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Attributes of the Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students

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Attributes of the Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration

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ABSTRACT

In today's labour market, organisational success in the war for talent is viewed as the ability to attract and retain MBAs. Within the South African context, organisations must step up to the challenge and meet their employees' needs to win this war otherwise someone else will. Against this backdrop, this study identifies and evaluates the significant attributes of an appealing Employee Value Proposition for South African MBAs. An online survey was presented to MBAs to partially rank order their 10 most preferred attributes out of a possible 22 attributes. The study statistically compared the attributes selected by MBAs using a quantitative technique called the Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm to identify the most significant attributes preferred by MBAs. On the basis of the survey results, statistically significant differences were found overall within South Africa when compared with similar studies. In terms of gender differences, preferences for the attributes between males and females display overall similar patterns. On the other hand, the preferences across the different generations reveal nuances that require elaboration. In summary, *Compensation* remains the most important driver of attraction, while several other core drivers also feature rather prominently, including: *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*; *Work–life Balance*; *Empowerment* and *Development Opportunities*.

DECLARATION

I, Yuva-Rani (Chetty) Rajha, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Yuva-Rani (Chetty) Rajha

Signed at ……

On the …….. day of …… 2012

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my loving husband, Lingy, and children, Neresh and Michska, in gratitude for their understanding and support while I pursued my dream to complete my MBA.

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I am particularly appreciative of Conrad Viedge, who enthusiastically supervised my research and willingly shared his knowledge of the topic throughout the study. Conrad had the knack of being able to get the best from me in the shortest possible time. As a result, I completed my research earlier and was able to get on with my life rather than make it my life's work.

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Last but not least, I would like to thank all the MBA students and graduates who participated in the survey giving up their valuable time very promptly to assist with this research.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the research was to evaluate the attributes of an appealing Employee Value Proposition (EVP) for South African Master of Business Administration (MBA) students at the end of two years of academic training as well as MBA graduates.

1.2 Context of the study

Globally, top of mind for many human resource (HR) executives is why some organisations are able to attract significantly more than their fair share of talent (Kochanski and Elliott 2010). The secret lies in the way that highly successful organisations like Apple, Google, Southwest Airlines, McDonalds and IBM (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a; Kochanski and Elliott 2010; Fortune 2011) have identified, differentiated, redefined and communicated their value proposition to their employees. These organisations have quickly realised that "one size no longer fits all" (Cantrell and Smith 2010:1), especially when it comes to managing talent as every employee has their own mix of hopes and fears which may or may not align strongly with the culture of the organisation. This implies that the modern organisation must move beyond offering a single Employee Value Proposition and rather look to customising its value proposition to the preferences of each sought-after employee, consistent within the overall framework of the organisation's employee brand.

In addition, organisations need to discard the notion that loyalty does not exist among today's employees and rather accept as a challenge this opportunity to create a value proposition that will attract and energise potential employees. Such organisations would then be more successful in appealing to high potential employees like MBAs who would be more engaged and committed to their organisations (Bartlett and Ghoshal 2002).

According to Kochanski and Elliott (2010:110), the most widely used definition of the Employee Value Proposition is that of the Corporate Leadership Council (CLC), which defines it as “the set of attributes that the labour market and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in the organisation” (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:6). Heger (2007:121) described the Employee Value Proposition as “the value or benefit an employee derives from his or her membership in an organisation,” also recognising that while the Employee Value Proposition influences key employee outcomes it ultimately impacts critical business outcomes as well. Bell (2005:3) like Heger (2007) identified the Employee Value Proposition as a key differentiator of success amongst organisations.

The CLC (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a) in defining the Employee Value Proposition considers it critical for talent attraction and commitment. On the basis of its empirical analysis the CLC (2006a) found that many organisations were looking for solutions to attract and retain talent (Corporate Leadership Council, 2006a, 2006c, 2007). This talent, according to Trank, Rynes and Bretz (2002), will continue to be the most important corporate resource at least over the next decade. They define talent as smart, sophisticated business people that are technologically literate, globally astute and operationally agile (Trank et al. 2002:331).

As an alternative to the high costs associated with employee retention and turnover as well as the high premiums paid to attract talent, many organisations, according to the CLC (2006a) are increasingly recognising the power of an Employee Value Proposition to appeal to and ensure the long-term commitment of talent. According to Bell (2005), while remuneration, reward and financial benefits continue to remain important, although over-emphasised, organisations are focusing more on non-financial factors, including responsible corporate conduct and ethics, as key ingredients of an appealing Employee Value Proposition.

More than a decade ago, Freeman (1998) was of the view that labour economics and the institutions together with the rules governing labour markets were moving from the periphery to the economic centre stage. His view, then, is

supported by the findings of the CLC (2006a), forcing a rethink of labour market fundamentals and strategies in support of business needs. In addition, the CLC (2006a) recognised that this unique convergence of key labour markets and business dynamics (i.e. the aligning of the market for an organisation's products with the labour market for its employees inside the organisation), an aging workforce, specialist talent needs, globalisation and growth imperatives make up some of the factors that create a burning platform for HR managers (Corporate Leadership Council 2006b). Some HR managers have responded by moving beyond vacancy-driven staffing to more proactive management of labour markets in order to secure access to scarce talent pools also referred to as "pivotal talent pools" (Boudreau and Ramstad 2005:129).

While Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2007) refute the notion of a single employer brand and value proposition they recognise that every employee has their own mix of hopes and fears which may or may not align strongly with the culture of the organisation. Cheese et al. (2007) imply that the modern organisation must move beyond offering a single Employee Value Proposition and rather look to customising its value proposition to the preferences of each sought-after employee, consistent within the overall framework of the organisation's employee brand.

Kochanski and Elliott (2010) argue that the definitions of the Employee Value Proposition provided by the CLC (2006a) and many others (Bell 2005; Heger 2007) focus too exclusively on the employee side of the equation, limiting and neglecting proper articulation of the value that employers expect in return for the set of rewards they have provided. This oversight ignores a critical component of the employee-employer equation, i.e. the employee-employer value exchange.

In this dynamic and ever-changing landscape, Kochanski and Elliott (2010) have introduced, as mentioned previously, the new concept of Employee Value Exchange (EVE), implying that forward-moving organisations are already broadening the concept of Employee Value Proposition to drive exceptional performance among their employees further. The introduction of this new concept, while an extension of the Employee Value Proposition, is intended to

create stronger relationships between employer and employee, based on mutually beneficial value exchanges. However, introducing EVE when the concept of Employee Value Proposition has not yet attained the maturity or been sufficiently explored to drive higher levels of organisational performance may be premature at this stage (Kochanski and Elliott 2010).

1.3 Problem statement

1.3.1 Main problem

The main problem of the research was to evaluate the preferences of South African MBA students for the attributes of an appealing Employee Value Proposition.

1.3.2 Sub-problems

1.3.2.1 The first sub-problem is to determine the pool of possible attributes that can be used to measure the preferences of South African MBA students for the attributes of an Employee Value Proposition.

1.3.2.2 The second sub-problem is to identify and evaluate the significant attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students and graduates.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study fills a gap in that while literature is limited on the Employee Value Proposition per se, there is a greater need, especially from corporate South Africa, to understand the preferences of MBAs for the attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition. MBAs have been chosen as a study group because they are considered to be high potential candidates, having high levels of ability and past achievements (Trank et al. 2002).

The CLC (2006a) considers the Employee Value Proposition as being critical to talent attraction and commitment. This ability to attract, engage, commit and ultimately retain talent has rapidly become a business imperative, especially among HR managers (Hiltrop 1999) within the context of the war for talent. “The war for talent” (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001:1), a term coined by McKinsey and Company in 1997, recognised a phenomenon that many people were experiencing but had not articulated (Michaels et al. 2001). Open competition for another organisation’s employees, once rare, was now a fact, according to Cappelli (2000), who argued that executives are fully aware that fast-moving labour markets require fast-moving organisations, with fresh new talent usually acquired through strategic poaching.

According to Cantrell and Smith (2010), new research has shown that organisations need to understand and appropriately respond to the individual needs of their employees in order to be competitive and maximise employee performance as economies regain momentum following the global economic recession of 2008 and 2009. In doing so, organisations must consider a menu-driven approach that allows candidates to select the personal relationships and gains that resonate, ultimately allowing the sought-after employee to find the meaning and purpose they seek from their work (Cheese et al. 2007). This is by no means an easy task for organisations but one which Cheese et al. (2007) consider as becoming increasingly important for retaining people and making an organisation appealing to the demands of a new generation of workers.

Across the literature, studies focused on the Employee Value Proposition, while having been performed over the past five years (Bell 2005; Corporate Leadership Council 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006d, 2006e, 2007; Heger 2007; Corporate Leadership Council 2008, 2009; Ingham 2009; Kochanski and Elliott 2010) remain somewhat limited to a few researchers and the CLC. However, related studies have been performed in the areas of employee attraction (Judge and Cable 1997; Albinger and Freeman 2000; Cable and Graham 2000; Trank et al. 2002; Farrell 2003; Berthon, Ewing and Hah 2005), retention (Cappelli 2000; Corporate Leadership Council 2009) and its critical component of employee engagement (Cappelli 1998; Luthans and Peterson 2002; McCrindle

2003; Robinson, Perryman, Hayday and Institute for Employment Studies 2004; Saks 2006; Seijts and Crim 2006; Murray 2007; Macey and Schneider 2008; Shaw and Fairhurst 2008).

Studies combining attraction and retention drivers and strategies for various talent segments and labour markets (Hiltrop 1999; Corporate Leadership Council 2006a; Clark 2007; Lehmann, Dieleman and Martineau 2008) while not as recent also, along with talent management and segmentation literature (Chambers, Foulon, Handfield-Jones, Hankin and Michaels III 1998; Michaels et al. 2001; Boudreau and Ramstad 2005; Florida 2006; Lewis and Heckman 2006; Hughes and Rog 2008), followed a similar trend.

In considering the gap that the research seeks to fill, limited literature exists that specifically focuses on the preferences of MBAs and high potential employees (HIPOs) within South Africa for the attributes they find appealing.

Clearly this confirms the gap that exists in the literature in terms of the preferences of South African MBAs for the attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition. Filling this gap requires supplementing the existing body of literature through further analysis and evaluation.

The study provides guidance to competitive organisations, more specifically those within South Africa, on how to attract critical talent segments such as MBAs. Using the results of the study, these organisations should be able to differentiate, build and in some instances even manage an Employee Value Proposition for a critical segment of HIPOs ensuring the attraction and subsequent engagement, commitment and retention of those employees.

In addition, business schools operating within South Africa may find the results of this study useful for informing their MBA curriculum, producing greater employability among MBA graduates (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin and Jones 2005) as well as enhancing their advisory capabilities to industry on the preferences of South African MBAs.

1.5 Delimitations of the study

- The research was performed within South Africa; and
- MBA students-in-training (at least in their 2nd year of study) were the focus of the research, with all other graduates excluded.

1.6 Definition of terms

The following definitions have been used within the research discussion and have been included to provide clarity:

Baby boomers: People born between the years 1946 and 1964 (McCrindle 2003);

Corporate social performance (CSP): A multidimensional construct that includes community investment and outreach, support for diversity in the workplace, employee involvement and benefits, attention to the environment, and other product safety and global issues (Albinger and Freeman 2000);

Corporate social responsibility (CSR): The social responsibility of business, which encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organisations at a given point in time (Hamman, Woolman and Sprague 2008);

Employee engagement: The intellectual and emotional attachment that employees have to their work and organisation. It involves both the rational and emotional factors, i.e. what employees think (mind) and feel (the heart) about their work and organisation (Heger 2007);

Employee satisfaction: The sense of fulfilment and pride felt by people who enjoy their work and do it well. This feeling is enhanced if the significance of the work done and its value are recognised by those in authority (should be read in conjunction with the following: “empowerment”, “motivation” and “self-actualisation”) (Oxford Reference Online Premium 2009);

Employee Value Proposition: The set of attributes that the labour market and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in the organisation (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:xii);

Framework of female deficiency: Psychological sex differences which are interpreted as evidence of female inadequacy. Sex differences in self-efficacy are interpreted as women's supposed misconstruction of their abilities and men's more accurate self-appraisal (Clement 1987:263);

Gender stereotyping: The justifying and perpetuating of the traditional social roles and power inequalities between men and women, i.e. the belief that women are warm and caring is matched by the societal prescription that they should be warm and caring (Prentice and Carranza 2002:269);

Generation X: People born between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s (Clark 2007);

Generation Y: People born between the years 1980 and 1990 (Clark 2007);

High-Potential Employee (HIPO): An individual with the ability, aspiration and engagement to rise to and succeed in more senior, critical positions (Corporate Leadership Council 2010:4);

Millennial: Also known as Generation Y (Shaw and Fairhurst 2008:370);

Partial rank ordered: The ranking of the ℓ most preferred of the k items (where $\ell \leq k$). When $\ell = k$ the survey items have been fully rank ordered, and when $\ell < k$ the survey items have been partially rank ordered (Stacey 2006:28);

Sampling bias: The difference between what we observe in our sample and what we would have observed if we collected data for the entire population. This introduces a sampling problem that reduces the external validity of the study (Kalof, Dan and Dietz 2008:86);

Skills shortage: A situation where the demand for a particular skill outstrips the supply (Daniels and Development Policy Research Unit 2007);

Socialisation process: A reciprocal process which for research purposes has been construed essentially as the effects of parental child-rearing practices (nowadays called parenting) on children's characteristics (Lytton 1980:1).

1.7 Assumptions

While the following assumptions were made, some turned out to be accurate while others needed a workaround in order to achieve the expected outcomes.

- It was assumed that access would be granted to the members constituting the expert panel, including HR executives, HR senior managers, talent managers and business line managers to survey them. This assumption proved to be correct.
- Following the initial assumption that access would be granted to MBA students, access was granted to MBA students both within Gauteng and the Western Cape provinces to survey them; however, participation levels from universities other than Wits were low as in-class access to MBA students and graduates was not authorised by the universities. This meant that the researcher had to rely upon colleagues and acquaintances to gain access to MBA students and graduates.
- It was assumed that the data would be sufficient to gain adequate coverage across the intended gender and age demographics. This proved to be true. However, geographic coverage was not adequate for research purposes due to the low levels of participation from Western Cape MBA students and graduates, and the geographic category was subsequently excluded.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Revolutionising talent management through customisation of employment practices and individual employee experiences can have profound business returns (Cantrell and Smith 2010). Talent management, as cited by Clark (2007), is the process of identifying skills and development potential amongst new and existing employees and finding promotion opportunities for them within the organisation, through the management hierarchy. Many organisations have mastered the art of customisation for customers, which has been one of the most profound business trends over the past few decades. Few, however, have applied that same customisation to appeal to their employees. Attracting talent had been cited by many (Cappelli 1998; Chambers et al. 1998; Michaels et al. 2001; Corporate Leadership Council 2006b, 2006a; Clark 2007; Montgomery and Ramus 2007) as being difficult for organisations and becoming increasingly so into the future. Montgomery and Ramus (2007) in particular are of the view that the war for talent involves the ability to attract graduating MBA students, especially from the top-ranked international business schools.

The literature review that follows is split into three sections. The first section will start by: (1) defining Employee Value Proposition, (2) describing its criticality to talent attraction and commitment, (3) discussing how to effectively leverage current employees as advocates of the organisation in the labour market, (4) detailing the importance of employee segmentation and (5) providing the reasons why it remains top of mind for many HR managers.

Section 2 will then describe HIPOs and discuss their importance to organisations, further segmenting the MBA as a critical qualification (Corporate Leadership Council 2010) during times of change. A discussion then follows of why HR departments need to focus on MBAs as a segment. This discussion is linked to the discussion in Section 1 of why the Employee Value Proposition is top of mind for HR and line managers.

The discussion in Section 3 builds the foundation required for solving the first sub-problem, described in Chapter 1. This section will, in detail, explore the available literature, identifying those specific attributes that global, high potential and South African employees consider appealing. It will include aspects related to gender, age (the generation gap) and geographical location. The section will conclude with a list of the economic factors and/or attributes that will ultimately set the backdrop against which the results of the research are analysed and interpreted.

2.2 Section 1: Definition and criticality of Employee Value Proposition

2.1.1 Employee Value Proposition – definitions

The most widely used definition of Employee Value Proposition, according to (Kochanski and Elliott 2010), and the definition that is used throughout this study is that of the CLC, which defines it as “the set of attributes that the labour market and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in the organisation” (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:xii).

Heger’s (2007) definition of Employee Value Proposition also has relevance to our discussion as a business concept describing the value that an employee derives from his or her membership in an organisation. Heger (2007) suggests that an Employee Value Proposition is a determinant of both employee engagement and retention, with each of these having a significant impact on business outcomes. Heger’s (2007) study showed an important relationship between Employee Value Proposition fulfilment and the intention of employees to stay in an organisation (engagement). However, the relationships between employee measures and business outcomes were not as robust.

Overall, literature covering the critical determinants of the Employee Value Proposition remains scarce.

Studies by the CLC (2006a, 2007, 2009) have revealed that an effective Employee Value Proposition can confer, among others, the following significant benefits to an organisation:

- Improvement in commitment of new recruits by up to 29%;
- Reduction of new recruits' compensation premiums by up to 50%; and
- Increase of the possibility of employees acting as advocates for the organisation, from an average of 24% to 47%.

In addition, the CLC (2006a) also identified that an effective Employee Value Proposition allows organisations to source more deeply in the labour market and increase access to passive candidates. Certain developed economies are showing a decline in population, thus making it so much harder to source talent (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a) while countries like India with large populations are facing the challenges of attracting the right talent from potentially large pools, creating a burning platform for having an effective Employee Value Proposition, specifically for MBAs.

2.1.2 Criticality to talent attraction and commitment

The CLC (2006a) in defining the Employee Value Proposition considers it critical for talent attraction and commitment. Employer attractiveness is defined as "the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation" (Berthon et al. 2005:149). Commitment or organisational commitment, on the other hand, is an individual's psychological attachment to an organisation and desire to remain part of it. It is normally measured according to attitudinal dimensions, e.g. identification with the goals and values of the organisation and a desire to belong to the organisation (Oxford Reference Online Premium 2009).

The CLC (2006a) also noted that Employee Value Proposition has very specific benefits: (1) attracting and retaining talent, through a clear and differentiated proposition; (2) ensuring that people are attracted and retained that would have otherwise been lost to competitor labour markets; (3) appealing to different market segments and hard-to-reach talent groups; (4) re-engaging a

disenchanted workforce and moving beyond a one-size-fits-all approach to one's employees; (5) prioritising HR agendas and better understanding their strategies; and (6) creating a strong and credible people brand reducing new recruit employment costs.

2.1.3 Employee Value Proposition marketing and branding

The CLC recognised that for "the Employee Value Proposition to effectively attract and commit talent, organisations will have to consider the implications of different Employee Value Proposition investments for different segments of the workforce" (2006a:62), referred to as Employee Value Proposition segmentation.

In considering segmentation, Dewhurst, Guthridge and Mohr (2009) challenged organisations to adopt the same work ethic (consistent with marketers) for satisfying their employees as they do for customers. They believe that organisations need to segment their workforce and understand what motivates and keeps their employees passionate. This will enable organisations to make the right offer to the right segment at the right time. Customisation, according to Cantrell and Smith (2010), is not just a "nice to have" (2010:2). They argue that customisation gives organisations the boost required for excellent performance and productivity especially when times are hard to do more with less.

Similarly, Berthon et al. (2005) specify, according to internal marketing concepts, that an organisation's employees are its first market. They use the concepts "internal advertising" and "internal branding" (Berthon et al. 2005:151) to appeal to employees in the same way as organisations appeal to customers. Another concept, "employer branding or employer attractiveness," they note, is somewhat undeveloped. Clarification is needed regarding whether the companies on Fortune's annual list of the "100 Most Admired" Companies" (Fortune 2011) address these concepts by the very nature of their internal practices. Berthon et al. (2005) accordingly share the views of many others cited previously that adopting internal practices and customisation makes attracting employees with superior skills and knowledge easier and a primary source of competitive advantage for the organisation.

2.1.4 Employees as advocates

The CLC (2006a), as mentioned previously, recognised that in order to build a credible Employee Value Proposition in the labour market, employers must make advocates of their employees. Employees are considered to be the most trusted source of information for candidates; however, only 24% of employees would recommend their organisations to friends, as per the CLC (2006a). The Starbucks Coffee Company has been recognised by the CLC (2006a) as an organisation with one of the highest numbers of employees actively promoting the organisation. By defining, reinforcing and managing what employees expect from the organisation, Starbucks has ensured that the internal working environment aligns with its Employee Value Proposition, thereby experiencing high levels of employee satisfaction and engagement.

2.1.5 Reasons that the Employee Value Proposition remains top of mind for many HR managers

Cappelli (2000), a decade ago, referred to executives as poachers who were always on the lookout for talented individuals to fill key positions. He added that executives will do whatever it takes to lure attractive candidates once they have been spotted and mentioned that organisations offer rich compensation bonuses, stock options and packages. Considering this, Clark (2007) suggested that organisations will have to look at making the package of benefits more meaningful and approachable for their employees if they want to attract and retain a talented and productive workforce. Cappelli (2000) noted that while all of this is happening, competitor organisations are searching through others' talent pools looking to steal their best talent. There are signs of this explosion everywhere in the labour market, which Cappelli refers to as "strategic poaching" (2000:104).

So, why have organisations, especially during these difficult times, not utilised their customisation capabilities to manage their people, specifically, in their approaches to recruiting, rewarding, training and developing employees, using attributes of HR management? Why then do organisations still adopt approaches that result in employees being managed as if they are all the same

(Cantrell and Smith 2010). Employees are, first, individuals having different abilities, career needs and ways of learning, each motivated by different factors or attributes, and having unique working styles (Cantrell and Smith 2010). Attributes, in this sense, are defined as the characteristics of the employment offering measured by a rating having two possible states, e.g. good or bad, acceptable or not acceptable (Oxford Reference Online Premium 2009).

Cheese et al. (2007:103) noted that tailoring the Employee Value Proposition is certainly a challenge for many organisations but one which is increasingly necessary for retention and for making any organisation appealing to a demanding generation of workers. This retention is really the ability to hold on to employees. Where an organisation finds that it is losing valuable staff (such as those with scarce skills or specialist knowledge) it may be said to have a "retention problem". Cantrell and Smith (2010), having recognised that market share for leadership goes to those organisations that have the best talent, are implying that employees matter just as much now as customers.

2.2 Section 2: HIPOs and MBAs

2.2.1 High Potential Employees (HIPOs)

Industrial and organisational psychologists, confirmed by economic trends, recognised almost a decade ago that if organisations wanted to improve their effectiveness they would have to select high potential candidates with high levels of ability and past achievements (Trank et al. 2002). As mentioned by the CLC (2006a), specific benefits accrue when organisations provide a clear and differentiated Employee Value Proposition to appeal to different employee segments. HIPOs, according to Dries and Pepermans (2007:85), are those individuals within the organisation who are "recognised, at that point in time, as the organisation's likely future leaders". The CLC (2010:3) also notes that HIPOs relative to the broader workforce are almost twice as valuable while being three times more successful as future leaders of the organisation. On the basis of the CLC (2010) interviews and survey results, HR officers indicated that HIPOs were 91% more valuable than ordinary employees and contributed

disproportionately to the organisations' future pipelines. The figures go on to indicate that HIPOs have a 75% chance of succeeding in more critical senior management roles as compared with only 25% of the high performers that lack high potential. Of the HR officers interviewed, 25% pointed out their concern with retaining HIPOs and another 25% indicated that they were generally worried about retaining employees with critical skills.

HIPOs are typically knowledge workers defined "as a person with the motivation and capacity to co-create new insights and the capability to communicate, coach and facilitate the implementation of new ideas" (Horwitz, Heng and Quazi 2003:23). The characteristics of knowledge workers based on the researcher's experience maps well with the profile defined and required for MBA students.

2.2.2 MBAs

Montgomery and Ramus (2007) view success in the war for talent as the ability to attract graduating MBA students, especially from the top-ranked international business schools. This view is supported by Professor Nick Binedell, a director from the University of Pretoria Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) in South Africa, who believes that a good MBA remains excellently suitable for survival in the modern business world (Fin24 2008a). Professor Binedell goes on to say that the MBA qualification provides the relevant global insight into management issues, with the graduate able to play a strategic role in any organisation.

Research from the more developed economies of the United States (US), Canada and the United Kingdom (UK) has indicated important extrinsic benefits from the MBA. A survey found that after the MBA qualification the proportion of participation in senior management nearly doubled, with a fourfold increase in MBAs involved in senior roles like corporate strategy and planning (Simpson, Sturges, Woods and Altman 2005).

Recently, though, the MBA qualification has come under scrutiny, requiring business schools to ensure that their MBA qualifications are enabling graduates

in the talent war to be headhunted by world-leading business organisations (Simpson 2000b; Bubna-Litic and Benn 2003; Fin24 2008b).

Mintzberg (2004) is adamant that MBA programmes must be recognised for what they are. He argues that while MBA programmes specialise in educating graduates about the functions of business they generally are not educating graduates in the practice of management. He adds that management applies some science, requiring managers to use the knowledge they can get, from the sciences and elsewhere. But more so, he sees management as an art, based on “insight,” “vision” and “intuition” (Mintzberg 2004:10).

Realising this, most South African business schools today are making it a prerequisite for their MBA students to have a few years’ practical management experience (typically at least four years), high levels of ability and good track records before being accepted to study for an MBA degree (Mintzberg 2004; Fin24 2008b; Jackson 2011). These business schools are hoping that having the requisite managerial experience will instil a depth of understanding about how organisations work and what management means. What is needed during these trying times and talent war, according to Mintzberg (2004), is leaders with human skills, not professionals with academic credentials. He notes that success, especially in larger organisations, depends more on what managers help others to do and less on how managers allocate resources and make decisions.

More recently, in the *Sunday Times* newspaper (Jackson 2011), Professor Gregory Lee of the Wits Business School, Professor Walter Baets of University of Cape Town, and Professor John Powell, who is the director of University of Stellenbosch, all concur that the MBA qualification retains its position as being critical to South African business. With the changing demands of modern business still recovering from a global financial crisis, it is imperative, according to Professor Gregory Lee, that the MBA qualification remains relevant in the broader social context of sustainable development.

2.3 Section 3: Compiling a comprehensive list of attributes

2.3.1 Introduction

According to the CLC (2006a), definitions of what attracts key talent vary significantly across the academic world, consultant literature and the business media. The CLC (2006a) believe that many questions remain unanswered as to exactly what constitutes the value proposition that is causing increased frustration among senior HR leaders and their executive colleagues with the failure of Employee Value Proposition strategies to provide the required talent. In addition, Sibson's Rewards of Work (ROW) model (Kochanski and Elliott 2010) also proposes a redefined Employee Value Proposition called EVE, which caters for the employers' perspectives as well. While other literature somewhat related will also be discussed in this literature review, these studies do not directly discuss the preferences of MBAs for the attributes that make up an Employee Value Proposition as their core subject matter.

2.3.2 Employee Value Proposition Framework – CLC

The CLC (2006a) responded to the questions referred to above by developing an actionable list of Employee Value Proposition attributes through reviewing varied sources. Accordingly, the CLC (2006a) came up with a master list of over 200 characteristics, which was compiled and evaluated for distinctiveness, similarity, universality and overall rateability. This master list they consolidated into a concise list of 38 attributes, as shown in Figure 1. This final list of 38 organisational attributes was then classified into five dimensions: *Rewards, Opportunity, Organisation, Work and People*. These 38 attributes, classified into five dimensions, have been identified by the CLC (2006a) as having the most impact on employees' attraction to and engagement with an organisation, obviously to a different degree for each employee.

