ACADEMIC STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

BY

JOCELYN   MOLLY   MOKODITOA

MINI-DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

IN THE

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE AND LAW

TURFLOOP GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP (TGSL)

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR   :   PROF. FREDERICK AHWIRENG-OBENG

2011

DECLARATION

I declare that the "Academic Staff Recruitment and Retention Strategies at the University of Limpopo" (mini-dissertation) hereby submitted the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Master of Public Administration has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

_____   _____

MOKODITOA JM (Ms)   DATE

STUDENT NUMBER 9448868

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the study from the beginning of course work to the research work and writing up I was assisted, encouraged, guided and supported by numerous people in different ways. That being the case, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the following people:

My supervisor, Professor Ahwireng-Frederick Obeng, for his continual advice, guidance and inspiration to this study.

My children, Madibeng, Mpho and Tebatso, for the endless love, support and motivation during the whole process.

My colleagues and classmates for the encouragement, assistance and support we shared at all times.

The interviewees, for their valuable time, honest responses and willingness to take part in this work.

Lastly, the Almighty God, for giving me the strength and perseverance during the whole process until the end.

ABSTRACT

The paper examines the causes of the high turn-over rate and the non-retention of the academic staff at the University, and come up with possible solutions to curb the problem. The study addresses the factors that affect the academic staff recruitment and retention strategies. The paper further address identification of factors contributing to the high turnover rate of the academic staff at the University of Limpopo, analyze causes of the problems, work on the feedback obtained from interviewees, and make recommendations that will enable the University to come up with possible and implementable strategies for the recruitment and retention of the academic staff.

This was evident by the results of the study through the literature review and the interviews held that academic staff recruitment and retention is a problem. It is therefore advisable for the University to take note of the results of this study, and that there should be a turn-around strategy that could be implemented and monitored.

The Human Resource department should have a database that tracks the career path of all academic staff, and notify all appointees who are coming up for tenure. This notice could go out at the start of the last but one year before the appointees become eligible for appointment with tenure. The university must develop a culture of reasonable, clearly articulated, and enforced deadlines for processing applications for promotion. Human Resources department have a role to play in the promotion process as well. Access to information about the promotion process can be enhanced by revamping the websites for some of the institutions which are not really helpful in this respect. Relevant documents (e.g., conditions of service, appointment and promotion guidelines, benefits) can then be made accessible via institutional websites in a very organized manner than is currently the case in many universities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

ANNEXURES

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

LIST OF ABREVIATIONS

UL   :   University of Limpopo

PPP   :   Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual

CCMA: Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since 1994, the South African government's regulation of Human Resource Management has increased drastically. The country's institutions are currently facing unprecedented challenges in their recruitment of staff. *The Constitution of The Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 199, the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998, the Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1997, the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1988,* to name but a few, are some of the laws that have presented institutions of Higher Education with innumerable challenges on recruitment.

An institution's Human Resources Department is thus expected to offer expert advice on the process of recruitment that is in line with the expectations of government. However, it must be considered that institutions have to operate in a diverse environment (Cornelius, 1999). They are expected to attract high potentially talented people. It is indicated that the war for talent is creating a new business reality (Michaels and Handfield-Jones, 1995).

1.1   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The University of Limpopo is a historically disadvantaged Institution of Higher Learning. In 2000/2002, the institution embarked on restructuring of staff members.

In 2006/2007, the University suffered a high turnover rate of the academics, which has resulted in continuous recruitment. This ultimately, disadvantages the students, who are the main stakeholders of the institution.

According to Notten (2003) an international research project was conducted to investigate and compare human resources practices in organizations in South Africa and Singapore. Popular strategies in these two countries include developing talent within an organization and developing career plans. Cloete (1993), states that the process of recruitment must be undertaken with a view of obtaining the services of people of quality.

The findings will give additional information that will improve where there is a problem and need. It will also contribute positively to both the students and the policy implementers, and the community at large. Recruitment will be done effectively and staff will be retained for continuity of teaching and research purpose at the University.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual (PPP) of the institution is outdated, and does not conform to the Human Resources Management laws of the country, however, the University is currently working on the new Policies of the institution. Compliance with the laws of the country is compulsory. The high turnover rate and non-retention of academic staff at the University is of much concern. The end result of this is a continuous recruitment process, which is costly and time-consuming. It also disadvantages the students in that, in some instances, the replacement process takes very long.

Temporary and part time staff are hired for short term periods, and this disrupts the continuous learning of students. Temporary staff do not put all the effort expected of them, as their appointment is for a limited period of time. Therefore, they seek permanent employment elsewhere.

As stipulated in the European management Guide of 1997, part time work in Belguim is encouraged in that workers have a right, with limitations, to request a transfer from full-time to part-time employment. In France, Part time staff are entitled to all the benefits that the full time employees receive, though, on a pro-rata basis.

Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, and Warnich (2000) argues that part-time staff members are less costly than full-time employees, especially where they perform much better than full-time employees. They are available for a stipulated period of time at a fixed rate.

The researcher's observation is that they (part-time staff) are not readily available for students' consultations. The student results become negative because of the inadequate tuition offered.

1.3   RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS / QUESTIONS

It is imperative to have research questions, in that, the questions provide a focus for data collection, and keep the researcher focused on the initial interest, states Maree (2007).

"What are the factors that contribute to the high turnover rate and non-retention of academic staff at the University of Limpopo?"

"Does the university have a clear Policy on Recruitment and Retention Strategies"?

"If yes, is the Policy clear and well implemented"

"Are the policy implementers well trained for the Job?"

"If no, is training arranged?"

1.4   AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to investigate the causes of the high turn-over rate and the non-retention of the academic staff at the University, and come up with possible solutions to curb the problem. The formulated recommendations will help correct the problems, as mistakes and wrong doings will be pointed out. It will also assist the institution to retain potential staff, which will lead to improved students' results. Again the university will be able to comply with the Government rules and regulations, and meet the expectations of both staff and students.

1.5   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are the following:

a) to identify the factors contributing to the high turnover rate of the academic staff at the University of Limpopo
b) analyze causes of the problems
c) work on the feedback obtained from interviewees, and
d) Make recommendations that will enable the University to come up with possible and implementable strategies for the recruitment and retention of the academic staff.

1.6   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings will give additional information that will improve where there is a problem and need. It will also contribute positively to both the students and the policy implementers, and the community at large. Recruitment will be done effectively and staff will be retained for continuity of teaching and research purpose at the University.

1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Some concepts which will be used in this research paper need to be defined to give clarity of their meanings for this study.

1.7.1 Recruitment

Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx and van der Schyf, (1998) defines recruitment as a process of acquiring applications of available candidates qualified to fill vacant positions of an organisation, while Werther and Davis (1996) regard recruitment as the process of finding and attracting capable applicants for employment.

1.7.2 Selection

According to Nel, van Dyk, Haasbroek, Schultz, Sono and Werner (2004) selection is the process of trying to determine which individual will best match particular jobs in the organizational context, taking into account individual differences, the requirements of the job and the organization's internal and external environment.

1.7.3 Retention

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary (2008)* defines retention as to continue to have, keep possession of.

1.7.4 Screening

Screening is a process whereby as soon as a sufficient number of applications have been received candidates are sieved for selection, reducing the number of applicants to a manageable pool who will then have better chances of competing to be selected (Chatterjee 1999).

1.8   OUTLINE OF RESEARCH

Chapter 1:

The background and significance of the Study gives a brief background to the study, research problem and discusses why the research was warranted. The objectives or aims of the study and the research questions were looked into as well; the research methodology discussed, some concepts defined, and the de-limitation of the study is indicated too.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review – this is the critical assessment of what has been done previously in the given topic, regarding the revision and reconsiderations.

Chapter 3:

Research Methodology - Data Collection, preparation, coding, data capturing and editing, data analysis and interpretation of results

Chapter 4:

Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation of Results

Chapter 5:

Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications

1.9   Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the background to the study, the research problem, objectives, research methodology, justification of the study, and a chapter summary of the dissertation. The following chapter will contextualise the study within the context of current literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide a brief history of the University of Limpopo, which was previously named the University of the North, the establishment of the University, the governance, student population, staff population and the literature relevant to the phenomenon of Recruitment and Retention strategies of academic staff.

This is done with the aim of gathering information for the research work which is a review for the period 2005 – 2009.

2.2   A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

The University of Limpopo is one of the oldest universities in the country as outlined by the University of Limpopo Act, no. 47 of 1969.

It is situated about thirty kilometres from Polokwane, on the R71 Tzaneen road, in Limpopo Province. It was established in 1959 under the trusteeship of the University of South Africa. This was done through the provisions of the Extension of the University Education Act of 1959, which brought about the establishment of racially exclusive universities for Black South Africans and was initially named the University College of the North *(UL Three Year Rolling Plan, 2000-2002:1).*

The status of the College was maintained until the South African Parliament promulgated the *University of the North Act No. 47 of 1969*, thus bringing to the end its college status with effect from 01 January 1970 (UL Three Year Rolling Plan, 2000-2002).

Currently, all institutions of higher education are governed by the *Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997.* As the need for institutions of higher learning grew, three satellite campuses under the auspices of the University of the North, were established, one in Venda (1980), Qwaqwa (1981) and Giyani (1983). Subsequently, the Venda campus became a university on its own, and the University of the North remained with the other two satelites. *(UL Three-year Rolling Plan, 2000-200).*

In the years 2001 and 2002, restructuring was embarked upon on both two satellite campuses and the main university campus, respectively. Some staff members from the Giyani campus were deployed to the main campus, others were laid off on operational basis, and the rest were retrenched (UL Three Year Rolling Plan, 2000-2002). At the main campus also, in 2002, some staff members were laid off, and retrenched on operational basis. During the restructuring process of the University in 2000 and 2001 respectively, faculties were scaled down from eight (8) to three (3), namely, Humanities, Management Sciences and Law and, Sciences, Health and Agriculture.

