correspondences are basic motives of human behaviour. This theory indicates that there are several kinds of environments, for instance, work, home, school, to which individuals must relate, achieve and maintain correspondence with. One environment may affect correspondence with other environments; however, work represents a major environment to which most individuals must relate (Dawis et al, 1964). Although this may be the case, individuals should strive to achieve a balance between different environments in which they live, as dissatisfaction in one environment may have a negative spill-over to another environment. Consequently, in a work environment such spill-over may be manifested through poor work performance on one hand or early departure from the job on the other hand. So, correspondence between various environments as well as correspondence between an individual and work environment is vital.

Correspondence at work is described in terms of the individual fulfilling the requirements of the work environment and the work environment fulfilling requirements of the individual (Wright & Kim, 2004). This is an exchange (give & take) process whereby both the individual and the work environment benefit. As correspondence increases the probability

of tenure increases, but, as correspondence decreases both probability of remaining in the job and the projected length of tenure decrease. Therefore, tenure is the most basic indicator of correspondence. On these grounds, failure to find correspondence, and so, failure to adjust at work may reduce tenure. In addition, Takeuchi and Chen (2013) points out that prior international experience has a positive linear relationship with an individual's work adjustment. These authors define international experiences as direct observation or participation in culturally related events or the state of being affected by such observation or participation. This includes, but is not limited to; experience gained while working, living, studying and or travelling abroad. In a way, an individual that has been exposed to these kinds of activities is more likely to adjust in a very short space of time compared to one who has not been an expatriate before.

In brief, expatriate professionals need to interact and integrate with stakeholders in their new work environment. This involves observing and learning acceptable behaviours. Moreover, they need to adjust at three levels; work adjustment, interaction adjustment and general adjustment. This will be achieved by going through four stages of adjustment namely honeymoon, cultural shock, adjustment and mastery. Lastly, although they need to adjust at all three levels, the work environment is the most significant environment they need to relate to. However, prior international experience could be a determinant of work adjustment. It is necessary to achieve correspondence between an individual's own requirements and the requirements of the work environment which in turn determines tenure. Prolonged tenure could also result from a well-nurtured work relationship where the conduciveness of the work conditions and environment play a crucial role. Amongst

other factors, conduciveness of new work environment could be determined by the amount of support offered to new employees to facilitate their adjustment process. On these grounds, the next section therefore discusses organisational support and adjustment issues.

## **2.4 ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT AND ADJUSTMENT**

The researcher is of the opinion that academic expatriates' adjustment process should be two-fold; on the one hand, universities should support academic expatriates to settle in the new space. On the other hand, academic expatriates should also take charge of their own adjustment through taking initiative, displaying positive organisational behaviour and willingness to learn. Also, Black et al. (1991) distinguish between individual, job, organisational and non-work adjustment factors that influence adjustment process of an individual. In which, *job factors* relate to the role clarity, role discretion, role novelty and role conflict, *organisational factors* relate to organisational culture novelty, social support and logistic help, *non-work factors* relate to culture novelty and family-spouse adjustment and *individual factors* relate to self-efficacy and skills. Therefore, the two parties; organisation and expatriates, have a role to play in the facilitation of the adjustment process.

### **2.4.1 Organisational support**

According to Shih, Lie, Klein and Jiang (2014) an organisation may serve as a support system when employees experience difficulties. Therefore, organisational support is crucial on how employees' emotionally and intellectually cope with daily work. Howe-

Walsh and Schyns (2010) point out that organisational support reduces the time the expatriate has to spend on adjustment related issues and facilitates smooth adjustment process to the new work setting, productivity commences without a waste of time. The most common difficulties expatriate professionals may face and therefore should be assisted with may include, among others relocation, support for their families, language and culture training for them and their families and extensive induction both on and off the job. Tharenou (2002) suggests that human resources of the host organisation should provide considerable support in cases when an individual is married and there are spousal concerns, support with relocation because this may involve family disruption and change, travel and accommodation support, cross-cultural training, training on global business knowledge and different business norms as well as find employment for a spouse and schools for children's education. According to Ren, Shaffer, Harrison, Fu and Fodchuk (2014) taking an international job leads to major psychological modification because of life changing forces for both expatriates and their families which may result in psychological and behavioural strains if unattended to.

Anderson (2001) emphasises that while accompanying partners may wish to work abroad, the difficulties of obtaining work may be related to work permit limits, language barriers, lack of job availability and unrecognised credentials. In view of these difficulties organisational support for an accompanying spouse and children is necessary and should be catered for in organisational policies such as relocation policy, induction policy, recruitment and selection policy and the like. Hence, Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) argue that human resources policies and practices should be designed in a way that

assists expatriates to perform at an expected level as early as possible. Therefore, an extension of organisational support to family members may ensure quick adjustment at all levels.

Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl (2009) state that expatriate adjustment is strongly related to some factors that may have nothing to do with work. They contend that adjustment literature on family-related issues has found that family related situations often influence the expatriate's ability to adjust and perform effectively. According to Saari and Judge (2004) researchers have speculated that there are possible forms of the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction, namely;

- 1) Spill-over, where job experiences overlap into non-work life and vice versa.
- 2) Segmentation, where job and life experiences are separated and have little to do with one another.
- 3) Compensation, where individual seeks to compensate for a dissatisfying job by seeking fulfilment and happiness in his or her non-work life and vice versa.

Because of a possible-spill over between one's job and one's social life, vice versa, an extension of support to family members becomes critical. According to Anderson (2001) upon arrival in their host countries, the majority of expatriates are generally expected to start work straight away. As a result, their daily routines are re-established and social contacts made, facilitating adjustments to their new environment. On the contrary, their families experience isolation and stress as they cope with the daily challenges of their new living environment. Therefore, organisational support becomes vital in assisting the

family members to adjust to the new location in terms of re-establishing social support system like church, school, etc. Such support may lessen the stress of both the expatriate and their families.

#### **2.4.2 Induction**

Induction is a process of socialising and familiarising new employees with their new working environment, policies, procedures, values and colleagues (Ndebele, 2013). This involves introducing them to their new roles and the surroundings in order to achieve the best out of them. When one joins an organisation, one possesses sets of expectations based on perceived assumptions about the new environment, and such are to be fulfilled. Induction is therefore expected to provide accurate and realistic facts about an organisation in order to bridge a gap between assumptions and reality. The bigger the assumptions, the longer it takes to close the gap between mere illusion and reality. Consequently, the more expectations the expatriate had, the longer it takes for one to adjust. Hence, induction should meet needs of new employees especially integration needs (Ndebele, 2014) and should be effective and efficient (Ndebele, 2013) and also comprehensive and informative.

Furthermore, Trowler and Knight (1999) describe induction as a professional practice designed to facilitate the entry of new recruits to an organisation and to equip them to operate effectively. According to Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2006) once employees are placed in their posts, it is important that they are introduced to the organisation, their tasks, supervisor and co-workers through induction, socialisation and

orientation. Although academic tasks may be similar in most countries, the actual workload, context and tacit assumption may vary so academic expatriates may need more information and support in understanding such (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010). Staniforth and Harland (2006) maintain that academics have to find their fit in a new community and unfamiliar colleagues and settings. This goes for even well-experienced academics as not all skills and knowledge they possesses could be transferable. Moreover, balancing personal life and new work demands in a new country could be disruptive for either experienced or novice academics.

Most common induction programmes involve, but are not limited to, orientation programmes and briefing sessions, assigning a mentor to provide guidance, providing policies, procedures, handbooks and so forth to introduce new academics to the new work environment (Ndebele, 2013). However, availing relevant information and suitable programmes may be one aspect of support. On the other hand, the organisational climate itself should be made conducive to reasonable working conditions to facilitate adjustment process.

### **2.4.3 Organisational climate**

Organisational climate is defined as consciously perceived environmental factors subject to organisational control (Adenike, 2011). Adenike further indicates that organisational climate consists of cognate sets of attitudes, values and practices that characterise the members of a particular organisation. Shih et al. (2014) point out that a supportive organisational climate is perceived to be crucial as it impacts on employees' well-being

and their job satisfaction. Therefore, conducive work environment and conditions are some critical aspects that facilitate the adjustment process of new academic expatriates. But, reasonable adjustment period should also be afforded. As organisations are concerned about productivity, the sooner an employee adjusts and adapts into the new environment the sooner he or she becomes productive. For productivity to take place, a well-balanced environment consisting of reasonable working conditions and reasonable support that promote maximum performance is what organisations should strive for, especially, in the case of academic expatriates as their employment comes at a higher cost than is usual.

For that reason, if universities are to achieve the best out of academic expatriates support should be made available to assist them to get their footing and fitting in the new environment. Luthans, Norman, Bruce, and Avey (2008) are of the opinion that employee's performance is the product of a combination of factors which include; 1) their own ability, 2) the support they receive to adequately perform their job and 3) the motivation to perform at high level. Therefore, one key component of employees' performance is the amount of support they receive which to a larger extent is facilitated by a good organisational climate. On this basis, academic expatriates should be assisted to adjust psychologically, emotionally and socially (holistically). Taking a close look at the nature of academic work, initiatives such as introducing them to the culture of surrounding community where they are most likely to conduct their community engagement and research-based projects as well as availing an interpreter to assist where necessary are some important areas of support.



## **2.5 ADJUSTMENT**

The researcher is of the view that academic expatriates, as role players, in their own adjustment should adopt a positive attitude towards the organisation and make a positive effort towards their adjustment. Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) point out that the organisations and individual's adjustment efforts should not be independent of each other. In this way, the parties should join their efforts. In a sense that, when one party pushes, the other pulls. Therefore, when the organisation has offered its support towards adjustment of academic expatriates, the ball is then put in the court of academic expatriates to make an effort to adjust to the new environment.

### **2.5.1 Individual Adjustment**

The researcher feels that adjustment in its broadness is a vital aspect of any change of environment especially in a foreign country. When one changes an environment a change in living conditions, life style and daily routine, including friends and colleagues, may be expected. This involves moving away from normal routines (comfort zone) to establishing new routines, learning new organisational cultures, local languages, local culture and so forth. Consequently, one has to adapt and adjust in order to fit into the new conditions. In this sense, Fomunyan (2012) states that migrants should be prepared to change their thinking, attitudes, speech, social conduct and they should look into how they negotiate their stay, whom they identify and associate with, and what strategies they use to integrate themselves into South African society.

Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl (2009) attest that expatriate adjustment is to a larger extent related to psychological orientations and attitudes towards international living, among others, wherein self-efficacy plays a major role. Self-efficacy is defined as the level of confidence that individuals have in their ability to accomplish tasks (Bandura, 1986). Moreover, self-efficacy has an impact on expatriates' perceptions of their ability to perform successfully in the new culture and on their skills to interact with host nationals and it has been found that expatriates with high level of general self-efficacy are better than those with low level of general self-efficacy on general adjustment, interaction adjustment and work adjustment. On similar grounds, scholars have established that female expatriates adjust better and quicker than male expatriates in relation to work and interaction adjustment (Cole, 2005; Haslberger & Brewster, 2007). However, these authors studied expatriates based in multinational firms who are often sent by their headquarters wherein the support is offered prior to departure. It is not clear yet if adjustment of self-initiated female academic expatriates could be similar. Therefore, proper programmes to facilitate adjustment of academic expatriates in terms of familiarising and socialising them with the new environment should be put place.

Black (1988) and Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) are of the view that adjustment in international assignment consists of three distinct aspects, namely:

- 1) Work adjustment which relates to the adjustments to the new job requirements
- 2) Interaction adjustment with individuals in the host country which relates to socialising with the host country nationals, and
- 3) General adjustment to the host country and living conditions abroad.

Black et al. (1991) proposed a comprehensive model of international adjustment. According to them, international adjustment refers to the level of comfort professional sojourner experiences during the stay abroad. Their model of international adjustment studied job factors, organisational factors, positional factors, non-work factors and individual factors. The model distinguished three main dimensions of expatriate adjustment; general adjustment (comfort associated with a various non-work factor), interaction adjustment (comfort associated with interaction with host country nationals) and work adjustment (comfort associated with the job assignment) (Osman-Gani & Rockstuhl, 2009). In an academic setting, over and above establishing relations with local nationals and getting to know the surroundings in general, one has to get familiar and comfortable with the nature of the teaching and learning environment, which entails getting to know, understanding and be able to deal with colleagues, students and communities at different levels.

Moreover, according to the U-Curve adjustment model by Lysgaard (1955) in a new environment one experiences mental and psychological adjustment, physical stress and family adjustment. In addition, one goes through certain phases, such as honeymoon, cultural adjustment, mastery and adjustment. Fomunyam (2012) points out that, amongst other elements, proficiency in local language and culture are central to adjustment. This is so because expatriates should be able to express themselves and they should also understand the cultural practices of the host community to enable alignment of thoughts and actions with those of the locals.

### **2.5.2 Cultural adjustment**

Culture is defined by Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman (2001) as the unique pattern of shared assumptions, values and norms that shape socialisation activities, language, symbols, rites and ceremonies of a group of people. Sales (2006) states that when looking at a culture within a business context three basic levels should be understood, which is, national culture, business culture/organisational culture and occupational culture. Sales go further to state that:

- 1) National culture is the most dominant that represents the broader culture of the people within political boundaries of the population,
- 2) Business culture focuses predominantly on how values, norms and beliefs influence business operations. It tells people the correct and acceptable ways to conduct business in society while the occupational culture highlights cultural traits adopted by specific occupational groups, and
- 3) Organisational culture refers to the character of a company's internal work climate and personality which is underpinned by specific values, beliefs, business principles, and traditions that are ingrained in employees' behaviour.

Graf and Mertesacker (2009) state that to provide international staff with intercultural competence which leads to effective as well as appropriate behaviours with expatriate professionals is an important challenge in organisations. These authors carry on to state that the multicultural construct of international competence consists of knowledge about the foreign culture, intercultural sensitivity and effective intercultural behavior.

Therefore, understanding of culture goes a long way and it is a critical component of cross-cultural adjustment at almost all levels of life as it facilitates cross-cultural adjustment process. Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl (2009) state that cross-cultural adjustment refers to the level of psychological comfort which one feels in a foreign environment, and different job assignments require a various degree of contact with the local culture which may be very different from or similar to the home culture. When people move across cultures clashes in values, principles, customs and traditions should be expected. Moreover, they have certain sets of expectations about what the new culture may be compared to their own culture. In this sense, the bigger the cultural clashes or the gap between the two cultures, the longer it takes for one to adjust to the host culture, and the bigger the cultural shock. Furthermore, Vrosmans and van Engen (2013), drawing from the unmet expectations theory, indicate that when cultural differences and adjustment problems are undermined the results will be unmet expectations which impact negatively on adjustment.

Van Aswegen (2009) points out that the extent to which an expatriate is able to successfully cope with adjustment process will depend on the foreignness of the culture, that is, how different the culture is to the person's own culture, known as culture shock. Slemer and Luring (2009) are of the view that the more different the host culture appears from the expatriate's own culture the more difficult adjustment will be. In contrast, Vrosmans and van Engen (2013) argue that adjustment in the host country of a similar culture as a home country may be as difficult as adjusting to a cultural distance country. Katrinli and Penbek (2010) describes culture shock as a primary set of emotional

reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning. Du Plessis (2009) is of the view that culture shock leads to negative feelings about the host country and its people and a longing to return home. In a way, when academic expatriates get exposed to the host culture they get shocked by the strange practices and the new way of doing things. However, through the learning process and regular interaction with host country nationals, they observe and practice new behavioural patterns. Eventually, they get to understand the new culture and their cultural fluency will then facilitate their adjustment in all spheres of interaction as their self-efficacy may have been improved. Therefore, they reach a recovery stage where their attitude and negative feelings about the host culture change. However, this is just one aspect of adjustment; another aspect is language proficiency. This involves understating of the local language and ability to use the language as means of interacting with locals.

### **2.5.3 Language proficiency**

Theoretically, language plays a major role in connecting people from different cultural background. Through the use of language people express themselves and convey messages; hence, it is critical for newcomers in the community to understand local languages. Zapf (1991) points out that not being understood or taken seriously when you communicate is one major frustration in a new culture. Therefore, he suggests that a newcomer should learn and practice effective communication according to the language and rules of the new setting. Language proficiency facilitates adjustment process of expatriates in two way; 1) it enables them to communicate effectively with the locals and

it boosts their confidence thereby bridging language barrier and 2) through demonstration of ability to communicate and interact with the locals they receive acceptance and support from the locals while they observe, learn, and practice local culture and acceptable behaviour.

Huff (2013) found a strong association between language proficiency and interaction adjustment as well as general adjustment. Huff further reported a negative relationship between language proficiency and work adjustment. This is because, in various instances, the local language is different from a business language. In this sense, the local language could be the dominant language used to interact amongst locals; however, it may not be the one used for business communication purposes. Even if this is the case, academic expatriates should still learn at least to a basic level the local language to enable them to interact and socialise with locals. This is more so because of their community engagement obligation whereby they should serve and interact with surrounding communities who may not have command of the business language used in a particular organisation but they can only interact in their local language. Therefore, in the higher education space understanding of local languages is critical not only for interaction and general adjustment but for work adjustment as well.

Added to the above, Ren et al. (2014) affirm that host country language fluency enables expatriates to communicate and obtain information about the host culture which in turn facilitates their adjustment. In this sense, expatriates are enabled by fluency in the host language to easily integrate into their new working space. Lack of fluency in the language

of the host country is likely to create language and cultural barrier to communication which make adjustment almost impossible.

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has explored available and relevant literature on academic skills in South African higher education and the challenges that come with the necessity of recruiting expatriate academics. The chapter also explored literature on how the South African higher education sector needs to devise novel interventions of retaining existing and experienced academic staff that should be used to mentor and develop novice academics into a refined calibre of academics. The standard and quality of education in the Republic of South Africa seems to be in need of improvement if the calibre of graduates is to match competitive and international standards. Regarding the important questions of equity in employment, besides recruiting skilled academic expatriates to booster the quality of South African education and satisfy the demands of industry, there is a need to improve the numbers of female academics as this remains critically low and flies in the face of democratisation and development. Finally, the question of expatriate academics adjusting into their host working environment in South Africa seems to require equal effort and commitment from the host institutions of higher education and the academic expatriates themselves that must take the initiative to adapt and adjust into the cultural landscape of their new work environment. The following chapter fleshes out the qualitative and quantitative techniques that are deployed as the methodology of this study.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

---

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter delineates what constitutes the methodology and design of the study. Such technical instruments of the study as sampling, data collection methods and data analysis are explained. Noteworthy, the chapter carries out an exposition of how quantitative methodologies and qualitative methodologies are brought together in this study to give the research an enriching multidimensional and multidisciplinary approach. For that reason, the study achieves a sound scientific standing which gives credibility, reliability and usability to its observations, arguments and conclusions on the shortage of academic skills in South Africa and the challenges that come with the intervention of recruiting expatriate academics.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

By design, this study employs a mixed methods approach to research. The mixed methods approach entails that the study mobilises and deploys in equal measure both the quantitative and qualitative techniques of research and analysis. Mixed methods research approach have the ability, arguably, to throw new perspectives on research questions, increase the credibility of results, demonstrate generalisability and provide deeper insights that explain why things take place (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2012).

Similarly, Wilson (2010) is of the view that data triangulation, which the mixed methods approach allows, has several advantages such as leading to the discovery of variance that may have been neglected by the use of one research method. Wilson influentially defined triangulation as collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and

settings, using a variety of methods. For that reason, this study uses methodological triangulation which Wilson (2010) describes as the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Wilson indicates that the triangulation approach can reduce the risk of chance associations and systematic biases. In a word, the mixed methods approach tends to benefits from both the strengths of the quantitative and the qualitative approaches to research and study. Therefore, the mixed methods research approach was necessary for this study in gathering relevant data from various sources using different research instruments that assisted the researcher in presenting a greater diversity of views, increased confidence, validity and credibility of results, uncovered deviant dimensions and provided stronger inferences.

The use of mixed methods is also supported by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) who are of the view that multiple viewpoints increase the accuracy of results and present complete, holistic and contextual depiction of the units in the study. In this instance, the mixed method approach refers to a collection (through a questionnaire) and analysis of quantitative data as well as a collection (through semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaire) and analysis of qualitative data. This was done through explanatory sequential design. In mobilising and deploying the mixed methods approach to research, this study benefits from the advantages of multidisciplinary, the uses of a diversity of disciplines to examine a subjects, which arguably gives enriching results.

### **3.2.1 Explanatory sequential design**

The explanatory sequential design approach, which this study adopts, suggests that collection and analysis of quantitative data be done prior to qualitative data collection (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). Therefore, the researcher utilised a two-phase approach to the study. Firstly, the researcher collected and analysed quantitative data. Secondly, the researcher later conducted qualitative study in order to follow-up on certain unclear and unexplained findings of quantitative data (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). This approach was followed so that clarity seeking questions that explain and expand our understanding of the findings of quantitative data could be addressed during semi-structured interview sessions. Moreover, the approach enabled the researcher to expand and elaborate on findings that were not attained by the statistical procedures. The explanatory design was executed in four steps that scholars have clarified (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). In this study, the explanatory approach was applied as follows:

**Step 1:** A survey of academic expatriates employed at the KZN institutions of higher learning was conducted.

**Step 2:** The research instrument was validated and quantitative data was coded, cleaned, captured, analysed using various statistical tests, interpreted and findings were presented.

**Step 3:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with line managers, academic expatriates and human resources practitioners. The researcher also administered a structured questionnaire with human resources practitioners. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. Relevant themes and sub-themes were identified.

Report writing was done based on the themes and sub-themes and their relevance to the research questions.

**Step 4:** Linkages and connection of the findings of the quantitative and qualitative data were made in order to present holistic answers to the research questions and make appropriate recommendations.

Noteworthy, in the process of deploying both the quantitative and qualitative research techniques, the researcher enhanced observation and gained a much deeper penetration and understanding of the subject on site in the institutions of higher learning. The quantitative and qualitative research phases are discussed in the following sections.

### **3.2.2 Phase 1: Quantitative phase**

The following subsections provide an exposition of the quantitative techniques that the study deploys:

### **3.3.3 Population and sampling**

In terms of the research population and research sample, the quantitative study targeted academic expatriates employed by the selected KZN higher education institutions. According to the lists of academic expatriates supplied by the institutions under study, 277 foreign academics were employed in these institutions. These include 29 from Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) 26 from Durban University of Technology (DUT), 56 from University of Zululand (UNIZULU) and 166 from the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

To start with, the entirely identified research population was invited by the researcher to participate in the processes of the research at their availability and willingness. Later, purposive sampling was employed in selecting and sampling those academics expatriates that because of their experiences were in a position to supply direct and enriching responses to the objectives and questions of the study.

Sampling is defined as the drawing of elements for the total population to represent the whole (Neuman, 2011). Furthermore, Ulin et al. (2002) describe sampling as the process of selecting a number of units for a study in such a way that the units represent the larger group from which they were selected. Participants who were selected to participate in the study meet the following inclusion criteria: 1) Academic expatriates employed in academic institutions in KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa, 2) Academic expatriates that have worked for a period of one year or more, 3) Academic expatriates aged 20 years and above and 4) Academic expatriates that are willing to participate in the study.