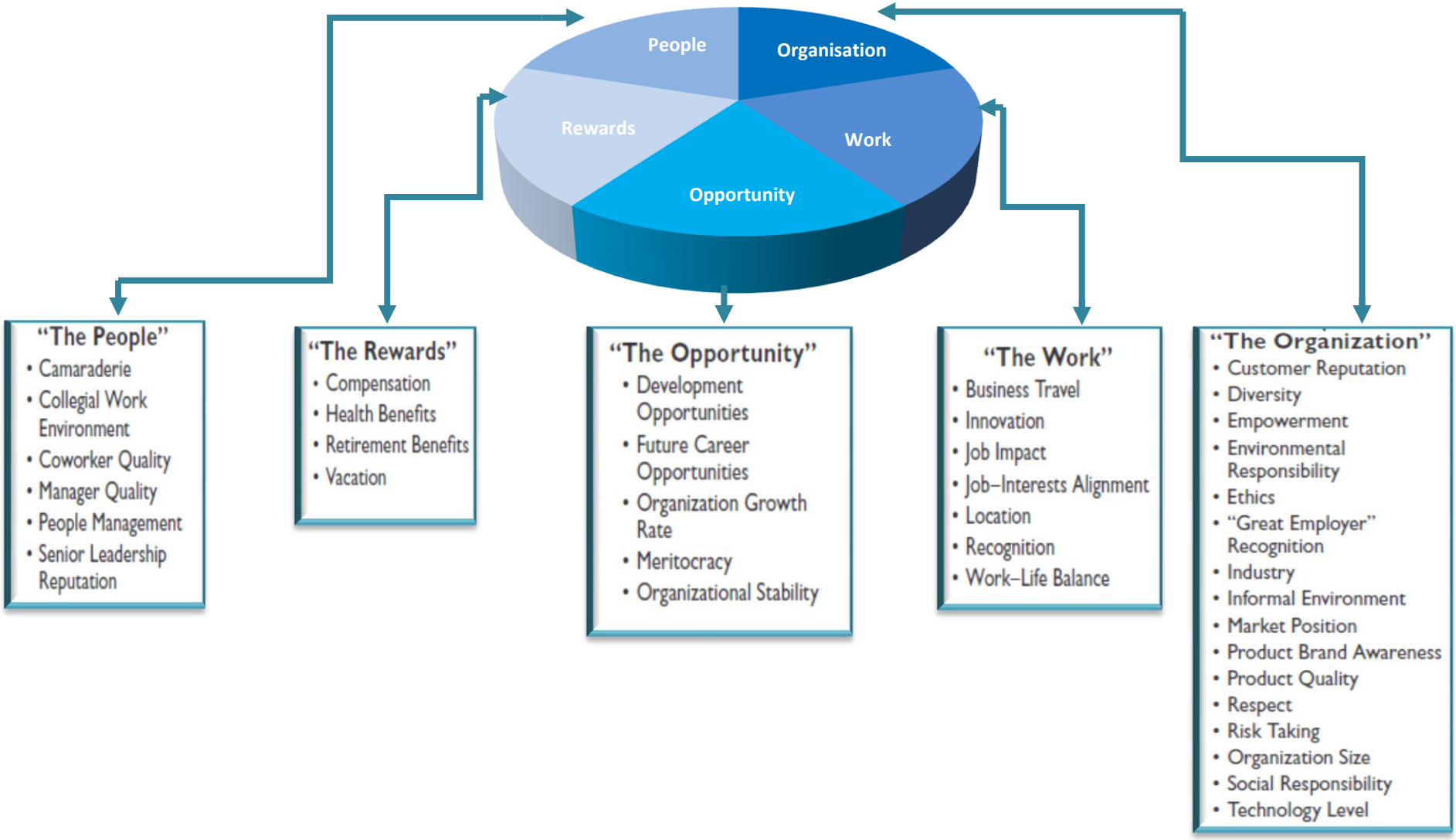


Figure 1: CLC's Employee Value Proposition (EVP) Framework and 38 attributes (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:27)

Definitions for the 38 attributes comprising what the CLC considers a strongly appealing Employee Value Proposition (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a) are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: CLC's Definitions of Employee Value Proposition Attributes for member respondents (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a)

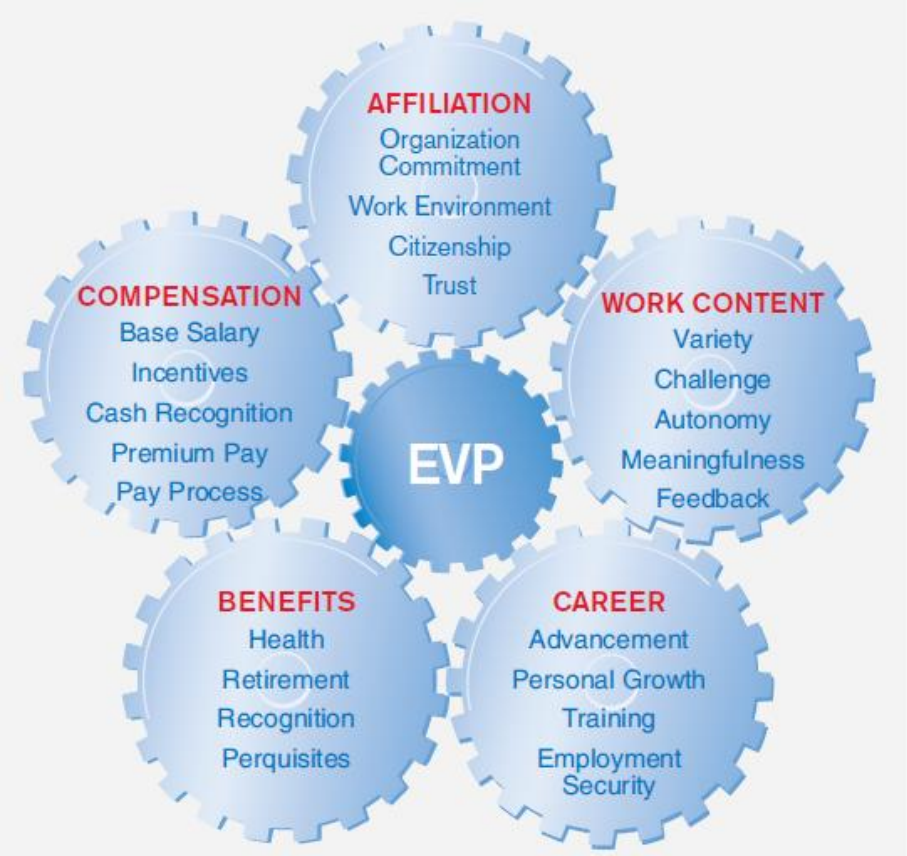
Attribute Name	Definition
Business Travel	The amount of out-of-town business travel required by the job
Camaraderie	Whether working for the organisation provides opportunities to socialise with other employees
Collegial Work Environment	Whether the work environment is team-oriented and collaborative
Compensation	The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package
Co-worker Quality	The quality of the co-workers in the organisation
Customer Reputation	The reputation of the clients and customers served in performing the job
Development Opportunities	The developmental/educational opportunities provided by the job and organisation
Diversity	The organisation's level of commitment to having a diverse workforce
Empowerment	The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career
Environmental Responsibility	The organisation's level of commitment to environmental health and sustainability
Ethics	The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity
Formal/Informal Work Environment	Whether the work environment is formal or informal
Future Career Opportunities	The future career opportunities provided by the organisation
"Great Employer" Recognition	Whether or not the organisation's reputation as an employer has been recognised by a third-party organisation
Health Benefits	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's health benefits
Industry	The desirability of the organisation's industry to the respondent
Innovation	The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects
Job–Interests Alignment	Whether the job responsibilities match the respondent's interests
Job Impact	The level of impact the job has on outcomes
Location	The geographic location of the job that the organisation is offering
Manager Quality	The quality of the organisation's managers

Attribute Name	Definition
Market Position	The competitive position the organisation holds in its market(s)
Meritocracy	Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted on the basis of their achievements
Organisational Growth Rate	The growth rate of the organisation's business
Organisation Size	The size of the organisation's workforce
Organisational Stability	The level of stability of the organisation and the job
People Management	The organisation's reputation for managing people
Product Brand Awareness	The level of awareness in the market place for the products' brand
Product Quality	The organisation's product or service quality reputation
Recognition	The amount of recognition provided to employees by the organisation
Respect	The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees
Retirement Benefits	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's retirement benefits
Risk Taking	The amount of risk that the organisation encourages employees to take
Senior Leadership Reputation	The quality of the organisation's senior leadership
Social Responsibility	The organisation's level of commitment to social responsibility (e.g. community service, philanthropy)
Technology Level	The extent to which the organisation invests in modern technology and equipment
Vacation	The amount of holiday/vacation time that employees earn annually
Work–Life Balance	The extent to which the job allows employees to balance their work and their other interests

2.3.3 EVE Framework – Sibson's Rewards of Work (ROW) model

Kochanski and Elliott (2010) have proposed a move from the traditional Employee Value Proposition to a redefined employee-employer value exchange (EVE) to include the expectations of the employer. They examine the balance between the rewards that employers are offering and the expectations they set for employees in return for the rewards. They propose using Sibson's ROW model as detailed in Figure 2.

Sibson Consulting is the leading, independent benefits, compensation and human resources consultancy. They developed their Employee Value



Proposition model to measure employee perceptions and attitudes towards five elements of rewards (Conlon, Insler and Kochanski 2010). These elements comprised both financial and non-financial rewards.

Figure 2: Sibson's Rewards of Work model (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)

Kochanski and Elliott (2010) identified five types of rewards:

- *Affiliation* – the feeling of belonging to an admirable organisation that aligns with the employee's values;
- *Compensation* – the actual money that the employee receives for his services and performance;
- *Benefits* – indirect compensation like time off, medical insurance, pension schemes and programmes, etc.;
- *Career* – employee training, development and advancement in relation to long-term opportunities; and
- *Work Content* – satisfaction received from the work that employees do.

According to Kochanski and Elliott (2010), each of the factors or attributes in the ROW model affects both current and potential employees' decisions to stay at existing organisations or to join a new organisation. They believe that while having the right mix of these attributes is required for employees to feel that their needs are being met, the scale is somewhat out of balance in terms of the value exchange, as very little information is provided in terms of the reciprocal level of performance that is expected by the employer for the rewards that are provided. In terms of the value exchange, employers expect at least the following five things to be contributed by employees (Kochanski and Elliott 2010):

- *Performance* – discretionary efforts required and desired objectives needed to achieve organisational goals that deliver superior returns;
- *3Cs of Teamwork* – coordination, collaboration and communication of organisational performance that is expected of individuals within business units and across teams;
- *Engagement* – knowing what is priority and having the desire and motivation to achieve this;
- *Behaviour* – the desired/acceptable behaviours required to align with the culture and achieve the results; and
- *Retention* – the level of retention which is desired of employees and needed to support the strategic objectives of the organisation.

Sibson's research, the ROW study and the organisation's experiences with customers (Conlon et al. 2010) have confirmed the important influence of the five elements of their Employee Value Proposition model on employee motivation, attraction and retention. On the basis of their research, the various elements and their aspects will have different levels of importance for different employees. Some employees within limits will accept the substitution of one reward for another. Conlon et al. (2010) suggest that Sibson's ROW model as presented in Figure 2 provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between employee attitudes and outcomes ultimately driving organisational effectiveness. The CLC (2006a) framework, its dimensions and

attributes will be discussed in relation to Sibson's ROW model and other literature in the section below.

2.3.4 Discussion of the CLC framework, Sibson's ROW model and related literature

The attributes that make up each of the five dimensions are discussed first from the perspective of the CLC (2006a). The CLC discussion takes its reference from three specific focus groups: (1) global drivers of attraction, comparing survey results in 2006 with 2009 (Corporate Leadership Council 2009); (2) South African drivers of attraction, comparing survey results in 2006 with 2009 (Corporate Leadership Council 2009); and (3) HIPOs in the US, comparing survey results in 2008 and 2010 (Corporate Leadership Council 2010). Figures 11, 12 and 13 (in Appendix G) present the CLC's member survey rankings for the Global drivers of attraction (2006-2009), South African drivers of attraction (2006-2009) and HIPO Employee Value Proposition preferences (2008-2010) respectively. Thereafter a discussion of Sibson's ROW model (Kochanski and Elliott 2010) and other literature, where pertinent, will follow.

Rewards dimension

Rewards, the first of the five dimensions of the CLC framework, are the tangible rewards an employee receives for his or her work, such as compensation and benefits (Corporate Leadership Council 2006d:10), as detailed in Table 2. A legend has been provided to assist with the understanding of the tables that follow.

Legend:

*	Indicates the ranking of the attribute where available, especially in terms of the surveys performed by the CLC (Corporate Leadership Council 2009, 2010)
√	Referenced by the literature; however, not ranked

The change in the rank order of preference levels for the same survey across the different years					
↔	no change	↑	increase	↓	decrease

Table 2: List of attributes that comprise the *Rewards* dimension

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
Compensation	(1)* ↔	(2) ↓	(1) ↔	√	√ √	Sibson's Compensation (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111) (Dewhurst et al. 2009) (Horwitz et al. 2003) (Simpson 2000a)
Health Benefits	(19) ↓	(19) ↑	(6) ↑	√		Sibson's Benefits – Health (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Retirement Benefits	(27) ↓	(15) ↑	(11) ↑	√		Sibson's Benefits – Retirement (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Vacation	(33) ↓	(36) ↓	(18) ↑	√		Sibson's Benefits – Time off/Perquisites (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)

The CLC identified *Compensation* as ranking the highest most valued Employee Value Proposition attribute as a global driver of attraction (Corporate Leadership Council 2009:41) in 2006 and 2009. The same results hold true when considering the preferences for HIPOs (Corporate Leadership Council 2010:59) in 2008 and 2010. As such the ranking for this attribute remained unchanged across the two areas mentioned previously. Within the South African context, while *Compensation* featured as the highest most valued Employee Value Proposition attribute in the 2006 survey (Corporate Leadership Council 2009), it slipped to second place during the 2009 survey (Corporate Leadership Council 2009). The same views are shared by Horwitz et al. (2003) and Dewhurst et al. (2009).

Health Benefits preferences for both South African employees and HIPOs increased in 2009 and 2010 respectively, with South African employees ranking the same as global employees.

Retirement Benefits, especially during 2009, lost significant ground as an attribute globally; however, the ranking increased rather considerably for HIPOs, with a marginal increase for South African employees. Could this have something to do with the global crisis perhaps?

Vacation as a benefit for HIPOs increased its appeal significantly in 2009; however, as an attribute both globally and in South Africa it is considered less attractive than was previously.

From Sibson's perspective (Kochanski and Elliott 2010), *Compensation* features prominently as one of the five types of rewards that employers offer. Following (Kochanski and Elliott 2010), the definition of *Compensation* will be extended to include base salary, incentives, cash recognition, premium pay, ownership and the pay process as other forms of compensation.

Both *Health* and *Retirement* are at the top of the benefits reward type in Sibson's ROW model (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111). *Time Off*, which can be compared to the CLC's *Vacation*, features less significantly. HIPOs, though, consider vacation or time off as an appealing attribute.

While compensation is important for both males and females it features higher on the agenda of males than females, who view non-financial attributes as more appealing (Simpson 2000a). These deductions are also in line with those found by Lacy, Bokemeier and Shepard (1983) and the CLC.

Lacy et al. (1983) recognised that males regardless of their marital status obtain their primary identity and importance from their profession and employment. This implies that males are more likely to choose those attributes that provide job security over the more intrinsic attributes such as job meaning, purpose and impact.

Dewhurst et al. (2009), citing the "McKinsey Global Survey Results of June 2009", identify that while financial incentives remain important, the three non-financial incentives of praise and commendation from immediate manager, attention from leaders, and opportunities to lead projects or task forces are seen

to be even more effective motivators than the three highest-rated financial incentives.

However, they are troubled at how quickly organisations have moved back to bonuses again. They question whether there has been any learning from what happened on Wall Street during the 2008 financial crisis. Dewhurst et al. (2009) interpret the McKinsey survey results as implying that it was no longer just the money that was attractive, and that meaningful work, specific goals and their achievement together with celebrating success through heartfelt and personal "thank you's" (Dewhurst et al. 2009:1) seemed to be more effective. This came as a complete and positive surprise for these authors.

Opportunity dimension

The opportunities a job or organisation affords an employee, such as development experiences (Corporate Leadership Council 2006d:10), are detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: List of attributes that comprise the *Opportunity* dimension

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
Future Career Opportunities	(2) ↔	(1) ↑	(2) ↔	√		Sibson's Career – Advancement (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Development Opportunities	(4) ↑	(4) ↓	(9) ↓	√		Sibson's Career – Personal Growth and Training (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Organisational Growth Rate	(24) ↔	(17) ↑	(25) ↑			
Meritocracy (opportunities based on ability)	(18) ↓	(24) ↓	(16) ↔			

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
Organisational Stability	(5) ↓	(5) ↓	(4) ↑	√		Sibson's Career – Employment Security, Benefits, Income Security (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)

The CLC identified *Future Career Opportunities* as ranking the second most valued Employee Value Proposition attribute globally and for HIPOs this remained unchanged across the different surveys performed over the years (Corporate Leadership Council 2009, 2010). For South Africans, however, this attribute has increased in preference level to become the first most valued Employee Value Proposition attribute. Generation Xers, according to Murray (1997), have a preference for future opportunities. Being the most culturally independent of all the generations before them, they are not your typical conformists and won't comply with standard practices. Coomes and DeBard (2004) comment that Generation Xers have the tendencies to be apathetic and aloof. Murray (1997) adds that they doubt everything and believe that things will change. As such he believes that Generation Xers crave individualism, personal attention and want to be current and up to date while resisting fixed, rigid or closed-off futures as they want to keep their options open. They see the work world as having endless ruts from which they will never escape.

Development Opportunities, with a ranking of 4 for both global and South African employees (Corporate Leadership Council 2009), subsequently slipped to ninth place during 2010 for HIPOs. This may indicate that HIPOs are taking charge of their own developmental requirements.

Organisational Stability both globally and within South Africa, while remaining in the top-five employment preferences, dropped to fifth position in 2009. According to the CLC, stability has always been important in driving attraction

(Corporate Leadership Council 2009), and coupled with security this attribute remains greatly valued by most employees. HIPOs on the other hand have increased their emphasis on benefits and stability.

The CLC (2009:10) in addition notes that stability, while very important for attraction, is not a top driver of commitment, especially among HIPOs in South Africa. Also outside of the US, stability is not a top-three driver of attraction. The CLC (2009) recognises that it is better to be transparent than to overpromise when it comes to stability. Clearly there must be some correlation with the recent financial meltdown with employee attitudes impacting preferences.

Meritocracy is expected to be the highest-ranked attribute for HIPOs because they expect to be rewarded with opportunities for their high achievements and abilities. Murray (2007) also found an interesting fact, which is that the focus of Generation Y lives while growing up has been on achievement – achievement measured by substantial outcomes.

The CLC (2006a) also recognised that generational differences have always been of significant interest to employers. While it is recognised that Generation Y preferences for attributes are not significantly different from their parents, the CLC (2006a) notes that future career opportunities, compensation and ethics are the core attributes that are relatively more important to Generation Y. Shaw and Fairhurst (2008) share similar views that an understanding of generational differences, their preferences and the impact on work motivation and related outcomes are important for recruitment, retention and reward.

Within the Sibson's ROW model, there are clear links between the attributes in the *Career* type of rewards and the CLC's *Opportunity* dimension. *Future Career Opportunities* maps against *Advancement* while *Development Opportunities* aligns with *Personal Growth* and *Training*, providing employees with long-term opportunities for development and career advancement.

Another link that could easily be established is the ROW model's *Employment Security* under the *Career* type reward and *Income Security* under the *Benefits* type with the CLC's *Organisational Stability*.

Organisation dimension

The characteristics of the organisation, such as its size, reputation or market position (Corporate Leadership Council 2006d:10), are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4: List of attributes that comprise the *Organisation* dimension

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
Customer Reputation/Prestige	(36) ↔	(29) ↔	(37) ↑			
Diversity/Inclusion	(29) ↑	(21) ↓	(29) ↓	√		Sibson's Affiliation - Work Environment and Trust (Kochanski and Elliott 2010) Simpson (2000a) Simpson et al. (2005) Thomas and Wise (1999) Ng and Burke (2005)
Empowerment	(16) ↓	(9) ↓	(13) ↓	√		Sibson's Work Content - Autonomy (Kochanski and Elliott 2010)
Environmental Responsibility	(34) ↑	(35) ↑	(36) ↔	√		Sibson's Affiliation - Citizenship (Kochanski and Elliott 2010)
Ethics/Integrity	(9) ↑	(6) ↓	(5) ↔	√		Sibson's Affiliation - Trust (Kochanski and Elliott 2010)
"Great Employer" Recognition	(25) ↑	(23) ↑	(27) ↑	√	√	Sibson's Affiliation - Citizenship (Kochanski and Elliott 2010) (Ingham 2009)
Industry	(28) ↑	(31) ↔	(34) ↓			

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
Formal/Informal Work Environment	(26) ↑	(32) ↑	(26) ↓	√		Sibson's Affiliation - Work Environment (Kochanski and Elliott 2010)
Market Position	(17) ↑	(20) ↑	(22) ↑	√		Sibson's Affiliation - Market Position (Kochanski and Elliott 2010)
Product Brand Awareness/ Well-Known Brand	(20) ↑	(18) ↓	(31) ↑			
Product Quality	(14) ↔	(14) ↓	(15) ↑			
Respect	(7) ↓	(7) ↓	(12) ↑	√		Sibson's Affiliation - Trust (Kochanski and Elliott 2010)
Risk Taking	(38) ↓	(34) ↑	(35) ↔	√		Sibson's Work Content - Challenge (Kochanski and Elliott 2010)
Organisation Size	(23) ↑	(26) ↑	(33) ↓			
Social Responsibility	(32) ↓	(30) ↔	(32) ↑	√	√ √ √	Sibson's Affiliation - Citizenship (Kochanski and Elliott 2010) (Bhattacharya, Sen and Korschun 2008) (Albinger and Freeman 2000) (Cappelli 2000) (Murray 2007)
Technology Level	(22) ↓	(25) ↓	(28) ↓			

Within the CLC's *Organisation* dimension, attributes like *Ethics/Integrity*, *Respect* and *Empowerment* feature prominently and are in the top 10 for South African employees (Corporate Leadership Council 2009). These attributes together with the attribute of diversity would almost certainly rank much higher than for HIPOs and global employees, given South Africa's recent past of apartheid. Employees within South Africa now desire greater respect and empowerment. They also see ethics/integrity and diversity as underpinning the very fabric of their existence.

Authors like Clement (1987), Scherer, Brodzinski and Wiebe (1990) and Gupta, Turban, Wasti and Sikdar (2009) discuss the issues of how traditionally women have been discriminated against because male behaviours have been taken as the norm and women have been measured within this "framework of female deficiency" (Clement 1987:263) interpreted as evidence of female inadequacy, supposed misconstructions of female abilities and male more accurate self-appraisal.

Browne (1997) also found that in the past, sex role stereotypes related to work habits, values and preferences have had a real negative impact on females. He adds though that some studies of male and female managers have shown only small differences between males and females in their values and attitudes toward work.

For these reasons, empowerment is especially important among female MBAs, who see this attribute as enhancing credibility and confidence, encouraging a more proactive approach to work problems as well as increasing their abilities to engage in work-related discussions more fully, leading to overall greater respect and recognition, a view also expressed by Simpson (2000a) in the literature.

Respect remains important for global employees and for HIPOs, with HIPOs rating this the lowest among the three focus areas as HIPOs command respect on the basis of their abilities (*Meritocracy*).

Organisational Size while not a significant attribute across all focus groups increased its ranking order by six positions.

Diversity

Thomas and Wise (1999) saw opportunities to extend the traditional studies into the factors influencing organisational attractiveness by addressing the moderating effects of gender and race on the employee-employer relationship. Their studies reveal that diversity factors (demographic composition) and diversity programmes appear to be more important to minority and female applicants than to male ones. These findings align with Ng and Burke's (2005) deductions that diversity management among women and other minorities must be emphasised during applicant attraction.

Simpson (2000a) identified some career barriers experienced by MBAs which may give some insight into what females prefer over males as attributes of the Employee Value Proposition. The top-three barriers are: men's club networks, prejudice of colleagues and lack of confidence. On the basis of these career barriers, it can be deduced that females will favour positions that will empower them and make them feel important or respected while males will be attracted to positions offering greater compensation with careers that have future opportunities.

In addition, Simpson et al. (2005) indicate that females are increasingly entering the labour markets and more so in the management space. Simpson et al. (2005) imply that, despite the popularity of MBA degrees, not much is known about the effectiveness of the MBA qualification for females wishing to become managers. The authors deduce that females do not seem to progress as far or even receive the same remuneration when compared to their male counterparts.

Fortune's "Most Admired" companies

Technology Levels as an attribute within organisations, while previously important, is taking somewhat of a back seat, with focus moving to attributes like: the "*Great Employer" Recognition* related directly to corporate image and reputation; *Product Brand Awareness; Well-known Brand*; and *Product Quality.* Brown and Perry (1994) presented a way to remove the financial performance halo from Fortune's "Most Admired" Companies. Although Fortune's most

admired companies' rankings are strongly driven by prior financial performance, in spite of the high correlations with non-financial factors that remained after removing the financial performance halo the authors drew similarities with the findings of Fombrun and Shanley (1990) in that an additional halo which is not influenced by financial performance may exist for the construct of corporate reputation.

Company image and reputation

In addition, Montgomery and Ramus (2007) argued that employees are influenced by the perceptions of the organisation's image when considering jobs (Fombrun and Shanley 1990; Cable and Graham 2000). From the literature reviewed it is clear that no single attribute influences a person's perceptions of an organisation's reputation, implying this to be a multidimensional construct.

Fombrun and Shanley (1990) showed that a whole host of signals, such as market signals (risk, performance, dividend policy), accounting signals, institutional signals (ownership, media visibility, firm's size and social responsibility) and strategy signals (differentiation and diversification posture), affected Fortune 500 firm reputations. Fombrun further acknowledges in his book *Reputation – Realizing Value from the Corporate Image* (1996) that to achieve prestige requires a long-term view towards building competitive advantage. These skills as he calls them must resonate as being unique with an organisation's people.

Filbeck and Preece (2003), in their studies of Fortune's Best 100 Companies to work for, concluded that stock markets and shareholders do value employees. According to Brown and Perry (1994), Fortune ranks large corporations on the following eight qualitative attributes: quality of management; quality of products or services; value as a long-term investment; innovativeness; soundness of financial position; ability to attract, develop and keep talented people; responsibility to the community and environment; and wise use of corporate assets. A ninth attribute called "effectiveness in conducting its business globally" (Fortune 2011) has recently been included and is now ranked as part of the Fortune survey (2011:42).

Fortune's "The World's Most Admired Companies" (2011) noted that a new competitive landscape is emerging. With the worst economic storm in modern history slightly behind us, there is a surprising new roster of winners and losers. Verizon Communications or AT&T is no longer top of the list. Companies like Apple, Google, IBM and McDonalds, to mention a few, have maintained their position or emerged as top organisations because of quality products and services, brand image, effectiveness in conducting their business globally, soundness of financial position, value as a long-term investment and wise use of corporate assets (Fortune 2011:42).

Fortune's ninth and newest attribute, "Responsibility to the community and environment," links in with CLC's *Social Responsibility* and Sibson's ROW model *Affiliation – Citizenship* type of reward.

Corporate social responsibility

The CEO of Deloitte Touché Tohmatsu put it very aptly when he said that globally the best professionals want to work for a good corporate citizen where they can thrive (Bhattacharya et al. 2008). In effect, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is starting to reveal the value system of organisations, which goes towards creating an appealing Employee Value Proposition.

According to Bhattacharya et al. (2008), this is the lens through which managers will have to view talent management today. Bhattacharya et al. (2008) are of the view that humanising the organisation depicts it as contributing to society rather than being concerned with solely maximising profits for its shareholders. In addition, these authors recognise that with so many global organisations investing large sums of money in CSR initiatives there is no better time than now to assess the returns in terms of the improved connectedness with employees that CSR delivers.