Based on the *Higher Education Act 101 of 1997: 23&24),* the Qwaqwa campus had to merge with the University of the Orange Free State. Some teaching staff members were deployed to the main campus, whereas the others were absorbed into the new University of the Free State. The process was finalized in December 2003. The University of the North has since merged with the Medical University of South Africa with effect from 01 January 2005, and the new institution became a new University of Limpopo. It is now structured into four faculties, namely, Science and Agriculture, Health Sciences, Management and Law, and Humanities.

The University of Limpopo has shed its apartheid stigma, and now stands as a transformed institution that had Dr Nelson Mandela (Madiba) as one of its past Chancellors and Professor Kader Asmal as one of its past Chairperson of Council.

In March 2008, the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, announced the establishment of a Ministerial *Committee on Progress Towards Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions* to "investigate discrimination in public higher education institutions, with a particular focus on racism and to make appropriate recommendations to combat discrimination and to promote social cohesion". The Committee located its investigation within the context of the transformation agenda of *Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education*. White Paper 3 explains that transformation requires that all existing practices, institutions and values are viewed anew and rethought in terms of their fitness for the new era". At the centre of the transformation agenda, in terms of 'fitness', is the White Paper's vision for the establishment of a single national coordinated higher education system that is "democratic, non-racial and non-sexist". (Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions *(*30 November 2008*)* (FINAL REPORT)

2.3   THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The organizational structure below describes the University of Limpopo model. At the top is the Vice-Chancellor who is acting as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the University, followed by the two Deputy Vice-Chancellors Academic & Research and Administration, the Chief Financial Officer and the Registrar, the Senior Manager Finance, the Executive Manager: Human Resources, Executive Manager: ICT, Executive Manager: Marketing and Communications, the Executive Deans of the faculties; Health Sciences, Humanities, Management Sciences and Law and Science and Agriculture, the Directors of the Schools, the Senior Professors, Professors, Associate Professors, Senior Lecturers and the Junior Lecturers.

2.4   GOVERNANCE PROCESS

The Vice-Chancellor is currently Professor NM Mokgalong. He took over from Professor Patrick FitzGerald, (who was appointed in a ministerial capacity as the Administrator of the University), when his term expired in December 2002. Firstly as an Interim appointment, then later on he was appointed on contract basis to date. The Vice-Chancellor reports directly to the highest decision-making body, namely, the University Council, of which Dr R Khoza is the Chairperson. The Senate is also the decision making body on academic matters.

2.5   STUDENT POPULATION

Since the inception of the University, the student population is growing. In the year 1994, the number reached a peak of 19 780 enrolled students. From 1995 onwards, however, the University experienced a steady decline in enrolment, which became a cause for great concern (UL Three Year Rolling Plan, 2000-2002).

YEAR	UNDER GRADUATES	POST GRADUATES	TOTAL
2005	15 392	3 362	**18 754**
2006	15 029	2 938	**17 967**
2007	14 600	3 034	**17 634**
2008	14 641	2 758	**17 339**
2009	14 876	3 354	**18 230**

Table 1   The student enrolment for the years 2000 to 2009

2.6   STAFF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The University of Limpopo being one of the oldest universities in the country, the number of staff increased with the passing of years. However, the institution suffered a high turnover rate between the years 2005 and 2008, and that has drastically reduced the number of staff. Staff movements between the years 2005 and 2010, as per the *University's Employment Equity Reports*, are as follows:

YEAR	NO. OF STAFF MEMBERS
2005	2 012
2006	2 003
2007	1 878
2008	1 851
2009	2 211

2.7   LITERATURE RELEVANT TO THE PHENOMENON OF ACADEMIC STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

Human Resources is regulated by legislations such as the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998, the Basic Condition of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997, the Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1997, the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1988 and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act. No. 108 of 1996.

The Acts that govern human resource have more influence on recruitment, given that they have to be taken into consideration whenever staff recruitment processes had to be embarked upon. There are serious implications when such legislation is not considered.

In order for the organization to achieve its goals, the financial and physical resources and the human resources are required. The financial and physical resources are regarded as most important and the people are taken for granted, whereas the organization cannot function without people.

The Human Resources Management of the University of Limpopo is faced with new and important challenges because of the dramatic changes taking place in both internal and external environments of the organizations in the country.

Externally, the economic change accelerates rapidly and puts the South African Human Resources Managers under extreme pressure to make a meaningful contribution to the success of their organizations (Carell, et al 2000).

The challenges faced are Direct and Indirect Discrimination, Equity, Freedom of Information and Victimization.

2.7.1   Direct Discrimination

Direct discrimination pertains to treating everybody in the same manner on the prohibited grounds. An individual may not be discriminated against because of a perception on the part of others, such as, a perceived religious belief.

Roberts (1994) agrees with Carrell et al (2000) in that, people must not be discriminated against unnecessarily.

Both the blind and the partially impaired people are partly discriminated against, as the campus is not fully user-friendly to them. Some buildings do not have provision for people on wheel chairs. Such buildings have no lifts or escalators, but only stairs, for instance, the old K-Block building at the University of Limpopo.

2.7.2 Indirect Discrimination

Indirect discrimination refers to applying a requirement or condition, even without intent, which affects some people covered by the legislation rather than the population in general and which cannot be objectively justified, such as, height requirements, where this would not be job related, could be indirectly discriminatory against women.

2.7.3 Equity

The Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 expressly prohibits discrimination, both direct and indirect, on the grounds of race, religion, gender, marital status, membership of the travelling community, sexual orientation, age, family status, and disability. The procedure contained herein intends to ensure that institutions recruit the best people for the job-enshrined principles, thus ensuring equal treatment. There is no difference between temporary and permanent employees, therefore, the same care and attention must be given to every appointment.

2.7.4 Freedom of information

The university is governed by the provision of the Freedom of Information as stated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1997. This gives individuals the legal right of access to own personal information held by the institution, to their own employment records, and the reasons in writing, for decisions made, that have impacted either negatively or positively on them.

Based on information gathered from the Knowres Conference of 2002, the reasons for decisions made by selection committees in respect of each applicant, both at short-listing and the final selection interview, may be released to applicants on request, and are therefore necessary and need to be documented.

2.7.5 Victimization

No person must be victimized for lodging a complaint or allegation of discrimination, or for acting as a witness in connection with proceedings under the Act, or has been involved in any other way or intends to get involved in any of these actions.

Roberts (1994) states that victimization happens when an individual has lodged a complaint or allegations of discrimination, eg. pregnancy and thus, agreeing with Carrell et al (2000) above.

2.8   RECRUITMENT

According to Carrel et al (2000) recruitment is the process of acquiring applicants who are available and qualified to fill vacant positions in an organization. The main requirement in recruitment is a well-conceived policy wherein guidelines and objectives to be achieved should be properly outlined.

Gerber, Nel & van Dyk, (1995), state that a recruitment policy is designed to describe and provide guidelines on carrying out recruitment processes. Its main objective is to enable management to attract the most competent of the candidates and to fill in the positions with the best qualified applicants.

Both Carrell et al (2000) and Gerber, Nel & van Dyk (1995) share similar understanding in that without well-designed policies, set objectives for the institution will not be attained. The recruitment process should be exhaustive and require potential employees to go through competency-based interviews, to avoid high turn-over rate. An organization should search for candidates, to bring a range of skills and versatility.

According to Cloete (1998), a policy should distinguish between posts to be filled by external recruits and those that should be filled by internal promotions or succession. The South African general practice is that posts in a fixed establishment should be filled by transfers or promotions (internally). If a suitable candidate is not available, it can be filled through recruiting externally.

Cloete (1998) clearly states that only when there is no existing staff member available to be transferred or promoted, outsiders can be considered for the position.

2.8.1   Recruitment Policy

Recruitment of staff is an ongoing process in most organizations, and it is very crucial. Carrell, et al (2000) refers to recruitment as the process of acquiring applicants who are available and qualified to fill vacant positions in an organization.   The main requirement in recruitment is a well-conceived policy, wherein guidelines and objectives to be achieved should be properly outlined.

Different authors view this in the same way, namely, the careful consideration of the policy, rules and regulations, without forgetting the different Acts that serve as guidelines to employment.   Accordingly, an institution must have a well-conceived policy as the first requirement for a strong workforce. According to Cloete (1998) the policy must provide guidelines on recruitment of staff and should state the goals to be achieved by the institution.

An institution's Recruitment Policy has to be fair and consistent, be of non-discriminatory nature on the grounds of sex, race, age, religion, or disability, and should conform to statutory regulations of the country, and agreed best practices.

There is a general shortage of supply of knowledgeable staff, as a result, there is vast competition in organizations to attract and retain these skilled resources Notten (2003).

Strategies that work best in attracting, motivating and retaining knowledgeable staff should thus be put in place. Policies and procedures must be carefully looked into, so as to ensure that they go along with the Labour Relations Act.No. 66 of 1995. Where necessary, there should be a compilation of new procedures to be applied consistently and fairly to all job applicants Carell, et al (2000).

A recruitment policy is designed to describe and provide guidelines on carrying out recruitment processes. Its main objective is to enable management to attract the most competent of the candidates and to fill in the job positions with best qualified applicants Gerber, Nel & van Dyk, (1995).

2.8.2   Recruitment Strategies

Organizations are realizing that attracting and retaining the right talent has become the key strategic objective. The traditional recruitment focus on skills and knowledge has to be changed to focus on values and culture fit. There are internal and external factors that affect recruitment.