### **3.3.4 Research Instrument**

The subsections below carry out an exposition of the research instrument as used in this study:

### **3.3.5 Pilot study**

The researcher began the quantitative phase with focus group discussions aimed and soliciting and the inviting input of the subjects into the research instrument that is the questionnaire. The questionnaire as used in the study was originally established by Black

(1988) and has since been adopted, adapted and used in various studies relating to the adjustment of expatriates which reported alpha of 0.78 on general adjustment, alpha of .88 on interaction adjustment and alpha of 0.68 on work adjustment and an overall alpha of 0.74 was reported (Okpara, 2010). The original of Black's questionnaire was amended by Flaspoler (2007) who further reported an overall alpha of 0.88. So, arguably, the questionnaire has been developed and polished as a research instruments.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher further amended and developed this questionnaire to make it relevant to an academic environment. Furthermore, in order to ensure that the questionnaire fully addressed all adjustment concerns and challenges, after permission was granted to conduct the study in the targeted higher learning institutions, the researcher conducted focus group meetings to solicit views of the subjects which were used to formulate a draft questionnaire. Subjects were invited through telephonic and email request to voluntarily participate in focus group discussions. Four focus group discussions of between six to ten participants were held with at least one group from each participating institution.

The draft questionnaire was distributed to a manageable sample of twenty-five (25) subjects from the UKZN, UNIZULU, UNISA, and MUT for pilot purposes. This pilot study intended to address issues of validity and reliability. After the pilot study, the questionnaire was further revised. The reliability and validity tests performed on the final questionnaire reflected Cronbach's alpha of 0.75 for general adjustment, 0.85 for interaction adjustment and 0.87 for work adjustment. An overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 was reflected for the entire questionnaire. This testing of the draft questionnaire was necessary to further fortify its research instrumentality.

### **3.3.6 Final questionnaire**

The tested and validated questionnaire consisted of four parts; the first part aimed to collect biographical data of participants, like age, the country of origin, tenure, qualifications and so forth. The second part consisted of four items relating to interaction adjustment the third part consisted of twelve items relating to general adjustment and the fourth part consisted of nineteen items relating to work adjustment. Participants were asked to respond to 5 points on a Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree. For an example, the questionnaire had statements such as, I am able to adjust to interaction with host country nationals in general, in the host country I am able to eat and enjoy the food. Over and above other data that is solicited, the validated questionnaire was designed to collect information relating to work adjustment, interaction adjustment and general adjustment of the academic expatriates into their host academics institutions.

### **3.3.7 Data collection procedure**

As part of the data collection procedure, the questionnaire was distributed manually to members of the entire identified population of the study. The lists of academic expatriates provided by Human Resources Department of each institution consisted of the biographical details such as name, surname, designation, department, country of origin, email address, contact numbers, office location, date employed by the institution, employment status, ID number and staff number. Based on certain biographical



information such as office location and number, participants were approached individually through the door to door office visits. In this same manner, those that eventually did not return the filled questionnaire for one reason or another were traced and some were identified as those who did not wish to participate in the study. In total the questionnaire research and data collection procedure yielded 120 responses.

Further, in order to increase the response rate, the researcher further developed an electronic questionnaire which was sent to the participants who could not participate in the manual survey. However, only 22 additional responses were received from the electronic survey. Prior to administration of the questionnaire whether manually or through an online survey, participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time and participation is voluntary. They were also assured of complete anonymity and confidentiality, and that no personal details will be included in the study report. While written informed consent was taken from the administered interviews online, survey participants showed their acceptance by their answers to the questions.

### **3.3.8 Data analysis**

The data that was collected was entered into the computer system, cleaned and checked, coded and then analysed using Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Various tests were performed to analyse, interpret and make meaning of the data, namely, Factor Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, ANOVA, Pearson Correlation and the Independent sample T-test. Descriptive statistics were used to make meaning of the raw data which included; frequencies and percentage tables, mean standard deviation,

skewness and kurtosis. The mean was used as a measure of location of data. The mean is one of the measures of central tendency and an example of a numerical descriptive. Measures of central tendency refer to measure that locates the centre of the distribution. The arithmetic mean also known as average is common and useful measure of centre identified. The mean is a good example of a point estimator (Lind et al., 2008).

Standard deviation is one of the measures of dispersion. According to Lind et al. (2008) standard deviation takes into account all the values in a data set and measure the spread by looking at how far the observations are from their mean. Sakaran (2010) states that frequencies refer to the number of times various subcategories of a certain phenomenon occur, from which the percentage and the cumulative percentage of their occurrence can be easily calculated.

The One-Way ANOVA helps to examine the significant mean differences among more than two groups on an interval or ratio scaled dependent variable. Particularly, the One-Way ANOVA was used to find out whether demographic characteristics play any role in General Interaction, General Adjustment and Work Adjustment of foreign academic. The independent sample T-test was used to establish differences between interaction adjustment, general adjustment and work adjustment of male and female academic expatriates. According to Pallant (2013), independent sample T-test is appropriate to compare mean scores of two different groups of respondents.

Further, the Pearson product moment Correlation coefficient test was used as preliminary analysis in order to establish if any linear relationship existed between the various constructs and demographic variables. The coefficient of the correlation technique is used

to measure the degree of the association between two bivariate variables. Lind et al. (2008) maintain that coefficient of correlation describes the strength of the relationship between two sets of interval-scaled or ratio-scaled variables.

In addition, Factor Analysis was used to assess the dimensionality of scales used in the study. Particularly the Exploratory Factor analysis was used to explore the factor structure of General Adjustment, Interaction Adjustment and Work Adjustment measures that are used in the study.

### **3.4 PHASE 2: QUALITATIVE PHASE**

The following subsections present an exposition of the qualitative techniques that were mobilised and deployed in this study:

#### **3.4.1 Population and sampling**

This study used the targeted population made out of HR practitioners and officials (i.e. those responsible for recruitment and selection of academic in scarce skill areas such as Engineering, Sciences and Accounting), line managers supervising expatriate academics of the four KZN higher education institutions under study. As a result, purposive random sampling was used to select a sample of knowledge rich HR practitioners from each participating institution. The selected individuals were approached based on their knowledge and involvement in the recruitment and selection of academics in the scarce

skill areas. In total eight (8) HR Practitioners were approached for an interview through email and telephonic communication.

Further, simple random sampling was used to select a total of twenty-five (25) expatriate academics and fifteen line managers from all institutions using the name lists of the relevant departments of all academic expatriates provided by the human resources department of these institutions. That is, five expatriate academics were selected per institution from UNIZULU, DUT & MUT and ten were selected from the UKZN. Three (3) line managers were selected per institution from UNIZULU, DUT & MUT and six (6) were selected from the UKZN. The researcher decided on this sample size based on the population size from each participating institution. From the staff list provided by the higher education institutions, the researcher selected participants after every second count; the third count was then selected to participate.

### **3.4.2 Research instrument**

The following subsections provide an exposition of the qualitative use of the structured questionnaire as a research instrument:

#### **a) Structured questionnaire**

Qualitatively, this questionnaire was aimed to collect data relating to the skills shortage, challenges in employing expatriate academics, and expatriates support programmes to assist expatriate academics in adjusting to their host country and educational institution.

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher who invited input and views of HR Practitioners in the institutions under study. It consisted of three parts; the first part aimed to collect basic information about the institution(s) such as the name of the institution, the second part consisted of four items which asked information relating to skills shortage, the third part consisted of five items relating to employment process and the fourth consisted of three items relating to institutional support programmes for academic expatriates. Participants were asked to select a relevant or suitable answer(s) from a given set of answers. Based on the objectives of the study, the questionnaire consisted of four broad categories; including 1) academic skills shortage, 2) disciplines that experience skills shortage, 3) academic labour turnover, 4) employment processes and 5) support offered to academic expatriates by the institution.

#### **b) Semi-structured interviews**

Over and above the questionnaire, semi-structured open-ended questions were formulated for specific groups and interviews were conducted with the HR Officials, line managers and academic expatriates themselves. Some of the questions asked included 1) in your view, what are some of the adjustment challenges faced by academic expatriates in your institution? 2) how long did it take you to get your work permit, and 3) what are the challenges relating to attracting academics expatriates in scarce skill areas? During interview sessions certain views that emanated from the quantitative study and the structured questionnaire distributed to HR Practitioners were confirmed and some disputed. Face-to-face interviews were conducted.

### **3.4.3 Data collection procedure**

In order to understand the nature of academic skills shortage from the Human Resources perspective, a structured questionnaire was distributed to the Human Resources Departments of the institutions under study. The researcher had meetings with Human Resource Practitioners from these institutions in order to concurrently assist them to respond to the questionnaire while soliciting relevant information to substantiate the responses. With regards to semi-structured interviews, participants were approached individually for interviews through telephonic or verbal one on one request. Appointments with individuals were confirmed at the time that was convenient for participants to partake in the interview sessions. All interviews were conducted at a time and a place for convenience to the participants. The researcher asked follow-up questions in order to ensure common understanding and interpretation of information as well accuracy of information provided. Each participant gave consent for the interviews to be conducted and recorded. On an average, each interview lasted for a time period of 30 minutes depending on the nature of responses and related follow-up questions.

### **3.5 RESEARCH ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

In both research phases, participants were informed of their right to voluntary participation and the benefits that could be reaped from the outcome of the study. Participants were further assured that their participation and all the collected information were to be treated with strict confidence as their participation was to remain anonymous. The participants

were informed that no disclosure of their personal particulars was to be made. The right to withdraw was also communicated to participants. The study did not in any way cause harm to participants, invade their privacy or involve deception. Permission to conduct research and ethical clearance was requested and granted through the Registrar's Office of the various academic institutions and the Human and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (protocol reference number: HSS/1352/013D).

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

The qualitative data collected was analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of identifying, analysing and interpreting patterned meanings or themes in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The six-phase data analysis approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2013) was used to analyse data and to identify themes. The research familiarised herself with the data through reading it a number of times and noting the key points. The data was then coded and labelled in relation to the specific research questions. Themes relevant to the research questions were identified and constructed together with sub-themes. The relevance of the identified themes to the research questions and their accuracy in relation to the data was verified. Further, the relationship between themes and sub-themes as well as coherence was ensured. The themes were named according to their level of fitness to the data. Lastly, the researcher then began to draft a report guided by the themes and subthemes. Based on the data, a total of six themes emerged as outlined in Table 13.

### **3.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has delineated the mixed methods approach research that is mobilised and deployed in this study. The mixed methods approach research, as defended by scholars, benefits from the strengths of both the quantitative and qualitative research techniques and therefore enriches the study by giving it a measure of multidimensionality and even multidisciplinary. Scholars have also indicated that studies that deploy mixed methods tend to enjoy more reliability and dependability in terms of their observations, arguments and conclusions. The following chapter presents the results of the quantitative techniques that were used in this study.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE STUDY**

---

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a presentation of the quantitative data that was collected using the techniques that are outlined in the previous chapter. Alongside the data that is presented, analysis and interpretation of the data are presented in order to make sense of the data and answer some of the questions that the study poses. In doing this, the appropriate statistical software known as Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) which performs tests such as Exploratory Factor Analysis, Pearson Correlation, Descriptive Statistics (Minimum, Maximum, Mean, Standard Deviation, and Skewness & Kurtosis), ANOVA and T-Test was used.

Quantitative data presented in this chapter was collected from academic expatriates employed at selected KwaZulu-Natal Higher Education Institutions. According to the data provided by these institutions, at the time of the study, a total population of two hundred and seventy-two (272) academic expatriates was employed in the selected KwaZulu-Natal higher education institutions. The questionnaire was distributed to the entire population and a response and participation rate of 142 (52%) was registered. The results of the study are presented in the sections that follow below.

#### **4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE**

As illustrated in Table 1, the majority of respondents (57%) were employees of the UKZN, while other institutions were represented by 20% for MUT, 14% for UNIZULU and 9% for DUT. The majority of these participants (61%) were employed as lecturers. Moreover, 34% of respondents had worked for their institutions for a period of between 2–5 years and 33% had lived in South Africa for a period of between 5 -10 years. The majority (59%) of the respondents were employed permanently whilst 32% were employed on fixed term contract basis.

In terms of gender and age, 80% of respondents were male with the majority (38%) between the ages of 31-40 years. Interestingly, 61% of respondents had Doctoral degrees and 38% had Masters. The participants were on various types of work permits; with 39% of them having obtained permanent residence status. Further, respondents were based

in various faculties across the institutions but the majority of them were from the Sciences (32%) and Engineering (30%) faculties while the least were from Education (8%).

According to the respondents, South Africa gets chosen as the destination for various reasons but the most prominent reasons being the education system (28%) of the country, growing economy (25%) and good research facilities (18%). Amongst other reasons, the majority of respondents chose host institutions based on the availability of job opportunities (33%), good reputation (28%) and good research facilities (16%). Notably, these academic expatriates as the results indicate believe South Africa to be a good destination and site for academic work.

**Table 1: Characteristic of the participants**

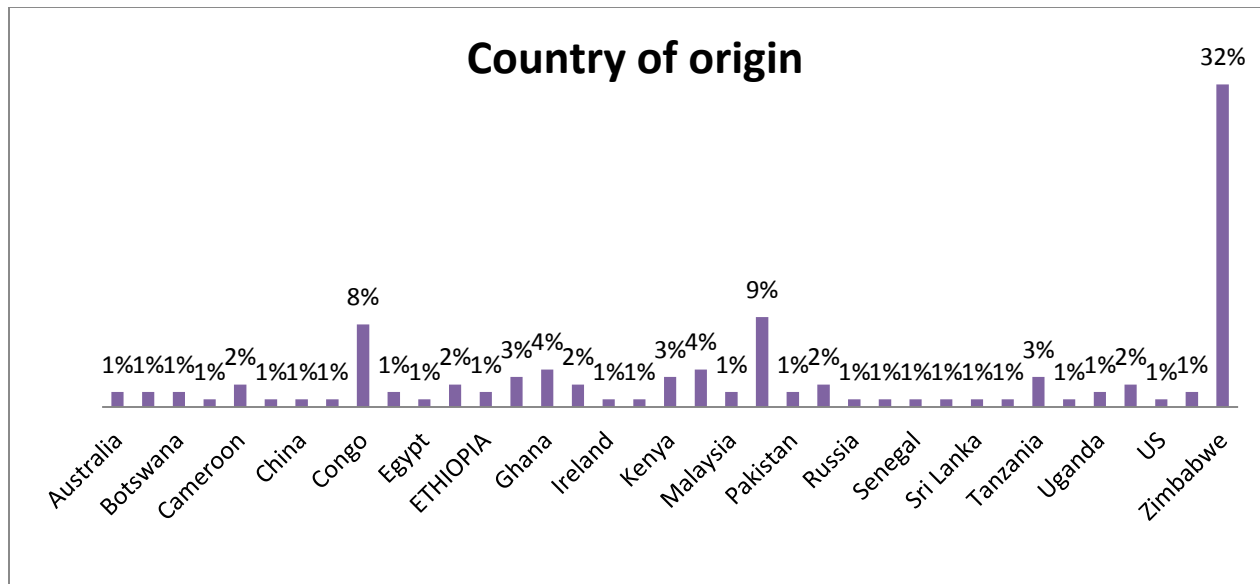
Characteristic	N	%	Characteristic	N	%
<b>Institutions</b>			<b>Type of work permit</b>		
MUT	28	20	General work permit	22	15
UNIZULU	20	9	Critical skills permit	31	22
DUT	13	14	Refugee work permit	5	4
UKZN	81	57	Quota permit	12	8
<b>Occupational levels</b>			Permanent residence	56	39
Professor	17	12	Other	11	8
Associate Professor	11	8	Missing	5	4
Senior Lecturer	18	13	<b>Age groups</b>		
Lecturer	86	61	20-30 years	13	9
Tutor	9	6	31-40 years	54	38
Missing	1	1	41-50 years	40	28
<b>Tenure</b>			Above 50 years	32	23
Less than 2 years	29	20	Missing	3	2
2–5 years	48	34	<b>Participation per faculty</b>		
5–10 year	33	23	Education	12	8
More than 10 years	27	19	Engineering	43	30
Missing	5	4	Humanities	19	13
<b>Employment status</b>			Management	15	11
Permanent	84	59	Sciences	46	32
Fixed term contract	46	32	Missing	7	5
Part-time	8	6	<b>Reason for choosing SA as host country</b>		
Missing	4	3	Academic development	15	11
<b>Gender</b>			Better opportunities	3	2
Male	113	80	Close to home	9	6

Female	25	18	Democracy	3	2
Missing	4	3	Education system	40	28
<b>Time lived in South Africa</b>			Family reasons	5	4
Less than 2 years	13	9	Good economy	35	25
2-5 years	30	21	Research facilities	25	18
5-10 years	47	33	Missing	7	5
More than 10 years	46	32	<b>Reasons for choosing host institution</b>		
Missing	6	4	Job opportunity	47	33
<b>Qualification</b>			Good reputation	40	28
Doctoral degree	83	58	Head hunted	6	4
Masters degree	52	37	Personal/family reasons	3	2
Honours degree	1	1	Contributions	3	2
Bachelors degree	1	1	Research facilities	23	16
Missing	5	4	Missing	7	5

The multiple imputation method was applied to deal the problem of missing values. Area of specialisation / discipline and the department to which respondents were attached were above 5% threshold of missing valued (Gaskin, 2014) and were therefore excluded in the reporting.

Respondents originate from various countries across the globe, however, the majority; 32% originates from Zimbabwe, 9% from Nigeria and 8% from the Democratic Republic of Congo (See figure 1).

**Figure 1: Country of Origin**



#### 4.3 RELATIONSHIP AMONG STUDY VARIABLES IN THE STUDY

As a preliminary analysis, the Pearson Correlation was performed to establish a linear relationship between demographic variables and various constructs. The researcher performed this test in order to establish and comprehend relationships between various constructs and variables. The relationships are therefore presented in Table 2; however, the researcher limited the discussions to the variables that yielded significance of less than 0.05. The results showed a significant positive relationship between the institution and work adjustment ( $r=0.215$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The results suggest that, work adjustment could depend on the institution one works for. In this sense, academic expatriates who work for a certain institution may adjust quicker.

**Table 2: Pearson's Product Moment Correlations for the variables**

\* $p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ ;

+ $r \geq 0.30$  – Practically significant relationship (Medium effect); ++  $r \geq 0.50$ – Practically significant relationship (Large effect)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Institution	1									
2. Occupation	-.095	1								
3. Tenure	-.240**	.440***+	1							
4. Gender	-.076	-.039	-.034	1						
5. Time stayed in SA	-.165	.266**	.688***++	-.133	1					
6. Qualification	.312***++	-.470***+	-.279**	-.037	-.198*	1				
7. Work Experience	.088	.489***+	.364***+	.050	.286**	-.262**	1			
8. Age	-.099	.574***++	.477**	.019	.308***+	-.350***+	.463***+	1		
9. Interaction Adjustment	.126	-.073	-.199*	.181*	-.056	.177*	.101	-.013	1	
10. General Adjustment	.157	-.016	.084	.180*	.206*	.154	.218*	.103	.507***++	1
11. Work Adjustment	.215*	-.145	-.015	.038	.045	.242**	.111	-.172*	.329***+	.591***++

The results further show significant negative relationship between variable interaction adjustment and tenure ( $r = -0.199$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). One may infer that the length of service (tenure) is negatively related to interaction adjustment. Moreover, significant positive relation exists between interaction adjustment and gender ( $r = 0.181$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) as well as between general adjustment and gender ( $r = 0.180$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, certain gender

categories tend to adjust better in both interaction and general adjustment.

Further, the results suggest a significant negative relationship is demonstrated through qualification and the time one has stayed in South Africa ( $r = -0.198, p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, academic expatriates who have stayed longer in South African are likely to have lower qualifications. But, the time one has stayed in South Africa has a significant positive relationship with general adjustment ( $r = 0.206, p < 0.05$ ). The possibility is that, the longer one stays in South Africa the better general adjustment he or she experiences.

Interestingly, significant positive relationship was noticed between interaction adjustment and qualification ( $r = 0.177, p < 0.05$ ). One may assume that those with higher qualifications experience better interaction adjustment. Moreover, significant positive relationship was observed between general adjustment and work experience, ( $r = 0.218, p < 0.05$ ) suggesting that those with vast academic work experience may attain better adjustment. Lastly, a significant negative relationship exists between work adjustment and age. Therefore, the older one becomes the lesser work adjustment challenges he or she experiences while the younger the person is the greater adjustment challenges he or she experiences respectively.

#### **4.4 FACTOR ANALYSIS**

Exploratory Factor analysis was used to assess the dimensionality of scales used in the study. According to Pallant (2013) factors that signify connections amongst a group of related variables are identified through factor analysis. Therefore, the exploratory factor

analysis established and grouped together all common variables. The validity and reliability tests performed on the scales then yielded the following results.

#### 4.4.1 General Adjustment

Exploratory Factor analysis was conducted on the General Adjustment 12-item scale (See Table 2). The Principal component analysis (PCA) with direct Oblimin rotation was used. The KMO measure of sampling Adequacy was 0.857 and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Item 12 was problematic as it failed to reach the cut-off point of 0.4; therefore, it was excluded in all further analyses. Two factors emerged but only two items (2 and 8) loaded on the second factor. All the items explain 60.63% of the variance in the General adjustment. Therefore, a decision was made to adopt the uni-dimensional for the General adjustment scale in further analyses. The scree plot for general adjustment scale is therefore presented in diagram 1 below:

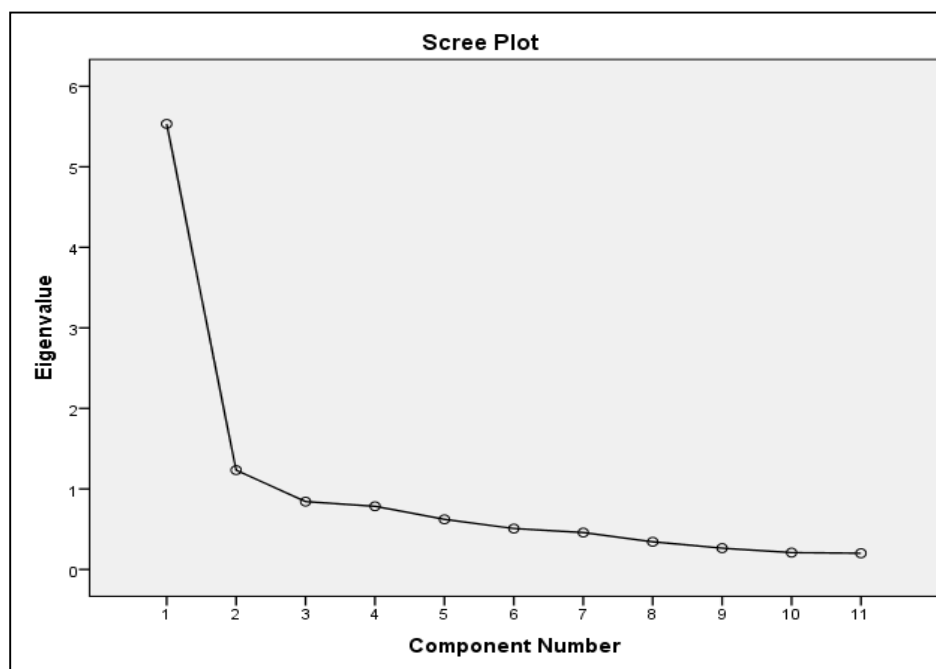
**Table 3:** *Factors Loadings (item-component correlations) of the General Adjustment items in the SA sample (N = 142) as obtained by PCA*

	Pattern Matrix	
	Component	
	Factor 1	Factor 2
GAD7	0.866	
GAD1	0.840	
GAD4	0.779	
GAD11	0.764	
GAD3	0.752	
GAD9	0.728	
GAD10	0.706	
GAD5	0.643	
GAD6	0.606	



GAD2	0.909
GAD8	0.689
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.	