Albinger and Freeman (2000) also identified, when they wrote of organisational corporate social performance (CSP), that this attribute is becoming increasingly important for organisations when seeking to attract highly educated applicants with high levels of job choice, e.g. MBAs. CSP is being seen as a source of competitive advantage in the human capital arena (Albinger and Freeman

2000). Murray (2007) also found that 92% of senior managers considered corporate responsibility (CR) policies important to employee brand and deduced that CR appeared to be important to recruiting and retaining both Generation X and Y employees.

An addition to the *Organisational* construct is the person-organisation fit attribute.

Person-organisation fit perspective

Cable and Graham (2000) reveal from their study that the type of industry in which the organisation operates, opportunities presented for employee development by the organisation and the organisational culture all affect the applicants' perceptions and inform their preferences. The authors highlight that their findings paint a paradoxical picture in that managers clearly may not or will not change their offering to align with improving their reputation among applicants. Attracting the best applicants has become critical for many organisations (Judge and Cable 1997; Chapman et al. 2005). According to Ng and Burke (2005), on the basis of the person-organisation fit theory, individuals assess their personal values against the values of the organisations to identify a fit and in this way decide on a job, based on these assessments. The same deduction was made by Judge and Cable (1997). In the same light, Chapman et al. (2005) recognise that applicants interpret the characteristics of the job and recruiter against their own needs and values to determine a fit. To supplement the person-organisation fit another study (Özbilgin, Küskü and Erdo mu 2005) revealed that MBA students consider their own human capital and capacity of free choice as significantly influencing their career choices rather than the impacts of structural conditions.

Work dimension

The nature of the work itself, such as the extent to which it matches an employee's interests (Corporate Leadership Council 2006d:10), is detailed in Table 5.

Table 5: List of attributes that comprise the *Work* dimension

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
Business Travel	(37) ↑	(38) ↔	(38) ↓	√		Sibson's Career – Advancement (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Innovation	(13) ↑	(12) ↑	(14) ↓	√		Sibson's Work Content – Variety and Challenge (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Job Impact	(31) ↑	(27) ↓	(21) ↓	√		Sibson's Work Content – Meaningfulness (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Job–interests Alignment	(10) ↓	(11) ↓	(8) ↓	√		
Location	(8) ↔	(13) ↑	(7) ↓			
Recognition	(11) ↓	(8) ↔	(19) ↓	√		Sibson's Benefits – Recognition (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Work–life Balance	(3) ↔	(3) ↑	(3) ↔	√	√ √ √ √ √	Sibson's Benefits – Perquisites (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111) (Filbeck and Preece 2003) (Dewhurst et al. 2009) (Simpson 2000a) (McCrindle 2003)

Work–Life Balance, included within the CLC's *Work* dimension, is ranked the third most valued Employee Value Proposition attribute for both global and South African employees as well as for HIPOs. The ranking for this attribute remained unchanged for both global employees as well as for HIPOs. *Work–life Balance* has increased significantly for South African employees, from being ranked 11th to 3rd (Corporate Leadership Council 2009). As noted by the CLC, work–life balance is particularly important for the Indian workforce, but not as important for the Chinese labour market. Given this increased geographic difference, there is a need for organisations to examine local or regional differences closely in considering how the labour market will respond to their Employee Value Proposition.

Within South Africa, a particular anomaly that is worth mentioning is that HIPOs, especially MBAs, create, by their own doing, a situation in which work-life balance is threatened and becomes an attribute that is highly sought after.

Work-life balance and compensation are important for both males and females, with work-life balance higher for females and compensation higher for males (Simpson 2000a). These deductions are in line with those found by the CLC (2006a:174). According to Corrigall and Konrad (2006), traditionally males were assigned the role of bread winner or economic provider for the family while females were assigned the role of homemaker. However, these traditional roles have somewhat evolved as married females have entered the labour markets and are participating more in paid employment. This has resulted in preferences of married males for the attributes changing in relation to their cultural context and family responsibilities. Male (fathers) are investing more time in their children.

In addition, the CLC (2006a:70) recognised that to attract employees in the more developed economies, *Location* and *Work–life Balance* featured as core Employee Value Proposition attributes. The CLC also noted that in developing economies, however, there is no consistent trend of Employee Value Proposition attributes beyond the global seven most significant attributes.

Another view expressed by McCrindle (2003) in understanding Generation Y is that this generation does not live to work but works to live. They see jobs as merely providing the income for them to do what they want to do. They are on a search for constant fun and quality friendships which have a fulfilling purpose and spiritual meaning. Clark (2007) believes that their demands include benefits that resonate with their language, music and imagery; they are committed to work-life balance and view their workplace in the context of their own lives. McCrindle (2003) also supports this view with the finding that Generation Ys have a very short term view with their top life expectation being to complete their education at least by 94% with not too many plans thereafter.

Murray (2007) found similar to McCrindle that Generation Y employees are not afraid to "jump ship" (Murray 2007:2), i.e. move to a more rewarding employer or start their own business if the culture and role do not meet their expectations or the job doesn't align with their interests as they have an increasingly short-term focus (McCrindle 2003) to establish their careers but a long-term goal to look for meaning and purpose in everything they do. Coomes and DeBard (2004) comment that Generation Xers on the other hand make it their life's work to build their careers, with Murray (2007) providing a view that Generation Xers appear to be more loyal than the younger Generation Ys.

Recognition as an attribute of the *Work* dimension has a ranking of 8, presenting somewhat of an anomaly within the South African context. This makes sense especially when one considers the previous discussion of empowerment and respect. In addition, *Recognition* is also an important attribute, especially among knowledge workers (Horwitz et al. 2003) and female MBAs. Female MBAs see the qualification as enhancing credibility and confidence, encouraging a more proactive approach to work problems as well as increasing their abilities to engage in work-related discussions more fully, leading to overall greater *Recognition* (Simpson 2000a).

Ingham (2009) believes that generally people want recognition as it binds the two sides of the deal around the Employee Value Proposition. When recognition is provided, people realise that their contribution is being noticed and valued, i.e. the employee to employer side of the deal. This then raises expectations

that the employer will also deliver on their side of the deal by providing the employee with the benefits promised as part of the organisation's Employee Value Proposition.

Filbeck and Preece (in (2003) also stated that organisations are being recognised not only for how well they manage their working capital but also for how well they assist their employees' balance of work/family issues. They noted that support for work/family balance has been incorporated in Fortune's "100 Best Firms" award, which also aligns with the focus area "Working Mother" (Filbeck and Preece 2003:773), considered as the criterion for its awards. According to Dewhurst et al. (2009), a recent McKinsey Quarterly survey revealed that the top three non-financial motivators identified played critical roles in making employees feel that their organisations were taking their well-being seriously.

The CLC's *Work* dimension aligns with Sibson's ROW model of *Work Content,* including the *Meaningful* attribute (Kochanski and Elliott 2010). Employees are able to ensure that there is *Job-interest Alignment* (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a). Cheese et al. (2007) noted that Yahoo! was successful in creating a compelling Employee Value Proposition as its initial Employee Value Proposition attempt spoke to all of the different kinds of people that were attracted to its organisation. Yahoo! was instrumental in bringing the product branding principles and lessons into the employee space in order to build a value proposition through an internal employee brand that communicated the meaning, promise and overall employee experience that was unique to Yahoo!.

Location has not made the top 10 list of drivers of attraction for South African employees but is one of three attributes with the biggest increases (Corporate Leadership Council 2009). *Location* is ranked more highly, and features within the top 10 list of attributes, by global employees and HIPOs. Could this be as a result of many businesses, especially in developed markets, going global?

Innovation as part of the CLC's *Work* dimension may have links to the *Variety* and *Challenge* attributes included in the *Work Content* reward type (Kochanski and Elliott 2010). *Innovation*, according to Judge and Cable (1997), is the

degree to which individuals prefer organisations that promote risk taking and experimentation and that fail to emphasise being careful, stable or secure. Innovativeness is an attribute that twice already has given Apple the title of the world's most admired company (Fortune 2011:42). With the move away from the technology attribute, many employees are finding innovative organisations more appealing. As far back as 1997, Judge and Cable found innovation to be a factor in job seekers' preferences for a particular organisational culture (Judge and Cable 1997). Horwitz et al. (2003) also argued that an innovative organisational culture is required to appeal to knowledge workers, i.e. HIPOs and MBAs.

People dimension

The characteristics of the organisation's people, such as: manager quality, team work and collaboration between employees in the work environment (Corporate Leadership Council 2006d:10), are detailed in Table 6.

Table 6: List of attributes that comprise the *People* dimension

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
Camaraderie	(35) ↑	(37) ↔	(30) ↑	√		Sibson's Affiliation – Work Environment and Trust (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Collegial Work Environment	(15) ↑	(33) ↔	(20) ↑	√		Sibson's Affiliation – Work Environment and Work Content – Feedback (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)
Co-worker Quality	(21) ↑	(28) ↔	(17) ↑			
Manager Quality	(6) ↑	(16) ↑	(10) ↑	√		Sibson's Affiliation – Work Environment and Work Content – Feedback (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)

Attribute	Literature Reviewed					Reference to Other Literature
	CLC			Sibson	Other	
	Global	SA	HIPO			
People Management	(12) ↑	(10) ↔	(23) ↓	√	√ √ √ √ √	Sibson's Affiliation – Work Environment and Work Content – Feedback (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111) (Shaw and Fairhurst 2008) (Clark 2007) (Murray 2007) (Cullinane and Dundon 2006) (Cappelli 1998)
Senior Leadership Reputation	(30) ↑	(22) ↑	(24) ↓	√		Sibson's Affiliation – Work Environment and Work Content – Feedback (Kochanski and Elliott 2010:111)

The survey results for the *People* dimension are not consistent across the various focus groups, i.e. global and South African employees, including HIPOs (Corporate Leadership Council 2009, 2010). *Manager Quality* and *People Management* attributes included in this dimension are ranked as important, with *Manager Quality* appearing within the top 10 list of preferred attributes for both global employees and HIPOs while the *People Management* attribute is ranked 10th for South African employees.

Co-worker Quality, while important for both global employees and HIPOs, is less important for South African employees, who find quality *Senior Leadership Reputation* more appealing. HIPOs and global employees on the other hand have indicated their preferences over South African employees for working in teams and collaborating with quality co-workers.

Sibson's ROW model is not specific when it comes to the *People* dimension or the quality of co-worker, senior leadership or team camaraderie as a type of reward. Attributes from Sibson's model that possibly relate to the attributes of the *People* dimension include *Affiliation – Trust* and *Work Environment* (Conlon et al. 2010), which speaks to the relationship within teams, their collaboration and the building of camaraderie among employees within the work environment.

These team-based and collaborative relationships are preferred by HIPOs, according to the survey results (Corporate Leadership Council 2010).

For effective *People Management*, Shaw and Fairhurst suggest that an understanding is required of generational differences, in particular Generation Y's characteristics, communication styles and social attitudes. Ideally, this understanding must be used by talent managers to impact this enormous and emerging segment effectively while at the same time meeting the needs and expectations of organisations (Shaw and Fairhurst 2008).

With respect to senior leadership reputation, McCrindle (2003) found that Generation Ys want direction and guidance as they are unsure of where they are now, not to mention where they are going. As Generation Ys are constantly seeking direction they have a preference for senior managers who have acquired the skills, experience and expertise to guide them in the right direction.

McCrindle (2003) goes on to say that Generation Ys are fearful of boredom, they want to be given innovative work by someone who knows them and their circumstances, and who is clear as to what lies ahead. They are looking for real life models and mentors who know better than them. These models and mentors will need to guide and also accompany them on their life's journey in a way that helps them showcase their talents and be rewarded and promoted on the basis of their personal achievements. Murray (1997) shares a similar view when he notes that Generation Ys do not emulate the cultural independence of their parents; instead, they require authoritative advising styles emphasising expertise.

Coomes and DeBard (2004) presented the view that Millennial students do prefer to work in teams rather than individually as preferred by their Generation X parents. Coomes and DeBard (2004:9) go on to say that Millennials tend to value authority rather than be alienated from it.

A contrary view was subsequently provided by Clark (2007), who notes that while Generation Y, the incoming workforce, is technologically skilled, it lacks social skills, making it difficult for these employees to work in teams, hold professional discussions with their bosses and adhere to rules, to mention a

few. As knowledge workers, they find the concierge services most appealing to their “lifestyle-first” (2007:51) concern.

Shaw and Fairhurst (2008), in exploring the concept of generational differences, present a profile of Generation Y and reflect on this generation’s potential impact on organisations. The entry of Generation Y into the labour market implies that, for the first time, the workforce will comprise four generations spanning across 60 years. These generations include the Primary Generation, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. This new workforce, the Generation Y or the Internet Generation speaks of “relationship capital” (Clark 2007:48). As mentioned earlier in this literature review, Generation Ys, according to Clark (2007), demand benefits that resonate with their language, imagery and music. They are committed to a work-life balance, usually reviewing the workplace features and plan solely in terms of their own context.

On the basis of an analysis performed at McDonald’s, which had been employing Generation Ys for the past decade, (Shaw and Fairhurst 2008) found Generation Y or as they called it “Millennials” (2008:380) to be excellent at multi-tasking and able to assimilate information rapidly from a number of different sources. From this it can be deduced that Generation Y represents the knowledge workers of the future.

Accordingly, Clark (2007), Cullinane and Dundon (2006) as well as Cappelli (2000) noted that marketing to this generation is about personal connection. Generation Ys are usually satisfied with rapid responses, good information and a personal touch. The above findings agreed with what McCrindle (2003) found in terms of television and cinema having the greatest influence (25%) on Generation Y’s thinking and behaviour, with music being the next big influencer.

Shaw and Fairhurst (2008) concurred with the views of Clark (2007), Cullinane and Dundon (2006) and Cappelli (2000) in their suggestion that Millennials wish to understand their roles and tasks and therefore seek early feedback. They suggest that a tailored approach might be more beneficial in attracting and retaining these employees. Furthermore, Murray (1997), based on his understanding that Millennials have been the most coached generation in

history, concludes that they require their seniors to continue to exhibit authoritative expertise, model effective techniques, emphasise motivation and invest in their outcomes never forgetting to celebrate their success. This will ensure that organisations get loyalty in return, which Cappelli (2000) previously recognised as being hard to come by. Murray (2007) notes that 90% of HR managers believe that Generation Ys are less loyal than previous generations, with only 20% believing that their organisations will be able to address the issue. Murray also found that 92% of senior managers consider CR policies important to employee brand and deduced that CR appeared to be important to recruiting and retaining both Generation X and Y employees.

Clark (2007) notes that in order for organisations to achieve maximum success, they will have to tailor their benefits, products and services, and development strategies to cater for all generations in the workplace.

2.4 Validation of the list of attributes

2.4.1 Introduction

The war for talent has been brewing for a while and without doubt has created a burning platform. Against this backdrop, the skill shortage has been exacerbated by the convergence of key labour markets and business dynamics, an aging labour force, globalisation, aggressive growth and specialised talent needs. The CLC responded to these challenges by providing a comprehensive Employee Value Proposition framework (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a) to its members.

On the basis of the CLC's empirical analysis of 90 organisations, after interviewing more than 58 000 members, they found that many organisations were looking for strategies for attracting and retaining talent (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a). As such the CLC (2006a) considered the definition and compiling of an appealing Employee Value Proposition framework critical for talent attraction and commitment. As discussed in this literature review, the

framework comprised an actionable list of 38 attributes classified into the five dimensions of *Reward*, *Opportunity*, *Organisation*, *Work* and *People*.

While the CLC's research appeared to be comprehensive, it was compared against Sibson's ROW model as well as other literature in academia for the purposes of ensuring completeness and validity. The literature review identified preferences, attitudes and career choices of global, HIPO and South African employees. Through the literature review, the CLC's (2006a) 38 unique attributes were amended to 39 attributes to ensure the list of attributes presented to the panel of experts were complete when compared against other literature. This has given a clear sense of what the future workforce may prefer in terms of the attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition.

In order to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the attributes further, in this study validation was sought from a panel of local HR experts and business line managers. This provided the assurance that the attributes are also reflective of South African employee perspectives.

2.4.2 Validation using a panel of experts

The first sub-problem of the research was to obtain validation about and/or adapt the list of attributes included in Table 24 (in Appendix B) in order to contextualise it for South Africa and finalise the list for application as a research instrument.

2.5 Preferences of South African MBAs for the attributes

Organisations must improve company attractiveness by investing in and developing attraction. While some start with an advantage, organisations can successfully develop their attractiveness by having an effective Employee Value Proposition as an outcome. While an effective Employee Value Proposition allows organisations like Apple, Google, McDonalds, and IBM (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a; Kochanski and Elliott 2010; Fortune 2011) to be differentiated and counted, it also ensures that the "packaging" reflects the

"contents" (Hanley 2009:26). Many a time candidates join organisations tempted by the branding, only to be disappointed when the rhetoric does not meet the reality.

Considering each of these attributes in terms of organisational attractiveness, the CLC (2006a:8) has identified three things that HR departments must consider: first, the importance of the attribute to the candidate and the extent to which this informs their decision making; secondly, the extent to which candidates are aware of the attribute and how readily the organisation can relay information about the attribute to the labour market; and, lastly, how the candidates in the labour market perceive the organisation's delivery of that attribute in terms of positive or negative impressions.

This in itself presents HR departments with a huge responsibility to better understand their customers' or better still potential employees' preferences, especially in terms of what attracts, motivates, and drives them and in what keeps them engaged and committed to the purpose of the organisation.

The HR manager's understanding of employee preferences may be enhanced even further through the process of ranking the attributes. The preference ranking will provide employees with the opportunity to give their subjective viewpoints and personal profiles about what they think is appealing from an Employee Value Proposition. Statistical analysis of the rank-ordered data will allow HR managers to better understand what attributes are important to employees. HR managers can then use this information to influence employee branding, recruitment, training, benefits' administration and the like in support of both the employee and a well-defined strategic and operational agenda.

2.5.1 Measuring and analysing the preferences for the attributes of an Employee Value Proposition

The second sub-problem is to have the validated attributes' preference ranked in order to measure and analyse the preferences of South African MBAs for the attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition.

2.6 Conclusion of the literature review

The literature review reveals a new reality in which benefits can be used to attract and retain talent. In this new reality it is the market and not the organisation that will determine whether employees will move or not. While organisations will try to make their organisations the ideal places in which to work, they risk not taking into account the labour market forces at play. On the other hand, organisations will also demand certain employee behaviours and outcomes in exchange for the rewards they provide to employees. In addition, it is recognised that using golden handcuffs as deferred compensation is futile for gaining employee loyalty. Ultimately it should be reiterated that the people make the place (organisation) and that a quality workforce is an important source of competitive advantage, providing both organisational and financial success for organisations.

Specific to the South African context, it was found that the drivers of attraction generally align with global trends, except that retirement benefits have become relatively more important, with a collegial work environment being relatively less important. An important fact is that work–life balance has increased in importance in South Africa, from its 11th position to number three in importance.

The literature argues that there are no set answers to managing the problems of attraction and retention and that it is only through experiential learning of the fit between problem analysis and strategy as well as through effectively navigating the politics of implementation that any progress can be made in this space.

2.6.1 Research Question 1

Research Question 1 can be phrased as:

Is the list of attributes that comprise an Employee Value Proposition comprehensive when compared with the views expressed by human resource experts and business line managers?

2.6.2 Research Question 2

Research Question 2 can be phrased as:

What are the significant attributes of an Employee Value Proposition that South African MBAs find appealing?

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used to conduct the research. As a start, the research methodology and design are outlined, including the use of a panel of experts to validate the research instrument, the theoretical rationale for choosing a quantitative research approach and, more specifically, a practical five-step approach to collecting and analysing rank-ordered response data. This will be followed by the advantages and disadvantages of the method discussed.

The chapter will then focus on the population, the sample and its size, and the appropriateness of the sampling method. This will lead into a description of the research instrument and its application in gathering the data.

The method of analysis and interpretation following the gathering of the data is then described. The potential weaknesses of the study are also discussed.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of how the research met where possible the validity (internal and external) and reliability criteria of this type of study.

3.1 Research methodology/paradigm

The intention of this study was to compile a partially rank-ordered top-10 list of attributes that make up an Employee Value Proposition that South African MBAs find appealing. The study had a two-pronged research approach:

- The first part of the study provided as far as possible a comprehensive list of attributes for an Employee Value Proposition in the form of a survey, with the list of attributes derived from the literature review in Chapter 2. This survey comprised the first research instrument, which was presented to a panel of HR experts and business line managers for validation purposes.
- The second part of the study, comprising the second research instrument, used the list of attributes validated in the first part of the study

to identify a partially rank-ordered top-10 list of attributes that South African MBAs prefer.

As mentioned, the study involved surveying a sample of the MBA population. Kalof, Dan and Dietz (2008) noted that surveys are one of the most popular forms of data collection techniques in the social sciences. According to Kalof et al. (2008), surveys consist of a series of questions that individuals are asked to answer, which in this study entailed respondents providing their preferences for attributes out of a list presented to them.

The surveys used during the study provided data that could be reported on by the respondents for the purposes of quantitative research (Kalof et al. 2008). As advised by Kalof et al. (2008), for a survey with a quantitative orientation, as is the case with this study, closed questions are used so that direct comparisons can be made between the respondents' answers.

A quantitative rather than a qualitative research methodology was used for the main part of this study. The rationale for choosing a quantitative methodology was based on Creswell's (2003) definition of the quantitative approach. He states that "a quantitative approach is one in which the investigator primarily uses postpositivist claims for developing knowledge, employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys and collects data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data" (Creswell 2003:55).

The researcher asked the respondents in both surveys to identify and capture additional attributes. This is an important consideration from a research methodology perspective and resulted in a qualitative research methodological approach being used for analysing the responses to these free text open-ended questions.

Thomas (2006) proposed a general inductive approach for analysing qualitative evaluation data. He advises that the inductive approach is a systematic procedure used for analysing qualitative data. The inductive analysis he refers to in his 2006 article is primarily an approach that required the researcher to read in detail the raw data in order to derive concepts and themes and/or even

develop a model or framework through which interpretations were made from the raw data.

For the first part of the research, the survey comprised as far as possible a comprehensive list of attributes for an Employee Value Proposition. The list of attributes was derived from the literature reviewed in the previous chapter. The survey was presented to a panel of HR experts and business line managers for validation purposes. The panel of experts was also asked to provide any additional attributes they considered important enough to include in the main research instrument.

According to Keller (2010), preference ranking allows for preferences of candidates to be analysed and identified in order for organisations to implement adequate benefits and, in the case of this study, Employee Value Proposition solutions. The result of this method provided the start for discussions on possible solutions to the Employee Value Proposition problems identified by the CLC (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a).

As mentioned previously, the research approach, particularly for the second and main study, was quantitative in nature as it used “postpositive” (Creswell 2003:20) attitudes and preferences for developing knowledge. The research enquired of MBA students and graduates, using a survey in the form of a predetermined instrument, their preferences for the attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition. This allowed the collecting of data that yielded statistical data. The MBAs were also asked to identify and capture any additional attributes that they believed had been left out but remain top of mind.

Stacey (2006) offers a practical approach to analysing the rank-ordered response data, which was adopted in this study once the survey data had been collected. This approach, Stacey (2006) believes, takes advantage of the computational power now available to researchers instead of the previously complicated theoretical analysis. However, he maintains, there exist difficulties with analysing the resultant ranked survey data. This has led many researchers to adopt either a simpler or inappropriate approach.

3.2 Research design

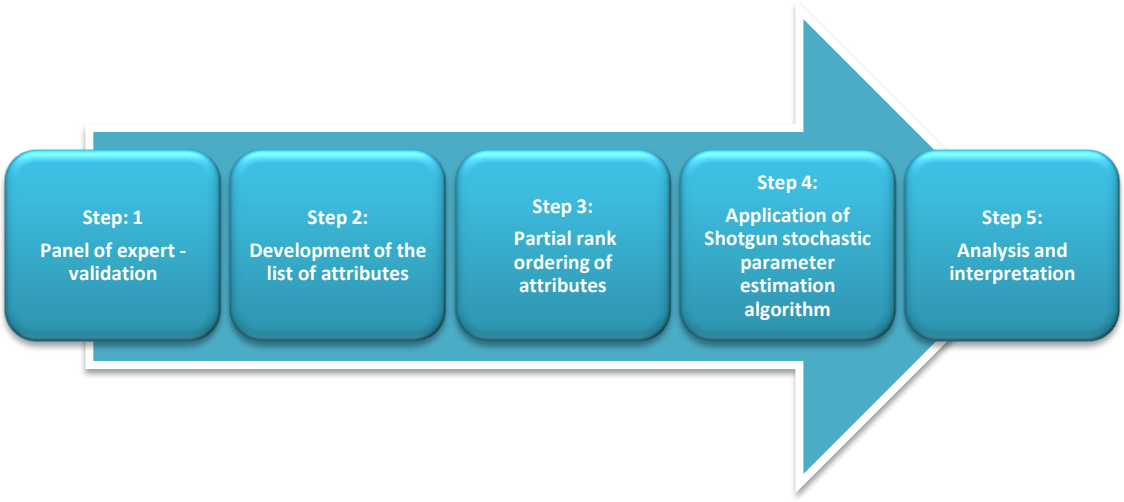


Figure 3: Steps in performing the research studies (expert panel validation and partial rank ordering of attributes)

Figure 3 outlines the five-step approach that the research followed. Each of these five steps is outlined below.

Step 1: Panel of expert validation

This part of the study used a general inductive methodological research approach for analysing and evaluating the data. This included selecting a panel of HR experts and two business line managers to influence and give credibility and validity to the list of attributes which ultimately became the main research instrument. The panel of HR experts and line managers were identified, initial contact was made, and a session was arranged to obtain their input in order to validate and/or supplement the list of attributes. The panel members were selected on the basis of their talent management, human capital, remuneration and benefits, and specific Employee Value Proposition skills and expertise in large organisations. The sample letter provided to the panel of HR experts and business line managers is provided in Appendix A.

Step 2: Development of the list of attributes

All the input from the various experts and the business line managers were consolidated and compiled into the final comprehensive list of attributes as presented in Table 25 (in Appendix D). All responses were analysed and

consolidated using inductive analysis (Thomas 2006:238), judgement and rationale to determine the second and main research instrument, i.e. the most complete, validated list of attributes that was used in the second part of the research.

Step 3: Partial rank ordering of attributes

The second and main part of the study used the validated, final completed list of attributes as the research instrument. The survey was provided to MBA students across various geographical locations in South Africa studying at different business schools, targeting both males and females, across the various generation groups. The identified MBA student respondents were contacted via their business school affiliate and agreement was obtained with some affiliates to send out an anonymous survey website link for completion by their MBA students and alumni. A sample letter to the business school affiliates is included in Appendix C.

A pilot study was conducted that comprised three MBA students from the current 2009-2012 part-time class at the Wits Business School (WBS), one MBA graduate from the University of Cape Town (UCT) and another from Milpark Business School in order to fine tune the process and ensure that the survey was not too onerous. As the list of 22 attributes was found to be manageable it was not further refined to a more manageable list, or a category sort (Q-sort), a suggestion that Stacey (2006) offers to make it easier.

A candidate completing the survey in the second part of the study was presented with a set of statements or options (the equivalent of about 22 attributes) which they were asked to partially rank order (coded “1” to “10”), i.e. to select their 10 most preferred attributes. The type of quantitative data provided is ordinal. Orme (2002) describes ordinal data as being commonly used for data-ranking purposes. He notes that this is ideal for asking respondents to rank, for example, five items from the best “1” to the worst “5” (Orme 2002). This preference ranking is a participatory technique that provided MBAs with the opportunity to give their subjective viewpoints and personal

profiles about what they thought was appealing from an Employee Value Proposition (Keller 2010).

Step 4: Application of the Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithmic

Stacey (2006) believes that the algorithmic approach to analysing rank-ordered survey data while computationally intensive avoids the complexities that as far back as 1927 prevented rigorous analysis of rank-ordered data.