2.8.2.1   Internal Factors

a)   Organizational Strategic Plan

The organizational strategic plan is the basis for short-term period in that recruitment efforts are based. The Human Resources department must make use of the organizational business plan in order to achieve the objectives set, indicates Erasmus (1998).

b)   Organizational Policy

Gerber, Nel & van Dyk, (1995) states that an organizational policy should provide for promotion opportunities for posts of existing staff members. If this is applied, external recruits will be in the cases of junior or entry posts. Existing staff members will thus be offered priority in being promoted, and this will help create a sense of security for them

Erasmus (1998) further argues that an organizational recruitment policy must be clear, for example, affirmative action, promotion from within or employment of the handicapped, and that all the stakeholders within the organization must participate in determining the policy.

Non-promotion and the recruitment of outsiders in an institution create a low morale, depression and de-motivation to existing staff members. Positions should be viewed as very urgent, for competency, potential and long-term development. An organization should search for candidates to bring a range of skills and versatility.

Policies and practices of every organization have an effect on the recruitment of staff. Some believe in promotion only from within, many practice nepotism, whilst others perpetuate their community/clan. The main requirement, however, is that, whatever the declared or undeclared policy or practice is, it must significantly demarcate recruitment (Chatterjee, 1999).

c)   Organizational Culture

An ideal organizational culture consists of a combination of high quality and high acceptance, and vice versa Boshoff (1998). The more an organization allows itself to be pushed into a conformance culture, the more backbone its employees will lose.

Standards will be lowered and it will become very difficult or even impossible to achieve quality Boshoff (1998). Taking popular decisions, pleasing people, doing what the masses expect one to do, being pressurized into appointing people, going with the stream, overlooking poor performance, allowing lower standards, failing to discipline people, breaking accepted rules, tolerating manipulation, ignoring sensitive problems, and bending over backwards to please people, are all symptoms of a conformance culture Boshoff (1998).

Many organizations fail to realize that creating a culture where transparency, openness, mutual trust, and respect are practiced is the cornerstone of human resource professionals. Every staff member in an organization should be involved, contribute opinions and play an active role in living the culture.

d)   Organizational Image

Gerber, Nel & van Dyk, (1995), says that the image of an institution is based on what it does, and whether or not it is regarded as a good and advantageous place to work in. Both the community and staff members of an organization can have an impact and influence on the recruitment of staff.

According to Chatterjee (1999), the quality of job applicants depends highly on the image of an organization. The better the image, the better the organization is known, the better the quality of applicants and the greater the number of applicants.

Whether or not an organization is favourable to work in, determines how it is perceived by the public and staff members. The larger the organization, the more likely it is to have a well-developed image (Chatterjee, 1999). The number and quality of job applicants depend crucially on the image perception of the organization. Whilst the

institution must build up its own image, it is also influenced by the general image of the industry.

The above authors are in agreement in that the organizational image has an impact in the attraction and retention of staff. The above mentioned statement further indicates that the organization is responsible to build its own reputation and image.

e)   Recruitment Requirements

Organizational requirements of prospective staff members have a determining influence on the recruitment program. If the requirements are abnormally high, they may impede the program. Therefore, it is important that effective job analysis, job descriptions and job specifications be used to lay down the requirements for the job incumbent, and for the smooth running of a recruitment program Gerber, Nel & van Dyk, (1995).

If correct information regarding job requirements is available, including the remuneration involved and the direction in which the organization is moving, both the organization and the candidate can make a better judgment of whether the job and the candidate's own needs and abilities will match or not.

In the case of the University of Limpopo, however, the researcher observed that there are no job descriptions in place. Based on Erasmus et al (1998), accurate job descriptions and specifications help to set realistic requirements which results in effective recruitment. Recruitment criteria must always be drawn to avoid discriminatory practices.

Laferla (1998) states that most managers do not fail because they lack the financial acumen, marketing knowledge or management skills. The most common reason for

failure is an excessive ego drive characterized by misplaced ambition of a self-serving, uncompromising and dominating nature, which is neither for the good of the organization nor custodians.

2.8.2.2   External factors

According to Gerber, Nel and van Dyk (1995), external factors are based on Government or trade union limitations and the general condition of the labour market. Government Acts and trade unions have far more influence on recruitment in ways mentioned below:

i)   Government Acts

This has to be taken into consideration whenever a recruitment process has to be taken into action. Acts like the Labour Relations Act No.66 of 1995, the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998, the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998, the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997, to name but a few, have serious implications when they are not taken into cognisance.

-   *The Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995*

The purpose of the Act is to advance economic development, social justice, labour peace, and the democratization of the workplace by fulfilling the primary objective of this Act, which is, to give effect to, and regulate the fundamental rights conferred by Section 27 of the Constitution of South Africa, in that every person shall have the right to fair labour practice.

Since its inception in 1996, the LRA has brought about fundamental revisions to the employment relationship in South Africa. It gives effect to constitutionally entrenched

rights such as the right to strike, freedom of association, equality, and the like (Venter, 2003).

The Act applies to all employees and employers in South Africa, and creates new rights, structure and procedures. In terms of Section 3, it excludes the South African National Defence Force, the National Intelligence Agency and the South African Secret Services (Venter, 2003).

According to Finnemore (1998), an Act has an important effect in standardizing labour rights and labour relations processes, resulting in greater opportunity for consistency, efficiency, social justice and equity.

- The Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998

The purpose of this Act is to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment, through the elimination of unfair discrimination; implementing Affirmative Action measures to redress the imbalances in employment experienced by the designated groups, so as to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace.

Chapter Two of the EEA (1998) stipulates that no person may unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly, against an employee in any employment policy or practice, on one or more of grounds including race, gender, pregnancy, marital status, family responsibility, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, HIV status, conscience, belief, political opinion, culture, language, and birth.

Top management of the University consists mainly of men, while there were only few females at the time of the study. (16 males and 4 females) (EE Report 2004/2005).

- **The Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998**

The purpose of the Act is to look into the need to develop the skills of the South African workforce; Increase levels of investment in education and training in the labour market and to improve the return on that investment; encourage employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment, provide employees with opportunities to acquire new skills, to provide new entrants to labour market work experience, and employ persons with difficulty to be employed; encourage workers to participate in learner-ships and other training programs; improve the employment prospects of persons previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, and to redress those disadvantages through training and education; ensure the quality of education and training in and for the workplace; and provide and regulate employment services.

- **The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997**

The purpose of this Act is to regulate Higher Education Institutions; provide for the establishment; determine the composition and functions of the Council of Higher Education Institutions; provide for the appointment and functions of an independent assessor; provide for the registration of private Higher Education Institutions; provide for quality assurance and qualify promotion in Higher Education Institutions; provide for transitional arrangements and the repeal of certain laws; and provide for matters connected therewith.

It is desirable to restructure and transform programs and institutions to respond better to the Human Resources' economic and development needs of the country, since it will help provide optimal opportunities for learning and the creation of knowledge.

-   The Basic Conditions of Employment Act No. 75 of 1997

The purpose of this Act is to advance economic development and social justice by fulfilling the primary objectives of this Act, which is to give effect to the right to fair labour practices referred to in Section 23(1) of the constitution by establishing and making provision for the regulation of the basic conditions of employment and thereby to comply with the obligations of the Republic as a member state of the International Labour Organization, and provide for matters connected therewith.

The Act applies to all employees and employers, except members of the National Defence Force, National Intelligence Agency, South African Secret Service, and the unpaid charitable workers (Venter, 2003).

ii)   Trade Unions

A trade union, in terms of the Labour Relations laws, is deemed to be a registered trade union that is sufficiently representative of the employees employed by the employer in a workplace, under the *Labour Relations Act No. 66 of 1995*, and continues to be a body corporate (South Africa, 1995).

This definition was formulated in 1920, but it is most appropriate within the current South African context. It clearly indicates that unions not only aim at improving conditions such as wages and other benefits at the work place, but also at defending the status quo and protect members from dismissal, retrenchment and even cuts in pay.

According to Finnemore (1997), a Trade Union is a continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives.

Carrell, et al (2000) define Trade Union as an organization of workers formed to further the economic and social interests of its members. Among other purposes of the existence of a Trade Union is job security and regulation. Thus, insecurity is often a driving force of unionization. Most employees join unions as a means of protecting their jobs. Members are, in most cases, expected to be protected from dismissal, retrenchment and unilateral action by management in changing job descriptions and working conditions.

The presence of a Trade Union has significant implications for the structure of an organization, and for the management of human resource. For union employees, Human Resources' procedures and policies are shaped by a written agreement between the management and the union.

Carrell, et al (2000) states that unions can either be registered or not registered. Unregistered unions, although they may enter into agreements with employers have no statutory rights.

Finnemore (1997) in turn mentions that Trade Unions participate in everything that takes place within an organization, to represent the interests of employees. There should always be a 100% consultation between the union and the employer. Decisions should be taken in consultation with the union. This helps the workers to be fully informed about everything in the organization.

Carrell, et al (2000) and Finnemore (1997) agree that a trade union is in full support of employees and guard against unfair labour practices in the work place.

b)   The General Condition of the Labour Market

Gerber, Nel & van Dyk, (1995) defines Labour Market as a place where-in demand and supply factors are expressed in exchange of labour between two parties, namely, employee and employer

Since South Africa's re-admittance into the international arena, massive discrepancies in the development of South Africa's labour market as a result of the apartheid regime have been relieved (Venter, 2003).

South Africa's poor standing in the management and people criteria is, however, still most disturbing. It has the most serious implications for the development of the country's labour market, and includes factors such as HIV/Aids in the workplace, equal opportunity, and economic literacy, to name a few. This necessitates a dire need for positive intervention to improve the South African workers' poor performance (Venter, 2003).

The government exerts considerable influence through its ability to change the rules to legislate and make sure that the acts and rules are abided by. The nature of legislative intervention is the creation of positive rights. The government is directly able to exert considerable influence on the terms and conditions of employment and the management of a significant proportion of the country's labour force.