**Diagram 1:** *Scree plot for general adjustment scale*



#### 4.4.2 Work Adjustment

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the Work Adjustment 19-item scale. Four sub-scales did not emerge for this study sample as depicted in the original instrument used (Black, 1988). Four components did not load perfectly as well as three component solutions. Therefore, a forced two component solution was conducted on the Work Adjustment scale and 8 items loaded on factor one which had many items from general

work interaction subscale. Items 4 (*I am able to adjust to working with host country co-workers*) and 5 (*I am able to make use of management and leadership techniques to accommodate the needs and expectations of employees and business associates in the host country*) from business culture subscale also loaded on the general work interaction subscale and this factor 1 was renamed General Work Interaction.

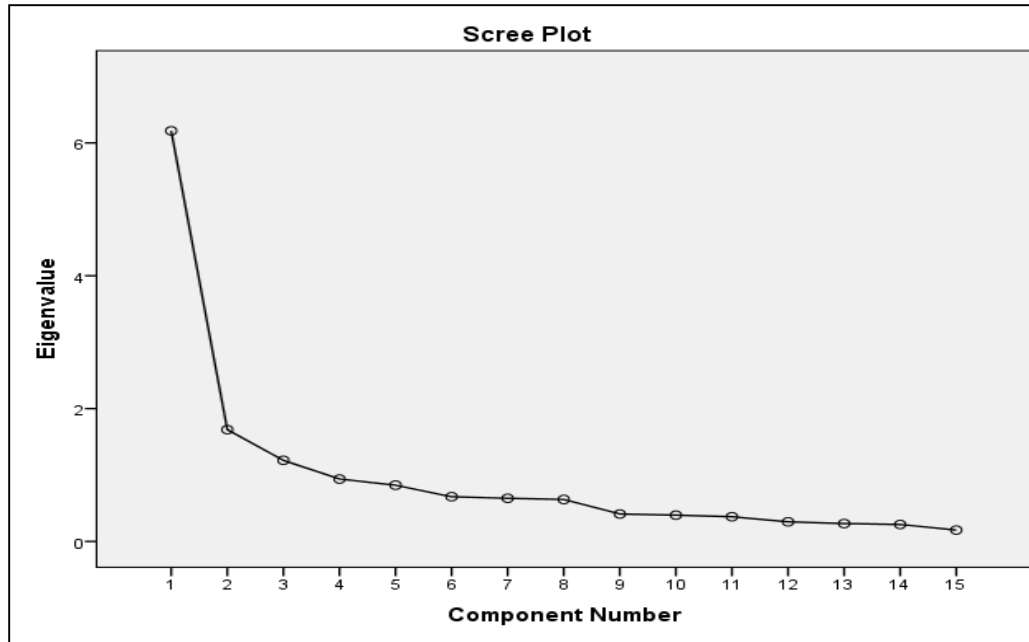
**Table 4:** Factors Loadings (item-component correlations) of the Work Adjustment items (N = 142) as obtained by PCA

Pattern Matrix		
	Component	
	General Work interaction	Work Activities
WAD3	0.914	
WAD18	0.734	
WAD14	0.715	
WAD15	0.658	
WAD4	0.650	
WAD5	0.642	
WAD17	0.536	

WAD19	0.471	
WAD8		0.815
WAD13		0.781
WAD9		0.722
WAD10		0.717
WAD6		0.649
WAD7		0.609
WAD16		0.467
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.		

Seven items loaded on factor 2 which retained five items from the work activities subscale together with item 6 (*I am able to understand the university policies and Procedures*) and 7 (*I am able to interact with students and staff at all levels*) from the business culture, this factor was renamed Work Activities. Items 1, 2, 11 and 12, did not load perfectly on any factor and were therefore excluded in further analyses. Diagram 2 presents the scree plot for the work adjustment scale:

**Diagram 2:** *Scree plot for work adjustment scale*



#### 4.5 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MEASURES

Descriptive statistics of the measures used are presented in Table 5. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for all measuring instruments but Interaction adjustment were acceptable based on the guidelines provided by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994): general adjustment ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$ ,  $r = 0.80$ ), overall Work adjustment ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$ ,  $r = 0.90$ ), General work interaction ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$ ,  $r = 0.84$ ), Work activities sub-scale ( $\alpha \geq 0.70$ ,  $r = 0.86$ ). However, the Interaction adjustment scale attained a coefficient of 0.60 which is also acceptable (Pallant, 2013).

**Table 5:** *Descriptive Statistics and Reliability for the Scales*

Variable	Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	$\alpha$
Interaction Adjustment	4	4.00	20.00	13.3224	2.83229	.040	.251	0.60
General Adjustment	11	22.00	55.00	41.4944	8.09131	-.759	.294	0.80
Overall Work Adjustment	15	25.00	70.00	49.4560	10.17286	-.681	.174	0.90
Factor 1-Gen work Interaction	8	12.00	35.00	24.1703	5.77943	-.491	-.644	0.84
Factor 2- Work activities	7	9.00	35.00	25.6393	5.51033	-.815	.075	0.86

$\alpha$  = Cronbach alpha coefficient; SD = Standard deviation,

Furthermore, the Skewness values reflected in table 5 reveal that data is almost normally distributed. These values range between 0.40 and 0.815 which is closer to zero. Therefore, one assumes data is from a normal distribution. Similarly, Kurtosis values ranges between .075 and -.644 which is also closer to zero. Kurtosis results reflect less variation of responses in all the factors. Tables 6 – 8 below present frequency tables and percentages:

#### 4.6 ASSESSING ACADEMIC EXPATRIATES' INTERACTION ADJUSTMENT

The majority of respondents, about 53% felt that they were unable to proficiently use of the local language. This is reflected in the 25.35% of respondents who indicated that they strongly disagree and through 27.46% of respondents who indicated that they disagree with the statement “Q2.1 - I am able to demonstrate proficient use of local language”. However, 21.8% of the respondents were neutral about their language proficiency. This may indicate some level of being unsure or lack of confidence in their language

proficiency. Only about a quarter, 25% of respondents were confident about their language proficiency. This can be observed through 16.20% of respondents who agreed and 9.15 of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement.

**Table 6: Percentages of the sample endorsing Interaction adjustment items**

Item No	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I am able to demonstrate the proficient use of the local language.	25.35%	27.46%	21.83%	16.20%	9.15%
2	I am able to correctly interpret and utilise nonverbal cues (i.e. body language) specific to the host culture.	5.63%	17.61%	30.28%	33.80%	12.68%
3	I am able to adapt easily to developing and maintaining new social relationships.	6.38%	2.84%	19.15%	56.03%	15.60%
4	I have the ability to demonstrate interpersonal skills appropriate to the host culture.	1.42%	3.55%	17.02%	57.45%	20.57%

About 46.5% of respondents were positive that they can correctly interpret and utilise nonverbal cues such as body language. This is reflected in 33.80% of respondents who agreed and 12.68% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement “Q2.2 - *I am able to correctly interpret and utilise nonverbal cues (i.e. body language) specific to the host culture*”. But, 30.28% of the respondents were neutral about their ability to interpret and utilise nonverbal cues. In this way, these respondents are not certain or they lack confidence in this particular area of communication.

Further, about 79% of respondents were confident that they can easily develop and maintain social relations. This is reflected in 56.3% of respondents who agreed and 15.6% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement “Q2.3 – *I am able to adapt easily to developing and maintaining new social relationships*”. Furthermore, about 78% of respondents indicated that they had the ability to demonstrate interpersonal skills appropriate to the host culture. This is revealed through 56.3% of respondents who agreed and 15.6% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement “Q2.4 – *I have the ability to demonstrate interpersonal skills appropriate to the host culture*”.

#### **4.7 ASSESSING ACADEMIC EXPATRIATES’ GENERAL ADJUSTMENT**

The majority of respondents, about 77% enjoy the food in the host country. This is demonstrated through 47.89% of respondents who agreed and 28.87% of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement “Q3.1 – *I am able to eat and enjoy the national food of the host country*”. Also, the majority of respondents, about 78% indicated that they were able to adjust to the transportation system in the host country. This is demonstrated through their responses to the statement “Q3.3 – *I am able to adjust to the transportation system in the host country*”. Again, the majority of respondents, about 82% indicated that they were able to adjust to general living conditions of the country. This is demonstrated through their responses to the statement “Q3.4 – *I have ability to adjust to the general living conditions in the host country*”.

Overall, the respondents demonstrated that they were comfortable with the living conditions and atmosphere. In a way, they have adjustment quite well in as far as living conditions and atmosphere is concerned. Moreover, about 75% of respondents are able

to tolerate the hygienic standards of host country nationals. This is observed through the responses of a participant who agreed and strongly agreed with the statement “Q3.2- *I am able to tolerate the hygienic standards of the host country nationals*. Also, about 75% of respondents have adjusted to the shopping in the host country which is reflected in the statement “Q3.8 – *I have the ability to adjust to the shopping in the host country*”. Generally, the respondents seemed to have adjusted well in the area of general living standards of the host country.

**Table 7:** *Percentages of the sample endorsing general adjustment*



Item No	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Living conditions and atmosphere</b>						
3.1	I am able to eat and enjoy the national food of the host country.	4.93%	2.82%	15.49%	47.89%	28.87%
3.3	I am able to adjust to the transportation system in the host country.	4.23%	4.93%	12.68%	52.82%	25.35%
3.4	I have the ability to adjust to the general living conditions in the host country.	5.63%	5.63%	6.34%	52.82%	29.58%
3.5	I am able to adjust to the climatic and environmental differences of the host country.	2.11%	11.97%	7.04%	43.66%	35.21%
3.6	Back home I maintain a living atmosphere which is closely comparable to the living atmosphere in the host country.	1.42%	7.80%	20.57%	44.68%	25.53%
3.7	I am able to adapt to differences in security in a new cultural environment.	1.42%	9.93%	12.06%	52.48%	24.11%
3.9	In my host country I am able to use the Entertainment facilities as the host nationals do.	2.84%	8.51%	21.28%	47.52%	19.86%
3.10	I am able to adjust to the quality of education and schooling system of my children in the host country.	3.57%	5.00%	22.14%	46.43%	22.86%
<b>General Living Standards</b>						
3.2	I am able to tolerate the hygienic standards and manners of the host country nationals.	13.38%	2.82%	9.15%	52.11%	22.54%
3.8	I have the ability to adjust to shopping in the host country.	2.82%	4.93%	16.90%	44.37%	30.99%

#### 4.8 ASSESSING THE ACADEMIC EXPATRIATES' WORK ADJUSTMENT

The majority of respondents felt that they were able to adjust to various work-related areas such as working hours, working with co-workers and interacting with staff and students at various levels. In addition, respondents felt that they were able to demonstrate sensitivity to the local culture and they were confident that they understood the business culture.

However, 59% of respondents indicated that they were unhappy with the coordination of work permit application as they disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement “Q4.19 - I am happy with the coordination of the work permit application process within the university”. Therefore, in the main, the majority of respondents have adjusted well in general work interaction with exception to the discomfort caused by the work permit application process.

Generally, the respondents have adjusted well in the area of work activities as they indicated that they understood university policies and procedures, they get adequate support from their respective universities and they felt a sense of fulfilment. The next section presents the results of ANOVA.

**Table 8: Percentages of the sample endorsing work adjustment**

Item No	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>General Work Interaction</b>						
<b>4.3</b>	I am able to adapt to the time required for working at this university.	11.97%	7.04%	7.75%	45.07%	28.17%
<b>4.4</b>	I am able to adjust to working with host country co-workers.	2.11%	2.82%	12.68%	50.70%	31.69%
<b>4.5</b>	I am able to make use of management and leadership techniques to accommodate the needs and expectations of employees and business associates in the host culture.	3.52%	8.45%	13.38%	50.70%	23.94%
<b>4.14</b>	I feel that I am welcomed and accepted by host nationals/colleagues and we have good working relationship	7.04%	4.23%	23.24%	43.66%	21.83%
<b>4.15</b>	I am able to demonstrate sensitivity to local	6.38%	6.38%	15.60%	57.45%	14.18%

	customs and norms when teaching new skills or providing students with information.					
<b>4.17</b>	I am able to understand the university culture	12.77%	6.38%	17.73%	44.68%	18.44%
<b>4.18</b>	I have worked / attended conferences / visited / studied / lived in South Africa before my employment at this university	9.22%	4.26%	12.77%	41.84%	31.91%
<b>4.19</b>	I am happy with the coordination of the work permit application process within the university	51.43%	7.86%	12.14%	17.14%	11.43%
<b>Work Activities</b>						
<b>4.6</b>	I am able to understand the university policies and procedures	3.52%	2.82%	16.90%	45.77%	30.99%
<b>4.7</b>	I am able to interact with students and staff at all levels	2.84%	7.80%	13.48%	39.01%	36.88%
<b>4.8</b>	I get adequate support from the university to enable me to adjust at work.	9.15%	5.63%	22.54%	42.25%	20.42%
<b>4.9</b>	I am able to adjust to my current work-related tasks and responsibilities.	5.63%	7.04%	10.56%	44.37%	32.39%
<b>4.10</b>	I am comfortable working in this university	2.82%	2.82%	21.13%	47.89%	25.35%
<b>4.13</b>	I feel that I stand a good chance of promotion in the near future	14.08%	7.04%	28.87%	39.44%	10.56%
<b>4.16</b>	My expectations are fully met and I feel fulfilled working at this university	10.71%	13.57%	34.29%	27.86%	13.57%

#### **4.9 DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP DIFFERENCES PERTAINING TO GENERAL INTERACTION, GENERAL ADJUSTMENT AND WORK ADJUSTMENT**

The One-Way ANOVA test showing differences between various constructs and demographic characteristics are presented in Table 9. Where necessary, Post Hoc test was performed to establish where the significant mean differences were observed. The results revealed that a significant General Adjustment means differences between foreign nationals at UNIZULU and UKZN as well as MUT,  $F = 3.227$ ,  $p = 0.025$ . The post-hoc test showed that UNIZULU differs significantly with those at UKZN and those at MUT. The *effect size* is 0.8 which is medium according to Cohen (1988).

Based on the number of years lived in South Africa, significant mean differences were found in General Adjustment and Work adjustment. For General Adjustment, those who have stayed in South Africa for 2-5years differ significantly with those who have been in South Africa for more than 6 years, ( $F = 3.809$ ,  $p = 0.012$ ) as well as with those who have lived in South African for more than 10 years. The effect size which is medium is 0.8 according to Cohen (1988). For Work Adjustment, those who have lived in South Africa for 2-5years only differs significantly with those who have lived in South Africa for 6-10 years,  $F = 3.205$ ,  $p = 0.025$ . Age, tenure, occupational level and nature of employment did not have any significant effect on the various types of adjustment levels of expatriate academics.

**Table 9:** ANOVA of General Interaction, General Adjustment and Work Adjustment based demographic characteristics

ANOVA						
Variable	Age				F	P
	20-30	31-40	41-50	50+		
Interaction Adjustment	14.17	13.57	12.69	14.00	1.487	0.221
General Adjustment	42.45	41.58	40.92	44.61	1.430	0.237
Work Adjustment	54.64	51.72	49.20	48.65	1.472	0.225
Tenure						
	< 2 years	2-5years	6-10yrs	10+		
Interaction Adjustment	14.45	13.42	13.06	12.59	1.920	0.130
General Adjustment	42.24	40.96	41.79	44.38	0.925	0.431
Work Adjustment	51.58	50.26	49.69	51.50	0.257	0.856
Institution						
	UNIZULU	UKZN	DUT	MUT		
Interaction Adjustment	12.70	13.39	15.08	13.75	1.885	0.135
General Adjustment	37.40	43.06	43.30	43.21	3.227	0.025*(effect size=0.8)
Work Adjustment	47.65	49.72	53.00	54.07	2.245	0.086
Occupational Level						
	Tutor	Lecturer	Sen Lecturer	AssocProf	Prof	
Interaction Adjustment	13.67	13.60	13.83	13.00	13.00	0.288 0.885
General Adjustment	43.89	42.00	43.65	41.73	42.00	0.267 0.899
Work Adjustment	54.44	51.15	50.11	47.27	48.47	0.915 0.457
Period of Stay in South Africa						
	< 2years	2-5	6-10	10+		
Interaction Adjustment	14.61	13.39	13.33	13.58	0.685	0.562
General Adjustment	42.07	38.20	42.96	44.18	3.809	0.012* (effect size=0.8)
Work Adjustment	53.62	45.97	52.42	5051	3.205	0.025*
Nature of Employment						
	Perm	FixedCon	Part-time			
Interaction Adjustment	13.04	14.09	14.38		2.311	0.103
General Adjustment	42.18	42.30	41.63		0.024	0.976
Work Adjustment	50.02	50.76	53.63		0.494	0.611

\* $p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$ ;

#### 4.10 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN GENERAL INTERACTION, GENERAL ADJUSTMENT AND WORK ADJUSTMENT

As demonstrated in the table 10 below, significant differences between males' ( $M = 13.25$ ,  $SD = 3.094$ ) and females' ( $M = 14.64$ ,  $SD = 2.018$ ;  $t = -2.143$ ,  $p = 0.034$ , two tailed) exist on interaction adjustment among expatriate academics. This suggests that female foreign academics have a better interaction adjustment than their male counterparts. The effect size (Eta squared = 0.03) for this difference was found to be small (Cohen, 1988).

Moreover, the table reveals a significant difference between males' ( $M = 41.63$ ,  $SD = 8.217$ ) and females' ( $M = 45.44$ ,  $SD = 5.24$ ;  $t = -2.789$ ,  $p = 0.037$ , two tailed) exist on general adjustment among expatriate academics. This finding thus indicates that female expatriate academics have a better general adjustment than their male counterparts. The effect size (Eta squared = 0.03) for this difference was also found to be small (Cohen, 1988).

**Table 10:** *Differences between General Interaction, General Adjustment and Work Adjustment based gender*

Variable	Males		Females		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Interaction Adjustment	13.25	3.094	14.64	2.02	-2.143	0.034*
General Adjustment	41.63	8.217	45.33	5.24	-2.789	0.037*
Work Adjustment	50.29	10.24	51.28	9.06	-0.442	0.659

The results however did not yield any significant difference between males ( $M = 50.29$ ,  $SD = 10.24$ ) and females ( $M = 51.28$ ,  $SD = 9.06$ ) with regards to work adjustment ( $t = -$

0.442,  $p > 0.05$ ).

#### **4.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has presented and provided a preliminary analysis of the data that was collected through quantitative techniques of the study. The categories of interaction adjustment, general adjustment and work adjustments are the areas where respondents were examined for their adjustment. Difficulties with the local language and communication with host nationals amongst academic expatriates was noted. There is also palpable discomfort if not disappointment with formalities involving the processing of work permits for academic expatriates at the South African Home Affairs. Evidently, those expatriate academics that have stayed longer in South Africa indicated meaningful adjustment levels while those that have not stayed longer indicated challenges and struggles with adjustment. Interestingly, there are noticeable indications that female academic expatriates adjust to their host country much more easily compared to their male counterparts. The following chapter fleshes out the data that was collected through qualitative techniques of the study.

## **CHAPTER 5 RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE STUDY**

---

## **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents and analyses the data that was collected through qualitative techniques of the study. The first part of the chapter deals with the data collected from human resources practitioners of the selected institutions of higher education in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. These practitioners present from their perspective the causalities and challenges of recruiting academic expatriates. Human resources practitioners also deal with the ways and means in which institutions of higher learning try to offer support to academic expatriates in their adaptation and adjustment to the host country and host institutions. The second part of the chapter presents and analyses the data that is related to the factors that influence the recruitment and selection of academic expatriates. Thematic analysis is deployed in the analysis of data in this chapter.

## **5.2 PART ONE: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF ACADEMICS IN SCARCE SKILLS**

Human resources practitioners encounter the challenge of shortage of academic skills and the challenge of recruiting academic expatriates directly. In order to understand the nature of academic skills shortage from the Human Resources Practitioners' perspective, a structured questionnaire was developed and distributed to the Human Resources Departments of the institutions under study. The researcher held meetings with Human Resources Practitioners from these institutions in order to concurrently assist them to respond to the questionnaire while soliciting relevant information to substantiate their responses. Based on the objectives of the study, the structured questionnaire consisted of four broad categories; including 1) lack of qualified applicants, 2) disciplines that



experience skills shortage, 3) academic labour turnover, 4) employment process and 5) support offered to academic expatriates. The overview of these categories and the responses is highlighted in table 11 below.

**Table 11:** *HR Professionals Responses on challenges relating to recruitment and selection of academics*

Category	Responses		
<b>Lack of qualified applicants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Above 200 academic vacancies</li> <li>- No/poor response</li> <li>- SA candidates do not meet requirements</li> <li>- Posts advertised several times</li> </ul>		
<b>Fields/Disciplines</b>	<u><b>Engineering</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Control</li> <li>- Civil</li> <li>- Electrical</li> <li>- Electronics</li> <li>- Survey</li> <li>- Quantity Surveying</li> <li>- Mechanical</li> </ul>	<u><b>Natural Sciences</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agriculture</li> <li>- Bioresources</li> <li>- Chemistry</li> <li>- Genetics</li> <li>- Biochemistry</li> <li>- Nursing</li> <li>- Medicine</li> <li>- Virology</li> <li>- Chemical Pathology</li> <li>- Pathology</li> <li>- Zoology</li> <li>- Botany</li> </ul>	<u><b>Other</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accounting</li> <li>Law</li> <li>IT</li> <li>Science Education</li> <li>Humanities</li> <li>Management</li> </ul>
<b>Labour Turnover</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Between 5-10% and 10-20% turnover</li> <li>- Workload</li> <li>- Low salary</li> <li>- Poor job satisfaction</li> <li>- Employer expectations</li> <li>- Growth</li> </ul>		
<b>Employment process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Takes about 3-4 months to fill academic position</li> <li>- Takes about 1 year to employ foreign nationals</li> </ul>		

	- Major delays in the recruitment and selection process
<b>Support system</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Induction programme</li> <li>- Relocation</li> <li>- Given 12 – 24 months' probation period with no extension</li> </ul>

As shown in table 11, the Human Resources Departments of the institutions under study indicated that over 200 academic vacancies are available in their institutions despite several unsuccessful attempts to fill these positions. Unfortunately, some of the institutions could not provide statistics of vacant posts; as a result, this information could not be presented in this study. This is also despite the use of various media such as national newspapers, social networks and media, professional bodies, other referral websites such as SANT, Best Jobs among others where academic vacancies are advertised to possibly attract sufficient numbers of qualified personnel.