He proposes a comprehensive analysis of survey responses by estimating population means and the standard deviations of the rank-ordered data. This analysis entails rescaling the data, thus allowing valid comparisons to be drawn. This he refers to as the "Shotgun stochastic" estimation algorithm (Stacey 2006). According to Stacey, successive attempts at guessing the optimal solution will be randomly scattered around the best estimate of the population parameters. Stacey further advises that the algorithmic flow has been implemented as a macro in Microsoft Excel, which was used for the purposes of this study.

Step 5: Analysis and interpretation

As mentioned previously, the first part of the study applied inductive analysis (Thomas 2006:238), researcher judgement and rationale to identify trends and patterns in the data, based on the frequency with which a specific attribute was selected.

The second part of the study applied statistical analysis to the rank-ordered data for the purposes of determining normalised means (Stacey 2006). This basic statistical result was interpreted to provide further meaning to the data gathered. The additional attributes identified and captured in response to the free text open-ended question at the end of the survey were analysed and evaluated using Thomas' (2006) general inductive approach.

As noted by Stacey (2006), there are inherent advantages to using rank-ordered survey items; apart from being independent of any particular scale, this approach is also intuitive. He adds that a disadvantage recognised previously

was the complexity associated with rigorous analysis. Stacey (2006) presents the opportunity to take advantage of the benefits of rank-ordered scales for surveys without compromising analytical rigour.

3.3 Population and sample

3.3.1 Population

For the purposes of the research, two separate population groups were used: Population 1 comprised a panel of HR experts and two business line managers while Population 2 consisted of MBA students-in-training (at least in their 2nd year of study) and graduates.

The researcher made preliminary contact with all HR experts and line managers and confirmed their willingness to participate in the study. The aim of that part of the study was to survey nine respondents, comprising seven HR experts and two business line managers. Table 24 (in Appendix B) presents the survey that was provided to HR experts and business line managers for validation.

For the second part of the study, the researcher also made contact with the primary stakeholders who assisted with obtaining the MBA student respondents.

Once approval for the study was obtained from the WBS research panel, the individuals were formally contacted and informed of the purpose of the study and the subject to be covered.

3.3.2 Sample and sampling method

Purposive sampling, referred to as a “judgemental sampling method,” combined with a general inductive approach was used for both parts of the study and in particular for making sense of and developing themes from respondents’ answers that were able to provide the valuable insights required for achieving the objectives of each part of the study.

From the first population a sample of seven HR experts and two business line managers was selected because of their talent management, human capital, specific Employee Value Proposition, and business line management skills and expertise in large organisations, as indicated in Table 26 (in Appendix H). The two business line managers were chosen because they fulfilled a dual role: as HR experts while simultaneously acting as heads of department.

From the second population, a sample of at least 200 MBA student respondents was taken. The sample was spread geographically across a coastal and non-coastal area, with respondents in the age range of between 21 and 55, including both male and female. The sample had to have at least 30 respondents that satisfied each demographic factor or grouping, as indicated in Table 27 (in Appendix H), as a sample size of 30 is usually considered reasonable.

At least seven HR experts and two business line managers agreed to provide input into and to influence the comprehensive list of attributes that shaped the first research instrument. Once validated, the comprehensive list of attributes in the form of a research instrument was provided to 400 MBA student respondents, as indicated in Table 27 (in Appendix H).

Personal relationships with friends and acquaintances and the use of networks developed over the course of the MBA studies were used to gain access to MBAs students and graduates across South Africa. The results will be made available to the respondents and to business schools.

3.4 The research instrument

Table 24 (in Appendix B) comprises the list of attributes deemed to be comprehensive, based on the literature reviewed. This list was presented to the panel of HR experts and business line managers for validation. This constituted the first research instrument.

The panel of experts and business line managers were asked to validate the list of attributes by ticking the boxes of those that they found appropriate for the study and striking off those that they found to be irrelevant. In addition, the

experts were provided with some free text writing space at the end of the list for capturing any additional attributes they believed had been left out but might supplement the list. The HR panel members' input was integrated into the original list of 39 attributes and summarised into 22 attributes considered appropriate and relevant to South African MBAs. Table 25 (in Appendix D) details this summarised and reduced list of 22 attributes which constitutes the content for the second research instrument. This answers the first research question regarding the comprehensiveness of the attributes comprising an Employee Value Proposition when compared with the views expressed by human resource experts and business line managers?

The second research instrument, while similar in structure to the first instrument, made use of the validated final and complete list of attributes as confirmed and supplemented by the panel of experts and business line managers. This research instrument was converted into an electronic survey. Personalised email surveys were also distributed to 252 WBS MBA students requesting completion of the survey. The WBS students were identified through a comprehensive MBA 2011 class list. The survey was made up of a table listing the validated attributes, their definitions and an allocated space in which to select and partially rank order the top 10 attributes. A respondent completing the survey instrument in the second part of the study was presented with a set of statements or options, the equivalent of 22 attributes, which they were asked to partially rank order (coded "1" to "10") by selecting their 10 most preferred attributes.

3.5 Procedure for data collection

The attributes were loaded onto the main research instrument, which took the form of an online survey generated using Qualtrics Labs, Inc. Software of the Qualtrics Research Suite (Qualtrics Labs 2011) included in Appendix E. Each attribute was presented as a row in a list with a definition of the attribute. A blank column was provided to the right of the list of attributes for the respondent to select and partially rank order their 10 most preferred attributes. Respondents were provided with clear instructions on how to complete the online survey. This started with (1) an explanation on how to complete the

spreadsheet, followed by (2) a guide on how to rank the top 10 attributes, and ending off with (3) a note expressing appreciation for the time and effort spent. See Table 25 (in Appendix D) for the 22 attributes to be partially rank ordered.

The guide on ranking the attributes included asking the respondents to drag, drop and rank the preferred attributes from the list by: (1) identifying the preferred attributes that appealed to them; 2) dragging them one at a time from the list on the left and dropping them into the blank column on the right; 3) once all 10 attributes had been dropped, then ranking the attributes in the blank column by dragging and placing them in the required order (sequence) so that each attribute reflected a ranking between 1 and 10 consistent with “1” being their most preferred at the top and “10” being their least preferred attribute at the bottom. The surveys were administered to the pilot group and the responses were collected electronically online via Qualtrics over a period of three days.

As part of the functionality to facilitate completion of the survey, checks and validation controls were coded at survey design to ensure that data validity was maintained during data capturing. This also assisted in ensuring that the survey responses achieved the required results.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

Both qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed as and when required. Quantitative techniques were applied for the analysis of the results obtained from the partial rank-ordered survey to determine normalised means. Stacey (2006) suggests using the Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm. According to Stacey (2006), while the algorithmic approach suggests considerable amounts of computation in place of theoretical analysis, these computations can be overcome by substituting them with computer–based methods available in Microsoft Excel, for example.

The algorithmic flow used for the purposes of this research was implemented as a macro in Microsoft Excel. Analysis and interpretation were undertaken using this macro as far as possible. Stacey’s (2006:29) specification of the algorithmic flow was carried out in the study as follows:

- As a start, initial guesses for item means and item variances were agreed;
- Means and variances were then standardised such that the means equalled zero and the variance equalled one, giving a total variance of unity;
- The population's rank-ordered responses were numerically simulated taking a very large simulated sample;
- The sum of the squared errors (SSE) was calculated between the observed sample proportion and the simulated population proportion across all of the permutations;
- The SSE obtained was compared with the estimates of item means and variance obtained previously. If for any of the items the current SSE was less than the previously recorded one, the current guess became the best estimate of the item's mean and variance;
- Introducing of uniformly distributed random permutations to the guesses of item means and variances continued until the SSE no longer reduced with multiple successive iterations;
- Ultimately the SSE was used to assess the goodness of fit between the observed sample proportion and the observed population proportion rather than the apparent statistic based on observed and simulated frequencies;
- A two-tailed hypothesis Student's t-statistic test was performed in order to establish whether there was a statistically significant difference between the mean of the data obtained and the normalised mean. The following equations were applied:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X} - \mu}{\frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}}$$

t = *t statistic*	$\bar{X}$ = *sample mean*	μ = *population mean*
s = *sample standard deviation*		n = *sample size*

$H_0 - null\ hypothesis$ $H_a - alternative\ hypothesis$	$H_0 : \mu = \overline{X}$ $H_a : \mu \neq \overline{X}$
H_0 - the preference for the individual attribute is not significantly different from the average H_a - the preference for the individual attribute is significantly difference from the average	

- The p-value was calculated to determine the significance levels. A p-value of 5% was chosen to determine the significance of the results. This value allowed the researcher to determine significance levels and reduced the probability of accepting the null hypothesis when it was false, otherwise known as avoiding a Type-2 Error.

This basic statistical result was then further interpreted to provide meaningful findings in relation to the data gathered, based on the literature discussed.

3.7 Limitations of the study

Rank ordering large numbers of survey items can be onerous for respondents, with negative implications for both the reliability and validity of data (Stacey 2006).

According to Stacey, statistical analysis of rank-ordered data is also sometimes flawed as it inappropriately applies parametric statistics that assume interval-level data when ordinal data is being captured.

However, Stacey's Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm (2006:35) allowed the researcher to take advantage of the benefits of rank-ordered data using available computational power avoiding the complexities that prevented rigorous analysis.

3.8 Validity and reliability

Validity's concern is congruence or "goodness of fit" (Kalof et al. 2008:156) between details of the research, the evidence that arises and the deductions that the researcher makes. Two aspects of validity are considered here.

3.8.1 External validity

Kalof et al. (2008) argue that experiments have limits which threaten the external validity in terms of the experiments' ability to generalise from a study to a larger population. They agree that while experiments can achieve high levels of internal validity, this ability to generalise from experimentation to the entire population is often problematic and may result in limited external validity.

In the first part of the research study, external validity was achieved by obtaining credibility through validation by the panel of experts and business line managers. Kalof et al. (2008:162) state that "credibility is how accurately the data reflects reality".

In the research, the debate around male and female as well as young and old (generational differences) MBAs and whether these groupings are actually comparable centres on validity. This debate was considered in the interpretation of the study findings and their application to the larger population of MBAs.

3.8.2 Internal validity

Kalof et al. (2008) describe internal validity as meaning that appropriate conclusions are being drawn, based on the data gathered. Internal validity was managed by reducing "invalid operational definitions" (Kalof et al. 2008:156) and ensuring that the attributes that were selected and presented to respondents aligned with the body of literature reviewed as well as the research performed by the CLC (2006a) to reflect the many possibilities of MBA preferences for attributes.

In addition, the potential for incorrectly deducing causal inferences exists as the research is not a true experiment with randomisation, making it difficult to determine the effects of an independent variable. It is noted that in the absence of randomisation, creative researchers may make arguments in favour of alternative explanations.

This risk is accepted on the premise laid down by Kalof et al. (2008) that no single study can provide a comprehensive understanding of a subject matter

and that it is only through the accumulation of studies that the understanding advances.

3.8.3 Reliability

Reliability relates to the consistency of the measuring instrument in yielding similar results time after time of applying the same research (Kalof et al. 2008).

To ensure reliability the researcher maintained a consistent approach to surveying the sample by making use of the same technique and questions (for both surveys). Also during data analysis, a systematic approach was maintained to ensure that the data was reliable. To increase the reliability of the research further, a pilot study was carried out.

The researcher acknowledges that the data was a reflection of the opinions, attitudes and preferences of the respondents at the time of each survey. Therefore, it stands to reason that re-surveying the same respondents at a later date may indeed result in different data being obtained from the original data set. For this reason it was important that the findings of the research were assessed within the context prevalent at the time of the research.

The reliability of the study was enhanced through establishing coherence between the purpose of the study, the literature review and the attributes identified together with the research methodology.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This study aimed to identify and evaluate the significant attributes of an Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students and graduates. Section 4.2 of this chapter provides the rationale for adopting both an anonymous and a named method of distributing the surveys to MBA respondents. Research results are then presented in a three-phased approach: beginning with the panel of experts, and then moving on to the pilot study and main South African MBA study.

Section 4.3 articulates the responses from the panel of experts, utilising the first research instrument and including the interpretation of the results. The findings from Section 4.3 were used for obtaining the responses discussed in Sections 4.4 and 4.5.

Section 4.4 details the responses and findings from a pilot group of five respondents while Section 4.5 presents the responses from the main study of MBA students and graduates across South Africa.

In addition, Section 4.6 presents the results obtained from a simple non-technical general inductive approach used to analyse the qualitative data requested at the end of each survey. Section 4.7 concludes the chapter with a summary of the results presented.

4.2 Anonymity versus named methods of distributing surveys

As the main study evaluated preferences among MBA students and graduates for the attributes of an appealing Employee Value Proposition, the responses were not considered sensitive in nature. The researcher concluded that the responses in themselves would not give rise to any ethical and privacy issues and so anonymity was not initially considered a requirement by the researcher.

However an anonymous approach was initially adopted, the rationale being a simple one that was based on the presumption that personal identification details were not a requirement for the study. The intention was to hand out paper surveys to MBA students and electronic surveys to MBA graduates, both of which were to be anonymous.

In order to hand out the paper surveys permission was required, across the various business schools, to access MBA students during a lecture session for a few minutes and also to be given access to MBA graduates through their alumni list.

Both of these access options proved challenging, as business schools were not prepared to disclose the names of MBA students and graduates. Some of the business schools such as UCT, GIBS and the University of KwaZulu-Natal agreed to distribute, on the researcher's behalf, an anonymous electronic link to their MBA students and graduates while others refused on the basis that MBAs were experiencing survey fatigue.

With these challenges in mind and in order to guarantee the required response rate of 200, the researcher called upon personal friends who attended UCT, Milpark Business School, GIBS and Stellenbosch University and requested them to extend an invitation to fellow MBA students and graduates to complete the survey using an anonymous online link facility available with the WBS provided Qualtrics tool (Qualtrics Labs 2011). As the researcher was at the time an MBA student of WBS, personalised (named) email surveys were also distributed to 252 WBS MBA students requesting completion of the survey. The WBS students were identified through a comprehensive MBA 2011 class list.

This gave rise to the adoption of a combination of anonymous and named methods for distributing the surveys to respondents. The method selected for sourcing responses was based on the circumstances warranting it. Both methods worked well to achieve the desired outcome. However, the named method of distributing personalised email surveys was found to have increased response rates.

4.3 Results from panel of experts

4.3.1 Demographic profile of the panel of experts

The researcher used the panel of experts as identified in the research methodology chapter (Chapter 3). The demographics of the panel are included in Table 26 (in Appendix H): Profile of HR experts and business line managers. All nine panel experts provided input that was used to validate the attributes to be used for the main research instrument to be provided to the pilot group and the MBA students and graduates.

In terms of demographics the panel of experts came from various cultures, were of different ages and worked in specialist areas of human resource management, including: human capital, Employee Value Proposition, talent management, benefits and remuneration, and business line management.

Subsequent to selecting the panel of experts, the researcher realised the potential of a sampling bias towards the following attributes: technology, industry desirability and media opinion, product quality and organisation growth rate because many of the members were from telecommunications organisations. This may have resulted in attributes being selected that were specific to the telecommunications environment but not necessarily relevant to the study.

4.3.2 Results pertaining to the significant attributes identified by the panel of experts

Panel members were provided with the first research instrument, which comprised a list of 40 attributes along with their descriptions. The panel members were tasked with selecting or removing an attribute based on its relevance to South African MBAs. This was done by placing a tick or a cross respectively in the space provided alongside each attribute.

Each panel member's response to the attribute was then converted to a "1" for a tick or a "0" for a cross. All the "1"s were totalled. Attributes that were scored by

at least eight out of the nine panel members were selected and considered significant for inclusion into the main research instrument. The rationale was that the final list should be a comprehensive list that was not too large from which to select and partially rank order the top 10 more preferred attributes. In addition, the list of attributes should have been considered as relevant by at least eight out of the nine panel members. After analysing the panel members' responses, all attributes with a total score of 8 or more were selected for inclusion into the main research instrument as represented in Table 7.

Table 7: Responses from the panel of experts

Attribute	Attribute Description	PANEL MEMBERS CONVERT CHOICES									TOTAL
		Mohammed Gathoo	Manoj Manichand	John Ludike	Pravashni Govender	Dean Strooh	Lou-anndre John	Sipho Gumbi	Ureka Rangasamy	Johanna Joubert	
Compensation	The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package including base salary, incentives, cash recognition, premium pay, ownership and the pay process as other forms of compensation.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Empowerment	The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Future Career Opportunities	The future career opportunities provided by organisation	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Industry	The desirability of the organisation's industry to the respondent	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Innovation	The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Job Meaning, Purpose & Impact	The level of impact the job has on outcomes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Market Position	The competitive position the organisation holds in its market(s)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Meritocracy	Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted based on their achievements	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Organisational Growth Rate	The growth rate of the organisation's business	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Senior Leadership Reputation	The quality of the organisation's senior leadership	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Development Opportunities	The developmental/educational opportunities provided by the job and organisation including youth development for enabling and supporting local priorities and challenges	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Ethics	The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Job–Interests Alignment	Whether the job responsibilities match your interests	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
Manager Quality	The quality of the organisation's managers	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Organisational Stability	The level of stability of the organisation and the job	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	8
People Management	The organisation's reputation for managing people	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Person-organisation fit	Personal values are aligned with the values of the organisation to identify a fit	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Product Quality	The organisation's product or service quality reputation	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Recognition	The amount of recognition provided to employees by the organisation	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Respect	The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Technology Level	The extent to which the organisation invests in modern technology and equipment	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	8
Work–Life Balance	The extent to which the job allows you to balance your work and your other interests	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8
Business Travel	The amount of out-of-town business travel required by the job	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	7
Collegial Work Environment	Whether the work environment is team-oriented and collaborative	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	7
Co-worker Quality	The quality of the co-workers in the organisation	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	7
Environmental Responsibility	The organisation's level of commitment to environmental health and sustainability	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	7
Product Brand Awareness	The level of awareness in the market place for the products brand	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	7
Camaraderie	Whether working for the organisation provides opportunities to socialise with other employees	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	6
"Great Employer" Recognition	Whether or not the organisation's reputation as an employer has been recognised by a third-party organisation	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	6
Risk Taking	The amount of risk that the organisation encourages employees to take	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	6
Customer Reputation	The reputation of the clients and customers served in performing the job	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	5
Diversity	The organisation's level of commitment to having a diverse workforce	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	5
Health Benefits	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's health benefits	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	5
Retirement Benefits	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's retirement benefits	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	5
Corporate Social Responsibility	The organisation's level of commitment to social responsibility, social activism, sustainable development and environment (e.g., community service, philanthropy, traffic reservist, crime fighting, corruption, toll fees)	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	5
Location	The geographic location of the job that the organisation is offering	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	4
Organisation Size	The size of the organisation's workforce	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	4
Vacation	The amount of holiday/vacation time that employees earn annually	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	4
Formal/Informal Work Environment	Whether the work environment is formal or informal	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3

The responses from the panel of experts study were compared with the attributes which had been identified throughout the literature review and the two sets of attributes showed a high degree of correlation. Once this relationship had been established the researcher concluded that the survey questionnaire had elicited suitable responses and that the main research could be undertaken on the basis of the selected attributes. The result was a comprehensive list of 22 attributes considered by the panel of experts as being significant to the Employee Value Proposition of an organisation.

In addition, panel members were asked to identify and describe in free text attributes to be included but which had not been specifically catered for in the list of 40 attributes. Table 8 lists the additional attributes raised by the panel members.

Table 8: List of additional attributes provided by the panel of experts

ADDITIONAL ATTRIBUTES			
Workplace Flexibility	Corporate Social Responsibility	Social Activism	Green Organisation
Youth Development	Education	Political Affiliation	Governance and Ethics
Internal Politics	Foreign Assignments	Media Opinion	Meaningfulness of Work
Organisation Communication			

These additional attributes were then considered relative to the list of 22 attributes. Discussions were held with the various panel members in order to understand their meanings and the intentions for their inclusion. The result was that many of the new attributes were included in the 22 attributes simply by expanding the attribute name or description to be more inclusive.

Governance and Ethics was incorporated in *Ethics and Integrity* and called *Ethics, Governance and Integrity*. *Workplace Flexibility* was seen as being part of *Work-life Balance* as well as the *Formal/Informal Environment* attributes. As such the *Work-life Balance* definition was expanded to consider flexible hours while *Informal/Formal Environment* was redefined as *Person-organisation Fit*.

The same was true for *Corporate Social Responsibility* and *Social Activism*, which were incorporated with the *Social Responsibility* attributes and renamed *Corporate Social Responsibility*. *Green Organisation* seemed appropriately mapped to *Environmental Responsibility*.

Meaningfulness of Work, a rather interesting concept, was linked back to the *Job Impact* attribute and subsequently redefined as *Job Impact, Meaning and Purpose*. *Media Opinion* was seen to have a direct impact on *Industry Desirability* and so this attribute was expanded to *Industry Desirability, including media opinion*.

Furthermore, aspects of *Organisational Communication* and *Internal Politics* were seen to be integrated into the ethics, integrity and values and culture of the organisation. As such, *Organisational Communication* and *Internal Politics* were not seen as new attributes to be considered for inclusion. The same view is valid for *Foreign Assignments*, which was confirmed to be sufficiently catered for under *Future Career Opportunities*, *Location* and *Business Travel*.

On the basis of the above exercise, it was found that there was no real need to expand the attributes beyond the list of 22 attributes. This then became the confirmed content for the main research instrument which was ultimately distributed to MBA students and graduates across South Africa.

4.4 Pilot and South African MBA students and graduates studies

4.4.1 Demographic profile of the pilot group

The main research instrument, which took the form of an online survey, was generated using Qualtrics Labs, Inc. Software of the Qualtrics Research Suite (Qualtrics Labs 2011). The surveys were administered to the pilot group and the responses were collected electronically online via Qualtrics over a period of three days.

The pilot study was undertaken on five MBA students and graduates to validate the ease of completing the online survey as well as to confirm that the survey elicited the results required for research purposes. The pilot study group comprised three WBS MBA students, a Milpark graduate and a UCT executive MBA graduate. The group comprised both males and females, ranging in age from 25 to 45. The pilot study group was deemed to be sufficiently large and representative of MBA students and graduates to validate the partial rank ordering of the 22 attributes comprising a compelling Employee Value Proposition.

The pilot group members were requested to partially rank order their top 10 attributes from the list of 22 attributes. Furthermore, they were asked to provide additional attributes that appealed to them but that were not available for selection in the list of 22 attributes.

4.4.2 Results pertaining to the pilot group study

Valuable insights and recommendations were provided by the pilot group. The first recommendation was to include an "**ACCEPT"** button on the survey, which provided the researcher with the permission required to proceed with the survey and elicit responses for research purposes. It is important to realise that simply because a researcher has access to data does not necessarily mean that it is ethically available for research purposes.

The second recommendation was to include a definition of an Employee Value Proposition within the introduction to the survey.

Insights from the pilot study showed the need for the survey to be modified to allow for responses from executive MBA graduates. Lastly, a need was identified for simple, yet detailed instructions to complete Question 8, which required dragging, dropping and rank ordering the top 10 attributes.

4.4.3 Conclusion of the pilot group study

The pilot study proved extremely useful in ensuring that the survey was easy to complete. In addition, the responses from the pilot group provided sufficient assurance that the results would provide valuable insights. As such, the results from the pilot study were subsequently combined into the main study for data analysis and interpretation purposes.

4.4.4 Demographic profile of South African MBA students and graduates

The main study of MBA preferences for the attributes of a compelling Employee Value Proposition included 181 South African MBA students and graduates, both male and female, across different age groups ranging from 21 to 60. These respondents were spread geographically across South Africa, with associations to different business schools, including WBS, GIBS and UCT.

The rationale for considering demographics of age and gender comes directly from the literature. The CLC (2006a:62) states that to attract and commit talent effectively, organisations will have to consider the implications of different Employee Value Proposition investments for different segments of the workforce. Along the same lines, Dewhurst, Guthridge and Mohr (2009) believe that organisations need to segment their workforce and understand what motivates their employees and keeps them passionate. This, they believe will enable organisations to make the right offer to the right segment at the right time. Furthermore, Cantrell and Smith (2010) advised that customisation is not just a “nice to have” (2010:2) but also gives organisations the boost required for excellent performance and productivity, especially when times are hard and they need to do more with less.

In addition, Simpson (2000a) identified some career barriers experienced by MBAs which may give some insight into what females prefer over males as attributes of the Employee Value Proposition. Simpson et al. (2005) also indicated that females are increasingly entering the labour markets and more so in the management space. However, they note that females are not progressing

at the same rate as their male counterparts, which raises concerns in terms of their Employee Value Proposition.

The researcher, in considering this, decided to survey a diverse group of MBAs for this quantitative research. Use of a wide variety of respondents provided the assurance that the results were not biased toward a single demographic group, and was rather a true reflection of the population. Respondents varied in age, gender, association to business schools, and geographic regions within South Africa.

On the basis of the literature (Harris and Sutton 1995; Furlonger 2010) which specifically discusses the age and gender demographics respectively of MBAs and of the researcher's MBA in-class experience, the researcher noted that the demographics of the MBA respondents are representative of the population. This includes: confirming the split between males and females and the generational differences.

Baby boomers were surveyed as part of the study; however, owing to the low number of completed responses, this generation group was omitted from the analysis and interpretation on the basis that baby boomers would not really be considering organisations for employment purposes. Instead, they would be more concerned about their retirement. While geographic demographics were also captured, it was decided to omit this category from the scope of this study as the two demographics of age and gender were considered sufficient for the purposes of this study. The decision was taken to include the concept of geographical differences under Section 6.4 as a suggestion for further research.

The 181 South African MBAs surveyed comprised a diverse group of students and graduates spread nationally and as previously indicated were representative of the demographic groups in the country. Therefore, the responses gained can be considered representative of the South African MBAs' preferences. Figure 4 graphically presents the gender group demographic split between males and females. The sample of MBAs surveyed can be considered representative of the gender profile of South African MBAs where the number of males exceeds that of females.

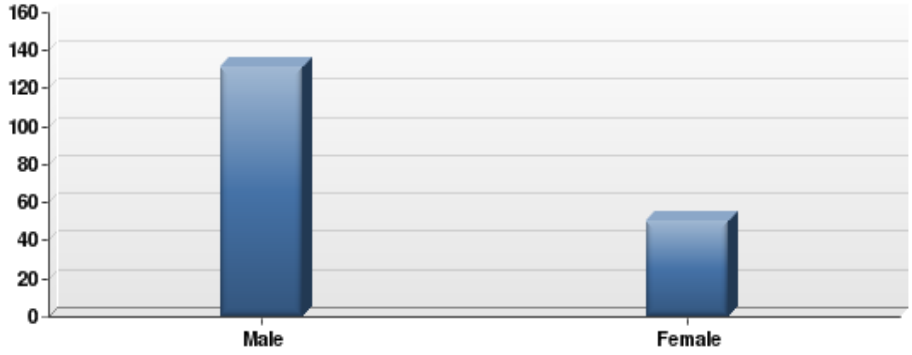


Figure 4: Gender group profile of respondents

Age – differences across generations

The age group profile of the 181 South African MBAs that were surveyed. Table 9 provides the generation group profile of the 181 South African MBAs that were surveyed. This profile is also graphically presented in Figure 5. The sample of MBAs surveyed can be considered representative of the generation profile of South African MBAs as Furlonger (2010) indicates in his *Financial Mail* article that many students begin their MBA in their thirties.