Hollinshed and Leat (1995) states that the objective of legislative intervention can be broadly separated into that which is regulatory and one which is protective. This distinction invariably becomes blurred in practice, though it can be used as a convenient structural framework.

2.8.3 Retention Strategies

2.8.3.1 Reward / Compensation System

According to Armstrong and Long (1994), the objective of the reward system include the attraction, motivation and retention of staff at all organizational levels. To accomplish these objectives, management has to consider a number of critical policy issues such as that pay incentives to reward individuals or group behavior.

Muchinsky (1995) further indicates the objective of compensation as an improvement of both employer and employee performance, and if rewarded accordingly, the employees are motivated.

The two authors (Armstrong and Long (1994) Muchinsky (1995)) are in agreement that the compensation system serves to attract and retain employees. Further, it helps provide for their personal needs.

Carrell, et al (2000), states that effective staffing can retain the human resource most likely to serve an organization's need. He further indicates that the compensation system should not hinder efforts to retain productive employees attracted and hired.

The compensation system is broad and plays a vital role. It assists in attracting and retaining good employees, and brings job satisfaction for the institution to achieve its goals. The benefits that the institution offers to employees fall within the umbrella of the compensation system.

Well structured salary packages could attract good applicants for the job and serve as a good retention strategy for the organization, as other employers in the market place are also searching for the best, Nel et al (2004).

Staff members should be remunerated based on their performance and the scarce skills categories should be taken into consideration. Human Resources staff should know what is expected of them and should accordingly be rewarded for their efforts.

Compensation is regarded as a vital role player in job satisfaction and staff retention. Pay satisfaction leads to desirable behavior value, increases employee effort and decreases absenteeism and turnover, Muchinsky (2005)

2.8.3.2   Fringe Benefits

Du Plooy and Snyman indicate that one of the main reasons to remain in the employ of the universities is because of the study benefits granted for both the staff members and their dependants. The researcher observed the same at the University of Limpopo. Most of the academic staff who decided to stay at the University did so because of the study benefits for both dependents and themselves, as self-development.

2.8.3.3   Promotion of present employees

According to Gerber, Nel & van Dyk, (1998), promotion is regarded as the most important source of candidates for vacancies, in that positions will be filled by way of promotion or transfer of existing personnel.

Promotions improve the morale of staff members as they know that their good work is acknowledged, states Cloete (1985).

Some symptoms of employee depression are that people do not feel recognized or appreciated for the work they do. They feel that their lives are out of balance and that no matter how much they do, it is never enough. Talented and valued staff members leave the organization. Others rebel, merely following rules and doing only what they are told to do (Boshoff, 1997).

Absenteeism, frequent lateness of arrival at work, poor performance, to name a few, are the results of de-motivated staff members in the workplace (Snell, 1999).

2.8.3.4   Job Satisfaction

Jacobs E. and Roodt G. (2008) refers job satisfaction as an employee's attitude towards the job. How people achieve and maintain correspondence with the environment to satisfy both the extrinsic and intrinsic needs.

Pietersen (2003), cited Buss (1988) describing job satisfaction as fulfillment of values of needs by employees. She further cites Igbaria, Meredith and Smith (1994) regarding job satisfaction as the most important factor to determine a person's intention to stay with the organization.

According to Locke (1976) as cited by Pietersen, indicates that the common aspects of job satisfaction amongst others is working conditions, recognition, to name a few.

The Department of Public Service and Administration's Guide to Retention (2006) as cited by van Dyk, indicate that creating a condusive work environment is part and parcel of effective retention strategy. This falls within staff members' job satisfaction.

2.8.3.5 Succession Plan

Effective internal staffing plans, policies and procedures promote the achievement of both an organization and employees' personal goals, for instance, effective staffing can retain the human resource most likely to serve an organization's needs (Carrell, et al 2000).

An organization may look internally (within) to fill vacant posts.

2.9 CONCLUSION

The university policies are under review, a Human Resource plan and succession plan must be in place and be aligned with the organization's strategic objectives, to correct the wrong doings in the recruitment, promotion and retention of staff members, for the development of the institution.

Apathy towards work, frequent late arrival at work, poor performance, to name a few, are the result of de-motivated staff members at the workplace.

This results in low morale of staff, students' poor performance due to large numbers in classes, difficulty in one-on-one consultation with lecturers and negative students' results.

Retention strategies must be sought, to alleviate the turnover rate and low-morale of the present staff members. To achieve quality recruitment, it is important to obtain commitment from everybody and training is the main solution to the problem.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Smit (1995) the researcher should strive for quality and excellence, be able to justify the research and strive to make a contribution through the research.

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on how the research work was designed and data collected for the study.   The researcher used two research methods with a view to gather as much relevant information as possible, namely, interviews and documentation.   The researcher designed a questionnaire to collect data.

In this study, the researcher used the qualitative method as the nature of the topic under investigation requires.   Qualitative research is often used to generate possible leads and ideas which can be used to formulate realistic results.

Research is a means of collecting data to produce new products.   It is referred to as a fact-finding activity, and defined as a procedure by which one attempts to find systematically, and with the support of demonstrable facts, the answers to a question or the resolutions of a problem (Walliman, 2001).

The *Oxford Concise English Dictionary* refers to research as a systematic investigation into the study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

According to Brynard and Hanekom (1997), research methodology is the how of collecting data and the processing thereof, within the framework of the research process.

Sampling was done to sufficiently represent the population and to also achieve the intended objective.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

Mouton (1996) refers to Research Design as a tool to enable the researcher to anticipate what the appropriate research decisions should be, so as to maximize the validity of the eventual results. It gives the framework for collecting data and how the study will be conducted. Research design deals with the following questions in the study: what are the data needed, where the data is collected, how will the data be collected, how will the data be analyzed and interpreted. Creswell (1998) defines research design to mean the entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem to writing a narrative report.

3.2.1   Choice of design

Williams and Grinnel (1990:304) describes qualitative research as studies whose purpose is to just gather data or facts in instances where little is known about the field of study. Where more is known about the research topic, a study can be expected to provide a higher level of knowledge; the appropriate research design here would have to be descriptive. Mouton (1996:111) states that descriptive research may be conducted by means of a review of the related topic and other pertinent literature and also by an investigation involving people who have practical experience of the problem to be studied. In this study, university employees were interviewed.

3.2.2 Rationale for the study

The main aim of the study is to investigate the cause of the high turn-over rate and the non-retention of the academic staff at the university, and come up with possible solutions to curb the problem. The study will also assist the institution to retain potential academic staff, which will lead to the improvement of quality of output.

3.2.3 Research methods

Qualitative research was more relevant for this study as it set out to provide solutions to practical problems, in this case, the high turn-over rate and the non-retention of the academic staff at the University. Several authors (Rothmans and Thomas, 1994, Rubin and Babbie, 1993:99 and Monette, Sullivan and de Jong, 1994:6) contend that qualitative research is designed with a practical outcome in mind in which the assumption is that some group or the University community as a whole will gain specific benefits from the research.

The qualitative approach according to the definition of Mouton and Marais (1994:155) is the approach in which the procedures are formalized and explicated in a not so strict manner, in which the scope is less defined in nature and in which the researcher does the investigation in a more philosophical manner. In this investigation, according to Nesser, Jourbert and Sonnekus (1995:53-54) preference is given to methods and techniques that capture the meaning of the experience, action or interaction; unstructured questionnaires and interviews, participant observation; recording of life histories; analysis of collected data by means of non-quantitative frameworks and category systems.

3.3   AREA OF STUDY

The area of study for the research is the University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus. The University of Limpopo comprises two categories of staff, namely; the teaching (academics) and support service. This study will concentrate mainly on academic staff as this seems to be the more problematic area in recruitment and retention. The academics are the main role players in the lives of the students, who are the main stake holders of the institution, as teaching is the core business of the University.

3.4   POPULATION

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) population is a set of elements that the research focuses on and the results arrived at should be generalized. Therefore, the population for the study is drawn from the University of Limpopo, Turfloop Campus.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) further argues that, though the sample is a subset of the population, it must represent the whole population fully.

The University has four Faculties, comprising 11 Schools and 68 disciplines. Each faculty is headed by the Executive Dean, Schools by Directors, and different disciplines have Heads of Departments.

3.5   SAMPLING METHOD

A total of thirty five (35) participants were included in the study. The participants were staff members of the University and exit interview forms of the staff member who resigned from the university. The sample was inclusive of all the staff in the University such as staff outside human resources and within human resources department, and the university union representative (National Health and Allied Workers Union).

The sample was formed based on Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) that sampling is the technique to rationalize the collection of information and to select the objects, persons or and events from which the actual information can be drawn. The sample was based on staff members of the target population, using the stratified random sampling method. This enabled the researcher to obtain different views concerning proper recruitment and retention strategies.

3.6   DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data collection is a means of collecting information from different sources. This is the most time-consuming exercise in that the population targeted for a study purpose should ideally be reduced to a small manageable group or portion, but still be representative of the large group. The main purpose of data collection is to produce reliable data that were aimed at acquiring Mouton (1996). The researcher will interview participants at the time convenient for them. The qualitative interview is specified as a method and a social interaction to find out what others felt and thought about their world and to understand their experiences. In-depth one-on-one interview will be conducted. This interview method affords participants with an opportunity to reflectively explain the phenomenon of interest (Polit & Hungler, 1995; Streubert & Carpenter, 1999).

In this study interviews were planned from at least 45 minutes. The researcher observed the following steps in each interview:

- Make an appointment with each informant regarding time and venue.
- Conduct interviews at the time convenient for the participants.
  Re-iterate the purpose of the study, the right of the participants to voluntarily participate and to withdraw at any time.

In this study, interview and documentary review were used.