It was revealed that some contributing factors leading to an accumulating number of vacant academic posts could be associated with the fact that when academic posts are advertised, poor response and applications are received or no response and applications are received at all. In some cases, applicants who respond to advertised positions do not meet the minimum requirements. This notion tends to be worse when it comes to applications from South Africans especially black South Africans. Depending on the seniority of the post, the minimum requirements for academic posts include, but are not limited to, relevant qualification, teaching or lecturing experience, research publications, postgraduate supervision, and industrial experience in some instances. Clearly, the combination of these stringent requirements seems to be unreasonably high for targeted

groups such as those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, a category in which many black South Africans are.

The results as shown in Table 11, indicate that on average, about five applications are received when academic posts are advertised; however, the response rate varies according to the seniority of the post. Although according to these institutions the situation tends to be critical in all Engineering and Natural Sciences fields, disciplines such as Accounting, Law, Information Technology, Science Education and some disciplines in Management and Humanities also experience skills shortage.

The HR practitioners revealed that labour turnover was considerably high. The majority of the institutions experience labour turnover of about 5-10% but one institution indicated about 10-20% labour turnover per annum. In most of these cases, labour turnover was associated with dissatisfaction with the workload, low salaries, unreasonable expectations from the employer and lack of growth opportunities in their institutions. When academics positions are to be filled, it takes an average of about 3-4 months to employ an academic. However, it takes about one year to appoint an academic expatriate; as a result of major delays that are experienced in the recruitment and selection process.

Moreover, all the institutions under study indicated that they utilise induction programmes as means to assist academic expatriates in settling in their institutions. However, over and above induction, academic expatriates are relocated from their home country to South Africa or from anywhere in the country. Some institutions extend the relocation benefit to family members as well. Most of these institutions have a probation period of

12 months for all academic staff including academic expatriates. At least one institution offers a 24 month probation period to all academic employees including academic expatriates. Through probation, academic expatriates are assisted to settle in and adjust properly to the new work environment; therefore, the longer the probation period, the better for both the academic expatriate and the institutions as chances of productivity are enhanced.

### **5.3 PART TWO: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF ACADEMIC EXPATRIATES AND CHALLENGES OF ADJUSTMENT**

The data from the structured interviews with HR Professionals, academic expatriates and line managers revealed that six main themes affect the recruitment and selection of academics in scarce skills areas and adjustment of academic expatriates. These themes relate to the attraction of academics, work permit application process, labour turnover, cultural diversity, language barrier as well as support and adjustment. The themes and sub-themes are presented in table 12:

#### **5.3.1 Themes**

**Table 12:** *Themes and Sub-Themes*

Theme	Sub-themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attraction of academics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scarcity of academic skills</li> <li>- Employment Equity Act</li> <li>- Academic Appointment and Promotion Criteria</li> <li>- Remuneration of academics</li> <li>- Competition</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work permit application process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Immigration Act and Home Affairs Regulations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour turnover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of job satisfaction</li> <li>- Retention, Succession and Talent Management</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cultural distance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language barrier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local language</li> <li>- Business language / communication</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and adjustment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Induction</li> </ul>

### 5.3.2 Attraction of academics

The different respondents shared their experiences relating to attracting academics especially attraction of academic talent in the scarce skill areas. The experiences of the participants interviewed indicated that attracting a qualified academic is influenced by four (4) main factors; scarcity of academic skills, Employment Equity Act no. 55 of 1998, academic appointment and promotion criteria, remuneration of academics and competition. These factors are discussed below:

#### ***Scarcity of academic skills***

All respondents were in agreement that academic talent has proven to be a scarce resource in South Africa. This has been evident by; amongst others, the inability to attract and place academics timeously, disruptions of academic year plan in some institutions due to unavailability of lecturers to offer certain modules, heavy workload for academic staff, contracting academic staff from other universities to offer classes on ad hoc and part-time basis, contracting experts from the industry to offer evening and part-time classes, offering part-time lecturing positions to senior students and offering of classes on weekends:

*“The university has adopted a policy that all academic positions be advertised at senior lectureship level and upward in order to attract experienced academics. At this level of the academic hierarchy serious difficulties are experienced in attracting a right pool of applicants. On average five applications are received most of which do not meet minimum requirements. This has led to some academic posts being vacant for long periods and at times part-time lecturers are employed to offer classes. One of the departments I serve is full of part-time Lecturers from one of our neighbouring higher learning institutions.”* (Interview 1, September 2014).

Although the majority of human resources professionals interviewed shared the same sentiment, some of them indicated that recruiting academic expatriates with scarce skills

is not the same in all disciplines. There are disciplines that tend to be more problematic than others. Some of these trends are outlined below:

*“In my area of responsibility, it is very difficult to attract academics in Auditing and Accounting. People in these fields do not have masters and doctoral degrees. It is also not easy to attract Chartered Accountants (CAs) because of the salaries offered by the University.” (Interview 2, September 2014).*

Notably, the public sector and other industries outside academia tend to pay more competitively than the universities, and they tend to provide much more comfortable working hours and conditions. Another response was that:

*“In my school, after the third attempt of trying to fill two academic positions was unsuccessful I then requested permission to headhunt. I sent the advertisement to the University of Nairobi, University of Ghana and University of Kenya. Even then, none of the suitably qualified individuals was interested in applying for the position because of the university pay structure including benefits. I eventually attracted a young intelligent academic from the University of Swaziland who served the University for only three months after that he was poached by another University outside the*

*borders of South Africa. As a result, the two critical academic posts remain vacant for about three years now.” (Interview 5, June 2015).*

From the above narrative, it seems that the non-competitive nature of academic salaries in academic institutions makes it difficult for professionals in the industry who have adequate qualifications to be employed. For some, even when through individual effort line managers manage to secure a candidate from outside South Africa, such academics do not stay for long as they are enticed by other institutions in or outside the country. One of the key strategies adopted by some of the institutions according to some of the participants was to attract young talented academics through the “developmental lecturer initiative”. It is envisaged that when these young talents acquire their terminal degrees while serving as lecturers, would go a long way to fill some of the academic skills gap currently being experienced by academic institutions. In a word, institutions may opt to develop their own talent from among their students. A narrative expressing this view from an HR practitioner is shown below.

*“Attraction of academic talent is problematic. We all compete over scarce and shrinking academic talent, all of us, national and international universities. I hope that the university would be able to close the academic skills gap with the new initiative on developmental lecturers. Currently, about one hundred (100) developmental lecturers were contracted in various academic departments of the institution in order to grow academic skills/pool.*



*Once this programme reaches its maturity we hope to reap good fruits. Although I do not expect that the academic skills gap will be filled completely especially in the fields such as Engineering where one can hardly get individuals with a master's degree but some departments will be able to get the gaps closed.” (Interview 6, June 2015).*

Seemingly, the development of own talent by the universities from among their own students is not an assurance against the shortage of academic skills in the future. Chances exist as has been observed above that once qualified, experienced and skilled these young academics may elope to the private sector or get poached by other industries that offer much greener pastures than what academia in South Africa is presently offering.

### **Employment Equity Act no. 55 of 1998 (EEA)**

Compliance with provisions of the EEA has been promoted and enforced to the extent that the requirements and the provisions of the Act have been infused to other relevant university policies in order to ensure linkage and enforcement. This initiative is fully supported at all levels of the university structures including organised labour. However, human resources practitioners and some line managers have witnessed some adverse effects of the initiative especially in relation to successful and effective execution of their duties relating to recruitment and selection of suitably qualified academics, one respondent noted that:

*“If, for the second or third time we are unable to attract an employment equity candidate, line management should write a motivation to the head of school requesting to employ outside employment equity plan. If the school director is convinced by the reasons stated in the motivation he approves, only then we can consider any other applicants including academic expatriates”*  
*(Interview 3, September 2014).*

Notably, the employment equity factor as noble as it is, tends also contribute to delays in seeking and finding skilled and qualified academics to fill up vacancies in institutions of higher learning in South Africa.

### **Appointment and promotion criteria**

Every organisation aspires and strives to be the best through its high standard practices and the quality services offered. Similarly, higher education institutions adopt the same ideology especially because of their mandate to train and produce well-qualified graduates who are entrusted to build the future of the country and contribute to the economic development of the country. It is for this reason that higher education institutions insists on employing the best calibre of academics so that the best calibre of graduates could be produced in turn. If this does not happen, higher education institutions would be complicit employing mediocrity and producing the same as well as compromising standards of education in the country. Hence, the appointment and promotion criteria of the higher education institutions have been made stringent instead

of being relaxed to respond to the academic skills crisis and the search for quality standards. One would have argued that, since the battle of attracting academic talent continues, let the appointment and the promotion criteria be dropped to a level where a greater number of academics will be attracted and appointment to fill the academic vacancies vacuum. However, irrespective of the state of academic skills in the country academic appointments and promotions criteria have remained stringent in the interest of quality standards. The response below reflects some of the concerns around the issue:

*“The minimum requirements for academic appointments in this university are unreasonably strict. Some of the academics leave the institution because they cannot be appointed or promoted to the next academic level they look for growth opportunities outside the university.”* (Interview 19, June 2015).

For better or for worse, the aspiration for quality standards closes many local academics out of the opportunities in higher education in South Africa.

### **Remuneration of academics**

Remuneration of academics is seen as one contributing factor to the shortage of skilled personnel in the higher education sector in South Africa. Remuneration strategies of the higher education institutions have been said to be uncompetitive. Hence, the inability of higher education institutions to attract appropriate academic talent has been attributed to the lack of competitiveness of academic salaries. However, it is interesting to know that

at least one university in KZN has decided to take action against this, as indicated in the response below:

*“It is never easy to fill vacancies in all departments in my School. Departments such as Genetics, Engineering, Mathematics, Statistics, Analytical Chemistry, Computer Sciences and so forth are always problematic when it comes to attracting the right academic talent. As a result, the University has introduced discipline specific salary scales. These salary scales, according to Ramchannel Salary Benchmark System are competitive with all the sectors including the private sector. The University is hoping that these benchmarked discipline specific salary scales will bring about change in the attrition rate of academics in scarce skills disciplines. However, at this point no difference or meaningful changes have been noticed.”* (Interview 3, September 2014).

As all qualified and skilled professionals seek fitting reward for their skills and talent, some competent and gifted academics shy away from the higher education sector in South Africa because of low salaries. Improving salary scales may be one approach to attracting qualified and skilled personnel.

### **Labour Market Competition**

Despite some efforts by some universities, competition with other sectors remains an area of concern. The South African labour market has witnessed an abundant supply of unskilled labour and undersupplies of skilled labour. The higher education sector is no exception; undersupply of academic skills has been a reality. For this reason, competition over skilled talent has been increasing. In the higher education sector, the source of enhanced competition within the sectors as well as with other sectors such as private, public, and semi-private includes; but is not limited to, stringent academic appointment and promotions criteria, uncompetitive academics salaries, high expectations and demands of the academic career, heavy workloads that lead to work dissatisfaction and so forth. Therefore, when academics establish that the competitors offer favourable working conditions and competitive salaries they are likely to be lured. The following response attests to some of the experiences witnessed by line managers within the higher education institutions under study:

*“Because the majority of the institutions will be searching the same academic skills, our academics are then poached by other universities. Sometimes even government and private sector poach them which part of the reasons we always have unfilled vacancies.”*  
(Interview 17, June 2015).

Although this is the case, the HR Practitioners felt strongly that the stringent academic appointments and promotions criteria have partially contributed to the increased competition faced by the institutions under study. Hence, some of the academics who

have attached little hope to mobility and career growth at their own institutions begin to avail their skills for growth opportunities in the labour market either within the sector or even outside, hence, the intense labour market competition. The response below indicates one of the HR Practitioners' views in this regard:

*“It has been difficult to compete with other sectors which do not need a Ph.D. as a minimum qualification. Most of the academics in my school do not have PhDs and the university implemented a policy few years ago that all academics should be in possession of a Ph.D. We have lost good academics that for some reasons find it difficult to acquire a Ph.D. Some of them join other universities within the region and throughout the country but some join government departments and the private sector.”* (Interview 10, June 2015).

Notably, the want of Ph.D. qualifications, for better or for worse creates another restriction that closes out many academics and creates a further shortage of academic skill in South Africa.

### **5.3.3. Work permit application process**

The higher education institutions under study are, without much choice, bound to attract academic talent outside South Africa because of academic skills shortage in South Africa. However, according to the respondents such an exercise is exhausting and daunting, and

at times it is futile as there have been cases when potential employees decline the offer of employment due to the delays in issuing work of permits by the South African Home Affairs Department.

For instance, one university indicated that for employment equity reasons their employment policies do not support employment of academic expatriates even when it is obvious that a South African cannot be sourced. In order to get a non-South African on board, one has to motivate as to why such international academic talent is necessary. Therefore, they found this to be a daunting and exhausting task because they have to repeat the same exercise on several occasions, in fact, almost every time they have to employ and fill in a vacancy.

The narratives according to the HR Practitioners showed that the work permit application process is the most challenging stage of employing a foreign national. However, the challenges vary from case to case. In some cases, the process takes a reasonable time and in other cases the process takes long. Perhaps this also has to do with what kind of permit one is applying for. For instance, the practitioners observed that general work permit takes longer than the quota and scarce or exceptional skills permit. Therefore, the challenges relating to the Immigration Act and the home affairs regulations are discussed below.

### **Immigration Act no. 3 of 1997 and Home Affairs Regulations**

It seems that the provisions and the execution of the Immigration Act have adverse effects for higher education institutions under study as they point to the delays that negatively impact recruitment of expatriate academics. Although human resources departments of employing institutions assist to their best possible effort, it seems that nothing further can be done to fast track the work permit application process as the response below attests:

*“For me, the most difficult stage of employing a foreign national has been to assist with the work permit application. In one case I had to submit the documents twice to the Department of Home Affairs because the original submission was said to be missing. The Department of Home Affairs processes takes long to be finalised. It is even worse that they have centralised the work permit application process. The shortest time I had to wait for a foreign national to get a general work permit was six (6) months and the longest time was about a year.”* (Interview 9, June 2015).

Moreover, the HR Practitioners are of the view that their recruitment and selection processes get compromised and delayed by other external forces that they do not have control over. This also impacts negatively on their obligation to fill vacant positions timeously and comply with relevant policies and procedures. However, despite the challenges involved in the employment of academic expatriates, line managers recognise that academic expatriates are a great source of academic talent and should be recruited; rather, the work permit application process needs to be reviewed to improve its efficiency. Another respondent noted that:



*“It took me about a year to join this institution after receiving an employment offer. At some point I thought the Department of Home Affairs was not going to approve my application because nobody ever told me a straight answer except to say it was still in process. I cannot recall how much I lost in monetary terms through phone calls and personal visits to their offices. At the time when the work permit was approved, I had already started applying for jobs in other universities and had been to two job interviews already.” (Interview 5, June 2015)*

If this response is representative of what academic expatriates experience and feel about the processes of getting a work permit at the South African Home Affairs Department, then the situation is really critical. Clearly, a lot of time is consumed in waiting while the academic skills gap continues to impact negatively on quality higher education in the country.

#### **5.3.4 Labour turnover**

Besides the challenges of attracting academic talent into the country, there seems to be another challenge with the labour turnover. Academic talent is very mobile, especially in scarce skill areas where the shortage is severe. This emanates from job satisfaction challenges that are caused by dissatisfaction with remuneration, benefits, lack of promotion opportunities, lack of recognition and unsatisfactory work environment, to

mention but few of the factors. Moreover, the situation is aggravated by the lack of retention strategies and programmes such as succession and talent management in institutions of higher education in South Africa.

### ***Lack of job satisfaction***

Amongst other factors, lack of job satisfaction amongst academics is attributed to heavy workloads, other work related demands such as obtaining a higher qualification as well as unreasonable expectations from the employer. The response below points to such dissatisfaction:

*“There are lots of vacant academic positions and the academic workload is shared amongst the available academics in departments. On the one hand, the university expects all academics to have a Ph.D. Once they are employed without a Ph.D. their contract of employment stipulates that they should obtain Ph.D. in a given time frame. Therefore, they are unable to cope with the demands of the jobs, that is, on one hand, heavy workload, on the other hand one; one has to complete a Ph.D. For this reason, they decide to quit and join the private sector where they are not required to have a Ph.D. Some quit their jobs here and join other sister universities in the region where a Ph.D is not a must.” (Interview 18, June 2015)*

For that reason, retention strategies, succession and talent management programmes have become a necessity in order to reduce labour turnover. There is a need, perhaps in another study to examine the challenges that most South African have in completing Ph.D. studies, challenges that clearly contribute to the shortage of academic skills in the country.

### **Retention, Succession and Talent Management**

This is one area that, perhaps, higher education institutions in South Africa have not taken cognisance of and has not been given enough attention and has not been exploited to its fullest potential. The competition and the skills shortage crisis dictates that higher education institutions hold on to human capital resources they have without letting go of them as the chances of being able to replace them are very limited. Therefore, one while striving to attract great academic talent, higher education institutions should strive to retain and nurture the existing talent. It is evident by the response below that not much has been done in the area of retention, succession and talent management:

*“Attracting suitably qualified persons in the scarce skills areas is a challenge but what is even more discouraging is when people in those areas leave the university in their early days without any attempts at retaining them. This means one has to embark on the same recruitment process over and over again this is so discouraging”.* (Interview 16, June 2015).

The above response indicates a perplexity with the ease with which academics that have been sought and found with difficulty get to be lost in a short period of time and the helplessness of the institutions to avoid the losses. Added to this, some adjustment challenges relating to cultural diversity and language have been evident in the higher education institutions in South Africa.

### **5.3.5 Cultural diversity**

Culture plays a major role in the adjustment of academic expatriates as well as in their adaptation to the change of environment. Academic expatriates, without much choice, should learn and practice the local culture in order to fully understand and master it. Universities under study have diverse cultural groups. Therefore, there is a possibility of having to learn and understand more than one culture. For instance, the cultural groups that could be found in these universities include whites, blacks, coloureds and Indians. This means, one should expect cultural diversity and should know how to interact and navigate the space with such culturally diverse groupings.

### **Cultural distance**

Cultural proximity describes the distance between two or more cultures. This distance could lead to some level of discomfort with the foreign or friction between or amongst cultures if it is not managed well. One could also expect cultural clashes caused by lack of knowledge and awareness of the other culture. Cultural awareness would also play a major role in dealing with issues of cultural shock that arises when two or more cultures

encounter each other. Therefore, some level of awareness of the local culture(s) could address issues of cultural sensitivity and avoid the feeling that one culture has been undermined while the other has been given full recognition. The response below points to the importance of knowing, embracing and respecting other cultures:

*“I lead a department that is dominated by Indians. My first year at this university I declined lots of leave requests submitted with the aim to celebrate “Diwali”. I did not know what it was and why a lot of people should be away from work at a very busy time. My action was just honest; I did not mean to offend or to be culture-insensitive. Before I knew it now, there was a grievance submitted to my action. I had to sincerely apologise it was merely an honest act.” (Interview 20, June 2015)*

The response above demonstrates what might happen when two different cultures encounter each other at the workplace. This study also established that members of some dominant cultural groups in some institutions are not keen to travel or live outside their own province, let alone living outside the borders of South Africa. Therefore, their cultural exposure is limited and they also claim ownership of the space where they live and work. Therefore, if an academic expatriate joins the university from outside the country they feel insecure and complain that their space has been invaded. This otherwise nativist mentality creates friction amongst the different cultural groups, especially amongst locals and expatriate academics, hence the labelling and xenophobic attitude and hateful

treatment of expatriate academics in some instances. A response from an academic expatriate noted that:

*“They always see us as different from them, irrespective of the fact that we are all black Africans. Just because we cannot speak Zulu, we are labelled “Makwerekwere”, just because we are from different cultural background and sometimes prefer to eat our own food from home we are called “izilwane” (Interview 22, June 2015).*

Such experiences and sentiments as noted above arise when cultures do not enter into dialogue but are knowingly or unknowingly allowed to clash. The clashing of cultures creates discomforts for both the locals and the expatriate academics, and in South Africa this is no light matter as this clash of cultures has frequently degenerated into xenophobic violence and skirmishes that have worried the country.

#### **5.3.6. Barriers**

This study noted that one of the challenges relating to the employment of academic expatriates besides the cultural clashes that are outlined above is that of language barriers. Language barriers relate to the knowledge and the appropriate use of the local language in relation to the language of the academic expatriates. Although in many instances local language is different from the business language of the institutions of higher learning, there is still a need for academic expatriates to know or understand local languages as much as they need to appreciate the local culture at large. In some cases the use of local language dominates the use of business language. Further, for interaction purposes the local language is vital or simply cannot be ignored.

## Local language

Academic expatriates like local academic staff members are expected to partake in community engagement activities as one of their area of responsibility. In most cases these community projects involve communities that are deeply rooted in the use of African culture, traditions and language. Therefore, for one to successfully execute this role, some command of a local African language is required. As narrated in the scenario below, it is imperative that at least one understands basics about the local language:

*“I was to address community members as part of my community engagement project. I did not have the language command and I had to ask one of my students to interpret. My meeting was a disaster because I discovered that the student who was interpreting did not use the language that the adults use. He used the modern Zulu language and to the adults it was seen as an insult to their culture and language. I learned that if you are going to address adults one has to get an old mature person who understands the use of local language very well and at an appropriate level. The community leader was not pleased with me at all.” (Interview 30, June 2015)*

Further, the knowledge and awareness of local languages also assist in interacting with the local public in general. It transpired that not only is the knowledge of African

languages necessary when one deals with local communities but even at work where one assumes dominant use of business language there is need for one to be sensitive to the local expression as the response below indicates:

*“I used to speak English to my students but they would respond in Zulu and the rest of the class would laugh. My first few months were really difficult for me. On several occasions, I considered quitting my job. I noticed the same habit even at departmental meetings when some issues are addressed in Zulu because it suits the majority of staff members in the department. My colleagues would totally forget about me. I thought it was inconsiderate of them” (Interview 31, June 2015).*

*“I am an NEHAWU member but I have stopped attending NEHAWU meetings because meetings are held in Zulu, not any other language but Zulu. You will find one or two whites attending as well but the speaker will disregard them and address the meeting in Zulu. In this institution, you must know Zulu in order to be able to integrate with the locals. Not that they do not know English, they just do not see why they have to speak other languages when the majority can understand what they say. As a result, I only mingle with selected few with whom we have something in common “being foreigners”. Locals, especially Zulus will just buy your face because*



*they do not believe that you belong in the institution”* (Interview 31, June 2015).

This bitter sounding response demonstrates the importance of cultural and linguistic sensitivity. There is a need for academic expatriates to learn and understand local languages as much as there is a need for the locals to be sensitive to the understandable linguistic incapacities of the academic expatriates.