Table 9: Age group profile of South African MBA students

Answer		Response	%
21 to 30		54	30%
31 to 40		98	54%
41 to 50		26	14%
51 to 60		3	2%
61 to 65		0	0%
Total		181	100%

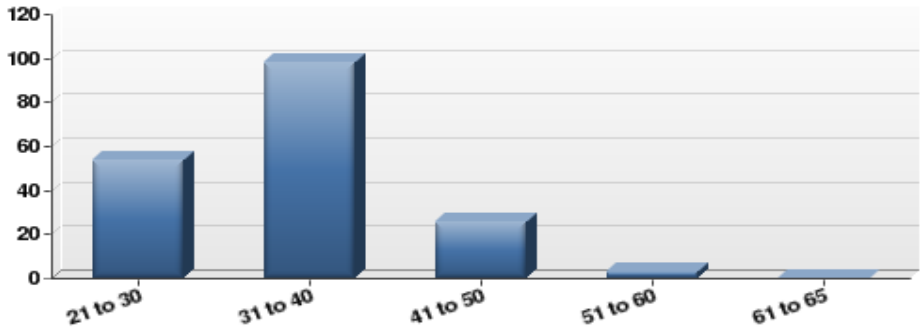


Figure 5: Age group profile of respondents

Generation Y, consisting of the age group 21 and 30, accounted for 30% of the respondents while Generation X, aged between 31 and 50, totalled 68%. As mentioned previously, baby boomers, comprising MBAs between 51 and 60 years old, while included in the survey were excluded from the study owing to a low 2% response. From the data presented, the mean or average age for the MBA respondent is considered to be 29.8 years. This is in keeping with the average age of MBAs being slightly over 29 as identified by Harris and Sutton (1995:810) and the researcher's MBA in-class experience, the researcher having been a student at the time. Again it can be confirmed that the MBA respondent demographics are representative of the MBA age demographic in the country.

Gender differences

Table 10 provides the gender group profile of the 181 South African MBAs that were surveyed.

Table 10: Gender profile of South African MBA students

Answer		Response	%
Male		131	72%
Female		50	28%
Total		181	100%

As can be seen, males accounted for 72% while females accounted for the balance of 28%. This is representative of the MBA gender demographics in South Africa, confirmed by a well-known South African academic in a *Financial Mail* (Furlonger 2010) article. In the article, mention is made of an Association of MBAs (AMBA) study of 55 schools in 60 countries, including South Africa, where the number of women undertaking MBAs was found to be in proportion to their applications. Given the traditional second-class status of women in Africa, the figures are below the average at 28% of acceptance and 28.7% of application figures.

4.5 Results pertaining to South African MBA students and graduates

The main research instrument was enhanced with the comments from the pilot group study. Respondents were recruited via word of mouth (i.e. the researcher's acquaintances), Facebook (Zuckerberg, Saverin, Moskovitz and Hughes 2004), e-mail (i.e. the researcher's contact lists), the provision of an anonymous website link to university contacts and invitations sent via the MBA Connect.net website (Symanowitz 2011). Surveys were then administered to the MBA students and graduates and the responses were collected electronically online via Qualtrics over a period of one month.

Respondents were asked initially to provide some demographic information, i.e. gender, age, type of MBA they were registered for, business school association and geographical area. Respondents then had to select their top 10 attributes that comprised a compelling Employee Value Proposition from the 22 attributes provided. Once the top 10 attributes had been selected they had to be rank ordered, with the most preferred attribute ranked "1" and the least preferred ranked "10". Partial rank ordering was selected to reduce respondent fatigue for large numbers of survey items, as Stacey (2006) indicates that the task of rank ordering large numbers of attributes can be unduly onerous for respondents. He writes that this onerous task could have negative impacts on the validity and reliability of the data.

4.5.1 Results pertaining to the partial rank-ordered top 10 attributes

The raw data from the 203 responses went through a sanitisation process to identify and remove all superfluous and invalid responses, which resulted in 181 responses being valid and accepted for analysis. According to Stacey (2006), the data needs to be normalised before any statistically correct comparisons can be made or conclusive findings drawn. Furthermore, Stacey notes that the larger the sample size the better it represents the population as a whole and the less chance there is of sampling error occurring.

The 181 respondents were confirmed by Antony Stacey, professor at WBS, as being a sufficiently large enough sample to be used for statistical analysis with higher levels of confidence in the results. Stacey's Shotgun stochastic estimation algorithm was used to convert the means of the raw data to zero and the standard deviation to one. (For details on the procedure used to rescale the data refer to Section 3.7.)

Figure 6 presents the preferences of South African MBAs graphically, indicating that *Compensation* remains the most preferred attribute overall for South African MBA students and graduates while *Technology Level* is the least preferred of the 22 attributes ranked. The p-values help to identify the significant attributes preferred by MBA students and graduates, including: *Compensation; Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact; Future Career Opportunities; Work-life Balance; Empowerment – level of involvement;* and *Development Opportunities*.

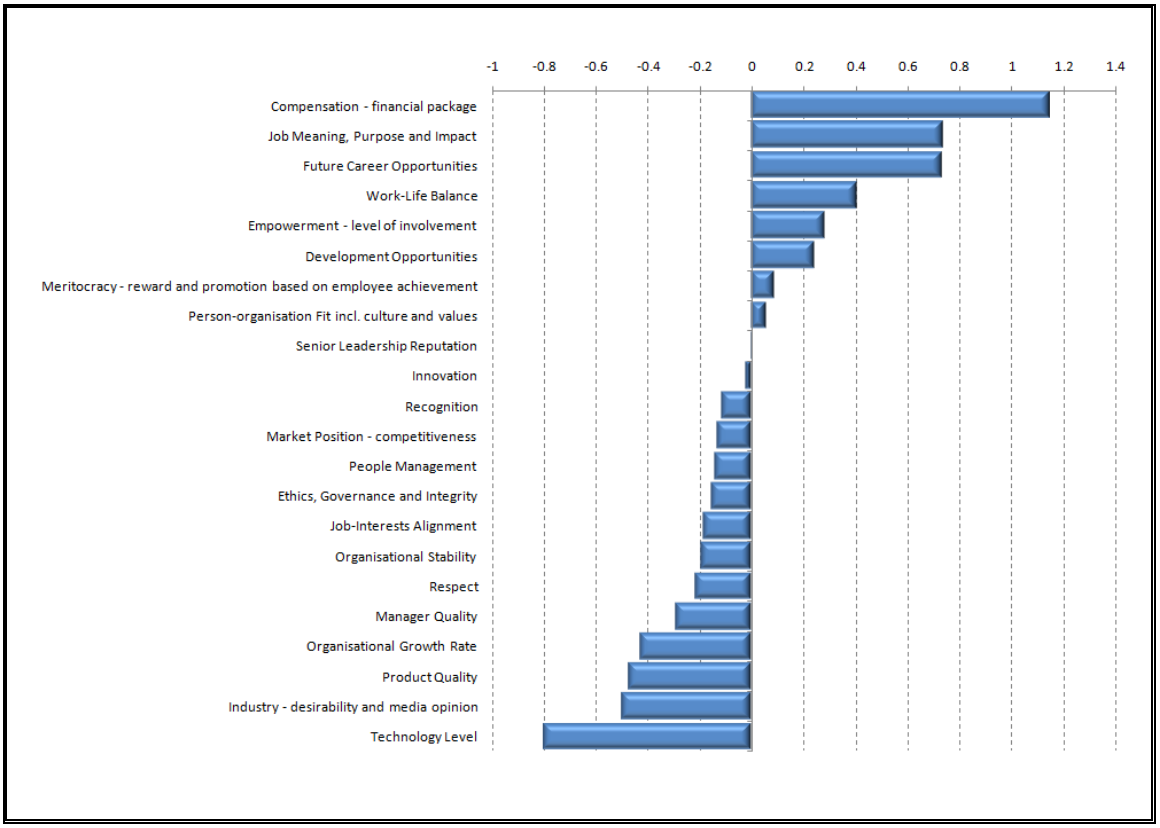


Figure 6: Significant attributes of South African MBAs

Normalised data (means and standard deviations) for South African MBAs is presented in Table 11. A two-tailed hypothesis test was applied to the normalised means. Instances were found where the null hypothesis held true, implying no significant difference between the sample attribute mean and the normalised attribute mean for South African MBAs. There were also instances, however, where the alternate hypothesis was found to hold true, implying that a significant difference existed between the normalised attribute mean and the actual attribute mean for South African MBAs.

As part of the hypothesis test, t-values and p-values were calculated. The p-values were compared to a 5% probability level to allow for valid statistical comparison of relative levels of importance. The attributes that are significant for the purposes of the study are highlighted in Table 11. These are the attributes with positive t-values and a probability of less than 5% or a p-value of less than 0.05. The attributes as presented in Table 12 have means that are significantly different from the normalised means, i.e. that allow the rejection of the null hypothesis, while those attributes not highlighted in Table 11 do not

have significantly different means from the normalised means, implying an acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Table 11: Normalised results across South African MBAs

Attributes	Normalised Means	T-values	P-values
Compensation – financial package	1.146	17.178	0.000
Empowerment – level of involvement	0.280	4.198	0.000
Future Career Opportunities	0.733	10.980	0.000
Industry – desirability and media opinion	-0.501	-7.513	0.000
Innovation	-0.024	-0.356	0.722
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	0.735	11.011	0.000
Market Position – competitiveness	-0.135	-2.023	0.045
Meritocracy – reward and promotion based on employee achievement	0.086	1.283	0.201
Organisational Growth Rate	-0.431	-6.463	0.000
Senior Leadership Reputation	0.003	0.044	0.965
Development Opportunities	0.243	3.647	0.000
Ethics, Governance and Integrity	-0.157	-2.357	0.019
Job-Interests Alignment	-0.188	-2.823	0.005
Manager Quality	-0.292	-4.375	0.000
Organisational Stability	-0.197	-2.953	0.004
People Management	-0.144	-2.159	0.032
Person-organisation Fit, incl. culture and values	0.055	0.826	0.410
Product Quality	-0.474	-7.109	0.000
Recognition	-0.117	-1.760	0.080
Respect	-0.220	-3.294	0.001
Technology Level	-0.802	-12.023	0.000
Work-life Balance	0.403	6.040	0.000

The significant attributes for South African MBAs (from here on referred to as the “Core” attributes) are presented in Table 12 in the order of highest to lowest (positive) significance level after being run through the Shotgun stochastic estimation algorithm.

In layman’s terms what the analysis reveals is that South African MBAs have a preference for the six attributes as highlighted in Table 12, with their top most-preferred attribute being *Compensation*, which deals with the financial aspects of their life, followed by *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*, which fulfils the spiritual aspect, and the rest determining their career path, lifestyle and opportunities. This starts to answer the second research question in terms of

the significant attributes of an Employee Value Proposition that South African MBAs find appealing.

Table 12: Core attributes of South African MBA students and graduates

Attributes
Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Future Career Opportunities
Work-life Balance
Empowerment – level of involvement
Development Opportunities

4.5.2 Results pertaining to the various demographic groups

Results will be presented first for the *Generation X* and *Y* generational groups and thereafter for the gender groups of *Male* and *Female*. Stacey's (2006) Shotgun stochastic estimation algorithm was used to analyse the data for the different generational and gender groups in the same manner as for all MBA students and graduates.

Normalised data (means and standard deviations) is presented in Tables 13, 15, 17, and 19 for all generational and gender groups. A two-tailed hypothesis test was applied to the normalised means and standard deviations. On the basis of the results, either the null hypothesis or the alternate hypothesis was accepted or rejected respectively. Where the null hypothesis held true then that implied that there was no significant difference between the sample attribute mean and the normalised attribute mean. Where the alternate hypothesis was found to hold true then that implied that a significant difference existed between the normalised attribute mean and the actual attribute mean.

As part of the hypothesis test, t-values and p-values were calculated. The t-values were compared to a 5% probability level to allow for valid statistical comparison of relative levels of importance. Identification of statistically significant differences allowed the research to then conclude that the attributes are important and considered the most preferred from the 22 attributes for that group.

Generation X

Figure 7 presents the preferences of Generation X MBAs graphically, indicating that *Compensation* remains the most preferred attribute overall for Generation X MBA students and graduates, with *Product Quality* being the least preferred of the 22 attributes ranked. The positive p-values help to identify the significant attributes preferred by Generation X MBA students and graduates, including: *Compensation; Future Career Opportunities; Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact; Development Opportunities; Work-life Balance;* and *Empowerment – level of involvement*.

The negative p-values assist in identifying those attributes such as *Technology Level; Industry – desirability and media opinion; Recognition;* and *Product Quality*, where the sample attribute mean is smaller than the normalised attribute mean, implying that such attributes would never have been drawn by the Generation X MBA population.

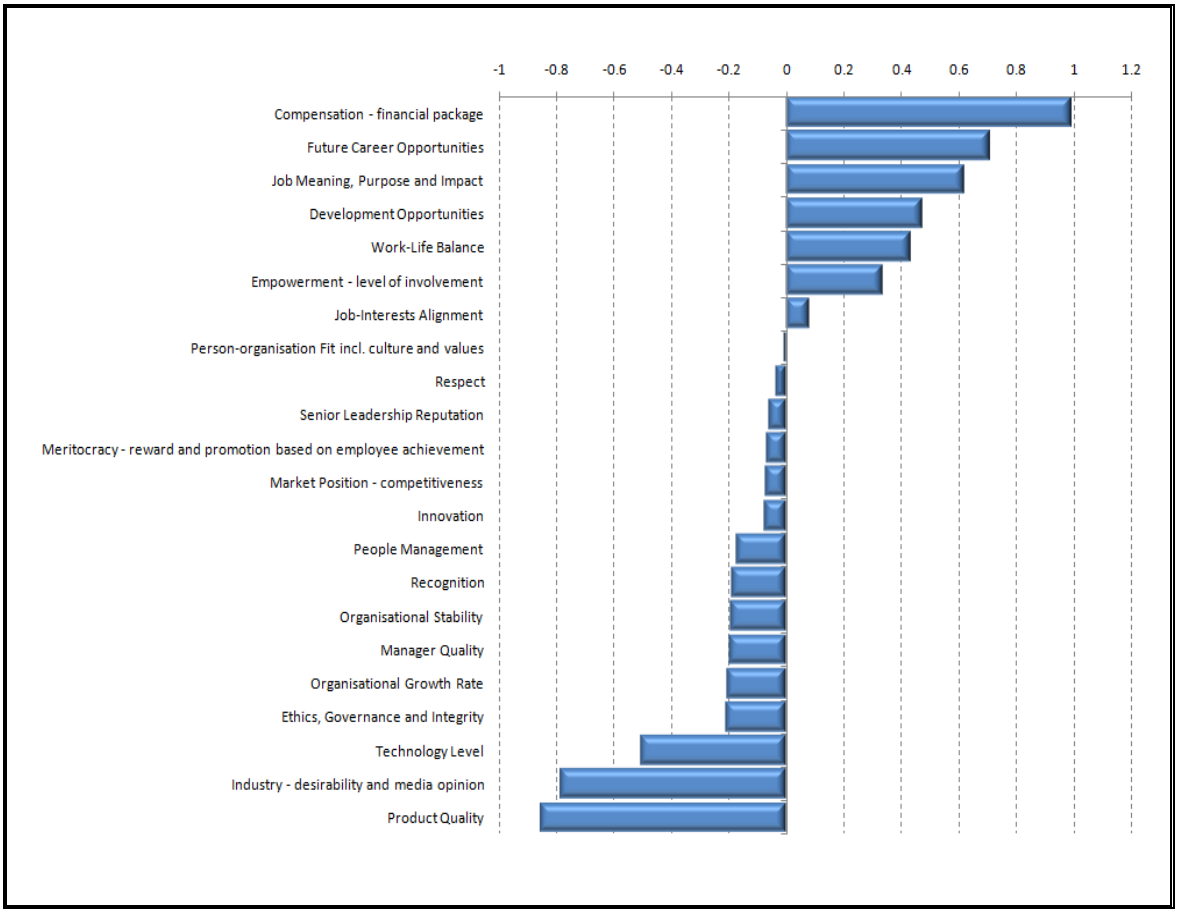


Figure 7: Significant attributes for Generation X MBAs

Normalised data (means and standard deviations) for Generation X MBAs is presented in Table 13. The significant attributes identified in this category of the study are highlighted in blue in Table 13. The significant attributes are those identified as having positive t-values and a probability of less than 5% or a p-value of less than 0.05.

Table 13: Normalised results of Generation X MBAs

GENERATION X			
Attributes	**Normalised Means**	**T-values**	**P-values**
Compensation – financial package	0.990	12.268	0.000
Empowerment – level of involvement	0.337	4.173	0.000
Future Career Opportunities	0.708	8.768	0.000
Industry – desirability and media opinion	-0.784	-9.713	0.000
Innovation	-0.078	-0.965	0.337
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	0.621	7.692	0.000
Market Position – competitiveness	-0.074	-0.917	0.361
Meritocracy – reward and promotion based on employee achievement	-0.069	-0.861	0.391
Organisational Growth Rate	-0.206	-2.551	0.012
Senior Leadership Reputation	-0.060	-0.743	0.459
Development Opportunities	0.474	5.872	0.000
Ethics, Governance and Integrity	-0.211	-2.608	0.010
Job-Interests Alignment	0.082	1.019	0.310
Manager Quality	-0.197	-2.441	0.016
Organisational Stability	-0.195	-2.410	0.017
People Management	-0.174	-2.152	0.033
Person-organisation Fit, incl. culture and values	-0.009	-0.115	0.909
Product Quality	-0.854	-10.580	0.000
Recognition	-0.192	-2.379	0.019
Respect	-0.037	-0.463	0.644
Technology Level	-0.506	-6.268	0.000
Work-life Balance	0.434	5.374	0.000

The attributes as presented in Table 14 have means that are significantly different from the normalised means, i.e. which allowed the null hypothesis to be rejected. In contrast, those attributes not highlighted in Table 13 do not have

significantly different means from the normalised means, implying an acceptance of the null hypothesis.

The significant attributes for Generation X MBAs are presented in Table 14 in the order of highest to lowest (positive) significance level after being run through the Shotgun stochastic estimation algorithm.

The analysis reflects that South African Generation X MBAs have a preference for the six attributes as highlighted in Table 14.

Table 14: Attributes of the Core and Generation X MBA students and graduates

CORE Attributes	Gen X Attributes
Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Future Career Opportunities
Future Career Opportunities	Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Work-life Balance	Development Opportunities
Empowerment – level of involvement	Work-life Balance
Development Opportunities	Empowerment – level of involvement

On the basis of the results, it is clear that *Compensation* remains as important for Generation X MBAs as it is for the Core. Overall the same attributes are considered significant for Generation X MBAs as for the Core. It is only the sequence or prioritisation that differs slightly. This will be further explored in Chapter 5.

Generation Y

Figure 8 presents the preferences of Generation Y MBAs graphically, indicating that *Compensation* remains the most preferred attribute overall for Generation Y MBA students and graduates while *Product Quality* is the least preferred of the 22 attributes ranked. The positive p-values help to identify the significant

attributes preferred by Generation Y MBA students and graduates, including: *Compensation; Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact; Future Career Opportunities; Work-life Balance; Development Opportunities;* and *Empowerment – level of involvement*.

The negative p-values assist in identifying those attributes such as *Product Quality; Market Position – competitiveness* and *Organisational Growth Rate,* where the sample attribute mean is smaller than the normalised attribute mean, which implies that such attributes would never have been drawn by the Generation Y MBA population.

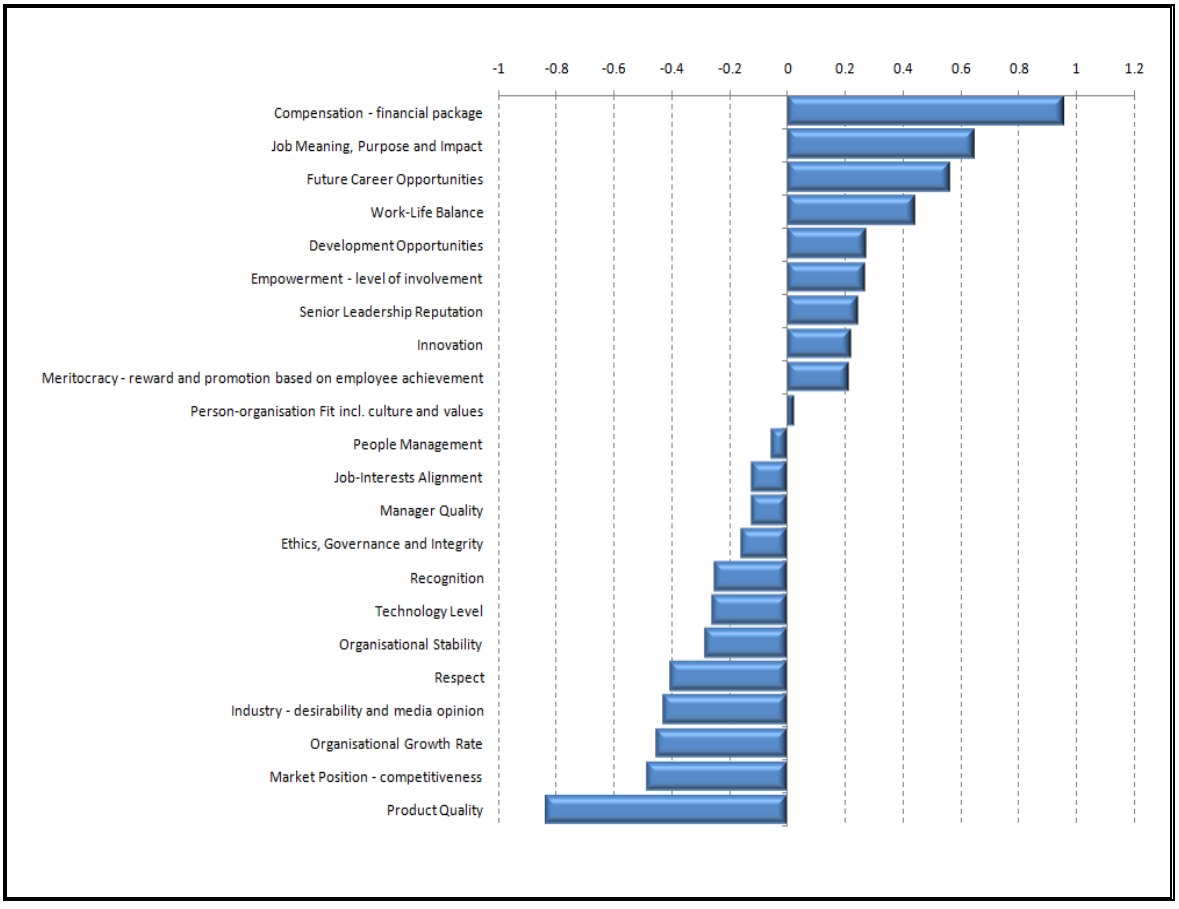


Figure 8: Significant attributes of Generation Y MBAs

Normalised data (means and standard deviations) for Generation Y MBAs is presented in Table 15. The significant attributes identified in this category of the study are highlighted in blue in Table 15. These attributes have positive t-values and a probability of less than 5% or a p-value of less than 0.05.

Table 15: Normalised results of Generation Y MBAs

GENERATION Y			
Attributes	Normalised Means	T-values	P-values
Compensation – financial package	0.958	7.762	0.000
Empowerment – level of involvement	0.271	2.195	0.033
Future Career Opportunities	0.562	4.553	0.000
Industry – desirability and media opinion	-0.427	-3.461	0.001
Innovation	0.222	1.801	0.078
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	0.649	5.259	0.000
Market Position – competitiveness	-0.485	-3.927	0.000
Meritocracy – reward and promotion based on employee achievement	0.215	1.740	0.088
Organisational Growth Rate	-0.453	-3.666	0.001
Senior Leadership Reputation	0.247	1.999	0.051
Development Opportunities	0.275	2.229	0.030
Ethics, Governance and Integrity	-0.162	-1.309	0.196
Job-Interests Alignment	-0.124	-1.007	0.319
Manager Quality	-0.126	-1.016	0.314
Organisational Stability	-0.283	-2.295	0.026
People Management	-0.057	-0.460	0.648
Person-organisation Fit, incl. culture and values	0.026	0.208	0.836
Product Quality	-0.836	-6.768	0.000
Recognition	-0.252	-2.038	0.047
Respect	-0.407	-3.297	0.002
Technology Level	-0.260	-2.105	0.040
Work-life Balance	0.445	3.602	0.001

The attributes as presented in Table 16 have means that are significantly different from the normalised means, implying a rejection of the null hypothesis, while those attributes not highlighted in Table 15 do not have significantly different means from the normalised means, implying an acceptance of the null hypothesis.

The significant attributes for Generation Y MBAs are presented in Table 16 in the order of highest to lowest (positive) significance level after being run through the Shotgun stochastic estimation algorithm.

The analysis reflects that South African Generation Y MBAs have a preference for the six attributes as highlighted in Table 16. These attributes are compared with the attributes of the Core and Generation X MBAs in Table 16.

Table 16: Attributes of the Core and Generation groups

CORE Attributes	Gen X Attributes	Gen Y Attributes
Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Future Career Opportunities	Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Future Career Opportunities	Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Future Career Opportunities
Work-life Balance	Development Opportunities	Work-life Balance
Empowerment – level of involvement	Work-life Balance	Development Opportunities
Development Opportunities	Empowerment – level of involvement	Empowerment – level of involvement

The results show that *Compensation* remains important across the entire sample irrespective of the generation group. Generation Y maps almost exactly to the Core attributes, except that Generation Y sees development opportunities as being more important than their level of involvement in an organisation when compared with the Core.

Moving beyond generational differences, the attributes and their significance among the gender groups of *Males* and *Females* were also considered.

Gender – Male

Figure 9 presents the preferences of Male MBAs graphically, indicating that *Compensation* remains the most preferred attribute overall for Male MBA students and graduates, with *Industry – desirability and media opinion* being the least preferred of the 22 attributes ranked.

The positive p-values help to identify the significant attributes preferred by MBA students and graduates, including: *Compensation; Future Career Opportunities; Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact; Empowerment – level of involvement; Work-life Balance; Meritocracy;* and *Development Opportunities*.

The negative p-values assist in identifying those attributes such as *Industry – desirability and media opinion; Product Quality;* and *Organisational Growth Rate,* where the sample attribute mean is smaller than the normalised attribute mean, implying that such attributes would never have been drawn by the population of Male MBAs.

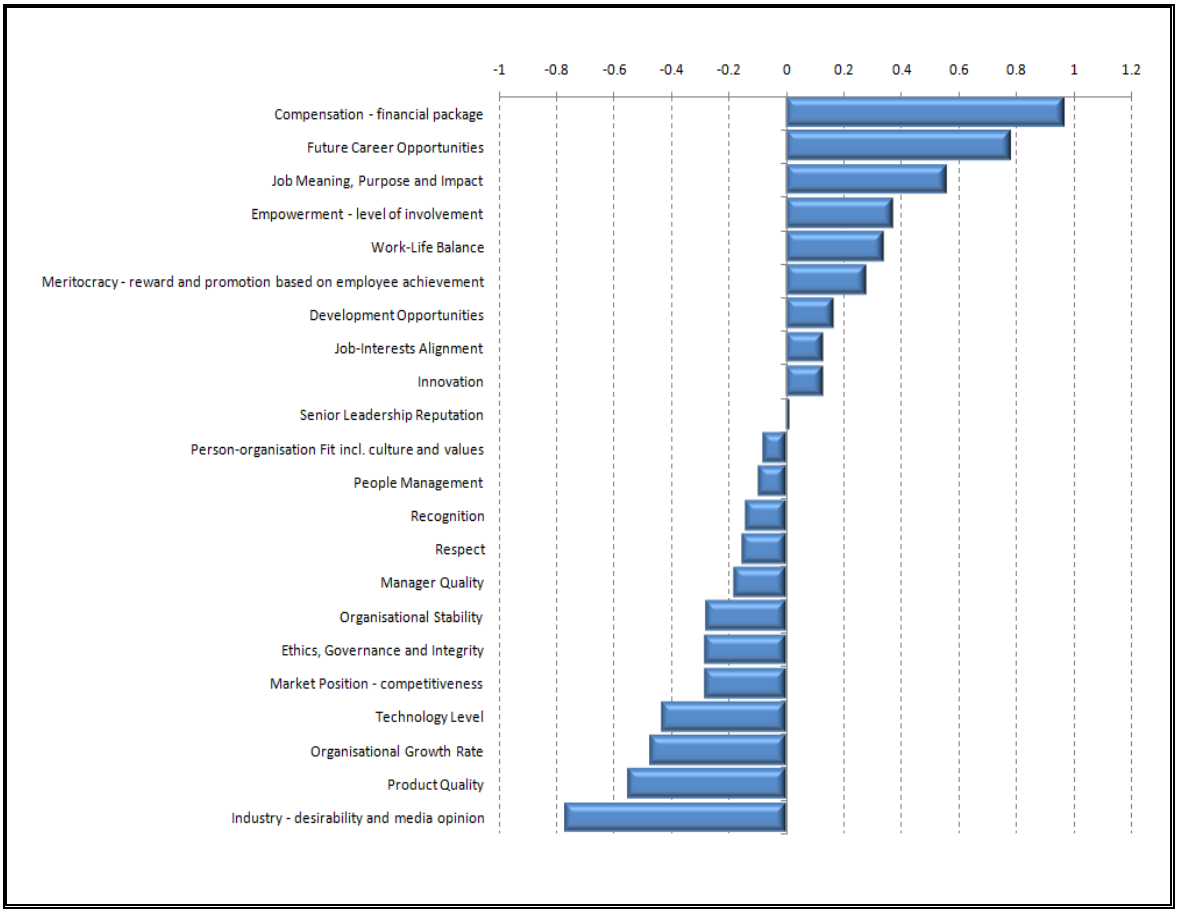


Figure 9: Significant attributes of Male MBAs

Normalised data (means and standard deviations) for the Male group of MBAs is presented in Table 17. The significant attributes identified in this category of the study are highlighted in blue in Table 17, with significant attributes having positive t-values and a probability of less than 5% or a p-value of less than 0.05.