3.6.1 Interview

A semi-structured interview was used, with questions relating to the recruitment and retention strategies at the University of Limpopo. The main reason for going through this process was to obtain the opinions of the staff members and get more inputs to help solve the problem of recruitment and retention of staff at the University of Limpopo.

3.6.2 Documentary review

The following documents were perused as part of data collection, so as to help find more information:

The Personnel Policy and Procedure manual of the University of Limpopo (PPP); The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996; and *Exit Interview forms*

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The analysis of data followed the collection thereof, which helped the researcher to find solutions to the problems created by existing problems with the recruitment and retention strategies at the University of Limpopo.

The analysis helps the researcher to discard data that are irrelevant to the research project and retain only what are the relevant. This is the process of determining what the data mean so that irrelevant information is filtered out, reducing the final information to manageable proportions, Mouton (1996). The results of the analysis could be a conclusion to the problem under investigation.

For the present study, the researcher observed that in all stages of data collection, for almost all the sections of the university, line managers were in an acting capacity, and not permanently appointed in their specific positions. Relevant qualifications for positions occupied were not considered. Lack of skills, knowledge of the job and the competency were often not suitable for their jobs.

3.8   MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness focuses on measures to convince the readers and the researcher that the findings are worthy to be considered (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher adopted several practical strategies as described by Lincoln & Guba (1985), to ensure trustworthiness throughout the study. The four strategies that were applied to ensure trustworthiness included: *truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality*, (Brink, 1996, Krefting, 1990).

3.8.1   Truth value

This is the criterion that one establishes confidence in the truth of the findings of the inquiry for the subjects with which and the context in which the inquiry was carried out. Truth value was being met using credibility which was ensured through prolonged engagement, reflexibility and triangulation of data (Krefting, 1990; Matwa, Chambeli, Muller& Levit, 2003).

3.8.2   Applicability

This is a criterion to determine the extent to which the findings of a particular study can be applied in other contexts or with other participants. This was ensured through the strategy of transferability (Krefting, 1990, Matwa et al, 2003).

3.8.3 Consistency

This is the criterion to ensure that the research findings would be the same if the study is replicated with the same subject in similar contexts. This was ensured through the strategy of dependability (Krefting, 1990, Matwa et al, 2003).

3.8.4 Neutrality

This is the criterion to ensure that the research findings are purely determined by the subjects and their conditions and not by the biases, motivations, interests or perspective of the researcher. This will be ensured through the strategy of confirmability. All research materials including research design, method data collection and analysis, findings and interpretations as well as audiotapes and notes will be made available to anybody who would need to audit the study (Krefting, 1990).

3.9   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher will observe ethical standards throughout the study. Ethical considerations pertinent to this study was based on the three ethical principles of the Belmont Report, namely beneficence, respect for human dignity and justice, including consent (Brink 1996, Polit & Hungler 1998)

3.9.1   Informed consent

The participants were fully informed about the nature of the research, the purpose of the study, why they have been selected and the dates and venue of the interview. The issue of confidentiality and voluntary participation was stressed (Babbie, 1994; Polit & Hungler, 1998, Seaman, 1987).

3.9.2 Confidentiality

The participants' right to confidentiality was maintained by ensuring that their names and addresses are not disclosed. Information was not linked to an individual. The researcher was the only person who interviewed the participants.

3.9.3 Privacy

The researcher respects the participants' right to privacy by allowing participants to discuss issues that they feel comfortable with.

3.10. CONCLUSION

The chapter described the research design and the qualitative approach used in the study. The random sampling method was used to choose the sample size without compromising the representativeness of the entire population. The data was collected through a questionnaire that was during the interviews, and relevant documents were perused.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on how data was analyzed, presented and the interpretation thereof, whereas the main aim was to validate facts and present them. The presentation is in the qualitative approach form.   Two methods of data collection were utilized.

The collected data were analyzed based on the following presentation of the responses and information gathered:

Data analysis of data collected from interviews and data collected from documents viewed.

4.2   DATA COLLECTED FROM INTERVIEWS

The main aim of the interview was to establish staff satisfaction on the academic staff recruitment and retention strategies at the University of Limpopo, and discovered that, about ninety percent of the respondents were dissatisfied.

4.2.1 Responses from Staff outside the Human Resources Department

Most of the responses are that staff members are not satisfied with the strategies affected as illustrated in figure 4.1. About 45% of respondents mentioned that there was no proper strategies and succession planning. Almost 70% of respondents mentioned that competency of staff was not taken into consideration as incompetent staff were not dealt with, they just earned salaries as equal to the competent and dedicated staff. Incompetent staff were not motivated to work on the problems they encounter.

In addition, there are no retention strategies, therefore, the turnover is very high but, management does nothing about the situation. Recruitment tools such as recruitment policy, job profiles, clearly defined organizational culture, job knowledge and competencies have to be put in place.

The researcher observed that there was no human resources planning, and this resulted in ad hoc advertisement of the posts. In addition, the researcher was informed that the lack of management support to the process was accelerating the problem and increasing the inefficiency of the process.

4.2.2 Responses from staff within the Human Resources Department

Human Resources Practitioners have a concern that strategic plan workshops are being held but there were no implementation. Most of the staff do not feel competent to do the job as they are not fully trained to.

Retention strategy is almost non-existent as nothing is being done about the high turn-over rate that the university is suffering. Succession plan and salary packages should be dealt with and salaries should be competency based.

80%

70%

60%

50%

40%

30%

20%

10%

0%

No proper strategies
and succession plan

Competency of staff
not considered

No retention strategies
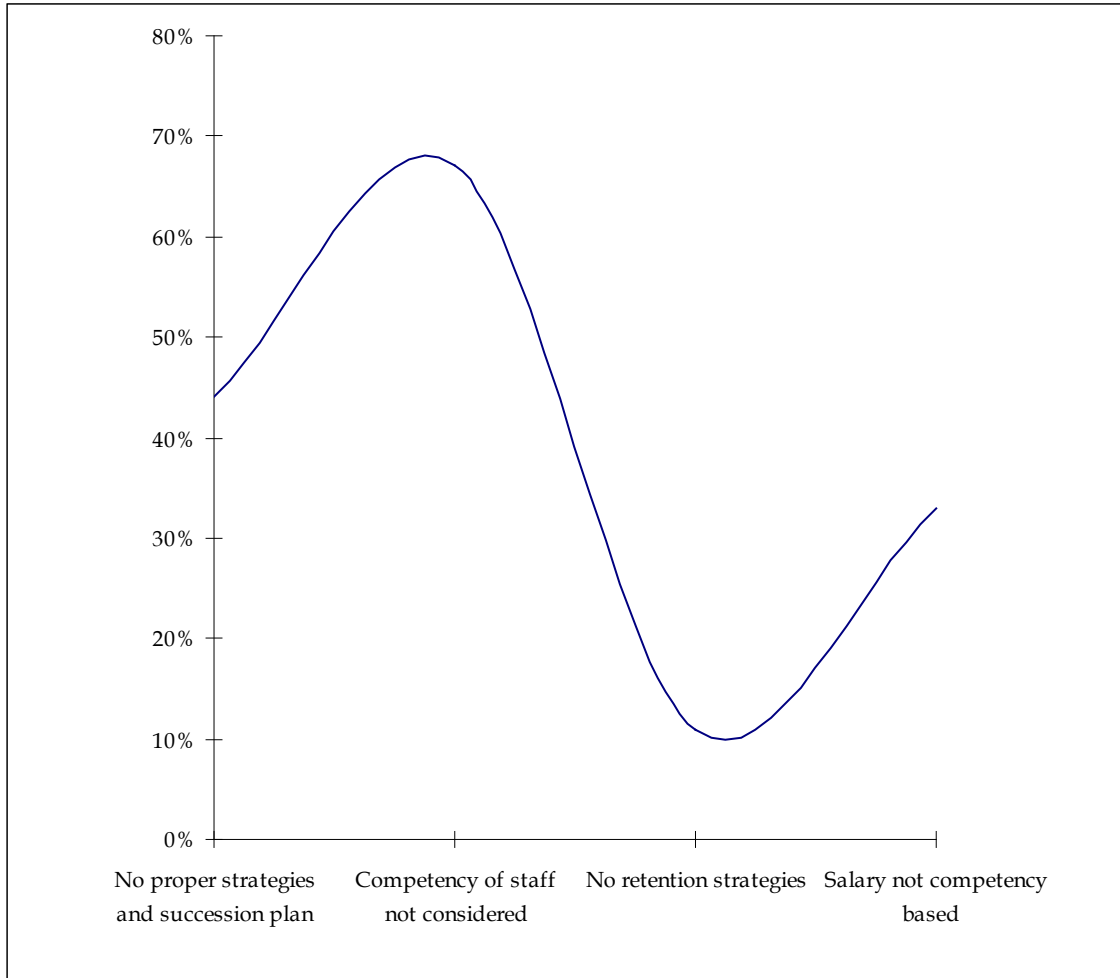
Salary not competency
based

