Talent Management in Higher Education Institution

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ABSTRACT
Institutions are losing talented and skilled personnel to competitors because employees opine that their abilities and skills are not valued. There are also no practices in place where shortcomings pertaining to skills and competencies are addressed in order for them to do their jobs effectively especially for administrative staff in higher educational institutions. Hence, the main problem for these institutions is having a workforce that is not motivated to perform optimally. The challenge currently facing Namibian higher education institutions is for them to implement talent management practices successfully so that the workforce is motivated to do their job effectively and efficiently. Hence, adopting a cross-sectional research design with data collected from employees of a higher education institution in Namibia (N=109), the human capital index (HCI) and motivation questionnaire were administered and statistical analysis done with the aim to investigate talent management and motivation relationship at a higher education institution in Namibia.

KEYWORDS
Administration, Drive, Education, Institution, Morale, Staff, Talent, University

INTRODUCTION
Higher educational institutions world over are mostly guided by supervisory bodies that mainly consist of external stakeholders, making it quite controversial in terms of institutional autonomy. Almost all higher education institutions of learning have a collegiate academic body i.e. Senate, Academic Council or Academic Board. The academic body was traditionally the collegial decision-making body of the university under the direction of the State or government (Kamau, Gakure & Waititu, 2013). Further Kamau et al. (2013), concur that more than half of the countries studied have such academic bodies with a relatively limited decision-making role and do not hold direct responsibility for institutional policies, orientation, or strategic development. Literature, however, reveals that higher institutions of learning lack talent management. Further there is lack of system for attracting, training and supporting the best people for the jobs in the field of education (Fossestøl, Breit, Andreassen, & Klemsdal, 2015). As producers of knowledge, institutions of higher learning are expected to be at the forefront of talent management.

DOI: 10.4018/IJAMSE.2019070103

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(Baporikar, 2011) but this is not so. The private sectors have taken a lead in this area (Baporikar, 2017a; 2017b). But the education sector lacks engagement in talent management practices especially in the areas of attracting and retaining talent, motivating and developing workers and transforming and sustaining the work force. (Ringo, Schweyer, De Marco, Jones & Lesser, 2008). The most critical element in academic institutions is human capital which includes academic, administrative and technical staff resources (Baporikar, 2016a; 2015a). Hence, all developed countries struggle to attract talent and reduce the migration of their skilled professionals to other countries Baporikar, 2013a). However, talent management activities undertaken by higher education institutions are limited to selection, recruitment, employment contracts and career advancement (Baporikar, 2013b). Riccio (2010) agrees that the key differentiators identified as the talent management practices believed to be successful in the work environment include the incorporation of organisational and leadership competencies. Talent Management is possible in a conducive environment and its provision is a responsibility of institutional leadership. The institution of higher learning in Namibia, like any other institution in the world is operating in a highly competitive environment locally and globally and this require management styles that enhance staff retention to have competitive advantage (Kamau, et al., 2013). According to Riccio (2010), “Colleges and universities that accept the challenge to build talent from within to meet impending leadership requirements will certainly gain an advantage on peer institutions in this competitive climate.”

However, the critical issue for institution of higher learning is regarding administrative and support staff. It is a workforce that is not motivated to perform optimally, and this results in poor service delivery (Shin, & Jung, 2014). Compared to other sectors, the education sector underperforms in its talent management practices, especially in the areas of attracting and retaining talent, motivating and developing, transforming and sustaining the workforce Kamau et al., 2013. This is supported by literature (Parker & Baporikar, 2011; 2013c; Baporikar, 2014, 2015b; 2015c; 2015d), revealing that higher institutions of learning lack talent management. Riccio (2010), observed that the education field which is knowledge intensive is least engaged in enlightened talent management practices. Hence, the main objective of this research is to study the relationship between talent management and motivation of support staff at a higher education institution.¹

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand the concept of Talent Management and its current state, it is important to look at the evolution of corporate human resources. The department known as the personnel department in companies during the period 1970-1980 was responsible for people. The function of this department was to hire people, to pay them and to ensure that they had the necessary benefits (Bersin, 2007). Systems that evolved to support the personnel function were batch payroll systems. In the 1980s-1990s the concept of Strategic Human Resources emerged as companies realized that the Human Resources function was more important. The role of Human Resources included recruitment of suitable candidates, training, designing of job roles, organisational design, and developing total compensation packages that included benefits stock options and bonuses and acting as a central point for employee health. Human Resources started playing a very important role in business strategy and execution, systems that supported this role was recruitment and applicant tracking, portals, total compensation systems and learning management systems. The Human Resources Department took on the role as a business partner who supports lines of business. According to Evans et al. (2012), talent is at the heart of the higher education enterprise. Chabault, Hulin, and Soparnot (2012), concur that the development of talent has come about as a result of globalization and increased market competition. Since institutions were faced with the uncertainty of how long they could maintain a competitive advantage and optimum organisational performance, they needed individuals who could “make a difference”.

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