Table 17: Normalised results of Male MBAs

MALE			
Attributes	**Normalised Means**	**T-values**	**P-values**
Compensation – financial package	0.967	12.191	0.000
Empowerment – level of involvement	0.371	4.673	0.000
Future Career Opportunities	0.782	9.849	0.000
Industry – desirability and media opinion	-0.769	-9.696	0.000
Innovation	0.128	1.610	0.110
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	0.558	7.028	0.000
Market Position – competitiveness	-0.285	-3.595	0.000
Meritocracy – reward and promotion based on employee achievement	0.278	3.509	0.001
Organisational Growth Rate	-0.472	-5.954	0.000
Senior Leadership Reputation	0.012	0.153	0.878
Development Opportunities	0.165	2.085	0.039
Ethics, Governance and Integrity	-0.282	-3.549	0.001
Job-Interests Alignment	0.128	1.613	0.109
Manager Quality	-0.182	-2.296	0.023
Organisational Stability	-0.279	-3.512	0.001
People Management	-0.098	-1.234	0.219
Person-organisation Fit, incl. culture and values	-0.083	-1.041	0.300
Product Quality	-0.550	-6.937	0.000
Recognition	-0.142	-1.788	0.076
Respect	-0.154	-1.940	0.055
Technology Level	-0.432	-5.448	0.000
Work-life Balance	0.340	4.279	0.000

The attributes as presented in Table 18 have means that are significantly different from the normalised means i.e. that allow one to reject the null hypothesis while those attributes not highlighted in Table 17 do not have significantly different means from the normalised means, implying an acceptance of the null hypothesis.

The significant attributes for Male MBAs are presented in Table 18 in the order of highest to lowest (positive) significance level after being run through the Shotgun stochastic estimation algorithm.

The analysis reflects that South African Male MBAs have a preference for the seven attributes as highlighted in Table 18.

Table 18: Attributes of the Core and Male Gender groups

CORE Attributes
Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Future Career Opportunities
Work-life Balance
Empowerment – level of involvement
Development Opportunities

Male Attributes
Compensation – financial package
Future Career Opportunities
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Empowerment – level of involvement
Work-life Balance
Meritocracy
Development Opportunities

The results show that *Compensation* remains important across the Core and Male MBAs. Overall the same attributes are considered significant for Male MBAs as for the Core. It is only the sequence or prioritisation that differs slightly. An anomaly with Male MBAs is high ranking of the opportunity to be rewarded and promoted based on employee achievement. This will be further explored in Chapter 5.

Gender – Female

Figure 10 presents the preferences of Female MBAs graphically, indicating that *Compensation* remains the most preferred attribute overall for Female MBA students and graduates while *Technology Level* is the least preferred of the 22 attributes ranked.

The positive p-values help to identify the significant attributes preferred by Female MBA students and graduates, including: *Compensation; Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact; Empowerment – level of involvement; Future Career Opportunities;* and *Person-organisation Fit.*

The negative p-values assist in identifying those attributes such as *Technology Level; Industry – desirability and media opinion;* and *Product Quality,* where the sample attribute mean is smaller than the normalised attribute mean, implying that such attributes would never have been drawn by the population of Female MBAs.

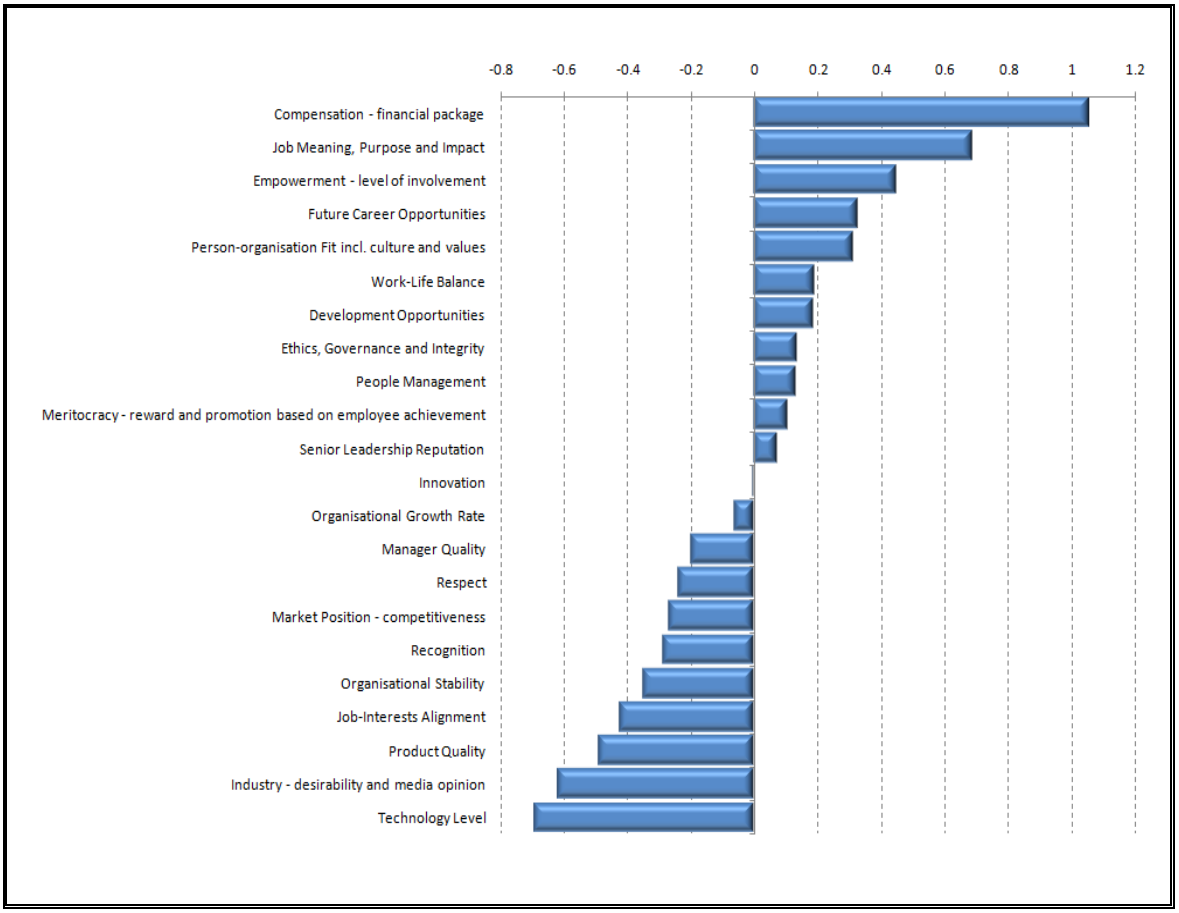


Figure 10: Significant attributes of Female MBAs

Normalised data (means and standard deviations) for Females is presented in Table 19. The significant attributes identified in this category of the study are highlighted in blue in Table 19; significant attributes are those attributes having positive t-values and a probability of less than 5% or a p-value of less than 0.05.

Table 19: Normalised results of Female MBAs

FEMALE			
Attributes	**Normalised Means**	**T-values**	**P-values**
Compensation – financial package	1.054	8.182	0.000
Empowerment – level of involvement	0.450	3.490	0.001

FEMALE			
Attributes	**Normalised Means**	**T-values**	**P-values**
Future Career Opportunities	0.328	2.546	0.014
Industry – desirability and media opinion	-0.620	-4.816	0.000
Innovation	-0.005	-0.037	0.971
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	0.688	5.340	0.000
Market Position – competitiveness	-0.269	-2.086	0.042
Meritocracy – reward and promotion based on employee achievement	0.105	0.813	0.420
Organisational Growth Rate	-0.065	-0.503	0.617
Senior Leadership Reputation	0.072	0.559	0.579
Development Opportunities	0.188	1.457	0.152
Ethics, Governance and Integrity	0.134	1.042	0.303
Job-Interests Alignment	-0.425	-3.301	0.002
Manager Quality	-0.201	-1.558	0.126
Organisational Stability	-0.350	-2.720	0.009
People Management	0.130	1.011	0.317
Person-organisation Fit, incl. culture and values	0.312	2.421	0.019
Product Quality	-0.492	-3.816	0.000
Recognition	-0.288	-2.234	0.030
Respect	-0.242	-1.880	0.066
Technology Level	-0.694	-5.391	0.000
Work-life Balance	0.191	1.480	0.145

The attributes as presented in Table 20 have means that are significantly different from the normalised means, implying a rejection of the null hypothesis, while those attributes not highlighted in Table 19 do not have significantly different means from the normalised means, implying an acceptance of the null hypothesis.

The significant attributes for Female MBAs are presented in Table 20 in the order of highest to lowest (positive) significance level after being run through the Shotgun stochastic estimation algorithm.

The analysis shows that South African Female MBAs have a preference for the five attributes as highlighted in Table 20 and as shown alongside the Male and Core MBA groups.

Table 20: Attributes of the Core and Gender groups

CORE – Attributes
Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Future Career Opportunities
Work-life Balance
Empowerment – level of involvement
Development Opportunities

Male – Attributes
Compensation – financial package
Future Career Opportunities
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Empowerment – level of involvement
Work-life Balance
Meritocracy
Development Opportunities

Female – Attributes
Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Empowerment – level of involvement
Future Career Opportunities
Person-organisation Fit, incl. culture and values

On the basis of the results, it is clear that *Compensation* remains important across the Core and the Gender groups. Significant for Female MBAs as well as for the Core are *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Empowerment* and *Future Career Opportunities*. It is only the sequence or prioritisation that differs slightly. An anomaly with Female MBAs is the prioritising of *Person-organisation Fit, including culture and values*. This will be further explored in Chapter 5.

In considering the difference in the means of the ranked order of the *Compensation* attribute between Male and Female MBAs, the question remains whether this is due to sampling error or whether the difference is statistically significant. A two-tailed hypothesis test was applied to understand the differences more clearly, as the different sample means are not sufficient to conclude that the population values are significantly different. Statistical significance must be a consideration in the findings.

As part of the hypothesis test, t-values and p-values were calculated. The t-values were compared to a 5% probability level to allow for valid statistical comparison of relative levels of importance. For the purposes of the study, the significant attributes were those having a positive t-value and a probability of less than 5% or a p-value of less than 0.05. In the study, the difference in the *Compensation* means between Males and Females is not significantly different, which implies an acceptance of the null hypothesis. This implies that any one gender group does not favour compensation more or less than the other.

On the basis of the results presented in Table 21, it is apparent that *Compensation* remains the most preferred and significant attribute across South African MBAs, which extends to the gender and generational groups. *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*; *Work-life Balance*; *Empowerment – level of involvement*; and *Development Opportunities* follow as the other significant attributes for South African MBAs.

This answers part of the second sub-problem, which concerns the identification of the significant attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students and graduates.

Important to mention is that the sequence or prioritisation according to which the attributes are ranked across the generational and gender groups offers some nuances that will be further elaborated upon in Chapter 5. This discussion will then answer the remaining aspects of the second sub-problem, requiring the evaluation of the significant attributes.

Table 21: Attributes of the Core, Generational and Gender groups

CORE	Gen X	Gen Y	Female	Male
ATTRIBUTES				
Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Future Career Opportunities	Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Future Career Opportunities
Future Career Opportunities	Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Future Career Opportunities	Empowerment - level of involvement	Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact
Work-life Balance	Development Opportunities	Work-life Balance	Future Career Opportunities	Empowerment - level of involvement
Empowerment - level of involvement	Work-life Balance	Development Opportunities	Person-organisation Fit incl. culture and values	Work-life Balance
Development Opportunities	Empowerment - level of involvement	Empowerment - level of involvement		Meritocracy
				Development Opportunities

4.6 Results pertaining to additional attributes

At the end of the survey, the respondents were asked to identify and to capture in free text additional attributes to be included which had not been specifically catered for in the list of 22 attributes. These attributes were captured as a list of additional attributes and analysed using the general inductive approach for evaluating qualitative data (Thomas 2006). The results are presented in Table 22, which indicates the themes that came out of the analysis.

Table 22: Additional attributes from the survey

Gender	Age	Additional Attributes	Themes
1	2	Social responsibility	Corporate Social Involvement / Responsibility
1	3	Community involvement, i.e. helping the poor	
1	3	Social involvement	
1	3	Social involvement	
1	4	Social capital	
2	3	Community involvement	
2	4	Organisation corporate and social responsibility	
2	4	Organisation's contribution to sustainability of the environment	Environmental Responsibility
1	2	Travel opportunities	Business Travel
1	2	International travel	
1	3	International mobility	
1	2	Location	Location
1	3	International opportunities	
1	3	Distance travelled to workplace	
1	2	Entrepreneurial skills	Entrepreneurial Leadership
1	3	Entrepreneurial flair	
1	4	Business ownership possibility	
2	2	Creativity and entrepreneurship ability	
2	2	Entrepreneurial spirit	
1	3	Networking with leaders	Senior Leadership Reputation
1	3	Strategy participation with employees engaged in determining direction	Camaraderie
1	3	Networking	
1	4	Team spirit of current employees	
1	2	Working as a team and level of autonomy	Collegial Work Environment
2	2	Ability to operate in teams and share knowledge	
2	2	Standard of colleagues	Co-worker

Gender	Age	Additional Attributes	Themes
			Quality
1	4	Global presence	Globalisation
1	5	Global reach	
2	2	International recognition of firm	
2	3	Global competitiveness	
2	3	Global mindset	
1	4	Culture and leadership allowing for "intrapreneurship" or corporate venturing	Risk Taking
2	3	Risk management	
1	2	Organisation reputation, e.g. word of mouth	"Great Employer" Recognition
1	3	Well-structured organisations	

On the basis of the results presented in Table 22, organisations and their corporate social responsibility appear to be top of mind, especially for Generation X MBAs. Business travel and location giving rise to international opportunities, mobility and travel were also highlighted, especially by younger male MBAs, as an important attribute for consideration.

As presented in the results, two new areas, *Globalisation* and *Entrepreneurial Leadership*, were identified and it would require further research and analysis to understand the real impact of these attributes on the decision making of MBAs. *Camaraderie*; *Collegial Work Environment*; and *Co-worker Quality* all relate to team work, collaboration and socialising with colleagues in the workplace. These team collaboration and socialising qualities emerged as important for MBAs in their selection but not as important for HR experts when designing their organisational employee value propositions.

4.7 Summary of the results

Table 23 highlights the six attributes comprising a compelling Employee Value Proposition for the survey Core and the attributes identified by the CLC Global, South African and HIPO studies (2009, 2010).

Table 23: Attributes of the survey Core versus the CLC studies

SURVEY CORE	Global	SA	HIPO
ATTRIBUTES			
Compensation – financial package	Compensation – financial package	Future Career Opportunities	Compensation – financial package
Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact	Future Career Opportunities	Compensation – financial package	Future Career Opportunities
Future Career Opportunities	Work-life Balance	Work-life Balance	Work-life Balance
Work-life Balance	Development Opportunities	Development Opportunities	Organisational Stability
Empowerment – level of involvement	Organisational Stability	Organisational Stability	Ethics and Integrity
Development Opportunities	Manager Quality	Ethics and Integrity	Health Benefits
Meritocracy	Respect	Respect	Location

On the basis of the results presented in Table 23, *Compensation* still remains one of the most significant attributes across MBAs, extending to global and HIPO studies (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a, 2009). *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact* and *Empowerment* while important from a South African MBA perspective are not significantly preferred as indicated by other studies (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a, 2009). *Future Career Opportunities*, *Work-life Balance* and *Development Opportunities* follow as the other significant attributes for South African MBAs as well as for global and HIPO studies. *Organisational Stability*, while important in the global and HIPO studies, remains less preferred by South African MBAs.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 presents an interpretation of the survey results within the context of the literature reviewed and also concludes on the second research question. This interpretation extends to the attribute themes deduced and assessed as being the most important to emerge from the responses to the open-ended question asked at the end of each survey.

The chapter starts with Section 5.1, which presents the interpretation of the survey responses in terms of two demographic categories: Age (generational differences) and Gender. Within this section, deductions regarding each category are presented under sub-sections that deal specifically with that category.

Thereafter, Section 5.2 presents an overall view of the significant attributes of an appealing Employee Value Proposition across all South African MBA students and graduates. In addition, Section 5.3 presents the findings resulting from the general inductive approach used to analyse the qualitative data. Section 5.4 concludes the chapter with a summary of the significant attributes of an appealing Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students and graduates.

5.2 Demographic profile of the respondents

5.2.1 Age – differences across generations

Generation Y's preferences for the Employee Value Proposition attributes are overall not much different from those of their parents. Generational differences have always been of significant interest to employers, although, as shown in this study, the differences between Generation X and Y are not exceptional. This finding aligns with those of the CLC studies (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a) mentioned previously in the literature review. Figures 14 and 15 (in

Appendix G) depict the findings of the CLC's studies on the most important Employee Value Proposition attributes for 23 to 29 and 50 to 59 year olds respectively (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:162-163).

In considering the preferences for the attributes across the different generations, the results reveal a few nuances that require elaboration. Generation Ys place more value on the meaning, purpose and impact of their jobs than their Generation X parents, whose preference for future career opportunities ranks slightly higher than the meaning, purpose and impact of their jobs.

This yearning for greater meaning and purpose implies that Generation Ys are increasingly worried about many factors, ranging from youth unemployment rates, crime, increasing housing costs and body image. They want more out of life than just friendships; they want to be understood, respected, accepted and included within a community, a view also expressed in McCrindle's (2003) study.

In addition, the need for work-life balance precedes the opportunities for development in the survey results. This seems to relate to Generation Ys having a very short-term view in which they expect to complete as much of their development as soon as possible with not too many plans thereafter. McCrindle (2003) also identified this view in his study.

On the other hand, the older generation values the attributes that provide opportunities to establish their careers to a much greater extent than the younger Generation Y candidates. Future career and development opportunities are highly preferred and most valued by Generation Xers, who may be prepared to sacrifice some work-life balance (although not too much) in exchange for better career prospects. Generation Xers appear to sacrifice now for a better future. The researcher shares Murray's (1997) view that Generation Xers always want to keep their options open and look for future opportunities in keeping with their cultural independence.

Significantly unique to Generation Ys is the importance they attach to meritocracy, senior management's reputation and innovation, focusing on a

variety of challenging and leading edge projects. Generation Ys look for direction and guidance, as they are unsure of where they are currently at, not to mention where they are going. As Generation Ys are constantly seeking direction, they have a preference for senior managers who have acquired the skills, experience and expertise to guide them in the right direction. As they are fearful of boredom, they want to be given innovative work by someone who knows them and their circumstances, and who is clear as to what lies ahead. They are looking for real life models and mentors who know better than them. These models and mentors will need to guide and also accompany them on their life journey in a way that helps them showcase their talents and be rewarded and promoted on the basis of their personal achievements. This is a view that is aligned with Murray (1997) and McCrindle's (2003) research on this generation.

Generation Y employees are not afraid to move if the culture of the organisation and the role they are expected to play in it do not meet their expectations or the job doesn't align with their interests. This is because they have an increasingly short-term focus on establishing their careers but a long-term goal of looking for meaning and purpose in everything they do. (McCrindle 2003) and Murray (2007) confirm this finding.

Attributes such as *Compensation*; *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*; *Development Opportunities*; *Work-life Balance*; and *Empowerment* rank among the top six most significant attributes when comparing Generations X and Y. It is merely the sequence or prioritisation of the attributes that varies among the attributes selected by the generations. In any event, organisations will have to show effectively that their Employee Value Proposition comprises these attributes if they want to attract the right talent.

The results confirm that overall the younger people of this generation work to live rather than live to work as their parents did. Our younger candidates see a job as merely providing the means to do what they want to do, which is to have fun, develop quality relationships and fulfil a purpose with spiritual meaning. Benefiting from their parents' rewards for hard work, they are the most materially endowed generation and entertained teenagers ever. However, they

have at the same time seen the costs of their parents' success in terms of divorces, single-parenting as well as an epidemic of stress-related illnesses. For the most part Generation Ys are realising that the materialism they have enjoyed is futile and that their biggest fear of boredom still remains a big problem.

Millennials are the next generation of workers that organisations like Yahoo!, Google and Macdonalds have been employing. They come across as high-energy, achieving young people who want to play by the rules. Who wouldn't want to employ them? Generation Xers will continue with their cultural independence, being suspicious of the workplace, disliking processes and policies but valuing results. They are workaholics who are living in the future but continue to yearn for work-life balance.

5.2.2 Gender differences

On the basis of the survey results, it appears that preferences for the attributes between males and females, while raising a few exceptions, display overall similar patterns across the different gender groups. In terms of the ranking and prioritisation of the attributes, males are identified as having a tendency to favour positions offering greater compensation with future career and development opportunities. These findings support the conclusions drawn by Lacy et al. (1983), Simpson (2000a) and the CLC (2006a). Figures 16 and 17 (in Appendix G) depict the findings of the CLC's studies on the most important Employee Value Proposition attributes for males and females respectively (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:174-175).

Job meaning, purpose and impact are important and as an attribute rank in the top seven significant attributes preferred by males. However, this attribute resonates more with female employees. Males have chosen those attributes that provide job security over the more intrinsic attributes such as job meaning, purpose and impact. Males, regardless of their marital status, obtain their primary identity and importance from their profession and employment. Such results are consistent with those found by Lacy et al. (1983).

Females' need for meaning, purpose, empowerment, ethics, corporate governance and integrity aligns with the literature deduction that females are attracted to organisations where they feel empowered, important and respected. This desire among females may be the result of the low self-efficacy expectations that females may have in relation to their traditional male counterparts, which may be seen to be problematic. Traditionally women have been discriminated against because male behaviours have been taken as the norm and women have been measured within this "framework of female deficiency" (Clement 1987:263), which is interpreted as evidence of female inadequacy, the supposed misconstructions of female abilities and of males being more accurate in their self-appraisal. This is especially relevant within the South African context during and post apartheid where women were discriminated against. Empowerment will be discussed further in the interpretation of the overall results. The above views align with findings from authors like Clement (1987), Scherer, Brodzinski and Wiebe (1990) and Gupta, Turban, Wasti and Sikdar (2009).

Surprisingly, males are more concerned about work-life balance than their female counterparts. This need for work-life balance could be as a result of males sharing parental responsibilities and acting as co-providers and co-parents while still attending to their occupational responsibilities and social commitment. This has resulted in the preferences of married males for the attributes changing in relation to their cultural context and family responsibilities. Males (fathers) are investing more time in their children, as identified by Corrigall and Konrad (2006).

Their female counterparts, on the other hand, consider person-organisation fit, including values and culture, more valuable than work-life balance. This finding is contrary to the literature, where work-life balance ranked higher for females than males (Simpson 2000a; Corporate Leadership Council 2006a). This contradiction, the researcher believes may be explained by the conclusions drawn in the literature related to person-organisation fit. Females are assessing their personal values (occupational, social and parental) against the values of the organisations to identify a fit and in this way decide on a job. Perhaps the

importance on work-life balance as an attribute has been replaced by the greater flexibility and career choices provided by the person-organisation fit. Again elements of meaning and purpose and impact of the job and its alignment with the culture and values of the organisation are presented. More specifically, MBA females are tending towards occupational flexibility and the capacity for free choice rather than formal structures, as this provides them with the opportunities to manage the characteristics of the job against their own needs and values to determine a fit. The conclusions align with other researchers such as Judge and Cable (1997), Ng and Burke (2005), Chapman et al. (2005), Özbilgin et al. (2005).

Work attitudes and employee preferences for the attributes of an Employee Value Proposition are complex social phenomena which are influenced and shaped by a whole host of factors, including the socialisation process, self-efficacy theory and the "framework of female deficiency" (Clement 1987), gender role stereotypes (Prentice and Carranza 2002), gender identification (Gupta et al. 2009) and trends in mothers' and fathers' child-care time (Sayer, Bianchi and Robinson 2004) to mention but a few. Empowerment as a significant social phenomenon has come out strongly within the South African context as having a significant impact on enhancing credibility and confidence among both males and females, but more specifically among females.

5.3 Discussion pertaining to significant attributes of South African MBAs

The significant attributes of a compelling Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students and graduates are: *Compensation*; *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*; *Work-life Balance*; *Empowerment*; and *Development Opportunities*. Across all MBAs, compensation remains by far the most important driver of attraction. However, several other drivers emerge as prominent drivers in the MBAs' evaluations of an employer's value proposition. A discussion of each of these significant attributes follows.

5.3.1 Compensation

Not surprising then that *Compensation* ranks the highest most valued Employee Value Proposition attribute by South African MBAs. Compensation features high on the agenda of both males and females, who view the financial attributes of a job as most appealing. Even across the generational groups of Generation Y and Xers, *Compensation* is the most highly valued attribute. It is interesting to see that compensation regained its lead position of significance even among MBAs in an emerging economy like South Africa whereas previous studies in South Africa showed a drop in the ranking to 2nd place. Compensation is also confirmed by the CLC (2009) on the basis of conventional wisdom as being a key motivator in attracting employees to an organisation.

On the basis of the existence of different components of compensation, including: remuneration, reward, bonuses, stock options and many more, organisations need to unpack and understand each of these components further in terms of their importance. This will assist organisations to focus their efforts in order to gain maximum benefit from employees. Employees will also demand less of a premium when joining the organisation, as they understand its Employee Value Proposition and find it attractive not only from a financial but also a non-financial perspective.

While compensation remains the key motivational attribute it must be recognised that using golden handcuffs as deferred compensation is futile for gaining employee loyalty. Ultimately it should be reiterated that the people make the place (organisation) and it remains critical that organisations consider the quality of the workforce as an important source of competitive advantage, providing both organisational and financial success for organisations.

In order to understand fully the increase in importance of compensation for South African employees when compared with the CLC studies (Corporate Leadership Council 2009), it may be necessary to identify the demographics of the survey population used by the CLC (2009) as well as factor into the results the effects of the global recession.

5.3.2 Job meaning, purpose and impact

While compensation may be a powerful tool it is not the only tool for attracting talent to an organisation. Among MBAs there appears to be a yearning for more meaningful and purposeful work. Ranking of *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*, modified slightly from the CLC's *Job Impact* attribute (Corporate Leadership Council 2006b), has had surprising results and presents somewhat of an anomaly. Across most of the MBA groupings of gender and generation this attribute has ranked 2nd place. While the CLC ranks job impact much lower in importance (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a), MBAs, it seems, have a preference for work that is more meaningful, has a specific purpose and is high impact. The CLC's findings that job impact is becoming more important (2009:16), has the highest impact on HIPOs' emotional commitment (2010:61) and is a driver that guarantees senior management commitment (2006a) all align with the findings from this study.