**Figure 4.1   Responses from staff within the Human Resources Department
(in percentage)**

4.3   DATA COLLECTED FROM THE EXIT INTERVIEW FORMS

Exit interview forms through resignations and retirements were scrutinized and the report is as follows:
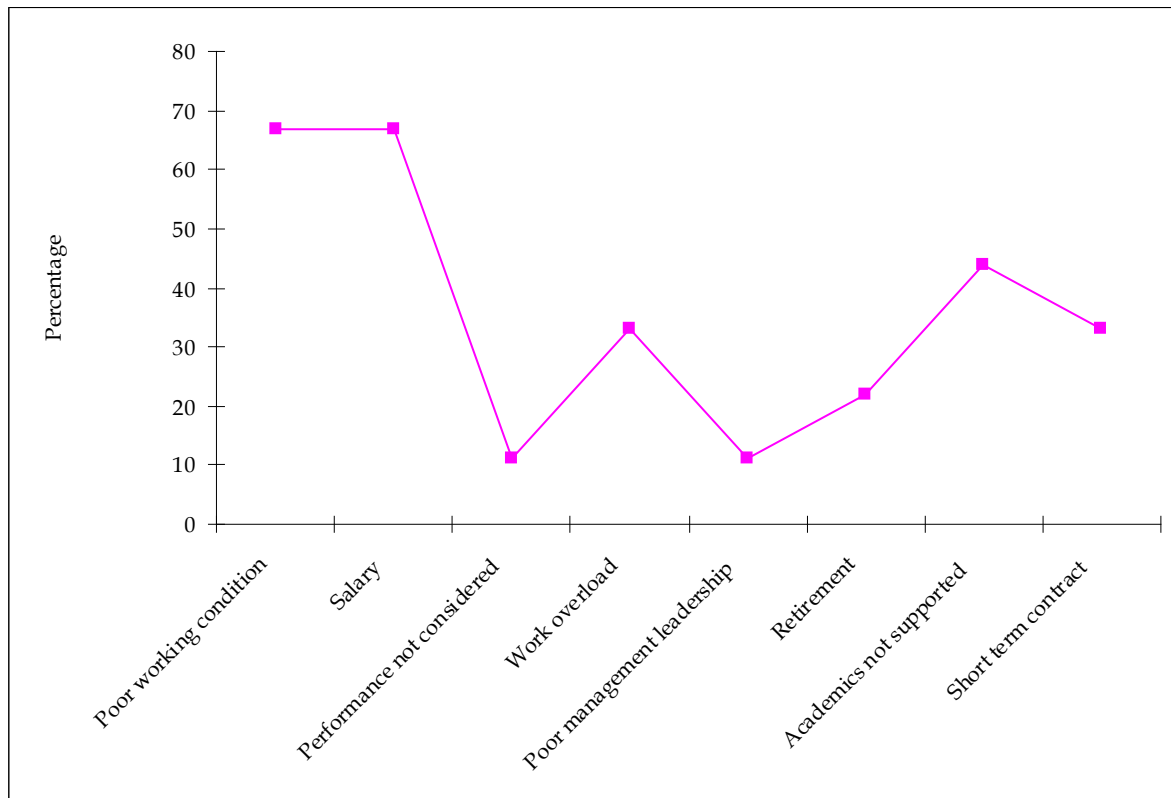
Figure 4.2   Reasons for leaving the University of Limpopo (in percentage)

4.3.1   Resignations and Retirements

The reasons for leaving the university vary from unsatisfactory salary packages, unsatisfactory working conditions to leadership factors as shown in figure 4.3 while work load and other factors such as lack of resources are raised. One person said "an individual's contribution towards the institution is not considered and appreciated until one decides to leave the institution". Another respondents said "workload and staffing situation is not considered. Potential and hardworking staff members are disadvantaged in most instances".

4.3.2   Expatriate Staff Members

Employment contracts of three years are regarded as short whereas other tertiary institutions offer up to five years contracts.   Unsatisfactory salary packages, unsatisfactory working conditions, work load and lack of resources contributes to demoralizing the staff.

Figure 4.3:   Percentage of Resignation and Retirement

Exit Interview forms perused in relation to resignations and retirements:
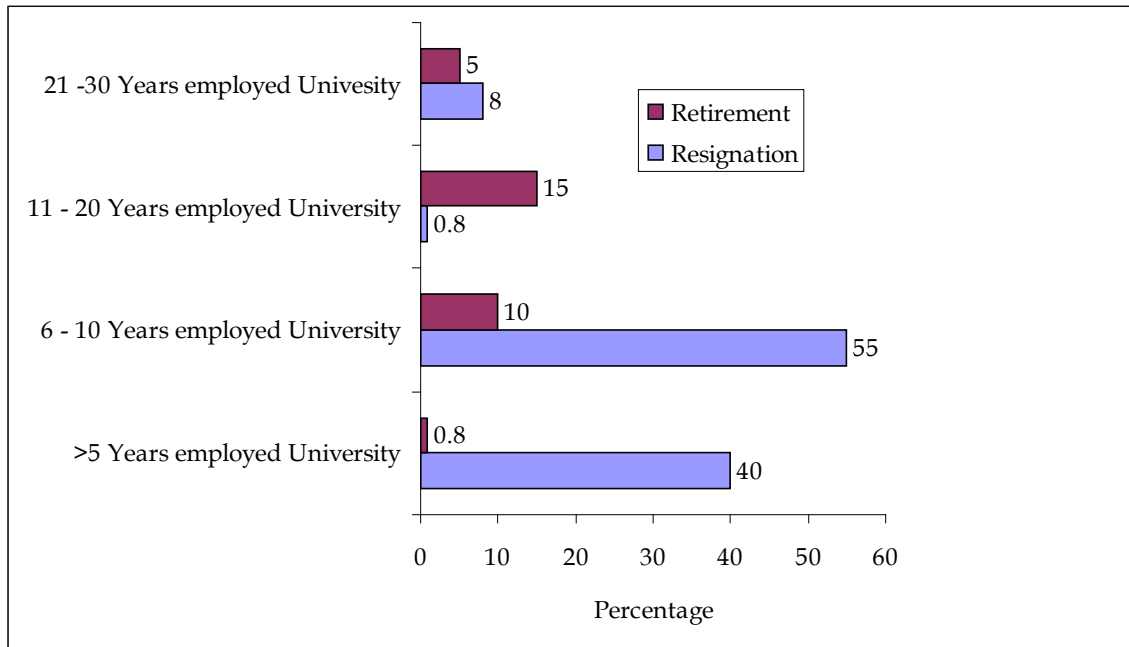
Figure 4.3 indicates that most academic staff members resign after they had worked in the University for a period of 6 – 10 years due to factors such as lower salary packages (not market-related), lack of adequate resources, unsatisfactory working conditions, and work load (large number of students with inadequate teaching staff) as highlighted in figure 4.3 and figure 4.2. Most academic staff members retire after 6 - 10 years of service; however, they indicate that the work load is abnormal, lower salary packages as compared to other tertiary institutions, s lack of adequate resources in the form of laboratories and equipment.

4.4   CONCLUSION

In order to design appropriate interventions for stemming the brain drain at university of Limpopo and to promote higher recruitment and retention rates among academic staff, it is necessary to understand the current situation within the institution, in terms of staff concerns, measures that have been instituted to address retention problems, and how successful they have been. This context will help identify specific and continuing areas of concern as well as good practices which will help us come up with suggestions for targeted interventions which are responsive, appropriate and feasible.

Academic staff complained about the inordinate bureaucratic red-tape that tends to surround promotion and appointment processes without enough attention given to guiding them through this maze. It was clear that Human Resource Units could play a more constructive role in efforts at enhancing academic staff satisfaction and retention. It appears that access to definitive information on promotion is a problem for many academic staff which leads to frustration, stress, a feeling that no one cares about their situation and dissatisfaction with their institution.

Whilst some of the concerns expressed by the respondents are genuine, it also appears that misperceptions may arise regarding promotion and tenure processes which come from a lack of effort on the part of academic staff to consult the relevant guidelines. For example, university went through an elaborate process of revising its guidelines which was widely publicized. Nevertheless, some of the respondents seemed unaware of the changes.

The nature of governance within an institution goes a long way in influencing satisfaction or lack thereof among academics, and could trigger a decision to leave (Task Force on Higher Education and Society, 2000; Fourie, 1999). Consultation with, and participation by, academics in decision-making helps them feel part of the organization and give them a sense of ownership in the outcomes of those decisions. Generally, academics are likely to leave an institution where they feel that their autonomy is compromised, their desire for innovation is not supported, and collegiality a mirage (Johnsrud and Rosser, 2002). In effect, the nature of the institutional climate within which these academics work will strongly influence the extent to which they are willing to remain at an institution.

Respondents voiced grievances about structures and processes of governance within the University. The criticisms were mostly directed at university-level administrators and systems of authority and control. Some unit heads were accused of being dictatorial, insensitive and unresponsive to the needs of their colleagues. In Africa, demand for higher education has increased tremendously, with implications for staff workload and satisfaction. From an estimated 600,000 students in 1980, the number of students enrolled in Africa's universities had increased to 1,750,000 by 1995 (Sawyerr, 2002). Université Marien N'gouabi in the Republic of Congo saw its enrolments soar from 3,785 in 1976 to 19,000 by 1997, while Nigerian institutions recorded a significant jump from 176,000 in 1989/90 to 376,000 by 2000 (Sawyerr, 2002).

At the University of Limpopo, expanded enrolments, without a commensurate increase in the staffing capacity of university to handle them, have resulted in an atmosphere that is not conducive to learning on these campuses, and the deterioration in the quality of instruction. The complaints about workload seem to center not so much on the number of courses that staff members teach, but more on the burden that is imposed by teaching large classes. Responses in Figure 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, illustrate the point.

Data analyzed from the interviews showed that almost all the interviewees were aware of the inconsistency and misinterpretation of the policies, and were calling for new strategies. The University's recruitment policy is not up to standard in that the overall policy is disregarded in making appointments.

The policy document does not conform to the government's laws and acts in which the employment equity is not representative as per the Employment Equity report 2002/2005 of the University of Limpopo.

The recruitment process is very tedious and time-consuming as there is a lack of planning, which results in continuous movements in the institution, since in the case of any sort of termination from the employ of the University, it would take between four to six months to replace or fill the post, or the vacant post might even end up being discontinued.

Top management, who are responsible for the recommendation and approval of the recruitment of staff, are on many occasions not available due to the nature of their jobs. The researcher observed that a request might take almost a month before it could be attended to, which necessitated proper planning in this regard. Having thus analyzed the data based on the official documents, the PPP is frequently not clear, and people are taking advantage of that.