### **Business language**

The business language in all the institutions under study is English. Therefore, all staff members are expected to be fluent in English and also conduct their business dealings in English. However, the predicament emanates when staff members are to execute their community engagement and research project roles within communities where the business language is not understood. In addition to this predicament, when staff members are interviewed to assess their suitability for jobs the English language is used as a medium of communication. Therefore their suitability to interact and communicate in a local language is not assessed or rather it is neglected. The expectation is that academic expatriates work and interact with local communities who in most cases speak local African languages. For this reason, academic expatriates are thrown into the deep end as they are expected to see for themselves and find their own way to deal with the situation, yet they have to fulfil their contractual obligations all the same. This response below reflects the expectations of the employer:

*“Once we observe from the interview that they may be serious language and adjustment problems we do not recommend them (foreign nationals) for an appointment. We only appoint when we are confident about their language fluency because we do not offer language training unless the Language Services decides to offer it which is not made compulsory for them to offer and also not compulsory for foreign nationals to attend ”* (Interview 34, June 2015).

The challenge is that the same academic expatriate who does not have local language proficiency might be in possession of scarce skills that the institution needs. It is also a difficult expectation that academic expatriates from, for example in Nigeria who might be a rare engineer, should suddenly know how to greet and answer greetings in Venda or in Zulu. This might indicate that basic language lessons may need to be made compulsory so that both institutional objectives and the mandate of the academic expatriates may be fulfilled.

#### **5.3.7. Support and adjustment**

Seemingly, very minimal support is offered by the institutions of higher education in South Africa to academic expatriates in terms of their settlement and adjustment. In other institutions there is no support at all. Once academic expatriates are employed they are left alone to find their own footing. For that reason, it takes longer for them to adjust and settle. Although academic expatriates themselves believed that they are flexible to adapt in to different environments because of their international experience and or exposure,

but they do expect some level of support and orientation from the employer which is usually offered through induction.

## **Induction**

Induction has been the main support system for all new staff members joining the universities under study. However, in some instances, respondents indicated that they did not go through induction while those who went through it felt that it was not sufficient. Although they felt that induction gave them necessary information about the institution some felt it did not address their expectations as academics. Therefore, there is a need to extend the content of the induction to cover some job aspects of individuals. It has been established that most induction programmes give an overview of an institution and its benefits structure without delving into what is expected of individuals in order to execute their duties successfully. This practice is prevalent at universities where performance management has not been introduced. In this instance, there is no platform to communicate expectations and set performance standards for new individuals. The response below is indicative of some experiences of academic expatriates:

*“Because positions remain vacant for long and colleagues have to share workload while the recruitment process is underway. On my very first day at this institution I was told I have a lecture at 10h00 and I was given details of the venue. I went around the campus asking people for this venue and nobody knew where the venue was located. Eventually, I was told that the venue is based in one of our campuses. I did not have a car, and I did not know how the*

*transportation system works. as a result. I missed my very first lecture at this institution.” (Interview 23, June 2015).*

*“Adjusting at this university was very difficult for me. I did not know anybody but I was told to look for accommodation by myself. Where do I start looking for accommodation in the area I have never been before? Human Resources plays no role at all in assisting with accommodation searches.” (Interview 26, June 2015).*

Line managers acknowledged that support offered to academic expatriates is not sufficient, however, they also point to staff incapacity that has led them to be overloaded with work as a result important human resources issues have suffered neglect. On the other hand, human resources practitioners also identified some gaps in the support offered to academic expatriates and they acknowledged that at least more extensive support that speaks to the basic needs such as accommodation needs to be offered. However, academic expatriates are of the opinion that even the benefits structure of the universities under study does not address their basic adjustment needs such as transportation and housing as the response indicate:

*“It is difficult to adjust in a place where you cannot buy a car; you are expected to use public transport, you cannot buy a house; you are expected to rent. The employer does nothing about offering benefits that may be attractive for me to stay. I am considering going back home. Back home, my peers are very progressive.*

*They have big houses, fancy cars, permanent jobs and career growth. Here in South Africa, we cannot get all those, because of the labour laws governing the country. We have no job security and no promotion but we contribute to the economic growth of the country. Moreover, the local colleagues do not trust us, they see us as a threat to their professional development because we are educated and they are not. Therefore, they do not give us any support unless one gets a good hearted colleague.” (Interview 29, June 2015).*

Notably, there is a way in which the academic expatriates tend to feel lost and forsaken when they are not afforded enough accommodation and transportation support services. The feelings of being an unwanted foreigner or alien tend to kick in and the academic expatriate experiences rejection and the thoughts that they are not being appreciated. Observably, such feelings and thought may end up affecting their productivity within the institution of higher education in South Africa.

#### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

Using qualitative techniques of data collection, information concerning institutional support mechanisms and the experiences of academic expatriates was collected. Specifically, the information was collected from the human resources practitioners of the selected institutions of higher learning in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa and from the academic expatriates themselves. The qualitative techniques used were structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Further, thematic analysis was

used to analyse data. Amongst other factors; attraction of foreign academics, the process of work permit application, labour turnover, cultural diversity, language barrier; and support for adjustment emerged as crucial areas of concern. The next chapter discusses both, in combination, quantitative and qualitative findings of this study.

## **CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION**

---

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the findings of the study as projected from both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. In a way, this chapter seeks to harmonise what the study quantitatively and qualitatively unmasked regarding the shortage of academic skills in South African institutions of higher education as represented by the sample institutions in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Further, the chapter aims to elaborate on the challenges that are encountered by the academic institutions in mediating the skills shortage by recruiting academic expatriates. The study reflects furthermore on the challenges that academic expatriates themselves encounter in adapting, adjusting and settling in their host country and host academic institutions. The chapter begins with a discussion of adjustment challenges of academic expatriates with a specific focus on interaction

adjustment, general adjustment and work adjustment. This is followed by a critical examination of the challenges associated with recruitment and selection of academic expatriates. Thereafter, the chapter concludes with a concise summary.

## **6.2 INTERACTION ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES FOR ACADEMIC EXPATRIATES**

Interaction adjustment relates to socialising and integrating with the host country nationals (Black, 1988; Black et al., 1991). According to Howe-Wash and Schyns (2010) it entails feeling at ease to interact and cooperate with locals. One of the key ways of interacting with others is by means of communication. Therefore, interaction adjustment could be easier if expatriates have the confidence to interact with locals through communication in mutually intelligible ways. However, as revealed through quantitative study, the majority of respondents (53%) felt they were unable to demonstrate proficient use of the local language. Language symbolises that individuals have their own unique way of communicating (Yusuf & Zain, 2014). Language barriers may lead to various communication problems including communication breakdown and ineffective communication. Consequently, one may envisage minimal interaction levels as a result of avoiding miscommunication and misconceptualisation of messages between a sender and a receiver. Some researchers such as Nkuna (2010) have reiterated that language has the ability to connect people and build strong relationships. Therefore, lack of communication as revealed in this study may result in the disconnection between academic expatriates and host nationals. As reported by Froese (2012) academic expatriates in Korea felt that communication difficulties limited their day to day activities. Moreover, Yusuf and Zain (2014) are of the opinion that communication may not be

confined to verbal means but it incorporates gestures, postures, silence, emotional expressions, touch, physical appearance and other non-verbal cues. For this reason, the issues of language and communication become complex to an extent that one has to go beyond mere verbatim expression but to also understand the meaning of certain facial expressions and gestures attached to certain traditions, practices and culture. This is because one tends to observe and rely on non-verbal cues if he or she finds difficulty in comprehending verbal communication (Yusuf & Zain, 2014). Therefore, knowledge of local language and non-verbal cues attached to it is very critical to enable academic expatriates in the KZN province to interact and integrate with the locals in a way that can enhance their settlement.

In the same vein, the findings of the qualitative approach to the study cited language barriers as one of the factors that hinder interaction adjustment of academic expatriates in the KZN institutions. According to Zapf (1991) not being understood or taken seriously when you communicate is one major negation in a new environment. Therefore, language and communication are important aspects of adjusting to a new environment. In this way, academic expatriates' interaction and full participation in some university activities that appeal to them are limited as a result of being unable to communicate in the local language. This feeling emanates from the dominant use of one local language even in official business gatherings and matters. As a result, respondents strongly felt somehow excluded and isolated. Hence, Zapf (1991) maintains that learning and practising effective communication in the language and symbolic codes of the new setting becomes vital. Therefore, comprehension and fluency in local language requires some effort in learning and practising.



A strong association between language proficiency and interaction adjustment as well as the general adjustment is noted, Huff (2013). Huff found that expatriates who were able to communicate in the local language were more satisfied with life in general. Almost similar findings were arrived at by Peltokorpi (2008) and Selmer (2006) who reported that local language fluency made it easy for expatriates in China and Japan to adjust at all three levels; interaction, work and general adjustment. Moreover, Froese (2012) points out that lack of local language proficiency has a negative impact on all their levels of adjustment with much more profound impact on interaction and general adjustment. Therefore, language proficiency is to a certain extent critical for work adjustment purposes, especially for the academic expatriates based in the region under study. This argument is based on two reasons; 1) the spill-over effect (Dawis, England and Lofsqvist, 1964) by one unsettled environment to another and 2) the dominant use of IsiZulu in this region. The result of the study conducted by Mol (2005) revealed a relationship between local language proficient and work adjustment. Hence, expatriates who were fluent in the local language found it easy to adjust in their work roles. In the case of academic expatriates in KZN institutions local language may directly impact their work because of community engagement whereby local communities may have little or no command of business language at all but they can only interact in their local language. Moreover, basic knowledge of local African language(s) will enable academic expatriates to interact with locals at work and probably receive better acceptance and support from locals. I am of the view that better interaction relations, closeness, and friendship could be established if academic expatriates and locals speak one common language and also if academic

expatriates demonstrate a willingness and interest to learn and interact in the local language.

Therefore, in the higher education space understanding of local language is critical not only for interaction and general adjustment but for work adjustment as well. One of the higher education institutions under study is based in the rural areas where the use of local language is very strong. On similar grounds, one of the largest institutions in this province emphasises the use of local language and has reinvented its language policy and language plan. As a result, local language has been incorporated in the curriculum of almost all qualifications offered by this institution (Kamwendo, 2013). Due to this initiative, the use of local language in KZN higher education institutions may spread to the previously known as “white institutions” where the importance and the use of local languages were never a priority and has been neglected for years. Therefore, proficiency in local languages is vital for academic expatriates in this province as it does not only impacts social relations but work related activities as well. As Kamwendo (2013) attest that there is a prominent use of isiZulu in academic and non-academic activities at UKZN.

Moreover, according to Yusuf and Zain (2014), one cannot separate language and culture as the two are a pair. Language is strongly rooted in the culture (Nkuna, 2010). Therefore, due to the connection between the two, one cannot speak of language without speaking about culture. Hence, both language and culture could be learned through observing and rehearsing. It should be noted from the findings of the qualitative study that academic expatriates in the institutions under study were battling to comprehend the local culture. According to the Social Learning Theory, one could master language and culture through observing, behaving, imitating and modelling the behaviour of locals (Bandura, 1977).

Moreover, Bandura (1986) and Rotter (1982) affirm that interaction between the individual and a certain situation allows self-development opportunities within established boundaries. This view is also supported by Nkuna (2010) wherein he indicated that learning new language results in acquiring new skills. Hence, interacting, watching and practising would advance the knowledge and practical application of the language and culture. On these grounds, interacting with locals (co-workers, students and community), observing and learning acceptable behaviour, language, culture, amongst other aspects; is critical for interaction adjustment of academic expatriates based in KZN.

However, Yusuf and Zain (2014) argue that in order for one to learn and understand the language of others he/she should first learn about them; their norms, values, practice, traditions, preferences and so forth. These aspects are attached to culture. Therefore, by learning such one learns cultural practices attached to the language he/she wants to learn. It is necessary to first learn these cultural practices as some words may be conceptualised differently in different languages, same with non-verbal cues (Yusuf and Zain, 2014). Moreover, these authors maintain that in some cultures space is also conceptualised differently. For instance, in some cultures if one gets too close to you when having a conversation it may be associated with being rude and disrespectful, while in other cultures if you leave too much space it is interpreted as being shy and lack of confidence. It is vital to learn about the basics of culture and its restrictions or flexibility before conceptualising the language itself.

Moreover, it should be noted that the Social Learning Theory recognises individuals' differences and the willingness to learn as some of the factors impacting adjustment and learning the process. The results of the quantitative study revealed significant mean

differences between the interaction adjustment of males and females. In this manner, male academic expatriates experienced interaction adjustment differently compared to females. It was revealed that female academic expatriates had adjusted better compared to males. These findings are consistent with the observations of Haslberger (2007) and Cole (2005) with interaction adjustment of female expatriates in multinational firms. These authors reported that female expatriates tended to strive for best results whenever they are offered opportunities for international assignments. They learn, obey and navigate cultural boundaries. Moreover, they tend to use democratic approach therefore their consultative approach improves their communication and interaction skills with locals. This view is also supported by Selmer and Luring (2010) who maintain that female expatriates are affiliative and integrative in nature and they enjoyed interacting with people. Interaction adjustment is not limited to a residential area; it extends to interacting with colleagues at work and public in general. On these bases, interaction adjustment has potential to influence general and work adjustment. The higher education institutions under study should provide appropriate intervention programmes to assist academic expatriates to grasp the local language and avoid symptoms associated with dissatisfaction with living abroad.

Closely related to interaction adjustment is a general adjustment. General adjustment, as discussed in the next section, is associated with day to day encounters with the surroundings within the new environment and establishment of relations with locals in the area of residence and in general public areas either than work.

### **6.3 GENERAL ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES**

General adjustment entails adjustment to the general living conditions and non-work factors in the new country (Black, 1988; Black et al., 1991). Also, according to Howe-Wash and Schyns (2010) general adjustment has to do with establishing social relations/networks, being able to find accommodation and not feeling isolated (not feeling alien). Quantitative findings revealed mean differences in general adjustment of academic expatriates based at UNIZULU and UKZN, as well as those of UNIZULU and MUT. Through admission of academic expatriates and human resources professionals during qualitative study, the location of the University of Zululand presents serious adjustment challenges to academic expatriates based at this institution. The University of Zululand is based in rural areas in the north of Durban, as such academic expatriates based in this institution, according to the HR Director, experience serious adjustment challenges. These adjustment problems relate to the location of the university, which is outside town, therefore, transportation system and finding suitable accommodation at a reasonable proximity to the institution become a serious concern. Such adjustment challenges are worsened by the dominant use of local language as a preferred medium of communication by locals in this institution as well as cultural practices in the area. This causes disconnection between locals and academic expatriates who cannot express themselves in the local language. Communities in the surrounding areas are strongly rooted in the African culture and so are their practices. It is therefore not surprising that academic expatriates in this institution experience adjustment challenges. It is also an interesting observation that practices of the universities in town are different from that of the universities in the townships and rural areas. The fact that UNIZULU being a rural-based university is different from UKZN based in town and MUT based in the township

suggest possible differences in their practices. Moreover, different locations suggest that different unique adjustment challenges could be experienced. Perhaps, the location, size and a number of academic expatriates employed by the UKZN suggest more exposure and sensitivity towards diversity as compared to other two universities.

In contrast, significant mean differences were observed in the general adjustment of academic expatriates who have lived in South Africa for a period of between 2-5 years and those who have lived in South Africa for a period of above 10 years. These findings are in line with the U-Curve cross-cultural adjustment model. According to this model, the adjustment is a process comprising of four cross-cultural adjustment stages, namely; 1) honeymoon/euphoria, 2) cultural shock, 3) adjustment and 4) mastery (Lysgaard, 1955). Therefore, upon arrival in South Africa (less than 2 years) academic expatriates through honeymoon stage. During this period, they feel excited about the new encounters in the host country / new environment. Succeeding this period, cultural shock confronts them as they face realities of the host country cultural practices. Culture shock is defined as a primary set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning (Zapf, 1991). Culture shock is uncertainty that leads to anxiety, depression and isolation in the event people are faced with an unfamiliar culture (Rajasekar & Renand, 2013). Scholars such as Du Plessis (2009) concur that negative feelings about the host country and its people and a longing to return home are some of the symptoms caused by culture shock. Therefore, as revealed in this study, these are some possible difficulties that academic expatriates in the KZN region may be experiencing.

The distance between home culture and local culture determines adjustment period. For those who find the local culture to be very close to their home culture, adjustment period may be shorter compared to those whose home culture is too distant to the local culture. It was also discovered through the qualitative study that academic expatriates in the KZN region are confronted by cultural adjustment difficulties. Various scholars indicate that expatriates' cultural adjustment is highly dependent on how foreign or familiar the culture is (Van Aswegen, 2009; Slemer & Luring, 2009; Vrosmans & van Engen, 2013). Hence, the Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) stresses the importance of learning and rehearsing local culture. Therefore, at the point where academic expatriates in the KZN higher education institutions discover differences between home culture and host culture, they should apply the principles of this theory in order to enhance their intercultural competence.

Intercultural competence lead to appropriate behaviours with a foreign culture (Graf and Mertesacker, 2009), as such, academic expatriates should have basic knowledge of the foreign culture, intercultural sensitivity and effective intercultural behaviour. However, Osman-Gani and Rockstuhl (2009) argue that different job assignments require a various degree of contact with the local culture which may be very different from or similar to the home culture. In the case of academic expatriates based in the higher learning institutions under study, they deal with local communities at various levels where the understanding and appropriate use of local culture becomes imperative.

However, regular interaction with the locals enables them to observe and practice the local culture and acceptable behaviours attached to the culture. In this sense, new behavioural patterns that facilitate fluency of the new culture develop and lead to adjustment stage. When adjustment stage is reached a change of attitude and adverse views about the host culture can be observed. This stage also entails symptoms of appreciating, embracing and comprehending the local culture. Regular practising of the culture thereof leads the mastery stage where academic expatriates become familiar and comfortable with the culture. Therefore, as revealed in this study, academic expatriates who have been in South African for about 2-5 years are going through different stages of this adjustment process while those who have been in South Africa for 10 years and more have reached the mastery stage and have fully adjusted. But, those who have been in South Africa for a period of between 2-5 years still experience different adjustment challenges.

However, one may not ignore the argument relating to individuals' differences (Black and Mendenhall, 1991). These scholars are of the opinion that individuals' differences may lead to differences in the amplitude of different adjustment stages and also would cause these stages to occur at different intervals. Therefore, academic expatriates may experience the adjustment differently. Consequently, different adjustment shape may be formed other than a U-shape. In the same vein, Takeuchi and Chen (2013) contest that prior international experience contributes towards ones adjustment. Hence, academic expatriates who have prior international experience may experience adjustment differently due to their exposure to different cultural practices.



Furthermore, the quantitative results revealed significant mean differences between general adjustment of males and females. In this case, males and females experience general adjustment differently with females doing better as compared to males. These findings are consistency with the observations of Haslberger (2007) and Cole (2005) with general adjustment of female expatriates in multinational firms. As with the interaction adjustment, various scholars concur that female expatriates integrate better because of their consultative approach, good human skills and affiliative nature (Cole, 2005; Elizur, 2001; Haslberger, 2007; Selmer & Luring, 2010). Therefore, female academic expatriates (13%) in the KZN higher education institutions have adjusted better in terms of general adjustment as compared to males (80%).

Moreover, the critical adjustment level for academic expatriates, other than interaction and general adjustment, is work adjustment. Work adjustment is linked to productivity, work outcomes and job satisfaction in the host country. Therefore, work adjustment, as discussed in the next section, is a major aspect of adjustment as it involves fulfilment and meaningfulness of work.

#### **6.4 WORK ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES**

Work adjustment is linked to new job requirements, job satisfaction and performance (Black, 1988; Black et al., 1991 & Howe-Wash and Schyns, 2010). The finding of the quantitative study revealed that respondents were unhappy with the manner in which work permit application is coordinated. According to the Immigration Act no. 3 of 2007, only after certain Home Affairs requirement have been met a foreign national gets employed. This include, amongst others; original copy of the job advertisement,

motivation from the employer indicating reasons for employing a foreign national, a proof that the position has been advertised several times without being filled, repatriation guarantee which is an undertaking from an employer that full responsibility for repatriation cost should any reason a foreign national is required to be repatriated back home, analysis of various levels staff headcount and so forth (Department of Home Affairs, 2015).

Once the Home Affairs Department is satisfied that the employing institution observed all the requirements relating to the employment of foreign nationals the work permit application is then accepted and processed. The internal Department of Home Affairs processes are not known to the public and employing institutions. Therefore, the reasons for the delays in the process as well as the challenges faced by the Department of Home Affairs in as far as work permit application process is a concern, are not yet known and they remain a concern. However, through the admission of the then Minister of Home Affairs (2007), one get to know that the Department of Home Affairs itself is experiencing skills shortages hence the slow processing of work permits. Moreover, the Department of Home Affairs itself also acknowledge this shortfall through its admission of having processed 1010 permit out of 35 200 in the year 2010.

Therefore, delays in processing work permit applications bring about uncertainty to the recruitment and selection of academic expatriates as the future is unknown. This is not only in the case of new work permits but the renewals as well, hence this process impact negatively on work adjustment and performance of academic expatriates. Some respondents whose contracts were about to terminate shared their uncertainty about continued employment at their institutions since their positions were to be re-advertised

for their contracts to be renewed, due to Home Affairs requirements/regulation. This means, they needed to register interest (apply) and then compete for the jobs. Should the employer manage to secure suitable South African candidate during the recruitment and selection process renewal of their contracts is unlikely. Should the foreign notational (current incumbent) be recommended for re-employment the work permit application process starts all over again. Therefore, this area is a major stressor for academic expatriates and has adverse consequences for their job performance and satisfaction. Scholars such as Mulenga and van Lill (2007) reported similar concerns and adverse outcomes that work application process bears in the employment process of foreign nationals in South Africa.

Furthermore, significant work adjustment means differences were observed amongst the academic expatriates who have lived in South Africa for a period of between 2-5 years and those who have lived for a period of 6-10 years. This can be associated with the U-curve adjustment model which alludes to the reality that expatriates get exposed to four adjustment stages (as discussed under general adjustment). Moreover, the principles of this model have been supported by scholars such as Selmer & Luring (2013) who established a relationship between time to proficient and work adjustment as well as time in the current location and work adjustment. These authors concluded that adjustment of academic expatriates is a learning process; therefore, the longer one has stayed in one location the greater the possibilities of being proficient and successful at work. Therefore, as found in this study, mean differences can be envisaged for those academic expatriates who are still going through cultural shock and adjustment stages as compared to those who have reached the mastery stage. .

In contrast, the Work Adjustment Theory stipulates that individuals seek to achieve and maintain correspondence with their work environment (Dawis, England & Lofsquist, 1964). In the first few years, academic expatriates are still trying to get their footing at work and therefore unable to find correspondence between themselves and the work environment. However, once they find their footing they then find correspondence, hence, the difference between the two groups. Correspondence is explained further by the Work Adjustment Theory in a sense that the requirements or expectations of individuals are to be met by the new environment; in return, the individual should meet the requirement or expectations of the new environment. But, there are various kinds of new environments such as work and home. Since work environment represents the greatest environment individuals should achieve and maintain correspondence with (Dawis, England and Lofsquist, 1964), it is the most importance environment one should adjust in. However, these environments are inter-linked, failure to achieve correspondence with one environment may have adverse consequences to another environment. As a result, dissatisfaction with one environment may negatively spill-over to another environment. In a work environment, such spill-over is usually demonstrated through poor work performance and early termination of the contract. Therefore, due to the spill-over effect, the adjustment challenges reported by this study as experienced by academic expatriates in the KZN higher learning institutions, such as, the language barrier, cultural distance and challenges resulting from the work permit application process adversely impact work adjustment and possibly work performance. This has been observed in various studies such as Rajasekar and Renand (2013) who discovered that culture shock and language had adverse consequences for the work performance of expatriates based in Oman.