In relating the CLC's (2006a, 2009, 2010) findings to South African MBAs, a major reason for studying an MBA is clearly to have access to and be sought after by successful well-led organisations that deliver significant impact. This clearly has a link back to person-organisation fit and the organisation's culture and values, which came out as a category in the additional attributes for consideration.

The time pressures placed on MBAs during their studies bring them to the realisation that they want more out of life than just work; they want to work to live rather than live to work, a view that aligns with McCrindle's (1983) findings.

Another view that could also shed light on the reason that MBAs have a preference for the *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact* attribute could be because MBAs being HIPOs have the ability, passion and motivation to work under pressure in order to drive results. Through this they are able to make an impact for their own personal achievements. This is also known as *Meritocracy*, which is the 7th Core attribute to come out of this study.

5.3.3 Future career opportunities

Ranked as the 3rd most valued attribute by South African MBAs, *Future Career Opportunities* is a significant driver for attraction, usually following just after *Compensation* in the pecking order globally and for HIPOs (Corporate Leadership Council 2006b, 2009) Male MBA employees, especially younger males, have definitely identified with this attribute when evaluating the value proposition from an employer. Overall for Generation Ys, the study has shown that this remains a preferred attribute after compensation and one that must be easily accessible when Generation Ys join an organisation.

MBAs on the whole find future career opportunities both preferential and appealing when presented by organisations because over one-third of HIPOs are uncertain about what their career holds for them over the next five years (Corporate Leadership Council 2010). Future career and development opportunities go hand in hand. Both offer MBAs the opportunity to develop and progress within an organisation. While *Future Career Opportunities* is an important attribute, there remains within it an element of meritocracy for MBAs as indicated in the literature (Corporate Leadership Council 2009, 2010), implying that MBAs may also be taking charge of their own developmental requirements and in this regard have a slightly decreasing preference for this attribute.

5.3.4 Work–life balance

When future career and development opportunities present themselves it is the research's view that *Work–life Balance*, a non-financial attribute, goes out the door. Confirming this idea, South African MBAs seem to favour *Work–life Balance* less than respondents in previous studies, giving it a ranking of 4 instead of the previous 3 ranking. This is despite the literature (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a, 2009) stating that organisations are being recognised not only for how well they manage their working capital but also for how well they assist their employees with balancing work/family issues (Filbeck and Preece 2003; Dewhurst et al. 2009; Fortune 2011).

Within South Africa, a particular anomaly that is worth mentioning again as it has also presented itself in the results is that MBAs create, by their own doing, a situation in which work-life balance is threatened and so becomes an attribute that is highly sought after.

On the basis of gender difference deductions around work-life balance, female MBAs are seemingly placing more importance on greater flexibility and the career choices provided by the person-organisation fit rather than on the work-life balance attribute.

5.3.5 Empowerment

Empowerment, another non-financial attribute of the CLC's *Organisation* dimension, has a ranking of 5, presenting somewhat of an anomaly within the South African context. Empowerment is recognised as important, especially for local MBAs, who have certainly followed in the trend of increasing preference for *Empowerment*, ranking it much higher than those attributes provided by HIPOs, global employees and in the South African studies performed by the CLC between 2006 and 2010 (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a, 2009). This is not surprising when one considers South Africa's recent past of apartheid.

Empowerment is especially important among female MBAs, who see this attribute as enhancing credibility and confidence, encouraging a more proactive approach to work problems as well as increasing their abilities to engage in work-related discussions more fully, leading to overall greater respect and recognition. This view is also expressed by Simpson (2000a) in the literature.

On the basis of South Africa's history and confirmed by the survey results, MBAs like most employees within South Africa desire greater respect through empowerment. They also see respect, ethics, integrity, corporate governance and person-organisation fit as underpinning the very fabric of their existence.

Creating an atmosphere where employees feel a sense of empowerment not only impacts their day-to-day work, but also creates a broader sense of

ownership that impacts their likelihood of promoting the organisation to others. Organisations will have to demonstrate trust, flexibility and organisational values to increase the probability of employees promoting the organisation in the labour market. The literature (Corporate Leadership Council 2006b:viii) clearly states that current employees tend to be one of the most frequently used channels of information for candidates in the labour market who want to understand the organisation's Employee Value Proposition.

5.3.6 Development opportunities

South African MBAs consider *Development Opportunities* as one of the important attraction drivers, having given it a ranking of 6. South African MBAs together with HIPOs have a slightly lower preference for development opportunities than the global and South African employees studied by the CLC (Corporate Leadership Council 2006b, 2009), who gave it a ranking of 4. This is evidence of the preference of HIPOs, in particular MBAs, in South Africa for taking more control over their own development with the option of better future career opportunities.

This poses the question from a South African MBA perspective as to whether development opportunities drive greater employee commitment rather than attraction. Development opportunities usually comprise personal growth and training, providing employees with long-term opportunities for development and career advancement. In this way they drive greater engagement, commitment and retention. A similar conclusion has been reached by the CLC (2006a:40).

As usually employees are not adequately made aware of the organisation's future career and development opportunities during the attraction and recruitment stage, this may possibility explain why development opportunities are seen as driving commitment rather than attraction. Furthermore, as development opportunities are the less tangible aspects of any Employee Value Proposition, it becomes harder to assess the attribute during the recruiting process. This poses risks for the organisation when the delivery does not meet the employee's expectations. This view aligns with the CLC study findings (CLC (2006a:48).

The reasons identified in the preceding discussion provide a rationale for why South African MBAs have a lower preference for development opportunities. Clearly, more detailed research is required to understand the exact reasons for the lower ranking of development opportunities as a driver of attraction when globally and from an emerging market perspective respondents are positioning *Development Opportunities* in their top five Employee Value Proposition attributes in evaluating potential organisations (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:82).

In considering an organisation as a potential employer, *Compensation* remains the most important driver of attraction. That said there are several other core drivers that also figure rather prominently, including: *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*; *Work–life Balance*; *Empowerment*; and *Development Opportunities*.

Given the research results, there are clearly some non-core attributes that must be considered in the way in which they link to and compete with the core attributes, depending on the variations in the employee's circumstances, and regional, age and generational differences.

The non-core attribute of *Organisational Stability* is not considered important by South African MBAs perhaps because of the lower impact that the 2008 recession has had on South African MBAs in particular than on employees globally. *Meritocracy*, being the 7th attribute, is not significant but is one that talks to the characteristics of South African MBAs in terms of the control they wish to retain regarding their futures in organisations as well as the promotion and reward expected on the basis of their personal achievements. *Respect, Ethics, Governance and Integrity* while important is not seen by South African MBAs as important enough when considering an organisation for employment.

5.4 Discussion of the additional attributes

At the end of each survey, respondents were asked to identify and capture additional attributes in response to the free text open-ended question. These additional attributes were analysed and evaluated using Thomas' (2006) general inductive approach.

The key themes that emerged are as follows:

- Corporate Social Involvement / Responsibility
- Business Travel
- Location
- Globalisation
- Entrepreneurial Leadership
- Camaraderie

Corporate Social Involvement / Responsibility, *Business Travel*, *Location* and *Camaraderie* while not important from the HR panel of experts' perspective were definitely worth consideration from a CLC view, based on the 38 attributes identified during its study into drivers of attraction and commitment in the global labour market (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a). Business travel and location as giving rise to international opportunities, mobility and travel were highlighted previously, especially by younger male MBAs, as important attributes for consideration. An additional attribute worth mentioning as it resulted in an anomaly was the need voiced by only one of the HR panel members to include *Foreign Assignment Opportunities*. This was subsequently not included and instead the definition of *Future Career Opportunities* was extended to include foreign assignments.

Business travel and location give rise to international opportunities, mobility and travel, which have been highlighted, especially by younger male MBAs, as important attributes for consideration. This would need to be further investigated, especially in light of globalisation, another recurring theme in the additional attributes. It is the researcher's view that based on the fact that the world is getting smaller because of globalisation, improved transportation and

technology, HIPOs have a need for increased international and cross-cultural understanding of business. This creates the need for greater opportunities for business travel, foreign assignments and international locations.

Corporate Social Involvement / Responsibility was not considered important by only two out of the nine HR panel members, of which one of the members was directly accountable for overseeing Corporate Affairs and more specifically sustainability implementation within their organisation. Considering that *Corporate Social Involvement / Responsibility* came out strongly as a theme under the additional attributes, there is clearly a need, based on the literature (Bhattacharya et al. 2008), for South African organisations to assess whether there is some connectedness between the values employees are looking for in organisations and what the organisation's CSR is delivering as its CSR efforts humanise the organisation and depict it as a contributor to society rather than as being solely concerned with profit maximisation.

Entrepreneurial Leadership as an additional attribute must be considered within the context that HIPOs and more specifically MBAs are typical knowledge workers with the motivation and capacity to co-create new insights and the capability to communicate, coach and facilitate the implementation of new ideas (Horwitz et al. 2003:23). These characteristics align well with MBAs in general, who are known to have aspirations for venture creation and management. Another characteristic that must also be considered is the mediating role that self-efficacy plays in the development of MBA students' intentions to become entrepreneurs (Zhao, Seibert and Hills 2005). On the basis of the findings from Zhao et al.'s 2005 study, we have sufficient evidence to conclude that MBA students during the course of their studies strengthen their confidence to become entrepreneurial through mechanisms such as self-efficacy beliefs – personal mastery, role modelling, social persuasion and physiological states, which impact them positively.

From the additional attributes identified and analysed, a clear need emerges for organisations to consider additional attributes related to globalisation, corporate, social involvement / responsibility and entrepreneurial leadership in setting up an Employee Value Proposition.

5.5 Conclusion

In summary, *Compensation* remains the most important driver of attraction. That being said, there are several other core drivers that also feature rather prominently, including: *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*; *Work–life Balance*; *Empowerment*; and *Development Opportunities*.

Organisations should also consider attributes like globalisation and corporate social responsibility as non-core drivers for attraction or perhaps more as core drivers for commitment levels of, especially, younger employees once they have joined the organisations. This is a view shared by the CLC (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:98). Entrepreneurial leadership may pose challenges from an Employee Value Proposition perspective. A question worth pondering is whether MBAs want to be their own bosses or whether they want to be employed in an organisation; either way there is a level of entrepreneurial leadership they want to be challenged with.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study with a summary of the key findings from South African MBA students and graduates pertaining to the significant attributes that comprise a compelling Employee Value Proposition. The results of the study will be used to supplement the existing body of literature pertaining to the significant preferences of South African MBAs. In addition, recommendations will be provided to competitive organisations on how to attract MBAs. Recommendations will also be provided to business schools for informing their MBA curriculum, producing greater employability among MBA graduates and enhancing their advisory capabilities to industry on the significant preferences of MBAs. In conclusion, recommendations for future research will be suggested, based on scope of this research and the findings and considerations that were uncovered during the research.

6.2 Conclusions of the study

In today's labour market, competition for employees in the war for talent takes place at different levels (Chambers et al. 1998; Corporate Leadership Council 1999; Hiltrop 1999; Michaels et al. 2001; Corporate Leadership Council 2006b). Montgomery and Ramus (2007) view success in this war for talent as the ability to attract graduating MBA students, especially from the top-ranked international business schools. This view is supported by Professor Nick Binedell, a director from GIBS in South Africa, who believes that a good MBA remains excellently suitable for survival in the modern business world (Fin24 2008a). Professor Binedell further states in the Financial Mail (2008a) article that the MBA qualification provides the relevant global insight into management issues, with the graduate able to play a strategic role in any organisation.

Within the South African context, organisations must step up to the challenge and meet their employees' needs if they want to win this war otherwise someone else will. Organisations must define their competitive Employment Value Proposition as relevant to their strategic priorities but as different from their competitors. Their Employment Value Proposition must consider the attributes preferred by MBAs as highlighted in this study. Compensation; job meaning, purpose and impact; future career opportunities; work–life balance; empowerment; and development opportunities are the significant drivers of attraction. The real challenge is to put together the best Employee Value Proposition on the market or one that is at least competitive.

6.2.1 Findings that address the gap in literature and provide guidance to competitive organisations for attracting MBAs

In considering the gap in terms of the limited literature that exists specifically focusing on the preferences of MBAs and HIPOs within South Africa for the attributes they find appealing, the following conclusions are presented to supplement the body of literature in this regard. In addition, the conclusions drawn and the recommendations offered in Section 6.3 can be used by competitive organisations easily, more specifically those within South Africa, to attract critical talent segments such as MBAs.

- *Compensation* is the most important driver of attraction, ranking as the highest attribute. *Compensation* is a rather complex concept, which would need to be unpacked into its various components of remuneration, reward, bonuses, share options and incentive schemes, etc. by any organisation intending to use it to attract MBAs.

- While compensation may be a powerful tool it is not the only tool for attracting talent to an organisation. Among MBAs there appears to be a yearning for more meaningful and purposeful work. Across most of the MBA groupings of gender and generation the attribute of *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact* ranked 2nd place. A major reason for studying an MBA is clearly to have access to and be sought after by successful well-led organisations

that deliver significant impact. This clearly has a link to person-organisation fit and the organisation's culture and values that speak to greater meaning, purpose and impact.

Another view that could shed light on the reason for MBAs' preference for the *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact* attribute is that MBAs, being HIPOs, have the ability, passion and motivation to work under pressure in order to drive results. This allows them to make an impact for their own personal achievements, also known as *meritocracy*, which was the 7th Core attribute of this study.

Younger people of this generation, Generation Ys work to live rather than live to work as their parents did. Younger candidates see a job as merely providing the means to do what they want to do, which is to have fun, build quality relationships and fulfil a purpose with spiritual meaning.

- MBAs on the whole find *Future Career Opportunities* both preferential and appealing when presented by organisations because over one-third of HIPOs are uncertain about what their career holds for them over the next five years (Corporate Leadership Council 2010). Future career and development opportunities go hand in hand. Both offer MBAs the opportunity to develop and progress within an organisation. While *Future Career Opportunities* is an important attribute, it holds an element of meritocracy for MBAs, as indicated in the literature (Corporate Leadership Council 2009, 2010), implying that MBAs may also be taking charge of their own developmental requirements and in this regard have a slightly decreasing preference for this attribute.

- When future career and development opportunities present themselves usually *Work–life Balance*, a non-financial attribute, goes out the door. As a case in point South African MBAs seem to favour the *Work–life Balance* attribute slightly less than respondents in previous studies carried out by the CLC in South Africa (2009). Within South Africa, a particular anomaly that presented itself in the results is that MBAs create, by their own doing, a

situation in which work-life balance is threatened and so becomes an attribute that is highly sought after.

Millennials, the next generation of workers, come across as high-energy, achieving young people who want to play by the rules. This makes them very attractive to employers. Generation Xers are and will continue to be culturally independent and suspicious of the workplace, disliking processes and policies but valuing results. They are workaholics who are living in the future but continue to yearn for work-life balance.

Gender difference deductions about work-life balance are that female MBAs place more importance on greater flexibility and the career choices provided by the person-organisation fit rather than on the work-life balance attribute.

- *Empowerment*, another non-financial attribute, presents somewhat of an anomaly within the South African context. Empowerment is recognised as important, especially for local MBAs, who have certainly followed the trend of increasing preference for empowerment. MBAs, like most employees within South Africa, desire greater respect through empowerment. They also see respect, ethics, integrity, corporate governance and person-organisation fit as vitally important.

  Empowerment is especially important among female MBAs, who see this attribute as enhancing credibility and confidence, encouraging a more proactive approach to work problems and increasing their abilities to engage in work-related discussions more fully, leading to overall greater respect and recognition.

- South African MBAs consider *Development Opportunities* as an important attraction driver. South African MBAs together with HIPOs have a slightly lower preference for development opportunities. This poses the question from a South African MBA perspective as to whether development opportunities drive greater employee commitment rather than attraction. Development opportunities usually comprise personal growth and training, providing employees with long-term opportunities for development and

career advancement, in this way driving greater engagement, commitment and retention.

- Work attitudes and employee preferences for the attributes of an Employee Value Proposition are complex social phenomena which are influenced and shaped by a whole host of factors, including the socialisation process, self-efficacy theory and the "framework of female deficiency" (Clement 1987), gender role stereotypes (Prentice and Carranza 2002), gender identification (Gupta et al. 2009) and trends in mothers' and fathers' child-care time (Sayer et al. 2004) to mention but a few.

The conclusions discussed thus far provide important implications, both for MBAs and organisations. Clearly there is value for organisations which are seeking to employ MBAs, obviously in the hope that MBAs possess the high energy and passion of those with the motivation and capacity to co-create new insights and the capability to communicate, coach and facilitate the implementation of new ideas. While at the same time the ability of organisations to create a competitive Employee Value Proposition provides MBAs with access to and allows them to be sought after by successful well-led organisations that deliver significant impact.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Recommendations for corporate South Africa

The following recommendations have been included to supplement corporate South Africa's understanding of the preferences of MBAs for the attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition. These recommendations have been developed on the basis of the research and the literature reviewed.

- Not surprisingly, *Compensation*, as identified by the CLC (2006a), ranks the highest most valued Employee Value Proposition attribute by South African MBAs. In order to understand more fully the preference for this attribute, consideration must be given to other components in the definition of

Compensation. Value strategies will need to be extended to include base salary, incentives, cash recognition, premium pay, ownership and the pay process as other forms of compensation;

- Organisations must consider targeting non-financial attributes as opposed to compensation, as otherwise this may lead to higher levels of turnover and inflationary remunerations (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:2);
- Organisations can become less reliant on higher compensation levels for attracting talent by making their Employee Value Proposition more attractive. This had the added cost advantage as it reduces the compensation premium that organisations must pay to employ talent (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:12);
- Surprising from a South African perspective is that meaning, purpose and impact of jobs as well as an empowering work environment are considered significant for both generations of MBAs and so organisations will have to show effectively that their Employee Value Proposition comprises these attributes;
- Development opportunities are not always easy to come by. As such organisations must consider rotational swap outs, not on the basis of a skills shortage but rather to foster proactive development. Rotational swaps will allow similar graduates from operating organisations in other countries during the graduate programme to participate for a or two years after which employees must then return to their host operating countries;
- Organisations must adequately make candidates aware of their future career and development opportunities in order to drive attraction, as these are significant in candidates' decision making and not as tangible as financial benefits. Lack of awareness regarding future career and development opportunities poses risks for the organisation especially when the delivery does not meet the employee's expectations. This view aligns with what the CLC found during its studies (2006a:48);
- Organisations must determine the optimum Employee Value Proposition for Generation Y employees and segment the proposition by adding attributes such as *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*;

and *Empowerment* to the core, as these are relatively more important and unique to this demographic (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:100);

- In the same way, organisations must also determine what works for female employees and segment the proposition by adding attributes such as *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Future Career Opportunities*; *Empowerment*; *Work-life Balance*; and *Person-organisation Fit* to the core, as these are significant for the female gender group (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:100);
- Customising the Employee Value Proposition can improve attraction and commitment outcomes for certain talent segments but not for all. In ensuring consistency with the core Employee Value Proposition, it is critical to apply segmentation only if the segment is important to the organisation's strategy and if the benefits of a customised Employee Value Proposition can significantly improve on the performance of the core Employee Value Proposition and generate positive returns;
- Internal staffs are considered the best source of trustworthy information and the greatest influence of external attraction. Organisations according to the CLC (2006a) must make promoters of their employees, especially as fewer than one in four of the average organisation's current employees are willing to recommend the organisation for employment to potential candidates;
- Organisations need to have a good foundational grasp of the characteristics, communication styles and social attitudes of Generation Ys, a new breed of employees, in order to impact this emerging and enormous generation positively;
- Most organisations generally position their jobs as having impact, recognising and respecting employees and providing work–life balance. The devil is in the detail of ensuring that these assertions are clarified (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:18). When positioning Employee Value Proposition attributes such as the employee's development or future career opportunities, HR and hiring managers must ensure that their promises are in line with what the organisation can realistically deliver and what the candidate can realistically achieve. Failure to do so will result in diminished commitment after the candidate has joined the organisation;

- Creating an atmosphere where employees feel a sense of empowerment not only impacts their day-to-day work, but also creates a broader sense of ownership that impacts their likelihood of promoting the organisation to others. Organisations will have to demonstrate trust, flexibility and organisational values to increase the probability of employees advocating the organisation in the labour market (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:viii).

6.3.2 Recommendations for business schools

Certain non-core attributes were found to be important to respondents in this study. These attributes should be considered in terms of how they link to and compete with the core attributes, depending on variations in employee circumstances, and regional, age and generational differences. These findings and the recommendations arising from them are important from a business school perspective as they indicate what the future workforce is currently considering as important and how to make best use of this information. While not significant at this stage, these non-core attributes will be useful for informing future MBA curricula, producing greater employability among MBA graduates and enhancing the advisory capabilities of business schools to industry on the potential preferences of South African MBAs.

In this regard, the researcher would like to draw attention to *Organisational Stability.* This attribute is not considered important by South African MBAs, perhaps because of the lower impact that the 2008 recession has had on South African MBAs in particular than on other employees. However, it is increasingly becoming important when considering the impact of globalisation within the South African context.

Meritocracy, although the 7th ranked attribute, is not significant but is an attribute that talks to the characteristics of South African MBAs in terms of the control they wish to retain regarding their futures in organisations as well as the promotion and reward expected, based on their personal achievements.

Respect, Ethics, Governance and Integrity while important is not seen by South African MBAs as important enough when considering an organisation for employment. However, this closely links with the attributes of *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact*; *Empowerment*; and *Person-organisation Fit*, which are significant for MBAs.

Corporate Social Involvement / *Responsibility*, *Business Travel*, *Location* and *Camaraderie* while not important from an HR panel of experts' perspective are definitely worth consideration. Considering that corporate social involvement and responsibility came out strongly as a theme, there is clearly a need, based on the literature (Bhattacharya et al. 2008), for South African organisations to assess whether there is some connectedness between the values employees are looking for in organisations and what the organisation's CSR is delivering as its CSR efforts humanise the organisation and depict it as a contributor to society rather than as being solely concerned with profit maximisation.

Business Travel and *Location,* giving rise to international opportunities, mobility and travel, were highlighted in Section 5.4 *Discussion of the additional attributes*, especially by younger male MBAs, as an important attribute for consideration. This definitely would need to be further investigated, especially in light of *Globalisation*, another recurring theme in the additional attributes.

The researcher believes that because the world is getting smaller through globalisation, improved transportation and technology, HIPOs have a need for increased international and cross-cultural understanding of business. This means that they need greater opportunities for business travel, foreign assignments and foreign locations.

Entrepreneurial Leadership as an additional attribute must be considered within the context of the aspirations of HIPOs and more specifically MBAs. MBAs in general are known to have aspirations for venture creation and management. Another characteristic that must also be considered is the mediating role that self-efficacy plays in the development of MBA students' intentions to become entrepreneurs (Zhao et al. 2005). Zhao et al.'s (2005) findings provide sufficient

evidence for concluding that MBA students strengthen their confidence to become entrepreneurial, which impacts them positively.

In light of the conclusions presented, it is pertinent to understand that the quality of MBA graduates is dependent on the effectiveness of the MBA programmes. Therefore, business schools and their MBA programmes play a vital role in ensuring that high-quality MBA programmes support the needs of the organisations that aim to employ MBA graduates. HR managers and business line managers who recruit MBAs need to evaluate the admission standards of the business schools from which they select their MBA talent critically.

Business schools should consider the above findings in developing their academic studies and should revamp their MBA programmes where necessary. Development of work-related attributes must remain the focus of business schools. Current or new MBA students should also be cognisant of the deals on offer from the various organisations looking to recruit MBAs. They, the MBAs must re-evaluate to ensure that the deal aligns not only with their persona but also meets the requirements of their employers and keeps them employable. This is very much in line with the view of Abdullah and Yee (2009).

6.3.3 Summary of the recommendations

- Any competitive Employee Value Proposition for South African MBAs should consider the six core attributes of *Compensation*; *Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact; Future Career Opportunities*; *Work–life Balance*; *Empowerment*; and *Development Opportunities* considered most significant to attraction. These attributes must be aligned with the organisation's long-term strategy;
- The Employee Value Proposition where possible must be customised and segmented to address gender, generational, geographic and level-based variation where important to the organisation's strategy and only if the benefits of a customisation can significantly improve on the performance of the core Employee Value Proposition;
- The customisation of any Employee Value Proposition must be locally relevant and globally consistent to be successful;

- Managing the consistency of the Employee Value Proposition experience is important to ensure that the Employee Value Proposition credibility is maintained;
- The organisation must leverage current employees as promoters of its Employee Value Proposition in the organisation's primary communication channel; and
- Organisations must actively manage both the Employee Value Proposition and the employee experience in order to build competitive advantage in the labour market.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

This research focused on identifying and evaluating the significant attributes of an Employee Value Proposition that South African MBAs found appealing, with the aim of assisting both business schools to refine their curricula and competitive organisations to fine-tune their efforts to recruit high potential MBAs.

The following areas are recommended for further investigation, based on themes that were uncovered in the process of compiling the research and that fell outside the stated delimitations of this research. Investigating these areas would further supplement the body of literature on those attributes that comprise a compelling Employee Value Proposition specifically for South African MBAs while at the same time informing business schools of necessary additions to their curricula to ensure that MBAs are better equipped to meet the challenges facing them once they graduate:

- Females are increasingly entering the labour markets and more so in the management space. Simpson et al. (2005) imply that, despite the popularity of MBA degrees, not much is known about the effectiveness of the MBA qualification for females wishing to become managers. The authors deduce that females do not seem to progress as far or even receive the same remuneration as their male counterparts.

- Female MBAs are seemingly placing more importance on greater flexibility and the career choices provided by the person-organisation fit rather than on the work-life balance attribute. This presents an area that may require further research.
- Studies (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:69) conclude that there are minimal differences between males and females and their preferences for the attributes of an employee value proposition. Furthermore, while men and women value similar job attributes women on the other hand have been less likely to obtain these attributes in a job. Further research is needed on the possible effects of this conflict between desire and reality on both women and organisations.
- *Work-life Balance* as the 4th most important attribute needs further research on its impact, depending on the demographics of gender, generation and geographic variation.
- *Work–life Balance* is particularly important for the emerging labour market. Given that geographic differences have been shown to present variations in attribute preferences, there is a need for organisations to examine local or regional differences closely in terms of how the labour market will respond to their Employee Value Proposition.
- *Empowerment* and its impact on gender, race and age require further elaboration, especially because of the anomaly that has come out of the research within the South African context.
- The impact of race, particularly within the South African context, is always an area for further research and may provide greater insights into the preferences for empowerment, respect, ethics, corporate governance and integrity which featured prominently in this study.
- Geographic differences in the Employee Value Proposition have greater variation than differences by age, level, gender, function or industry. With a few exceptions the most important variations in Employee Value Proposition preferences are found across geographic boundaries (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:66). Organisations with multicultural operations will need to consider contrasting their Employee Value Proposition through design or in

the way it is communicated to meet the needs of employees in their different operating countries.

- A segmented Employee Value Proposition requires active management as organisations with too many segmented employment value propositions run the risk of being perceived as inconsistent in their delivery of the Employee Value Proposition. Research is required to assist organisations to develop an employee brand to guide trade-offs between global consistency and the segmentation required for customisation in order to be successful.
- Researchers should take into account and investigate the increased trust placed in the various consumable media by Generation Ys, as this presents an opportunity for organisations to design, craft and present the Employee Value Proposition more effectively to Generation Ys when recruiting them.

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APPENDIX A

Letter to the panel of experts and business line managers

Opening statement to respondent

The researcher will begin the session by introducing herself and describing the aim of the research. It will be explained upfront that any information shared by the respondent will be in the public domain should it be published; however, the individual's names will be kept anonymous.

In an attempt to enhance consistency and therefore reliability, the following short paragraph will be read to each respondent, giving a brief background to the research and clarifying any potential misinterpretations:

> Thank you for agreeing to contribute to this research study. The survey should not take longer than 20 minutes. Your contributions will be anonymous; neither your name nor your company name will be linked to any statements or comments made.
>
> The research aims to identify a comprehensive list of attributes, comprising an appealing Employee Value Proposition, that are preferred by South African Master of Business Administration students. This will be achieved by drawing on your experiences, specifically in the areas of talent and human capital management, employee value proposition and human resource best practices.
>
> Please feel free to raise any new or different attributes which you feel are applicable to you as this is an important part of the research. Please, also bear in mind that it is important to focus on how things actually happen in your environment, even if this may be different from formal company guidelines.