This happens despite the fact that advertisements are placed in newspapers. In addition, everybody has the opportunity to view the advertised posts. Job specifications and requirements should be clear and understandable to all the readers, to allow them the opportunity to apply for posts.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this section, we draw from good practices from around the world, in general, and African countries, in particular, to discuss various mechanisms that can be adopted for enhancing recruitment and retention within University of Limpopo. These suggestions provide guidelines only, and so their implementation will vary across departments, based on size, the number of academic staff, organizational structure, institutional arrangement that defines various positions, and their attendant roles and responsibilities.

The purpose of the present study was to establish why the academic staff recruitment and retention strategies at the University of Limpopo are regarded as not applicable, which hampers the successful operation of the University.

5.2   CONCLUSION

The present study has tried to establish why the recruitment strategy at the University of Limpopo tends to be a failure. The process is faced by both challenges and an opportunity to actively support the implementation of quality Human Resource Systems.

People management and development play a pivotal role in creating a highly successful organization.   Despite the policy manual of the University, and the different governmental Acts that regulate recruitment practices, the University appointment policy is still regarded as unfair. The survey furthermore demonstrated that when

people are asked to assume managerial responsibilities without receiving the appropriate training and/or development, they can have a major negative impact on individuals motivation levels and team morale.

The decentralization of the University's Human Resource Department which was done with the hope of improving the situation, instead, aggravated in that Human Resources officers used to be specialists in different fields, and after the decentralization, have often been posted into positions as generalists without the necessary training. As such, a philosophy of continuous improvement was tampered with. It is obvious that, for the welfare of an institution, a proper work ethic must become a way of life for every staff member in the Human Resource profession.

The research observed that at the moment, the image of the University of Limpopo is tarnished, the turnover is high, staff members come and go, exit interviews are held, reports are written, but nothing is done about the turnover problem (in terms of the retention strategy), and thus the University is losing potential and talented staff.

Employee motivation is at the heart of productivity, and thus, very important. In current times, we live in a time when staff motivation, commitment, innovation, and openness to change are extremely important. The staff must have a total customer focus and customer service must be the heart of strategic planning and execution.

It should be kept in mind that customer service begins inside an organization with the way employees are treated, namely, with regard to being valued, respected, empowered, and rewarded. Delivering good results is linked to the way organizations manage and motivate their staff.

Finally, the University's management thus has to seriously look into the problem.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

Promotion and Permanent Appointment/Tenure

It is obvious that the promotion and tenure process in all the departments tend to be filled with stress, anxiety, and uncertainty for the majority of academics. This need not be the case, since simple efforts such as better communication and guidance can help allay the fears of most people. The Human Resource department should have a database that tracks the career path of all the academic staff, and notify all appointees who come up for tenure. This notice could go out at the start of the penultimate year before the appointees become eligible for appointment with tenure. This one year time line provides a reasonable frame within which to process the application, notify the applicant of a decision, and give him/her the temporal latitude to explore other options, in case their tenure application is unsuccessful.

At the same time as appointees are notified by the Human Resource department, their units must be informed as well, so that they can also set in motion the various administrative procedures necessary for evaluating and deciding on the application. In view of the questions raised in the findings about favoritism and inconsistency with regard to promotion and tenure, it will be useful for the university to ensure that each of these processes is anchored in a committee system at every level – i.e., the departmental, faculty/college, and university - which is made up of peers and has representation from both genders.

The university must develop a culture of reasonable, clearly articulated, and enforced deadlines for processing applications for promotion and tenure. Human Resources units have a role to play in the promotion and tenure process as well. Access to information about the promotion and tenure process can be enhanced by revamping the websites for some of the institutions which are not really helpful in this respect.

Relevant documents (e.g., conditions of service, appointment and promotion guidelines, benefits) can then be made accessible via institutional websites in a very organized manner than is currently the case in many universities.

Faculty associations have a role in helping their members with the promotion and tenure processes. They could hire experienced professional officers who are knowledgeable about regulations, procedures, and processes, so that they can assist staff prepare better. These officers could organize yearly workshops for staff members who are due for tenure, or contemplating promotion, so that they could become familiar with expectations, get advice on what they need to be successful, and get a sense of their chances.

Having a dedicated individual who is hired by the faculty association, and hence autonomous from the institution's direct control, ensures that they channel their energies towards serving the interest of academic staff, and support them through any grievance that might emerge from the tenure/promotion process. The position can be supported by the faculty association itself, if it is capable of raising funds from its own sources, or the institution can allocate guaranteed funds to enable the association sustain the post, without interfering with the work of the appointee.

In order to address the frustration and anxiety that contract staff members go through because of the uncertainty that characterizes their re-appointment, the faculty associations and the institutions should agree on terms which allow such individuals who have served a defined minimum number of years, to be guaranteed contracts of a longer duration, subject to acceptable performance. This will address the concerns expressed by expatriate staff at the University. Of course, in the case of expatriate contract staff, these agreements have to be welded appropriately to the goals of localization or indigenization of staff. Institutions, therefore, need to have medium-to-long term plans which allow recruitment of indigenes to fit into the recommended

cycles for bridging appointments. Such planning allows the goals of localization to be achieved, while reducing the anxieties produced by short, uncertain contracts for expatriate staff, and curbing feelings, among them, that their host institutions are ungrateful, and inclined to dispose of them without much sensitivity to their plight and contribution, once an indigene is available.

To avoid inordinate workloads which are not only morale-deflating, but physically and psychologically draining, the university has to insist on the need to balance intake with resources, when they discuss these matters with governments. The University should insist on an optimum level of student intake, under current circumstances, beyond which they are unable to maintain the integrity and credibility of their programs and credentials. This position should be firmly defended against the demands of governments, when they are politically motivated, rather than grounded in a pragmatic appreciation of what is appropriate. One way to facilitate the development of new faculty members is to reduce their teaching load, by at least one course in the first year while they are trying to settle into their new positions.

As Olmstead (1993) observes, "the myriad of new opportunities and responsibilities that burst upon a brand new faculty member can be both exhilarating and overwhelming". Under current circumstances where the University of Limpopo is struggling to cope with very high instructor-to-student ratios, this might be considered a luxury. Such a perception will, however, be short-sighted. The institution stands to benefit from a situation where new staff are relieved of the stress that attends heavy work-loads and which may ruin their interest in the profession. Moreover, students will gain from an instructor who has had a little more time to settle in and prepare for the job. The release time from teaching can be devoted to building a research foundation that will enable the new staff member to enhance their research profile, through publications, establishing collaborative linkages, and getting research grants which tend to keep them attached to their institutions and careers.

From the discussions it is shown that the University of Limpopo has a problem in the recruitment and retention of academic staff, and the following are ideas recommended to help solve the problem.

The management of the University should be proactive in the recruitment and retention of the academic staff in order to achieve its goals. Succession planning should be in place to avoid unnecessary advertisements and to motivate the current staff. The right person in the right place at the right time is the starting point of all. The right people be selected through behavior-based testing and competency screening. Employees should be respected at all times and they be allowed to balance work and social life. The people core values and the mission and vision that enable people to align with the organization direction. The importance of this should be communicated clearly.

The Personnel Policy and Procedure manual of the University should be revisited so that it should be clear and understandable to everyone. This will ensure that its interpretation would be uniform, especially within the Human Resource Department. Systems should be put in place and be adhered to.

Government Acts relating to Recruitment Practice (including the constitution of the country), should be adhered to, so as to avoid waste of time and money by frequently going to the CCMA for unfair labour disputes between staff members and the university.

Proper training and mentoring of staff is of the utmost importance, and have to be introduced and offered. Notten (2003) indicates that South African organizations are currently experiencing problems in recruiting, training and retaining staff from designated groups, and, therefore, emphasizes the introduction of mentoring.

According to Notten (2003), growth, development and training are crucial aspects of any individual's life. Such opportunities at the University of Limpopo are very limited as training is inadequate.

The recruitment situation at the University has to be improved. Duplication of appointments should be dealt with accordingly. Permanent appointments should be made in acting positions. The lack of taking firm decisions derails the system production, as people tend to be afraid to take decisions. Human Resource practitioners must be seen as active team players who add value in helping an organization develop capabilities to compete and win, in the form of attracting, retaining and motivating talent.

Talent is regarded as a combination of competence and commitment. In addition, value is defined by its recipients more than by its providers. In the case of Human Resource, recipients are regarded as employees who should become more committed and competent.

The Human Resource should search for candidates who would bring a range of skills and versatility to the organization, and should again appoint candidates who will remain with the organization for long term, to avoid unnecessary turnover. Management must ensure accountability and have the ability to turn ideas into sustainable behaviours and lasting outcomes. Through acting with speed, removing unnecessary and redundant bureaucracy, providing discipline and shifting from the outdated ways of working, and instilling an attitude of learning and working, managers will have the capacity to make informed decisions.

Commitment to learning, developing and working, should be the norm of both the University Council and top management should lead by example.

5.4   IMPLICATIONS

To avoid the frustration and tardiness of the recruitment process, which university must constitute hiring committees, made up of elected members from the relevant department and appointed members from cognate units;

One short term measure will be to ensure that the institutions are staffed by qualified personnel until long term solutions are found, is to reconsider the retirement age for academics

In view of the questions raised in the findings about inconsistency with regard to promotion and tenure, it will be useful for university to ensure that are processes is anchored in a committee system which will take place within a reasonable time of at least twice in a year , rather than pro-longing the process. The committees be made up of peers and has representation from both genders.

Organizing of yearly workshops for staff members who are due for tenure, or contemplating promotion

6. REFERENCES

Armstrong, M., and Long, P. 1994. *The Reality of Strategic Human Resource Management.*
    London: The Institute of Personnel and Development Publishers.