Also, Ramalu, Rose, Uli and Kumar (2013) established that work interaction and work adjustment influence work performance.

Based on these challenges, a need for support is evident. The following section discusses organisational support.

## **6.5 ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT**

In light of the adjustment challenges shared in this study, organisational support is critical. According to the institutions under study induction is the only means by which organisational support is offered. Therefore, the induction should be designed in a way that addresses all adjustment needs of new employees (Ndebele, 2014). On the other hand, the same author emphasises the importance of having comprehensive and informative induction programme. However, respondents felt that the induction programme offered by their institutions was not comprehensive enough to address all adjustment needs of academic expatriates. Therefore, the lack of comprehensive induction programme as observed in this study may create deeper adjustment problems and possibly extends the adjustment period. Scholars such as Scheckle (2014) affirms that induction programme should facilitate quick adjustment of new employees through familiarising them with various aspects of the university including, but not limited to; the history of an organisation, processes and procedures, teaching and learning paradigms,

approach to community engagement and research and providing opportunities for social networking with new colleagues.

Although some respondents felt it was not necessary to induction experienced / senior academics, Walsh and Schyns (2010) argue that the context and workload differ from institution to institution relevant support and information that would assist academic expatriates to understand such a dynamics process is vital. In the same vein, Ndebele (2014) reports that senior academics who attended induction programme at a certain higher education institution in South Africa felt that they benefited from the programme while junior academics were of the view that attendance of senior academics was vital as they shared insightful and valuable information informed by their experience in the field. Similarly, Staniforth and Harland (2006) point out that induction plays a critical role of familiarising academics with their new roles, new community, colleagues and settings. Therefore, even well experienced/established academics should go through an induction programme in order to facilitate their adjustment to the new environment. The nature of adjustment challenges identified in this study and the views of respondents revealed a need for more intense induction programme that may, amongst other aspects, addresses basic language and cultural concerns.

Parallel to the organisational support, Cerdin and Brewster (2014) contend that the role of host country nationals (locals) in the adjustment of academic expatriates is equally vital. Hence, these authors suggest that organisational support and the support from host country nationals should be offered concurrently. Emphasises has also been made on an appointment of a suitable mentor during adjustment phase of academic expatriates/ new

employees (Ndebele, 2014; Howe-Wash and Schyns, 2010; Scheckle, 2014). A well experienced mentor who is well vested with the institutional context and background should be identified and attached to newcomers to facilitate quick adjustment.

The next section discussed the challenges associated with recruitment and selection of academics in the institutions under study.

## **6.6. CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF ACADEMICS**

### **6.6.1 Attraction of academics**

The attraction of academics of high stature has been a serious challenge as per the view of higher education institutions under study. Although this happens throughout all academic levels and almost all disciplines, the situation tends to be worse at higher levels of academic structure as well as in the fields such as Engineering, Natural Sciences, Accounting, Law and Information Technology. Scholars such as Woodlard, Kneebone and Lee (2003), Daniels (2007), Fisher and Scott (2011), Ilunga (2010), Tettey (2010) and publications (HESA, 2011; Govender, 2008) are concern about the limited number of academics in various academic disciplines, especially in Science and Engineering. Moreover, Govender (2014) affirms that universities in South Africa are unable to attract suitably qualified academics to fill vacancies in areas such as Actuarial Sciences, Engineering, Veterinary Surgery, Health Sciences and Information Technology.

Although respondents were of the opinion that all departments associated with the Engineering and Science Colleges/Faculties experience difficulties in attracting academic talent, however, testimonies and real time cases can be shared amongst the disciplines such as Control Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Electronics, Surveying, Quantity Surveying, and Mechanical Engineering to mention the few. This concern was shared amongst the three Universities in the KwaZulu-Natal that offer Engineering subjects/qualifications. Moreover, respondents felt that, amongst others, Science disciplines such as Agriculture/Bioresources, Chemistry, Genetics, Biochemistry, Biomedical Science, Nature Conservation, Nursing/Health Studies, Medicine, Virology, Chemical Pathology, Pathology, Mathematics, Statistics, Computer Sciences, Zoology and Botany always have a high number of vacancies as academic talent in these disciplines is hard to find. These findings confirm the observations of Ilunga (2010), Tettey (2010), HESA (2011), Govender / Sunday Times (2008) and Govender / Sunday Times (2014). Moreover, the findings suggest that obtaining a suitable match in the mentioned fields is problematic and that academic skills shortage has impacted negatively on the delivery of academic activities in these fields. Given this background, higher learning institutions need to proactively devise mitigating strategies to address the academic skills shortage. The use of social and electronic media in talent attraction such as LinkedIn, Facebook, PNet, BestJobs to identify potential candidates as well as headhunting suitable candidates has emerged and is starting to spread into the higher education sector. Hence, the institutions under study have already started utilising one or more of these social means of advertising. Moreover, flexibility in recruitment and



selection policies and procedures is on a key area that could open doors for many talented academics.

Furthermore, disciplines such as Accounting, Law, Information Technology, Science Education, Humanities and Management also face similar difficulties as revealed in the study. Some Human Resources Practitioners were of the view that academic skills shortage is not only unique to the Science and Engineering Faculties/Colleges but it is across all academic disciplines. This view is supported by Nieuwenhuizen (2011) who established that Business Management Departments from six universities in South Africa had 27 academic vacancies while Maharaj (2011) attest that academic migration occurs at almost all academic fields and levels as a result of academic skills shortage.

Moreover, respondents argue that besides the limited academic pool other aggravating factors are the Employment Equity Act and internal university policies, Academic Appointment and Promotion criteria, Academic Remuneration policies, labour turnover and the competition from sister universities, private and public sector.

#### **6.6.2 Employment Equity Act no. 55 of 1998**

The Employment Equity Act of 1999 and the 2004 amendment were established to ensure equitable representation of all races and gender across all employment categories in the premises of an established employer. The respondents appreciated the good intentions of this Act. However, they felt that exceptions should have been made since the Act is currently a major hindrance in the employment of suitably qualified candidates. Similarly, Bytenski and Fakoti (2014) point the short fall of the Employment Equity Act and its

adverse contribution to the recruitment of academic talent which may lead to some academic vacancies being unfilled for long periods. In the same vein, respondents blame the inflexibility of the internal university policies and procedures linked to this Act for being unable to serve the best interest of the universities in question. As a result, even employment of foreign nationals is not encouraged unless they were naturalised before 1994.

One institution had an established deviation procedure to be followed in case South Africans were not sourced or not found appointable for vacancies. Respondents were well aware such a procedure as they have been enforcing it for quite some time; however, the great concern was on the waste of resources and the delays experienced in filling vacant positions timeously. According to the respondents, it is well-known fact that South Africa lacks talent hence the poor skills profile in South Africa. On the other hand, Brown and Oplatka (2007) argue that the core business of higher education calls for high-profile skills including specialisation and qualification. But, internal university policies insist on complying with the provisions of the Employment Equity Act and overlook the state of skills shortage in the South African labour market, especially the dire academic skills shortage. It is the very Act that has led to the migration of critical academic talent (Benedict & Ukpere, 2012, Mateus et al. 2014; Rasool & Botha, 2011). Therefore, as revealed in this study, higher education institutions under study have got restricted rights of ensuring that sufficient human capital is employed to accomplish strategic objectives of the university. But, such rights should be exercised within the Employment Equity Act restrictions. On almost similar grounds, respondents blamed the universities under study for limiting employment opportunities for potential academics to access employment or

promotion in the higher education sector. This is evident by the stringent academic appointment and promotion criteria in some universities.

### **6.6.3 Academic Appointment and Promotion Criteria**

Respondents were of the view that the current academic appointment and promotion criteria did not encourage upward mobility for academics who are keen to grow within the institution or higher education sector. The same criteria have discouraged new entrants or do not open access to the newcomers who wish to join and make a meaningful contribution to the growth of the institution. This argument was informed by the high-level minimum requirements for academic positions at all academic ranks. These requirements include, but not limited to; a doctoral degree, teaching/lecturing experience, experience in supervising masters and doctoral students to completion, research publication record, community engagement, academic citizenship and so forth. According to Robyn and du Preez (2013) active involvement in all these areas is such a tall order as academics; especially at the junior level academics carry enormous workloads. Therefore, the university's inability to attract academic talent for certain positions as well as losing some academic talent to competitors can be attributed to stringent appointment and promotion criteria.

### **6.6.4 Labour market competition**

According to Robyn and du Preez (2013) academia faces competition from both public and private sector. Although the negative consequences of the competition have been said to be emanating from uncompetitive salaries offered by academia, the respondents raised an interesting perspective associated with the stringent appointment and promotion criteria. Therefore, academics who find it difficult to progress within their institutions seek greener pastures at other sister universities whose appointment and promotion criteria are not as high as their current institutions. Moreover, some academics who are eager to earn higher salary opt to public and private sector as they feel salaries in the higher education sector do not match the level of education they have as well as the work demands of an academic career are far higher than in the other sectors (See *interview 19, June 2015*).

The expansion of the higher education sector from 23 to 25 public universities has also tightened the level of competition for higher education institutions while opening more opportunities for job seekers within the sector and even those from outside the sector but willing to join the higher education sector. The expansion of education sector suggests an increase of academic skills demand while the supply of such remains unchanged. On these grounds, it is envisaged that the newly established universities may never be able to fill certain critical positions if the skills shortage crisis persists while the old universities will find it even harder to attract and fill vacancies. Moreover, the private and public sectors do not require high qualifications such as doctoral and master's degree (Robyn & du Preez, 2013); therefore, finding employment in these two sectors at higher remuneration rate is a possibility for those who have opted to exit academia.

### **6.6.5 Academic remuneration**

Although respondents believed that salaries of their institutions were competitive within the higher education sector in the KZN region, they were also of the view that improved salaries will afford their institutions greater competitive edge. It has been observed that academic remunerations are uncompetitive, hence the difficulty in attracting and retaining right academic talent (Govender / Sunday Times, 2008; HESA, 2011; Samuels & Chipunza, 2013; Govender / Sunday Times, 2014; Theron et al., 2014; Robyn & du Preez, 2013). However, whether monetary rewards contribute positively towards attractiveness of a post and if it triggers a decision to join or leave a particular organisation has been argued extensively. But, scholars such as Theron et al. (2014) discovered that dissatisfaction in monetary rewards contributed towards labour turnover of academic staff at a university in South Africa. Hence, these authors and Koen (2003) are convinced that uncompetitive academic salaries have contributed to the unattractiveness of an academic career and discouraged new entrants to the higher education sector. As shown in this study, talent attraction and placement of academics with suitable skills have been limited to the higher education institutions in KZN due to uncompetitive salaries. However, it is interesting that in order to cast the net wider, one of the institutions in this region has benchmarked and revised its salaries especially in scarce skill areas. Hence, Schlechter, Hung and Bussin (2014) as well as Kerr-Phillips and Thomas (2009) conclude that if best talent is to be attracted, organisations should be prepared to offer high monetary rewards. Consequently, dissatisfaction with remuneration could be lead to high labour turnover.

### **6.6.7 Labour Turnover**

The higher education institutions under study reported that at least about 5 -10% annual academic staff turnover is experienced. At one university based outside town, this situation is aggravated by adjustment challenges attached to the location of the institution. As a result, higher labour turnover is experienced in this institution as compared to the universities based on the city and township. The most popular reasons cited for the turnover were low salaries, poor job satisfaction associated with the workload and other demands of an academic career as well as the lack of growth opportunities. These findings support those of Theron et al. (2014) wherein it was uncovered that monetary benefits, lack of career growth and competition were some of the factors leading to labour turnover of academics. Moreover, respondents indicated that not much has been done to retain and manage academic talent in these institutions. Therefore, retention and talent management strategies should be devised to circumvent high turnover.

### **6.6.8 Retention and Talent Management**

Retention aims to reduce turnover of knowledgeable and highly valued employees (Ngobeni & Bezuidenhout, 2011). Hence, retention of talent carries more or less the same weight as talent attraction. However, talent retention has over the years been a challenging aspect of managing human capital (Ngobeni & Bezuidenhout, 2011; Keer-Phillips & Thomans, 2009; Robyn & du Preez, 2013; Theron et al., 2014). As shown in this study, the higher education institutions under study experience similar challenges. Scholars such as Koen (2003) established that academic vacancies currently available in

the higher education institutions are not newly created but they are old position have been vacated without bean field (Koen, 2003). This has become a norm especially in disciplines associated with Engineering, Natural Science, Accounting, and Law. Therefore, Naris and Ukpere (2010) suggest for this norm to be broken be retention strategies be developed to stress retention of academic talent and prolonged service. However, these authors also argue that retention does not happen in a vacuum, therefore, push and pull factors should first be first be established. Some of the push factors identified by respondents were amongst others; low salaries, poor job satisfaction associated with the workload and other demands of an academic career as well as the lack of growth opportunities. While, pull factors were said to be good research facilities, opportunity to supervise postgraduate students, promotion / growth opportunities and a good reputation for the institution. On the other hand, Schlechter et al. (2014), Botha et al. (2011) as well as Kerr-Phillis and Thomas (2009) identified good remuneration and employer brand/reputation as some pull factors. Moreover, Kerr-Phillis and Thomas (2009) posit that top performers in an organisation value recognition of the skills, abilities and the meaningful contribution they make towards achieving the best results for an organisation. For this reason, if these factors are found in their jobs the sense fulfilment and satisfaction develops and contributes towards eagerness to extend the length of service. However, as revealed in this study, some of these critical factors were said to be missing.

Leading motivational theorists such as Maslow, Hertzberg, ERG share their insight on the intrinsic and extrinsic factors leading to the motivated workforce. These theorists emphasised the importance of intrinsic factors such as better working conditions and growth opportunities since these factors contribute positively toward ones job satisfaction

and prolonged tenure. However, Theron et al. (2014) and Robyn (2012) question the relevance of the motivation theories to the academic context based on the uniqueness of academia as compared to other organisations. These authors then proclaim that factors such as research funding opportunities and academic autonomy could be considered as some of the motivational factors for academics. In contrast, Robyn and du Preez (2013) argue that generational differences should not be overlooked as different generations have different preferences; therefore, their motivational factors may be different. This is relevant to the higher education sector as the higher education institutions transit into developing capacity through the next generation of academics. An abundance of young emerging academics most of whom belong to generation “Y” is expected in the sector as a result of this initiative. As revealed in this study that one of the institutions has already implemented the initiative on “Developmental Lecturers” aimed at addressing skills shortage crisis in this institution while concurrently growing the next generation of academics. It is necessary to develop strategies that speak to attraction and retention of the next generation of academics which should also encapsulate enticing the experienced older generation of academics, cultivating willingness and increase probabilities for knowledge and skills transfer to the young upcoming generation of academics. On these grounds, nurturing and retaining academic talent becomes critical for higher education institutions. Hence, strategies that address all these pull and push factors should be designed.

## **6.7 CONCLUSION**



This chapter has delved on the study findings on academic skills shortage in South Africa as represented by the sampled institutions of higher education in the KZN province of South Africa. The chapter has also reflected on the challenges the institutions face attracting and recruiting the academic expatriates, together with those challenges that the academic expatriates themselves face in adjusting to their host country and host academic institutions. Interaction adjustment, general adjustment and work adjustment have been the focal points of the inquiry of the study. Cultural issues that include local language and symbolism proficiency emerged as meaningful factors that influence adjustment of academic expatriates to their host country and host academic institutions. The following chapter profiles the limitations, recommendations and conclusions of the study based on the discussions and interpretations of the foregoing.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

---

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to sum up the efforts of the study by presenting the recommendations, limitations and conclusions of the study. This summation of the study is based on the observations, arguments and conclusions that the study has been making in the previous chapters. The subject of academic skills shortage in South Africa and the challenges of recruiting academic expatriates are brought to closure as its limitations are noted and policy recommendations are advanced. The selected institutions of higher education in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal are a site of the study and are used to make inferences on institutions of higher learning in the Republic of South Africa at large.

#### **7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

It would be useful for future studies of this nature and focus to involve local communities in their sample since local communities interact with academic expatriates through community engagement and community based research projects. Some of the academic

expatriates reside or conduct business in the very communities. Therefore, it would be interesting to establish the perspective of local communities in terms of their views and experience of interacting with academic expatriates. Also, students' insight would be valuable in relation to their interaction and relations with foreign lecturers. Moreover, the Department of Home Affairs has been blamed for inefficient service delivery but very little is known in terms of the causes and challenges experienced by this government department in processing work permits/visas. Therefore, a study that would establish or capture the challenges experienced by the Department of Home Affairs in processing work permits and visas would be insightful.

Furthermore, the higher education institutions under study indicate that induction programme is the sole structure used to support academic expatriates. It would be worthwhile to establish the usefulness, success and relevance of such programmes to the needs of academic expatriates as well as their impact on the adjustment of academic expatriates. Therefore, the relevance and usefulness of induction programmes offered by the higher learning institution should be evaluated to determine if they bear the desired outcomes or rather if they serve their intended purpose.

Further, this study notes; the increased migration of academic expatriates into South African institutions of higher learning calls for the transformation of the human resources practices in the country. Human resources practices should be transformed to suit the increased traffic of academic expatriates into the country. Finally, it is recommended that a similar comprehensive study is done across the entire higher education sector in South

Africa in order to understand the academic skills shortage as well as understand the challenges faced by academic expatriates across the higher education sector.

### **7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE**

#### **7.3.1 Induction**

It is recommended that Induction programmes be taken seriously by the institutions of higher learning under study as induction seems to be the sole source of support for academic expatriates. In essence, an induction should have three phases; 1) prior to employment, 2) on the assumption of duty and 3) during employment. Prior to employment, details pertaining to requirements for a specific individual such as accommodation, transport and so forth should be gathered and addressed. On the first day of employment, policies, procedures, benefits, university overview and the likes should be shared with academic expatriates. During employment, an ongoing induction and orientation (Scheckle, 2014) that would familiarise academic expatriates with their roles and responsibilities, new colleagues, new work space should take place and this process should be monitored to ensure that it addresses expectations of both employer and academic expatriates. The “during employment induction” should carry-on until an academic expatriate is comfortable and confident that he or she has found footing. Further, the academic expatriates themselves indicated that it would be useful if they are given a week to familiarise themselves with the study content and context before they

begin to engage in their academic activities and students. In disciplines such as tax and law, an overview of South African context should be shared with academic expatriates who come from countries that might be doing things differently from the way South Africa does in terms of tax and law. Scheckle (2014) reported poor attendance of induction programmes at a certain higher education institution in South Africa. Therefore, it could be useful to establish effectiveness, usefulness and relevance of such programmes. Ndebele (2013) supports that institutions of higher education invest in high-quality induction and he suggests that academic induction covers topics such as e-learning, humanising pedagogy, teaching paradigms, the role of student academic support programme, assessments, research and postgraduate studies. This list may be expanded to include community engagement and academic citizenship.

### **7.3.2 Training and development**

Training and development entails the professional development and organisational learning where organisational values and culture are instilled in employees. Training and development initiatives should be undertaken as an integral part of inducting and familiarising academic expatriates with the new environment and also inculcating basic but critical skills in navigating the new environment. Such skills may include, but are not limited to; communication and basic language skills, and cultural sensitivity skills. These initiatives could be well integrated within the skills and professional development programmes that usually reside in the Training and Development Unit or Academic Development Unit and in some instances in the Language Services Unit. Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) concur that training is offered to address cross-cultural intelligence.

Relevant stakeholders should join hands in designing and offering such critical skills for the benefit of academic expatriates, but, could also be extended to all interested parties.

Moreover, it is vital to transform the mindset of local employees in relation to the way they interact and treat academic expatriates. The second phase of the xenophobic or afro-phobic attacks in the region under study and the experiences shared in this study relating to the treatment and discrimination of expatriates call for the united front by the organisations and institutions in sensitising its employees and communities on issues of diversity, promotion of respect and tolerance in the workplaces. Halim, Bakar and Mohamad (2014) conclude that awareness could be created amongst those who work and deal with academic expatriates in terms of the role they could play in supporting and assisting them to adjust to the new environment. More so, Wan and Fang (2014) established that academic expatriates who were fully supported by host country nations had greater adjustment and satisfaction. Therefore, raising awareness and sensitivity towards diversity issues could increase involvement and participation towards assisting academic expatriates to adjust to their new locations. Their supportive behaviours demonstrate acceptance of academic expatriates in their communities and workplace. Support conveys that even though we communicate differently and we originate from different countries we are all humans with a common purpose.

Furthermore, mentoring, coaching and providing guidance to the academic expatriates would play a major role in facilitating their adjustment. This will further create a bond between academic expatriates and their mentors, establish close working relations while also opening an opportunity for social relations and assisting them to get footing as quickly as possible. In line with the Social Learning Theory, they could easily observe and model

their behaviours. Also, in line with the U-curve adjustment model they can quickly reach the adjustment phase. In the same vein, Howe-Walsh and Schyns (2010) affirm that mentoring enhances interaction adjustment at work as it provides academic expatriates with an opportunity to know and demonstrate the right behaviour in their new location. As a result of such efforts their cognitive, affective and the behavioural cross-cultural adjustment would be addressed (Howe-Walsh & Schyns 2010)

### **7.3.3 Remuneration and benefits**

The financial rewards and fringe benefits should be reviewed and be structured in a more supportive manner, especially to include accommodation and transportation concerns at least for the first few months while academic expatriates are still confronted with change and overwhelmed by adjustment issues in the new environment. Suitable remuneration strategies should be developed that can account for the adjustment experiences of the academic expatriates. Human resources practitioners have always been concerned with managing experiences of workers and the conditions of the workplace; there is need for them not to neglect the unique needs of academic expatriates. Human resources policies and strategies should be fashioned and reformed in such a way that they accommodate the unique needs of the academic expatriates. This should be treated as part of employer branding initiative (Schlechter et al., 2014). Revision of remuneration strategies should take into account that in most cases academic expatriates are employed on fixed term contracts, usually without benefits, therefore they have to pay their own medical aid expenses and invest towards their retirement. Moreover, financial institutions such as

banks are not keen to provide financial assistance and retail stores are also not prepared to open credit accounts for them as they are seen as credit risk.

#### **7.3.4 Capacity development**

Capacity development programmes should be designed to deal with an academic skills shortage. One of the institutions under study indicated that a capacity development programme has been put in place to address the skills shortage. Although respondents were of the view that due to the ever-changing nature of business the gap cannot be bridged completely but good fruits could be reaped once the programme matures in about five years. Scholars, Nundulall and Reddy (2011) speculate that such a gap cannot be filled in a short and medium term. Hence, Notshulwana (2011) proposes a 20-year plan. Therefore, capacity development should be encouraged to build the next generation of academics (HESA, 2011; Notshulwana, 2011). On the other hand, academic expatriates should transfer their skills to the fellow South African colleagues so that when they return home investment would have been made through their skills.

For that reason, when academic expatriates join the institutions of higher learning in South Africa, they should also start participating in mentorship programmes aimed at grooming and transferring knowledge and skills to young and emerging academics in South Africa (Nundulall & Reddy, 2011.) A fair skills and opportunities exchange would take place that way. In a way, institutions should invest in employing academic expatriates, in return transfer of skills and knowledge should take place. However, attractive rewards should be offered to lure commitment and cultivate a willingness to



participate as involvement and participation in such initiatives should be voluntary. Unless skills transfer and exchange are embedded in the employment contracts of academic expatriates and are part of performance agreements they remain a pipe dream and an uncertain achievement. Moreover, the capacity development programmes should be enhanced to ensure success and also be monitored and evaluated to trace progression towards intended results for the benefit of the institutions of higher learning and the academic expatriates.

### **7.3.5 Human Resources practices**

Human resources space is known for leading and championing change in the working environments. For change to be led correctly and channeled to the right direction those who lead should be creative, innovation and be abreast of the changes taking place around the globe. Moreover, they should analyse current trends for proper planning to take place. The issue of skills shortage and employment of academic expatriates deserves such proactive approaches through the introduction of new human resources practices that promote a high level of flexibility. It is in this spirit that human resources practices, processes, policies, procedures and guidelines should be accommodative of academic expatriates (Amin, Ismail, Rasid & Selemani, 2013; Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010). Accommodative in a sense that their adjustment needs should be acknowledged and catered for. It is clear from this study that academic expatriates constitute a certain percentage of South African academic institutions' headcount. Therefore one cannot neglect and ignore their existence and do business as usual without addressing their unique needs.

Furthermore, academic skills are in short supply in South Africa, for that reason, flexible, innovative and proactive recruitment and selection strategies should be devised to attract a high calibre of academics from around the globe. Bureaucracy in endorsing selection recommendations and decisions should be addressed to eliminate delays. Competition dictates that selection decisions and appointments of suitable candidates be processed quicker than usual if not immediately due to the limited or rather shrinking pool of academic talent (Notshulwana, 2011). Also, for institutions to gain a competitive edge, human resources processes should be revised to successfully respond to issues of competition and quality.

### **7.3.6 Work permit applications for academic expatriates**

The South African Immigration Act no.3 of 2007 should be relaxed to attract and encourage the best calibre of academic expatriates to join South African institutions of higher learning and contribute to building the economy of the country. Home Affairs processes that are involved with work permit applications should also be revamped to address the outcry of the current delays and misplacement of documents submitted for work permit application purposes. Furthermore, decentralisation of this process would enable quick processing as opposed to centralised structures of the present where all applications are channelled to a central point. Efficient systems and skilled employees should be made available to deal with the necessary intricacies of the process in the most effective, efficient and professional manner.

#### **7.4 CONTRIBUTION TO ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE**

In what it has achieved, this study, in its humble way expands our understanding of skills shortage in the South African higher education landscape and challenges emanating from the necessary attempt to recruit academic expatriates. Although various scholars, researches and publications came to almost similar conclusion (Daniels, 2007; Fisher & Scott, 2011; Govender, 2008; HESA, 2011; Ilunga, 2010; Tettey, 2010; Woodlard, Kneebone & Lee, 2003), this study further identified disciplines that experience academic skills shortage. The study also expands our understanding of the management of academic expatriates in the South African context. Scholars such as Maharaj (2011) and Okoli (2013) have shared the impact of globalisation in the South African higher education sector which has led to the increased migration of academic talent to other parts of the globe. These scholars recognise that academic expatriates are increasingly joining the South African higher education sector. This study identifies some adjustment challenges faced by the foreign expatriate academics in the South African higher education institutions under study so that these challenges can be addressed in order to facilitate the settling-in process of academic expatriates and their families.

In addition, the use of mixed methods research in this study is one major contribution to an illuminating understanding of the subject. Collection and analysis of data from various sources present diverse views about factors contributing to academic skills shortage as well as views about academic expatriates' adjustment challenges in the South African context. The explanatory sequential design approach used in the study unpacks challenges faced by the academic institutions under study as well as adjustment

challenges experienced by academic expatriates based in these institutions. This approach presents a deeper insight of the issues under investigation which otherwise would not have been presented through the use of one method. The approach further expands on the findings not arrived at by statistical procedures. Therefore, the mixed research methods used in the study presents greater reliability of results and thorough investigation of the problem. For that reason, the conclusions of the study may achieve greater credibility.

Moreover, the study was located in the South African higher education sector. This brings the South African context into academic expatriates' or self-initiated expatriates' literature which is currently in its infancy in the European countries (Slemer & Luring, 2010), but close to non-existence in South Africa (Maharaj, 2011). In light of the internationalisation of the higher education landscape in South Africa, diversity and expatriation issues are evident. Therefore, this study shed some light on critical diversity management issues that call for institutional level intervention strategies. Through this study, awareness of adjustment challenges of academic expatriates was raised for higher learning institutions and host country nationals to take cognisance of and offer appropriate support. Also, through this study a call is made for transformed and accommodative human resources practices that respond to the global changes, especially practices that address needs of academic expatriates.

Furthermore, the validation of the academic expatriates' adjustment instrument revealed two-factors from the general adjustment scale and another two factors emerged from the work adjustment scale. This is probably the first research instrument that has reported such as compared to the original instrument used (Black, 1988). These results suggest

that the two factor instruments are the most suitable to assess academic expatriates' adjustment challenges in the South African context or any context for that matter. For that reason, these findings contribute to the existing scientific body knowledge in the discipline where this study is located.

## **7.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study was located in the KZN region. Therefore, its findings can only be applicable within the confines of this region. However, the usefulness of these findings to other institutions of higher learning in South Africa as well as other institutions of similar nature should not be underestimated. Moreover, due to the specific focus in the higher education sector, the findings may be irrelevant to other sectors considering the nature, dynamics and practices of the higher education sector.

## **7.6 CONCLUSION**

It is an inevitable fact that skills shortage exists in South Africa, particularly in academia. In one way or the other, this impacts negatively on the daily running of academic activities. However, it is not only the disruption of academic activities that is a concern but academic staff also has to cope with heavy workloads which compromise quality, efficiency and effectiveness of academic services rendered. Therefore, the work-life balance of academics also suffers disruption as extra hours are to be invested in discharging academic responsibilities or rather in responding to the work demands. Furthermore, human resource recruitment and selection practices and strategies are to be enhanced

to a level where diverse sources of talent attraction are utilised and employment policies are relaxed to accommodate a vast range of skills from diverse background especially those from beyond the South African borders.

In this context, foreign skills have over the years proved to be a great source of academic talent. Therefore, employing institutions should assist the adjustment process of academic expatriates through providing necessary support and cultivating a conducive work environment that promotes superior work performance. But, the support offered should further be extended to a level where government legislations, processes and procedures are influenced to enable quick processing of work permits. This influence is well within the space of academic research and innovation. Therefore, scientific knowledge should be produced that will influence the current work permit application process.

## 8. References

- Adams, S.B., Schulz, K., Hardly, J., Bliss, S., Lipowitz, A., Baxter, G., Meagher, D., Fingerioth, J., Howe, L., Grant, B., Probst, C. & Loew, A. (2005). Retention of surgery specialists in academia: A critical agenda. *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 32(4), 404–415.
- Adenike, A. (2011). Organisational climate as predictor of employee job satisfaction: Evidence from Covenant University. *Business Intelligence Journal*. 4(1), 151–165.
- Akoojee, S. (2009). Scarce Skills and public technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in South Africa: Twin challenges or two sides of the same coin?. *Southern African Review of Education*. 15(2), 117–138.
- Altbach, P.G. (2013). *The international imperative in Higher Education*. Center for International Higher Education: Boston College
- Amin, M., Ismail, W.K.W., Rasid, S.Z.A. & Selemani, R.D.A. (2013). The impact of human resource management practices on performance: Evidence for a public university. *The TQM Journal*. 26(2), 125–142.
- Anderson, B.A. (2001). When “expatriation means follow that women”. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*. 39(3), 100–116.
- ASAF (Academy of Science for South Africa) (2010). The Ph.D. Study. An evidence-based study on how to meet the demands for high-level skills in an emerging economy. *Consensus Report*.
- Badat, S. (2009). *Producing, transforming the social composition of, and retaining a new generation of academics*. Keynote address at the Higher Education South Africa Developing the Next Generation of Academics Workshop. Eastern Cape: Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- Badsha, N. & Cloete, N. (2011). *Higher Education: Contribution for the NPC’s National Development Plan* (p.1 – 22). Pretoria, South Africa

- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice- Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall.
- Bendict, O.H. & Ukpere, W.I. (2012). Brain drain and African development: Any possible gain from the drain? *African Journal of Business Management* 6(7), 2421–2428.
- Bishop, C.C., Boyle, D.M., Cune, R.R., & Hermanson, D.R. (2012). A Different Model for Doctoral Education in Accounting and Auditing: Student and Faculty Reflection. *American Accounting Association*, 6(1), A1 – A16.
- Black, J.S. (1988). Work-role transitions: A study of American expatriate managers in Japan. *Journal of International Business Studies*. 19, 277–294.
- Black, J.S., Mendenhall, M. & Oddou, G.R. (1991). Towards a comprehensive model of international adjustment: an integration of multiple theoretical perspectives. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(2), 291–317.
- Black, J.S. & Mendenhall, M. (1991). The U-curve adjustment hypothesis revisited: A review and theoretical framework. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 22(2), 225–247.
- Botha, A., Bussin, M., & De Swardt, L. (2011). An employer brand predictive model for talent attraction and retention. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management*, 9(1) 1–12.
- Boshoff, N. & Bosch, A. (2012). Women in South African Academia – A statistical profile. *The SABPP Women's Report 2012*. p.12 – 19.
- Boyle, D.M., Hermanson, D.R. & Mensah, M.O. (2011). Addressing the Accounting and Auditing Shortage: Practitioners' Perceptions of Academia. *American Accounting Association*, 5(1), A72- A85.
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2). p. 77-101.



- Bryman, A. A. & Bell, E. (2007). *Business research methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brown, J.H. & Oplatka, I. (2007). Market orientation in universities: A comparative study of two national higher education systems. *International Journal of Education Management*, 24 (3), 204–220.
- Bytenski, R. & Fatoki, O. (2014). The effect of Employment Equity Act on academic staff recruitment in South African university. *Anthropologist*, 17(3), 957–979.
- Carr, E.; Ennis, R. & Baus, L. (2010). Critical Issues on Dental Hygiene, The Dental Hygiene Faculty Shortage: Causes, Solutions and Recruitment Tactics. *Journal of Dental Hygiene*, 48(4), 165–169.
- Cerdin, J. & Brewster, C. (2014). Talent management and expatriation: Bridging two streams of research and practice. *Journal of World Business*, 49, 245–252.
- Cesnyiene, R. (2008). *Globalisation and human resource management*. *Economics*, 82, 41–56.
- Creswell, J.W. & Plano Clark, V.L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research (2nd Eds)*. Thousand Oak. CA: Sage.
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioural sciences (2nd ed.)*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Cole, N. (2005). *Why do female expatriates “fit in” better than males?* ASAC. Toronto, Ontario.
- Daniels, Z. (2007). Skills Shortage in South Africa: A Literature Review. School of Economics, University of Cape Town. DPRU Working Paper 07/121.
- Dawis, R.V., England, G.W. & Lofquist, L.H. (1964). A theory of work adjustment. *Minnesota Studies in Vocational Rehabilitation*. XV.

- Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). (2002). *Nature and causes of skills shortages: Reflections from the Commonwealth National Industry Skills Initiative Working Groups*. Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. Australia: Australian Government Printers.
- Department of Labour. (2003). *The State of Skills in South Africa 2003*. Cape Town: South Africa
- Department of Home Affairs. (2015). *Immigration Regulations*. Retrieved, 3 October 2015 from [www.dha.go.za/immigration/newmigrationregulations](http://www.dha.go.za/immigration/newmigrationregulations)
- Development Policy Research Unit, University of Cape Town. (2006). *Graduate unemployment in post-apartheid South Africa: Nature and possible policy responses*. Research Report compiled for Standard Bank and Business Leadership South Africa. Cape Town.
- De Wit, H. (2011). *Trends, Issues and Challenges in Internationalisation of Higher Education*. Centre for Applied Research on Economics & Management, School of Economics and Management of Hogeschool van Amsterdam. Amsterdam.
- Du Plessis, A.J. (2009). An overview of influence of globalization and international on domestic human resource management in New Zealand. *International Review of Business Research Papers*, 5(2), 1–18.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, M. & Jackson, P. (2012). *Management Research*. Singapore, SAGE Publications.
- Elizur, D. (2001). Gender and work values: A comparative analysis. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 134 (2), 201–263.
- Flaspoler, B. (2007). Cultural Intelligence and Adaptation: The impact of the anticipated tenure of cross-cultural assignment. *Unpublished master's dissertation*. University of Maastricht.

- Fisher, G. & Scott, I. (2011). Closing the skills and technology gap in South Africa Background paper 3: the role of higher education in closing the skills gap in South Africa. *The World Bank Human Development Group, Africa Region*.
- Fomunyam, B.N. (2012). Caught between Two Worlds: The (re)Negotiation of Identity among Cameroonian Migrants in Durban. *Alternations*, 19(1), 199–216.
- Froese, F.J. (2012). Motivation and adjustment of self-initiated expatriates: the case of expatriate academics in South Korea. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23(6), 1095–1112.
- Gaskin, J. (2014, May 14). Statistics basics, data screening and missing values [SEM Boot Camp]. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C\\_Jf4l0PFI8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_Jf4l0PFI8)
- Govender, P. (2008). Skills Shortage Cripples SA Universities. *Sunday Times*. 24 November 2008.
- Govender, P. (2014). Fear of Brain drain as profs retire en masse. *Sunday Times*, 06 April 2014.
- Graf, A. & Mertesacker, M. (2009). Intercultural training: six measures assessing training needs. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 33(6), 539–558.
- Grobler, P.; Warnich, S.; Carrell, M.R.; Elbert, N.R. & Hatfield, R.D. (2006). *Human Resources Management in South Africa*. Thompson Learning.
- Halim, H., Bakar, A.B. & Mohamad, B. (2014). Expatriate Adjustment: Validating multicultural personality trait among self-initiated academic expatriates. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 155, 123–129.
- Harley, J. (2013). Strengthening research in African Universities: Reflections on Policy, Partnerships and Politics. *Policy and Practice*, 16, 80–100.
- Haslberger, A. & Brewster, C. (2007). Domains of expatriates adjustment with special emphasis on work. *Paper presented at the Cadiz University's VI. International Workshop on Human Resources Management*. Jerez, Spain, May 2007.

- Haslberger, A. (2007). Gender differences in expatriate adjustment. *Paper presented at the 67<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management*, Philadelphia, 6-7 August 2007.
- Hellriegel, D. Slocum, Jr. J. W. & Woodman, R.W. (2001). *Organizational Behaviour*. 9th Edition. Sydney: Thomson Learners.
- HESA. (2011). A proposal for National Programme to Develop the Next Generation of Academics for South African Higher Education. Unisa Sunnyside Campus. Pretoria.
- Herman, C. (2011). Expanding doctoral education in South Africa. Pipeline or pipedream? *Higher Education Research & Development*, 30(4), 505–517.
- Howe-Walsh, L. & Schyns, B. (2010). Self-initiated expatriation: Implications for HRM. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(2), 260–273.
- Huff, K.C. (2013). Language, cultural intelligence and expatriate success. *Management Research Review*, 36(6), 596–612.
- Human Science Research Council. (2002 -2004). *HEMIS study*. Pretoria. Government Printers.
- Ilunga, M. (2010). Addressing the imbalance in civil engineering between academia and industry: Opinion. *Civil Engineering-Siviele Engenieurswese*, 18, p.4.
- Jick. T.D. (1979). Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24(4), 602–611.
- Kamwendo, G.H. (2013). Language in Higher Education Transformation: Contrasts and Similarities between two African Universities. *The Development of Higher Education in Africa: Prospects and Challenges International Perspective on Education and Society* (pp. p265 – 285)
- Kerr-Phillips, B. & Thomas, A. (2009). Macro and micro challenges for talent retention in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human Resources Management*, 7(1), 1–10.

- Katrinli, A. & Penbek, S. (2010). Role of cultural sensitivity on creativity of academic expatriates: The moderating effect of culture. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(5), 755–763.
- Kubler, J. & Lennon, M.C. (2007). 2007-07 Academic Staff Salary Survey. *Association of Commonwealth Universities*. Policy Research Unit.
- Koen, C. (2003). Academics. *Human Resource Development Review*, 501–521
- Lieber, L.D. (2010). How HR can assist in managing the four Generations in today's workplace. *Employment Relations Today*, 36(4), 85–91.
- Lind, D.A., Marchal, W.G. & Wathen, S.A. (2008). *Basic Statistics for Business and Economics*. Singapore: McGraw-Hill.
- Loomes, S. (2011). The aging workforce: How can Australian universities address future workforce challenges? September 29, 2011. *SBS HDR Student Conference*. Paper 7.
- Luthans, F., Norman, S.M., Bruce, J.A. & Avey, J.B. (2008). The mediating role of psychological capital in the supportive organisational climate employee performance relationship. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 29, 219–223.
- Lysgaard, S. (1955) Adjustment in a foreign society: Norwegian Fulbright grantees visiting the United States. *International Social Science Bulletin*, 7, 45–51.
- Maharaj, B. (2010). The African brain Drain, Causes, Costs, Consequences. *Africa Insight*, 40(1), 96–108.
- Maharaj, A. (2011). The impact of globalisation on South African Higher Education Institutions, patterns of academic inflow into the South African higher education system. *Delhi Business Review*, 12(1), 37–50.

- Maphisa-Nqakula, N. (2007). Department of Home Affairs Budget Voce 2007/08 held on 7 June 2007.
- Mateus, A.D., Allen-Ile, C. & Iwu, C.G. (2014). The skills shortage in South Africa: Interrogating the repertoire of discussions. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(6), 63–73.
- Mbeki, T. (2005). State of the nation address by the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, to the joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament, Cape Town, February.
- Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G.R. (1985). The dimensions of expatriate acculturation: A review. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 39–47.
- Modisaotsile, B.M. (2012). The Failing Standard of Basic Education in South Africa. Africa Institute of Africa, *Policy Brief*. 27, 1–7.
- Mokoditsoa, M.J. (2011). Academic staff recruitment and retention strategies at the University of Limpopo. Unpublished master's dissertation. University of Limpopo, South Africa.
- Mol, S.T., Born, M., Willisen, M.E. & van der Molen, H.T. (2005). Predicting expatriate job performance: the moderating effects of international experience. *The Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 36(5), 590–620.
- Mulenga, C.N. & Van Lill, B. (2007). Recruitment and Selection of Foreign Professional in the South African Job Market: Procedures and Processes. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 5(3), 30–37.
- National Planning Commission. (2012). Diagnostic Overview. Department of Presidency. Republic of South Africa.
- Naris, N.S. & Ukpere, I.W. (2010). Developing a retention strategy for qualifies staff at the Polytechnic of Namibia. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(6), 1078–1084.

- Ndebele, C. (2013). New Staff perceptions on an academic staff induction programme at a South African University: Lessons for educational development. *Journal of Social Science*, 36(2), 103–111.
- Ndebele, C. (2014). Approach towards the Professional Development of Academics as Espoused in Institutional Policy Documents at a South African University. *Journal of Social Science*. 38(3), 255–269.
- Neuman, L. (2011). *Social science methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches (7<sup>th</sup> Eds)*. New York: Pearson International
- Ngobeni, E.K. & Bezuidenhout, A. (2011). Engaging employees for improved retention at a higher education institution in South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(23), 9961–9970.
- Niewenhuizen, C. (2011). Academic staff and employment equity profile in Business Management departments at universities in South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(16), 7006–7016.
- Nkuna, P.H. (2010). Preparing for talent: Towards transformed indigenous African language disciplines at South African universities. *South African Journal of African Languages*, 30(2), 222–233.
- Notshulwana, V. (2011). Expanding opportunities through international equity, transforming higher education in South Africa to benefit all. *Africa Insight*, 4(2), 142–159.
- Nundulall, R. & Reddy, K. (2011). Mentorship as a strategy to improve research output at tertiary institutions: A case study of University of Johannesburg. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 25(6), 1155–1177.
- Ojong, V.B. (2012). Pragmatic and symbolic negotiation of Home for African migrants in South Africa. *Alternations*, 19(1), 262–279.
- Okoli, N. (2013) Universities and globalisation flows: African experience. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 1(2), 58–62.

- Okpara, J.O. (2010). Personal characteristics as predictors of expatriate managers' cross-cultural adjustment in Nigeria. *African Journal of Business and Economic Research*, 5(1), 113–133.
- Osman-Gani, A.M. & Rockstuhl, T. (2009). Cross-cultural training, expatriate self-efficacy, and adjustments to overseas assignments: An empirical investigation of managers in Asia. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 33, 277–290.
- Pallant, J. (2013). *SPSS Survival Manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using SPSS* (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) London: Open University Press.
- Peltokorpi, V. (2008). Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates in Japan. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19(9). 1588–1606.
- Ramalu, S.S., Rose, R.C., Uli, J. & Krumar, N. (2013). Cultural intelligence and expatriate performance in global assignment: The mediating role of adjustment. *International Journal of Business and Society*, 13(1), 19–32.
- Rajasekar, J. & Renand, F. (2013). Culture shock in a global world: factors affecting culture shock experienced by expatriates in Oman and Oman expatriates abroad. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8(13), 1833–8119.
- Rasool, F. & Botha, C.J. (2011). The nature, extent and effect of skills shortage on skills migration in South Africa. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 9(1), 1–12.
- Ren, H, Shaffer, M.A., Harrison, D.A., Fu, C. & Fodchuck, K.M. (2014). Reactive adjustment or proactive embedding? Multi study, multi-wave evidence for dual pathways to expatriate retention. *Personnel Psychology*, 67, 203–239.
- Robyn, A. & du Preez, R. (2013). Intention to quit amongst Generation Y academics in higher education. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 39(1), 1–14.
- Robyn, A.M. (2012). *Intention to quit amongst Generation Y academics at higher education institutions*. Unpublished master's dissertation. Stellenbosch University. South Africa.



- Rotter, J.B. (1982). *The Development and application of Social Learning Theory: Selected papers*. New York: Praeger Publishers.
- Saari, L.M and Judge, T.A (2004). Employee attitudes and job satisfaction. *Human Resources Management*, 43(4), 395–407.
- Sales, C. (2006). Organisational cultures in multinational organizations. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 3, 60–76.
- Sakaran, U. (2010). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.: New York.
- Samuels, M.O. & Chipunza, C. (2013). Attrition and Retention of Senior Academics at Institutions of Higher Learning in South Africa: The Strategies, Complexities and Realities. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 35(2), 97–109.
- Scheckle, L.A. (2014). How can the Induction Programme be influenced and improved? *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(11), 77–88.
- Schlechter, A. Hung, A. & Bussin, M. (2014). Understanding talent attraction: The influential rewards elements on perceived job attraction. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(1), 1–13.
- Shih, S.P., Lie, T., Klein, G. & Jiang, J.J. (2014). Information Technology customer aggression: The importance of an organizational climate support. *Information & Management*, 51, 670–678.
- Slemer, J. & Luring, J. (2009). Cultural similarity and adjustment of expatriates academics. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33, 429–436.
- Slemer, J. & Luring, J. (2013). Cognitive and affective reasons to expatriate and work adjustment of expatriate academics. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 13(2), 175–191.