Bless, C & Higson-Smith, C. 1995 Fundamentals of social research: an African
    Perspective 2nd edition Kenwyn: Juta & Company, Ltd.

Brynard, P.A. and Hanekom, S.X. 1997. *Introduction to Research in Public*
    Administration and Related Academic Disciplines, 1st ed. Pretoria;
    J.L. van Schaik Publishers.

Carell, M.R. Elbert, N.F. Hatfield, R.D. Grobler, P.A. Marx, M. and van der Schyf, S.
1998. *Human Resource Management in South Africa.* Thomson Learning: Great Britain

Carrell, M.R. Elbert, N.F. Hatfield, R.D. Grobler, P.A. and Warnich S. 2000.
    Human Resource Management in South Africa. Texas; Business Publications.

Chatterjee, B. 1999. *Human Resource Management; A Contemporary Text.* 1st revised and
    enlarged ed. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers PTY Ltd.

Cloete, J.J.N. 1993. *Introduction to Public Administration*. Pretoria:
    JL van Schaik Publishers.

Cloete, J.J.N. 1998. *Guidelines in Recruitment*, Pretoria: JL van Schaik Publishers.

Concise English Oxford Dictionary, 1995. 9th ed. Oxford: Clarenton Press.

Creswell, J.W. 1998. *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches.* London: Sage Publications.

Dowling P.J., Welsch, D.E., Schuler, R.S. 1999. *International Human Resources Management; Managing People in a Multinational Context.* 3rd ed. South Western College Publishing, Cincinathi, OH.

Du Plooy M.J. and Snyman, A.H. *Academic Staff Recruitment and Retention at the Technikon Free State: Issues and Recommendations.*

European Management Guide: 1997. *Recruitment, Training and Development: Incomes Data Services.* Institute of Personnel and Development: London.

Finnemore, M. 1997. *Introduction to Labour Relations in South Africa*, Revised 5th ed. Butterworths: Bedford Books

Gerber, P.D., Nel, P.S., & van Dyk. P.S. 1995. *Human Resources Management* 3rd ed. Halfway House: Southern Book Publishers (Pty) Ltd.

Hollinshed, G. and Leat, M. 1995. *Human Resource Management, an International and Comparative Perspective.* London: Pitman Publishing. Ibucon Consultancy.1976.

Jacobs, E. Roodt, G. 2008. *Health South Africa Vol. 13 No. 1*

Knowres Conferences. 2002. *Managing Human Resources. Recruitment and Selection* Johannesburg.

Maree K. 2007. *First Steps in Research*: van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria.

McKenna, F.E. and Beech, N. 1995. *The Essence of Human Resource Management.*
TJ Press, Padstow, Cornwall.

Michaels Ed, Handfield-Jones, H. Axelrod, B. 1995. *How to compete in the war for talent: A guide to Hiring the Best,* Harvard Business School Press.

Mouton, J and Marais, HC. 1994. *Basic concepts in the methodology of the social sciences* 4th impression.Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Mouton, J.1996. *Understanding Social Research*. Pretoria:JL van Schaik.

Mouton, J. 1996. *Basic Concepts in the methodology of the social sciences.*
HSRC Publishers. Pretoria

Muchinsky Kriek Schreuder. 2005. *Personnel Psychology* 3rd edition, Oxford University Press, Southern Africa, Cape Town.

Nel, PS. Van Dyk, PS. Haasbroek GD, Schultz, HB. Sono, T. Werner, A. 2004
Human Resource Management, Oxford University Press, Southern Book Publishers.

Nesser, Jourbert and Sonnekus (1995:53-54) Neser, J, Joubert, SJ & Sonnekus, EF. 1995.
Introduction to methodology: criminology, penology and police science.
Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Notten, J. 2003. *Human Resources Future Magazine:* December Issue; Executive's guide to Attracting Talent. Parktown, Print source

Report of the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions *(30 november, 2008) FINAL REPORT*

Roberts G. 1997. *Recruitment and Selection:* Institute of Personnel and Development.

Pietersen, C. 2005. Job Satisfaction of Hospital Nursing Staff. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management 3 (2).*

Rothman, J. & Thomas, E. J. 1994. *Intervention Research Design and Development for Human Service.* New York: Haworth

Sawyerr Akilagpa. 2002. "Challenges Facing African Universities: Selected Issues." Prepared for presentation at the 45th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association Washington, DC.

Seaman, CHC. 1987. <u>Research methods, principles, practice and theory</u>. 3rd edition. Appleton & Lange.

Snell, S. 1999. *Motivate your Staff: Self Study Work Books,* Biddles Limited, Guildford & King's Lynn. Kogan Page, Limited.

Smit, G.J. 1995. *Research Guidelines for planning and Documentation:* Southern Book Publishers (Pty) Ltd.

Van Dyk, H.G. *The Talent Management Approach to Human Resource Management: Attracting and Retaining the right people. Journal of Public Administration 43 (3.1)* October 2008. University of Pretoria

Venter, R. 2003. *Labour Relations in South Africa,* 2nd ed. Oxford: University Press.

Walliman, N. and Bousmaha, B. 2001. *Your Research Project: a step-by-step guide for the first time researcher.* London: SAGE Publication.

Werther, W.B and Davis K, 1996. *Human Resources and Personnel Management,* 5th ed.   New York. Mc Graw-Hill.

Williams, M., and Grinnel. R.M. (1990). Research in Social work: A primer: Peacock

Republic of South Africa. *The Skills Development Act* (No. 97 of 1988.) Pretoria: Government Printers, South Africa.

Republic of South Africa. *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996* Act (No. 108 of 1996), Pretoria: Government Printers, South Africa.

Republic of South Africa. *The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (No. 75 of 1997.)* Pretoria: Government Printers, South Africa.

Republic of South Africa. *The Higher Education Act* (No. 101 of 1997) Pretoria: Government Printers, South Africa.

Republic of South Africa. *The Labour Relations Act* (No.66 of 1997.) Pretoria: Government Printers, South Africa.

Republic of South Africa. *The Employment Equity Act* (No. 55 of 1998.) Pretoria: Government Printers, South Africa.

VICE CHANCELLOR

ASSISTANT VICE-CHANCELLOR's OFFICE

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: OFFICE OF VC

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: FINANCE

Senior Manager: Finance

Executive Director: Human resources

Deputy Vice Chancellor: Academic & Research

Dean Student Affairs

University Registrar

Executive Director: Marketing & Communications

Head Internal Audit

Deputy Vice Chancellor: Medunsa Campus

Exec. Dean: Faculty of Health Sciences

Exec. Dean: Faculty of Humanities

Exec. Dean: Faculty of Management Sciences & Law

Exec. Dean: Faculty of Science and Agriculture

Principal Internal Auditor

5 x Directors of Schools

3 x Directors of Schools

3 x Directors of Schools

4 x Directors of Schools

Heads of departments & teaching staff

Heads of departments & teaching staff

Heads of departments & teaching staff

Heads of departments & teaching staff

ANNEXURE B

I am a student of Master of Public Administration in the School of Management Science and Law, University of Limpopo, involved in a study to assess the Academic staff recruitment and retention strategies at the University of Limpopo, Turfloop campus.

You are invited to participate in this research study. The information provided will be treated as confidential and anonymous, if one so wished. Please give information as much as you can.

JM MOKODITOA
Tel. (015) 268 2953

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

SECTION A

1. GENDER

MALE	
FEMALE	

2. AGE GROUP

25 – 35	
36 – 45	
46 - 55	
56 - 65	

3. MARITAL STATUS

MARRIED	
SINGLE	
DIVORCED	
WIDOW/WIDOWED	

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF OUTSIDE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

A. RECRUITMENT

1. Does the University have a recruitment strategic plan document?

   _____

2. If yes, have you ever seen a copy and do you think it is well conceived?

   _____

3. Are you satisfied with the matter in which the recruitment of academic staff is being

   handled at the University, please elaborate?

   _____

4. Have you been involved at any stage, if so, how often and at which level?

   _____

5. What were your observations? _____

6. What are the main problems in the recruitment of the academic staff?

   _____

7. Is talent / competency considered or not considered at the University during

   recruitment, please give your comments?

   _____

8. Are there any strategies to recruit knowledgeable and / or competent staff?

   _____

B. RETENTION

9. Is talent / competency considered or not considered for retention at the University, please give your comments? _____

_____

10. Does the University have strategies to retain existing and newly recruited staff, and is the University keen to retain them? _____

_____

11. Based on your observation, does the University have the relevant recruitment / retention tools such as job profiles, job knowledge, skills, competencies and a clearly defined organisational culture? _____

_____

12. Are there any possible proposals which could be made concerning the retention strategies of the University? _____

_____

13. In your opinion, what is lacking? _____

_____

14. What is the image of the University of Limpopo to the outside world and do they have interest in the University? _____

15. How do you perceive the Human Resources Department of the University?

_____

16. How would you rate the Human Resources Department in relation to the recruitment strategy on a scale of 1 – 10, give comments please? _____

_____

17. What is your general comment on recruitment and retention of the academic staff at the University? _____

_____

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF WITHIN HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

A. RECRUITMENT

1. Does the University have a recruitment strategy document that you know of?

   _____

2. Do you in one way or the other participate in the recruitment process?

   _____

3. If so, how often and at which level?

   _____

4. Have you ever received training for your job?

   _____

5. Do you feel competent to do your job?

   _____

B. RETENTION

6. Is there any strategic plan that you know of to retain existing staff and newly

   recruited staff, please elaborate? _____

   _____

7. Does the strategy taken into account the competency of staff? _____

   _____

8. Is the University keen to retain their staff?

   _____

9. How does the University community perceive the Human Resource Department?

   _____

10. What other strategies should be implemented to improve or keep up the positive

    standard if you regard it as such or to improve? _____

    _____