- Slemer, J. & Luring, J. (2010). Self-initiated academic expatriates: Inherent demographics and reason to expatriate. *European Management Review*, 7, 169–179.
- Selmer, J. (2006). Language ability and adjustment: western expatriates in China. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 48(3), 347–368.
- Staniforth, D. & Harland, T. (2006). Contrasting views of induction: The experiences of new academic staff and their heads of department. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 7(2), 185–196.
- Statistics South Africa. (2005). Labour Force Survey. Retrieved, 3 October 2015. From [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za)
- Subotzky, G. (2001) Addressing equity and excellence in relation to employment: What prospects for transformative change in South Africa? *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 34(3), 56–69.
- Sunday Times. (2014). *Skills development, bridging the skills divide*. Business Times. (18 May 2014).
- Takeuchi, R. & Chen, J. (2013). The impact of international experience for expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment: A theoretical review and a critique. *Organisational Psychology Review*, 3(3), 248–290.
- Tetty, W.J. (2010). *Challenges of developing and retaining the next generation of academics: Deficits in academic staff capacity at African Universities*. Unpublished paper, Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, available: [www.foundation-partnership.org/pubs/pdf/tetty\\_deficits.pdf](http://www.foundation-partnership.org/pubs/pdf/tetty_deficits.pdf) (accessed 14 July 2014).
- Theron, M., Barkhuizen, N. & du Plessis, Y. (2014). Managing the academic talent void: Investigating factors in academic turnover and retention in South Africa. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 40(1), 1–4.

- Tharenou, P. (2002). Receptivity to careers in international work—abroad and at home. *Australian Journal of Management*, 27, 29–136.
- Trowler, P. & Knight, P.T. (1999). Organisational Socialisation and Induction in Universities: Reconceptualising Theory and Practice. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 19(1), 27–42.
- Twalo, T. (2010). Education for self-reliance – South Africa’s alternative for addressing skills and job creation: A literature review. *South African Journal of Higher Education*. 24(5), 832–846.
- Ulin, P. R., Robinson, E. T., Tolley, E. E., & McNeil, E. T. (2002). *Qualitative methods: A field work guide for applied research in sexual and reproductive health*. North Carolina: Family Health
- Van Jaarveldt, L.C. (2010). *An evaluation of a development programme for your academics at the University of South Africa: Views from participants*. Pretoria, South Africa: UNISA Press.
- Van Aswegen, M. (2009). The psychological stress of relocation and travel. *Southern African Journal of Epidemiology and Infection*, 24(2), 32–34.
- Vogel, A.J. & van Vuuren, J.J. (2008). Factors influencing the preparation, support and training of South African expatriates. *Acta Commercii*, 8(1), 80–89.
- Vrosmans, P. & van Engen, M. (2013) Presumed cultural similarity paradox, Expatriate adjustment and performance across the border or over the globe. *Journal of Global Mobility*, 1(2), 219–238.
- Walsh, L.Z. & Schyns, B. (2010). Self-initiated expatriation: Implications for HRM. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(2), 260–273.
- Wang, C.H. & Fang, M. (2014). The effect of personality country nationals helping behaviours toward expatriates. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 42, 140–145.

- Wilson, J. (2010). *Essentials of Business Research, A guide to doing your research project*. Singapore, SAGE Publications.
- Wocke, A. & Klein, S. (2002). The implications of South Africa's skills migration policy for country competitiveness. *Development Southern Africa*, 19, 441–454.
- Woodlard, I.; Kneebone, P. A. & Lee, D. (2003). Forecasting the demand for scarce skills, 2001 – 2006. *Human Resource Development Review*, 458–475.
- Wright, B.E. and Kim, S. (2004). Participation's influence on job satisfaction: The importance of job characteristics. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 24(1), 18–40.
- Yusuf, B.N. & Zain, A.B. (2014). The effect of cultural diversification on working performance of expatriates in the higher learning institutions. *Advances in Environmental Biology*, 8(11), 978–986.
- Zapf, M.K. (1991). Cross-cultural transitions and wellness: Dealing with culture shock. *International Journal for Advancement of Counselling*, 14, 105–119.

## 9. Appendices

APPENDIX A : ETHICAL CLEARANCE

 UNIVERSITY OF  
KWAZULU-NATAL  
INYUVESI  
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

26 August 2014

Ms Thulile L Ngonyama 205539922  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Ngonyama

Protocol reference number: H55/1352/013D  
Project title: Skills shortage and challenges in employment of foreign professionals in selected ICZN Higher Education Institutions.

**Full Approval – Expedited**

This letter serves to notify you that your application in connection with the above has now been granted Full Approval.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol

Yours faithfully

  
.....  
Dr Shabuka Singh (Chair)  
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Prof. IH Butindach  
cc Academic Liaison: Professor DP McCrackin  
cc School Admin: Ms Ausla Luthuli

---

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee  
Dr Shabuka Singh (Chair)  
Westville Campus, Gavin Nibeki Building  
Postal Address: Private Bag X24001, Durban 4001  
Telephone: +27 (0)31 230 3507-3508/4557 Fax/Folder: +27 (0)31 240 4602 Email: [shabuka@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:shabuka@ukzn.ac.za) / [shabuka@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:shabuka@ukzn.ac.za) / [shabuka@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:shabuka@ukzn.ac.za)  
Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)

 1915 - 2015  
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Open Rubric     Spring Garden     Edgewood     Howard College     Medical School     Pietermaritzburg     Westville

Ms TL Ngonyama (209539922)  
University of KwaZulu Natal  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Department of Psychology  
Howard College

14 January 2014

The Registrar  
University of KwaZulu Natal  
Westville

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL**

This serves to seek permission to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I am a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), Howard College, under the supervision of Prof JH Buitendach, Department of Psychology. My research topic entitled "Skills shortage and challenges in employment of foreign professionals in the selected KZN higher education institution" intends to study challenges faced by the KZN higher learning institutions in the general recruitment and selection of their personnel, particularly in the employment of foreign professionals. The targeted population in this study shall include the Human Resources Department, foreign nationals employed by the University of KwaZulu Natal and the line managers supervising foreign nationals.

I attach, with this letter, my research proposal, research instruments, consent letter, and ethical clearance letter from the UKZN.

Should you require further information in this regard, please contact me on 012 – 429 2684 / 0845523178 or [ndoutl@unisa.ac.za](mailto:ndoutl@unisa.ac.za).

I look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,



-----  
Ms Thulile L Ngonyama  
Student (209539922) - UKZN

APPENDIX C : LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION AT UKZN



24 January 2014

Ms Thulile L Ngonyama  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Howard College Campus  
UKZN  
Email: [209539922@stu.ukzn.ac.za](mailto:209539922@stu.ukzn.ac.za)  
[ndoull@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ndoull@ukzn.ac.za)

Dear Ms Ngonyama

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

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

*"Skills shortage and challenges in employment of foreign professionals in the selected KZN higher education institution".*

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by requesting staff in the Human Resources Department, foreign nationals employed by UKZN and line managers supervising foreign nationals to respond to a Questionnaire that you will be handing out.

Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely

MR M C BALOYI  
REGISTRAR

**Office of the Registrar**

Postal Address: Private Bag X64001, Durban, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 280 8505/2208 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 280 7934/2204 Email: [registrar@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:registrar@ukzn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Open Public

HEALTH CAMPUS

Edgewood

Howard College

Medical School

Pietermaritzburg

Westville

Ms TL Ngonyama (209539922)  
University of KwaZulu Natal  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Department of Psychology  
Howard College

14 January 2014

The DVC: Research and Innovation  
University of Zululand  
KwaDlangezwa  
3886

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND**

This serves to seek permission to conduct research at the University of Zululand (UniZulu). I am a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), Howard College, under the supervision of Prof JH Buitendach, Department of Psychology. My research topic entitled "Skills shortage and challenges in employment of foreign professionals in the selected KZN higher education institution" intends to study challenges faced by the KZN higher learning institutions in the general recruitment and selection of their personnel, particularly in the employment of foreign professionals. The targeted population in this study shall include the Human Resources Department, foreign nationals employed by the UniZulu and the line managers supervising foreign nationals.

I attach, with this letter, my research proposal, research instruments, consent letter, and ethical clearance letter from the UKZN.

Should you require further information in this regard, please contact me on 012 – 429 2684 / 0845523178 or [ndoutl@unisa.ac.za](mailto:ndoutl@unisa.ac.za).

I look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Thulile L Ngonyama  
Student (209539922) - UKZN



APPENDIX E : LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION AT UNIZULU

DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR,  
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION



UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND  
Website: <http://www.unizulu.ac.za>

Private Bag X1001  
KwaDlangezwa 3886

Tel: 035 902 5621

Fax: 035 902 6222

Email: [MsNgonyamaT@unizulu.ac.za](mailto:MsNgonyamaT@unizulu.ac.za)

Ms T L Ngonyama  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Department of Psychology  
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Per email: [ricoutl@unizulu.ac.za](mailto:ricoutl@unizulu.ac.za)

12 February 2014

Dear Ms Ngonyama

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT UNIZULU: "SKILLS SHORTAGE AND CHALLENGES IN EMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN PROFESSIONALS IN SELECTED KZN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS"**

Your letter dated 14 January 2014 and attached documentation refer. I note that the University of KwaZulu-Natal has issued a provisional ethical clearance certificate in respect of this project (Ref HSS/1352/D13D).

I hereby grant approval for you to conduct part of your research at UNIZULU, as per the methodologies stated in your project description document. This approval is conditional upon the following: Copies of all research outputs emanating from this research, including the thesis, must be shared with UNIZULU's Human Resources Division, and should there be any adverse findings that might impact upon UNIZULU's reputation, then UNIZULU should be informed prior to publication.

I wish you well in your research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Rod Wiggley  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation

\*Restructured for Relevance\*

Open Public

Ms TL Ngonyama (209539922)  
University of KwaZulu Natal  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Department of Psychology  
Howard College

5 May 2014

The Director: Research  
Mangosuthu University of Technology  
Umlazi

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE MANGOSUTHU UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

This serves to seek permission to conduct research at the Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). I am a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), Howard College, under the supervision of Prof JH Buitendach, Department of Psychology. My research topic entitled "Skills shortage and challenges in employment of foreign professionals in the selected KwaZulu Natal (KZN) higher education institution" intends to study challenges faced by the KZN higher learning institutions in the general recruitment and selection of their personnel, particularly in the employment of foreign professionals. The targeted population in this study shall include the Human Resources Department, foreign nationals employed by the MUT and the line managers supervising foreign nationals. The KZN higher education institutions under study include the University of KwaZulu Natal, the Durban University of Technology (DUT), the Mangosuthu University of Technology and the University of Zululand (UNIZULU).

The study will use both qualitative and quantitative research techniques; therefore, two questionnaires will be used to collect data from HR practitioners (Questionnaire 1) and foreign professionals (Questionnaire 2). Questionnaire 2 will be piloted before the actual study takes place. Moreover, 15 minute structured interviews will be conducted with HR practitioners, foreign nationals and line managers supervising foreign nationals. The interviews are envisaged to take place around January 2015.

I attach, with this letter, my research proposal, research instruments, consent letter, ethical clearance letter from the UKZN and gate-keeper letters from the UKZN, DUT and UNIZULU.

Should you require further information in this regard, please contact me on 012 – 429 2684 / 0845523178 or [ndoutl@unisa.ac.za](mailto:ndoutl@unisa.ac.za).

I look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Thulile L Ngonyama  
Student (209539922) - UKZN



Mangosuthu  
University of Technology

29 July, 2014

Ms. T.L. Ngonyama

Dear Ms. T.L. Ngonyama

It is my pleasure to inform you that permission to conduct survey titled: *"Skills shortage and challenges to employment of foreign professionals in selected KZN Higher Education Institutions"* amongst MUT staff members was granted

Permission to conduct the survey is granted on the condition that any changes to the project must be brought to the attention of the MUT Research Ethics Committee as soon as possible. Should there be any adverse findings which may negatively impact on MUT's reputation, permission to publish the results must first be obtained from MUT.

A copy of your thesis or publication would be appreciated.

Good luck with your research.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anette Mienie', written over a faint horizontal line.

Dr. Anette Mienie

Director: Research

031 9077354/7450

[anette@mmut.ac.za](mailto:anette@mmut.ac.za)

Open Rules

Ms TL Ngonyama (209539922)  
University of KwaZulu Natal  
School of Applied Human Sciences  
Department of Psychology  
Howard College

14 January 2014

The Research Department  
Durban University of Technology  
Durban

Dear Sir/Madam

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

This serves to seek permission to conduct research at the Durban University of Technology (DUT). I am a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), Howard College, under the supervision of Prof JH Buitendach, Department of Psychology. My research topic entitled "Skills shortage and challenges in employment of foreign professionals in the selected KZN higher education institution" intends to study challenges faced by the KZN higher learning institutions in the general recruitment and selection of their personnel, particularly in the employment of foreign professionals. The targeted population in this study shall include the Human Resources Department, foreign nationals employed by the DUT and the line managers supervising foreign nationals.

I attach, with this letter, my research proposal, research instruments, consent letter, and ethical clearance letter from the UKZN.

Should you require further information in this regard, please contact me on 012 – 429 2684 / 0845523178 or [ndoutl@unisa.ac.za](mailto:ndoutl@unisa.ac.za).

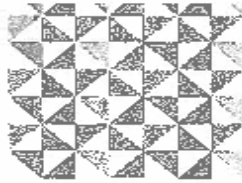
I look forward to your positive response.

Yours sincerely,



-----  
Ms Thulile L Ngonyama  
Student (209539922) - UKZN

APPENDIX I : LETTER GRANTING PERMISSION AT DUT



Directorate for Research and Postgraduate Support  
Durban University of Technology  
Framsa Annex, Steve Biko Campus  
P.O. Box 1334, Durban 4000  
Tel.: 031-37325767  
Fax: 031-3732946  
E-mail: [moyo@dut.ac.za](mailto:moyo@dut.ac.za)

17<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Ms Thulile Ngonyama  
c/o School of Applied Human Sciences  
University of KwaZulu-Natal

Dear Ms Ngonyama

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE DUT**

Your email correspondence in respect of the above refers. I am pleased to inform you that the Institutional Research Committee (IRC) has granted permission for you to conduct your research at the Durban University of Technology.

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings can be submitted to the IRC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards.  
Yours sincerely

**PROF. S. MOYO**  
**DIRECTOR: RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT**

Open R:Eric

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**School of Applied Human Sciences**

Dear Sir/Madam

**PhD Research Project**

**Researcher:** Ms Thulile Ngonyama (021 429 2684/0845523178)

**Supervisor:** Prof JH Buitendach (031 260 2407)

My name is Thulile Ngonyama a PhD student in the School of Applied Human Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal under the supervision of Prof JH Buitendach.

I am planning to conduct a study entitled “*Skills Shortages and challenges in employment of foreign professional in selected KZN higher education institutions*”. The aim of this study will be to: 1) establish disciplines that experience high levels of skills shortages in the KZN higher education institutions; 2) ascertain if there are programmes in place to assist foreign professionals to adjust in the new environment; and 3) identify adjustment challenges faced by foreign professionals in KZN higher learning institutions. The actual study will be conducted during the course of the year 2014; however, at this stage I would like to invite input of foreign employees into the questionnaire. The input will assist in ensuring that their adjustment challenges/needs are identified so that strategies to address them could be developed.

I will appreciate if you could avail yourself for a focus group discussion on Wednesday, 12 March 2014 at 11h30, venue to be confirmed.

Should you need further information regarding this focus group meeting, you are welcome to contact me on 084 552 3178/ 012 429 2684 or [ndoutl@unisa.ac.za](mailto:ndoutl@unisa.ac.za)

Sincerely



Thuli Ngonyama\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**School of Applied Human Sciences**

Dear Sir/Madam

**PhD Research Project**

**Researcher:** Ms Thulile Ngonyama (021 429 2684/0845523178)

**Supervisor:** Prof JH Buitendach (031 260 2407)

My name is Thulile Ngonyama a PhD student in the School of Applied Human Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal under the supervision of Prof JH Buitendach.

You are invited to participate in a **pilot** study for a research project entitled “*Skills Shortages and challenges in employment of foreign professionals in selected KZN higher education institutions*”. The main study is anticipated to take place as from August this year (2014) in the KZN higher education institutions. The study intends to: 1) establish disciplines that experience high levels of skills shortages in the KZN higher education institutions; 2) ascertain if there are programmes in place to assist foreign professionals to adjust in the new environment; and 3) identify adjustment challenges faced by foreign professionals in KZN higher learning institutions. I hope to solicit information that will assist identifying and addressing barriers in employing foreign professionals, as well as identifying and addressing adjustment challenges faced by foreign employees in the KZN higher education institutions. This will assist institutions under study to better understand the needs of foreign employees in terms of settling-in in a new work environment and therefore create an enabling environment for them.

Your participation in this **pilot** project is voluntary. Your participation will remain anonymous and all information received will be treated in strict confidence. Should you agree to participate, kindly complete the consent letter below then turn to the attached questionnaire tick or cross in an appropriate space provided. The answered questionnaires will be kept for a period of five years in the School of Applied Human Sciences, UKZN and thereafter they will be disposed.

Should you have any questions or concerns about participating in this pilot study, kindly contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above. It should take you about 15 minutes/s to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely



Thuli Ngonyama

## QUESTIONNAIRE

*(This questionnaire is to be filled by foreign nationals of the institutions under study)*

### PART I – GENERAL INFORMATION

NO.	STATEMENT
1.	Which institution do you work for? 1. UNIZUL <input type="checkbox"/> 2. UKZN <input type="checkbox"/> 3. DUT <input type="checkbox"/> 4. MUT <input type="checkbox"/> 5. UNISA (pilot only) <input type="checkbox"/>
2.	What is your occupation?
3.	In which faculty/school are you?
4.	In which department are you?
5.	What is your field of specialisation/discipline?
6.	How long have you worked for your institution?
7.	Why did you choose South Africa as your host country?
8.	Why did you choose your institution as the host university?
9.	Are you a permanent employee <input type="checkbox"/> or a fixed term contract <input type="checkbox"/> or part-time <input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Are you male <input type="checkbox"/> or female <input type="checkbox"/>
11.	What is your country of origin?
12.	How long have you been in South Africa?



**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**School of Applied Human Sciences**

Dear Sir/Madam

**PhD Research Project**

**Researcher:** Ms Thulile Ngonyama (021 429 2684/0845523178, ndoutl@unisa.ac.za)

**Supervisor:** Prof JH Buitendach (031 260 2407)

My name is Thulile Ngonyama a PhD student in the School of Applied Human Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal under the supervision of Prof JH Buitendach.

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled “*Skills Shortages and challenges in employment of foreign professional in selected KZN higher education institutions*”. The aim of this study is to: 1) establish disciplines that experience high levels of skills shortages in the KZN higher education institutions; 2) ascertain if there are programmes in place to assist foreign professionals to adjust in the new environment; and 3) identify adjustment challenges faced by foreign professionals in KZN higher learning institutions. Through your participation I hope to solicit information that will assist in addressing skills shortages, identify and address barriers in employing foreign professionals, identify and address adjustment challenges faced by foreign employees in the KZN higher education institutions and also recommend tailored induction programme to assist foreign professionals to adjust in the new environment. This will assist institutions under study to better understand the needs of foreign employees in terms of settling-in in a new work environment and therefore create an enabling environment for them.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may not participate or you may withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Your participation will remain anonymous and all information received will be treated in strict confidence. Should you agree to participate, kindly complete the consent letter below then turn to the attached questionnaire and tick or circle response(s) you deem relevant. The answered questionnaires will be kept for a period of five years in the School of Applied Human Sciences, UKZN and thereafter they will be disposed.

Should you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, kindly contact me or my supervisor at the numbers listed above. It should take you about 15 minutes/s to complete the questionnaire. I hope you will take the time to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely



Thuli Ngonyama\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

## QUESTIONNAIRE

*(This questionnaire is to be filled by foreign nationals of the institutions under study)*

### PART I – GENERAL INFORMATION

	NO.	STATEMENT
Q1.1	1.	Which institution do you work for? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>1. UNIZUL</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>2. UKZN</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>3. DUT</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>4. MUT</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>
Q1.2	2.	What is your occupation?
Q1.3	3.	In which faculty/school are you?
Q1.4	4.	In which department are you?
Q1.5	5.	What is your field of specialisation/discipline?
Q1.6	6.	How long have you worked for your institution? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>1) less than 2yrs</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>2) 2 – 5yrs</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>3) 5 – 10yrs</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>4) More than 10yrs</span> <input type="checkbox"/> </div>
Q1.7	7.	Why did you choose South Africa as your host country?
Q1.8	8.	Why did you choose your institution as the host university?
Q1.9	9.	Are you a permanent employee <input type="checkbox"/> or a fixed term contract <input type="checkbox"/> or part-time <input type="checkbox"/>
Q1.10	10.	Are you male <input type="checkbox"/> or female <input type="checkbox"/>

## QUESTIONNAIRE

*This questionnaire is to be filled by HR professionals of the institutions under study*

### PART I – Skills shortage (Recruitment)

*Please cross/tick the answer(s) relevant to your institution in the space provided*

<b>1. Which institution do you work for? Q1.1</b>	
1) UNIZUL	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) UKZN	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) DUT	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) MUT	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2. How many academic vacancies does your institution have currently? Q1.2</b>	
1) None	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Less than 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Between 10 -20	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) Between 20 – 30	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) Between 30 – 40	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) Between 40 - 50	<input type="checkbox"/>
7) Above 50	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3. How long have these academic posts been vacant? Q1.3</b>	
1) Approximately 2 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) 2-5 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) 5-10 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
4) Approximately 1yr	<input type="checkbox"/>
5) Approximately 18 months	<input type="checkbox"/>
6) Approximately 2yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>
7) More than 2yrs	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. In which fields/disciplines are these academic vacancies?</b>	
1) IT Q1.4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2) Accounting Q1.5	<input type="checkbox"/>
3) Natural Sciences (please specify discipline/s) Q1.6	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **Structured interviews:**

### **For HR professionals**

- 1) What are the most common challenges the institution experiences in attracting academics in the scarce skill areas?
- 2) What are the most common challenges the institution experiences when employing foreign nationals?
- 3) In your view, what are some of the adjustment challenges the foreign employees face in your institution?
- 4) How does your institution address adjustment challenges that foreign employees experience?

### **For academic HoDs/CoDs**

- 1) What are the challenges relating to attraction of academics from scarce skill areas?
- 2) On average how long does it take to replace an academic in a scarce skill area?
- 3) Suppose it takes about a term or longer to fill an academic post in a scarce skill area, what are some of the strategies used to ensure continuation of teaching and learning?
- 4) Suppose it takes about a term or longer to fill an academic post, how does the prolonged recruitment and selection process affect the teaching and learning of students?
- 5) What are the adjustment challenges experienced by foreign employees in your area of functioning?

### **For foreign professionals**

- 1) How long did it take you to get your work permit?
- 2) What would you say about the work permit application process?