I would like to remind you again that the information provided in the survey will be in the public domain once the research report is completed; however, your name will not be linked to any information shared in the survey.

APPENDIX B

Comprehensive list of attributes of the Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students

Table 24 includes the possible attributes of the Employee Value Proposition for South African MBA students.

Please identify those attributes of the Employee Value Proposition for South African Master of Business Administration (MBA) students that you consider applicable.

Insert a mark in the **Choice** column to indicate your selection based on the legend provided at the end of the table:

Table 24: Comprehensive list of attributes

Attribute Name	Definition	Choice
Business Travel	The amount of out-of-town business travel required by the job	
Camaraderie	Whether working for the organisation provides opportunities to socialise with other employees	
Collegial Work Environment	Whether the work environment is team-oriented and collaborative	
Compensation	The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package including base salary, incentives, cash recognition, premium pay, ownership and the pay process as other forms of compensation	
Co-worker Quality	The quality of the co-workers in the organisation	
Customer Reputation	The reputation of the clients and customers served in performing the job	
Development Opportunities	The developmental/educational opportunities provided by the job and organisation	
Diversity	The organisation's level of commitment to having a diverse workforce	
Empowerment	The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career	

Attribute Name	Definition	Choice
Environmental Responsibility	The organisation's level of commitment to environmental health and sustainability	
Ethics	The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity	
Formal/Informal Work Environment	Whether the work environment is formal or informal	
Future Career Opportunities	The future career opportunities provided by the organisation	
"Great Employer" Recognition	Whether or not the organisation's reputation as an employer has been recognised by a third-party organisation	
Health Benefits	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's health benefits	
Industry	The desirability of the organisation's industry to the respondent	
Innovation	The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects	
Job–Interests Alignment	Whether the job responsibilities match your interests	
Job Impact	The level of impact the job has on outcomes	
Location	The geographic location of the job that the organisation is offering	
Manager Quality	The quality of the organisation's managers	
Market Position	The competitive position the organisation holds in its market(s)	
Meritocracy	Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted based on their achievements	
Organisational Growth Rate	The growth rate of the organisation's business	
Organisation Size	The size of the organisation's workforce	
Organisational Stability	The level of stability of the organisation and the job	
People Management	The organisation's reputation for managing people	
Person-organisation fit	Personal values are aligned with the values of the organisation to identify a fit	
Product Brand Awareness	The level of awareness in the market place for the product's brand	
Product Quality	The organisation's product or service quality reputation	
Recognition	The amount of recognition provided to employees by the	

Attribute Name	Definition	Choice
	organisation	
Respect	The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees	
Retirement Benefits	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's retirement benefits	
Risk Taking	The amount of risk that the organisation encourages employees to take	
Senior Leadership Reputation	The quality of the organisation's senior leadership	
Social Responsibility	The organisation's level of commitment to social responsibility (e.g., community service, philanthropy)	
Technology Level	The extent to which the organisation invests in modern technology and equipment	
Vacation	The amount of holiday/vacation time that employees earn annually	
Work–Life Balance	The extent to which the job allows you to balance your work and your other interests	
<<Add new attributes here>>		
<<Add new attributes here>>		

Legend:

Description	Mark
Applicable	√
Not Applicable	X
New – additional attributes not included in the current list must be written in at the bottom of the list. Please include the attribute name and definition.	N

APPENDIX C

Letter to the Universities requesting access to MBA students and alumni



The University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Graduate School of Business Administration

2 St. David's Place, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193, South Africa

P O Box 98, WITS, 2050

Telephone: +27 11 717 3947

Facsimile: +27 11 717 3538

Website: www.wbs.ac.za

Dear *Sir/Madam*

I am currently completing my MBA at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits) Business School, Johannesburg. A critical requirement for the completion of the program is the submission of a research report to the university. My research proposal which has been approved by Wits relates to identifying and evaluating the attributes of an appealing employee value proposition (EVP) for South African MBA students and graduates.

The study intends filling a gap in that while literature is limited on EVP per se, there exists a greater need, especially from corporate South Africa, to understand the preferences of MBAs for the attributes that comprise an appealing EVP. MBAs have been chosen as a study group because they are considered to be high potential candidates, having high levels of ability and past achievements (Trank et al. 2002). In addition, the Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) considers the EVP as being critical to talent attraction and commitment.

This ability to attract, engage, commit and ultimately retain talent has rapidly become a business imperative, especially among HR managers within the context of the war for talent. “The war for talent”, a termed coined by McKinsey and Company in 1997, recognised a phenomenon that many people were experiencing but had not articulated. Open competition for another organisation’s employees, once rare, is now a fact, and so executives must be fully aware that fast-moving labour markets require fast-moving organisations, with fresh new talent usually acquired through strategic poaching.

Globally, top of mind for many HR executives is why some organisations are able to attract significantly more than their fair share of talent. The secret appears to be in the way that highly successful organisations like Apple, Google, Southwest Airlines, McDonalds, and IBM have identified, differentiated, redefined and communicated their value proposition to their employees. These companies have quickly realised that “one size no longer fits all” especially when it comes to managing talent as every employee has their own mix of hopes and fears which may or may not align strongly with the culture of the organisation. This implies that the modern organisation must move beyond offering a single EVP and rather look to customising its value proposition to the preferences of each sought-after employee, consistent within the overall framework of the organisation’s employee brand.

In order to fill this gap, the existing body of literature will require supplementing through further analysis and evaluation. The intention of this study is therefore to compile a partially rank-ordered top-10 list of attributes that make up an EVP that South African MBAs find appealing. The study has a two-pronged research approach:

- The first part of the study presented a comprehensive list of attributes (as far as this was possible) of an EVP in the form of a survey to a panel of Human Resource experts and business line managers for validation purposes. Important to note: that the original list of attributes was derived from a literature review of academia.
- The second and key part of the study intends using the list of attributes validated in the first part of the study to identify a partially rank-ordered top-10 list of attributes that South African MBAs prefer through surveying university MBA students and alumni.

A total of 200 students and graduates are required to be surveyed incorporating gender, age (the generation gap) and geographical diversity. Data required for the research will be gathered from various universities/business schools by: 1) in-class survey of 2nd year MBA students and 2) online survey of MBA graduates (alumni).

The study results will provide guidance to competitive organisations, more specifically those within South Africa, on how to attract critical talent segments such as MBAs. Using the results of the study, these organisations should be able to differentiate, build and in some instances even manage an EVP for a critical segment of high potential employees (HIPOs) ensuring the attraction and subsequent engagement, commitment and retention of those employees.

On the other hand, business schools operating within South Africa may find the results of this study useful for informing their MBA curriculum, producing greater employability among MBA graduates as well as enhancing their advisory capabilities to industry on the preferences of South African MBAs.

Accordingly my request to the university is to be granted access to at least fifty MBA students (in-class) and MBA alumni during the last week of October and the 1st week of November 2011. The duration of the survey should be between 10 and 15 minutes. In-class MBA student respondents were asked to partially rank order the list of attributes using a printed handout while MBA graduate respondents were asked via email the same using an electronic list. Confidentiality was observed throughout the entire process with the view of contributing to academic knowledge.

In return for the time invested, the university will be offered a copy of the key findings across the entire research project. As this study was carried out across different geographical locations, age demographics and gender groups it will provide insights into the current trends in the labour markets and human resource management (HRM) beyond the scope of day-to-day operations. Access to such information can certainly be beneficial not only in today's HRM thinking, but HRM foresight for tomorrow and the foreseeable future.

It would definitely be value adding if you would be able to contribute to this body of knowledge.

On behalf of the Wits Business School we would like to thank you for taking the time to consider this request, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

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MBA Student

Wits Business School

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APPENDIX D

List of attributes selected and validated by the HR panel of experts and business line managers

Table 25: Summarised list of attributes for South African MBAs

Attribute Name	Definition
Compensation	The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package including base salary, incentives, cash recognition, premium pay, ownership and the pay process as other forms of compensation.
Empowerment	The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career
Future Career Opportunities	The future career opportunities provided by organisation
Industry	The desirability of the organisation's industry to the respondent
Innovation	The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects
Job Meaning, Purpose & Impact	The level of impact the job has on outcomes
Market Position	The competitive position the organisation holds in its market(s)
Meritocracy	Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted based on their achievements
Organisational Growth Rate	The growth rate of the organisation's business
Senior Leadership Reputation	The quality of the organisation's senior leadership
Development Opportunities	The developmental/educational opportunities provided by the job and organisation including youth development for enabling and supporting local priorities and challenges
Ethics	The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity
Job–Interests Alignment	Whether the job responsibilities match your interests
Manager Quality	The quality of the organisation's managers
Organisational Stability	The level of stability of the organisation and the job
People Management	The organisation's reputation for managing people
Person-organisation fit	Personal values are align with the values of the organisation to

Attribute Name	Definition
	identify a fit
Product Quality	The organisation's product or service quality reputation
Recognition	The amount of recognition provided to employees by the organisation
Respect	The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees
Technology Level	The extent to which the organization invests in modern technology and equipment
Work–Life Balance	The extent to which the job allows you to balance your work and your other interests

APPENDIX E

Employee Value Proposition survey provided to MBAs

Employee Value Proposition Survey

Q1 Please take a moment to complete this survey of 9 questions which aims to identify the attributes of an Employee Value Proposition (EVP) that South African Master of Business Administration (MBA) students and graduates find appealing. For the purposes of this survey, an Employee Value Proposition is defined as "the set of attributes that the labour market and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in the organisation". The survey will take about 3-5 minutes to complete. There are no risks relative to participating in this study. As your time and effort is valuable to me, I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration. Confidentiality will be observed throughout the entire process with the view of contributing to academic knowledge. All questionnaires will be concealed, and no one other than the primary researcher (Yuvi Rajha) and my supervisor (Mr Conrad Viedge, Senior HR Lecturer at Wits Business School, Johannesburg, South Africa) will have access to it. The data collected will be stored in the HIPPA-compliant Qualtrics secure database until it has been deleted by the primary researcher. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you have any questions regarding your rights as research participants or want to provide any feedback, please feel free to contact the primary researcher Yuvi Rajha directly on yuvi.rajha@gmail.com or sms on +27 83 222 1237. Alternatively you may contact my supervisor Mr Conrad Viedge on conrad.viedge@wits.ac.za or sms +27 83 777 3110.

❍ ACCEPT (1)

Q2 What is your gender?

- ❍ Male (1)
- ❍ Female (2)

Q3 What is your current age?

- ❍ 21 to 30 (2)
- ❍ 31 to 40 (3)
- ❍ 41 to 50 (4)
- ❍ 51 to 60 (5)
- ❍ 61 to 65 (6)

Q4 What is your status at the Business School?

- ❍ MBA final-year student (1)
- ❍ MBA graduate (2)
- ❍ Other (please specify the qualification/s) (3) _____

Answer If What is your status at the Business School? MBA final-year student Is Selected Or What is your status at the Business School? Other (please specify the qualification/s) Is Selected

Q5 What type of MBA student are you?

- ❍ Full time (1)
- ❍ Part time (2)
- ❍ Other (please specify the type of MBA student) (3) _____

Q6 Which Business School are you currently attending or have attended for MBA studies?

- University of Cape Town (GSB) (1)
- Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) (2)
- Milpark Business School (3)
- University of Stellenbosch (USB) (4)
- University of Witwatersrand (WBS) (5)
- Other (please specify the business school) (6) _____

Q7 Where do you currently live?

- The Eastern Cape (1)
- The Free State (2)
- Gauteng (3)
- KwaZulu-Natal (4)
- Limpopo (5)
- Mpumalanga (6)
- The Northern Cape (7)
- North West (8)
- The Western Cape (9)
- Other (please specify the country) (10) _____

Q8 Instructions for completing this question: There are 2 boxes included below: The box on the left-hand side called Items comprises of a list of possible attributes of an employee value proposition for South African MBA students. The box on the right-hand side called Top 10 Preferred Attributes will need to be populated with the preferred attributes that are selected from the Items box. You are required to Drag, Drop and Rank the Preferred Attributes selected from the Items box as follows: 1) Identify the preferred attributes that appeals to you by dragging it one at a time from the Items box on the left and dropping it into the centre of the Top 10 Preferred Attributes box on the right. Once all 10 attributes have been dropped then 2) Rank the attributes in the Top 10 Preferred Attributes box by dragging and placing it into the required order so that it reflects a ranking between 1 and 10 consistent with (1) being your most preferred at the top and (10) being your least preferred attribute. Ensure that you select exactly 10 attributes. You will note that as you move the attributes up and down in the required sequence, the ranking is automatically adjusted. If you experience any problems dropping the Items into the Top 10 box, please ensure that you drop the Items in the middle of the Top 10 box. This will ensure that the items do not slide back to the Items box.

Top 10 Preferred Attributes
_____ Compensation - financial package (1)
_____ Empowerment - level of involvement (2)
_____ Future Career Opportunities (3)
_____ Industry - desirability and media opinion (4)
_____ Innovation (5)
_____ Job Meaning, Purpose and Impact (6)
_____ Market Position - competitiveness (7)
_____ Meritocracy - reward and promotion based on employee achievement (8)
_____ Organisational Growth Rate (9)
_____ Senior Leadership Reputation (16)
_____ Development Opportunities (17)
_____ Ethics, Governance and Integrity (18)
_____ Job-Interests Alignment (19)
_____ Manager Quality (20)
_____ Organisational Stability (21)
_____ People Management (22)
_____ Person-organisation Fit incl. culture and values (23)
_____ Product Quality (24)
_____ Recognition (25)
_____ Respect (26)
_____ Technology Level (27)
_____ Work-Life Balance (29)

Q9 Include where required, additional attributes that appeal to you but are not available for selection in the list of 22 attributes contained in the Items box

Additional Attribute 1 (1)

Additional Attribute 2 (2)

Additional Attribute 3 (3)

APPENDIX F

Consistency matrix

Research problem stated here					
Sub-problem	**Literature Review**	**Hypotheses or Propositions or Research questions**	**Source of data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
To determine the pool of possible attributes that can be used to measure the preferences of South African MBA students for the attributes of an Employee Value Proposition (EVP).	Cantrell (2006), Cantrell and Smith (2010), Clark (2007), Chambers et al. (1998), Cappelli (2000), Michaels et al. (2001), Corporate Leadership Council (2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006e, 2006d, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010), Montgomery and Ramus (2007), Heger (2007), Bell (2005), Conlon et al. (2010), Kochanski and Elliott (2010), Berthon et al. (2005), Dewhurst et al. (2009), Cheese et al. (2007), Cheese (2008), Trank et al. (2002), Horwitz et al. (2003), Mintzberg (2004), Simpson	Is the list of attributes that comprise an Employee Value Proposition comprehensive when compared with the views expressed by human resource experts and business line managers?	CLC's 38 attributes mapped to Sibson's ROW Model, other academia, body of literature and educational resources formed the first research instrument (survey) to be presented to HR experts and business line managers for validation.	Nominal data –list of attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition (EVP) with definitions See Table 24 (in Appendix B)	General inductive analysis, researcher judgement and rationale were used to determine as far as possible a comprehensive list of 39 attributes for an Employee Value Proposition derived from the literature review in Chapter 2

Research problem stated here					
Sub-problem	**Literature Review**	**Hypotheses or Propositions or Research questions**	**Source of data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
	(2000b, 2000a), Simpson et al. (2005), Thomas and Wise (1999), Ng and Burke (2005), Bhattacharya et al. (2008), Murray (2007), Brown and Perry (1994), Filbeck and Preece (2003), Fortune (2011), Fombrun and Shanley (1990), Fombrun (1996), Judge and Cable (1997), Cable and Judge (1994), Ingham (2009), Murray (1997), Coomes and DeBard (2004), Sayer et al. (2004), Corrigall and Konrad (2006), Gupta et al. (2009), Scherer et al. (1990), Clement (1987), Lacy et al. (1983), Lytton (1980), Harris and Sutton (1995), Furlonger (2010), Thomas (2006), McCrindle				

Research problem stated here					
Sub-problem	**Literature Review**	**Hypotheses or Propositions or Research questions**	**Source of data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
	(2003) and Browne (1997)				
To evaluate the preferences of South African MBA students for the attributes that comprise an appealing Employee Value Proposition	Kalof et al. (2008), Creswell (2003), Qualtrics Labs (2011), Thomas (2006), Keller (2010) and Stacey (2006).	What are the significant attributes of an Employee Value Proposition that appeals to South African MBAs?	The second research instrument was a survey presented to MBA students (respondents). The survey comprised a set of statements or options with definitions, the equivalent of 22 attributes. The respondents were asked to partially rank order (code "1" to "10"), i.e. to select their 10 most preferred attributes.	Ordinal – rank-ordered data	Quantitative techniques were employed for the analysis of the results obtained from the rank-order questionnaire to determine normalised means and standard deviations from the rank-order questionnaire.

APPENDIX G

CLC's Global Drivers of Attraction Difference: 2006-2009

EVP Attributes	Rank Order of Importance for Attraction		Change in Rank Order, 2006–2009
	2009	2006	
Compensation	1	1	→ 0
Future Career Opportunities	2	2	→ 0
Work-Life Balance	3	3	→ 0
Stability	5	4	↓ (1)
Development Opportunities	4	5	↑ 1
Respect	7	6	↓ (1)
Job-Interests Alignment	10	7	↓ (3)
Location	8	8	→ 0
Recognition	11	9	↓ (2)
Ethics/Integrity	9	10	↑ 1
Empowerment	16	11	↓ (5)
Meritocracy	18	12	↓ (6)
People Management	12	13	↑ 1
Product/Service Quality	14	14	→ 0
Innovation	13	15	↑ 2
Health Benefits	19	16	↓ (3)
Retirement Benefits	27	17	↓ (10)
Vacation	33	18	↓ (15)
Manager Quality	6	19	↑ 13

EVP Attributes	Rank Order of Importance for Attraction		Change in Rank Order, 2006–2009
	2009	2006	
Market Position	17	20	↑ 3
Technology	22	21	↓ (1)
Collegial Work Environment	15	22	↑ 7
Coworker Quality	21	23	↑ 2
Organization Growth Rate	24	24	→ 0
Well Known Brand	20	25	↑ 5
Camaraderie	35	26	↓ (9)
Social Responsibility	32	27	↓ (5)
"Great Employer" Recognition	25	28	↑ 3
Informal Work Environment	26	29	↑ 3
Industry	28	30	↑ 2
Senior Leader Reputation	30	31	↑ 1
Organization Size	23	32	↑ 9
Diversity	29	33	↑ 4
Level of Impact	31	34	↑ 3
Environmental Responsibility	34	35	↑ 1
Customer Prestige	36	36	→ 0
Risk Taking	38	37	↓ (1)
Business Travel	37	38	↑ 1

Figure 11: CLC's Global Drivers of Attraction Difference: 2006-2009

(Corporate Leadership Council 2009:41)

CLC's South African Drivers of Attraction Difference: 2006-2009

EVP Attributes	Rank Order of Importance for Attraction		Change in Rank Order, 2006–2009
	2009	2006	
Future Career Opportunities	1	2	↑ 1
Compensation	2	1	↓ (1)
Work-Life Balance	3	11	↑ 8
Development Opportunities	4	3	↓ (1)
Organizational Stability	5	4	↓ (1)
Ethics/Integrity	6	5	↓ (1)
Respect	7	6	↓ (1)
Recognition	8	8	→ 0
Empowerment	9	7	↓ (2)
People Management	10	10	→ 0
Job-Interests Alignment	11	9	↓ (2)
Innovation	12	14	↑ 2
Location	13	20	↑ 7
Product/Service Quality	14	13	↓ (1)
Retirement Benefits	15	17	↑ 2
Manager Quality	16	19	↑ 3
Organizational Growth	17	21	↑ 4
Well Known Brand	18	16	↓ (2)
Health Benefits	19	24	↑ 5

EVP Attributes	Rank Order of Importance for Attraction		Change in Rank Order, 2006–2009
	2009	2006	
Market Position	20	15	↓ (5)
Diversity	21	18	↓ (3)
Senior Leader Reputation	22	23	↑ 1
"Great Employer" Recognition	23	26	↑ 3
Meritocracy	24	12	↓ (12)
Technology	25	22	↓ (3)
Organization Size	26	32	↑ 6
Job Impact	27	25	↓ (2)
Coworker Quality	28	28	→ 0
Customer Prestige	29	29	→ 0
Social Responsibility	30	30	→ 0
Industry	31	31	→ 0
Informal Environment	32	33	↑ 1
Collegial Work Environment	33	27	↓ (6)
Risk Taking	34	35	↑ 1
Environmental Responsibility	35	36	↑ 1
Vacation	36	34	↓ (2)
Camaraderie	37	37	→ 0
Business Travel	38	38	→ 0

Figure 12: CLC's South African Drivers of Attraction Difference: 2006-2009 (Corporate Leadership Council 2009:42)

CLC's HIPO Employee Value Proposition Attribute Preferences and Rank-Order Levels in the United States: 2008-2010

EVP Attributes	Rank Order of Preference Levels		Preference Levels	
	2010	2008	2010	2008
Compensation	1	1	62%	68%
Future Career Opportunities	2	2	40%	50%
Work-Life Balance	3	3	38%	39%
Organization and Job Stability	4	8	38%	23%
Ethics/Integrity	5	5	29%	26%
Health Benefits	6	13	29%	12%
Location	7	6	27%	26%
Job-Interests Alignment	8	7	23%	24%
Development Opportunities	9	4	22%	30%
Manager Quality	10	12	17%	12%
Retirement Benefits	11	22	16%	7%
Respect	12	19	14%	9%
Empowerment	13	10	12%	15%
Innovative Work	14	9	11%	19%
Product/Service Quality	15	23	11%	7%
Meritocracy	16	16	11%	11%
Coworker Quality	17	18	10%	10%
Vacation	18	29	9%	4%
Recognition	19	15	8%	11%

EVP Attributes	Rank Order of Preference Levels		Preference Levels	
	2010	2008	2010	2008
Collegial Work Environment	20	21	7%	8%
Job Impact	21	14	6%	11%
Market Position	22	24	6%	6%
People Management	23	17	6%	10%
Senior Leadership Reputation	24	11	6%	12%
Organization Growth	25	27	5%	5%
Formality of Work Environment	26	25	5%	6%
"Great Employer" Recognition	27	30	5%	4%
Technology Level	28	20	5%	9%
Inclusion/Diversity	29	26	4%	6%
Camaraderie	30	37	3%	1%
Well-Known Product Brand	31	32	3%	3%
Social Responsibility	32	33	3%	2%
Organization Size	33	31	3%	3%
Industry Desirability	34	28	3%	4%
Risk Taking	35	35	2%	1%
Environmental Responsibility	36	36	1%	1%
Customer Prestige	37	38	1%	0%
Business Travel	38	34	1%	2%

Figure 13: CLC's HIPO Employee Value Proposition (EVP) Preferences and Rank Orders in the United States: 2008-2010 (Corporate Leadership Council 2010:59)

CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes: 23–29 Year Olds

EVP Attraction Drivers by Demographic

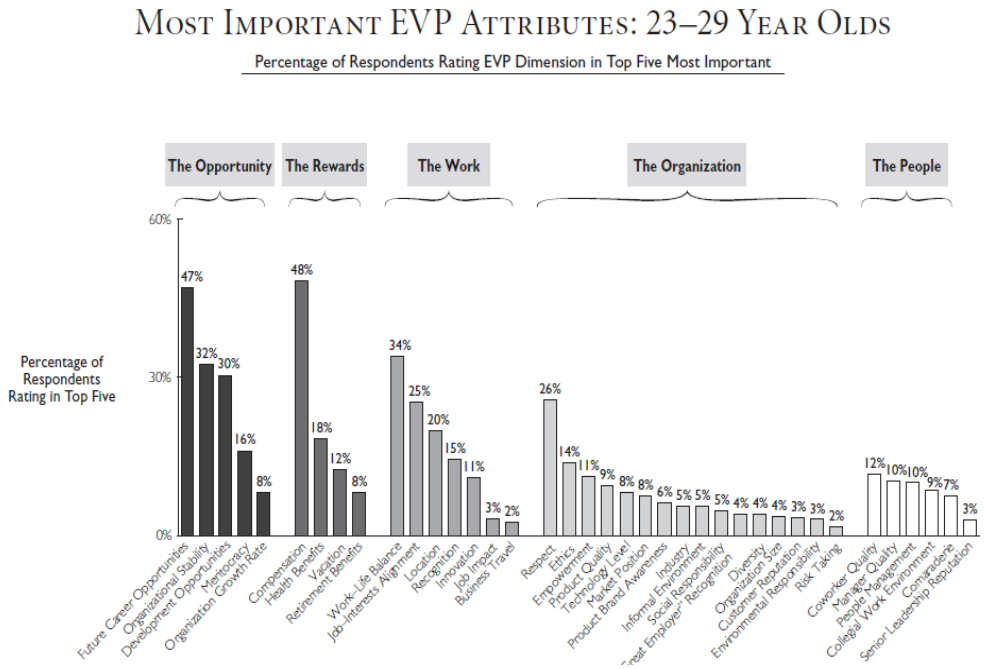


Figure 14: CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes for 23-29 Year Olds (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:162)

CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes: 50–59 Year Olds

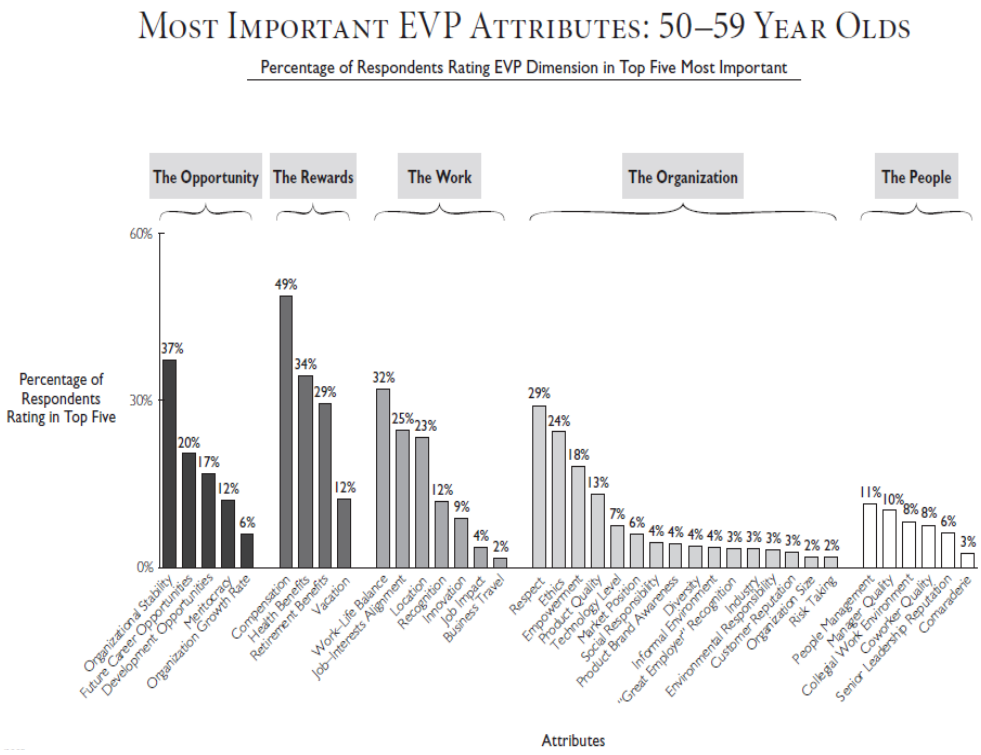


Figure 15: CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes for 50-59 Year Olds (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:163)

CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes: Male

EVP Attraction Drivers by Demographic

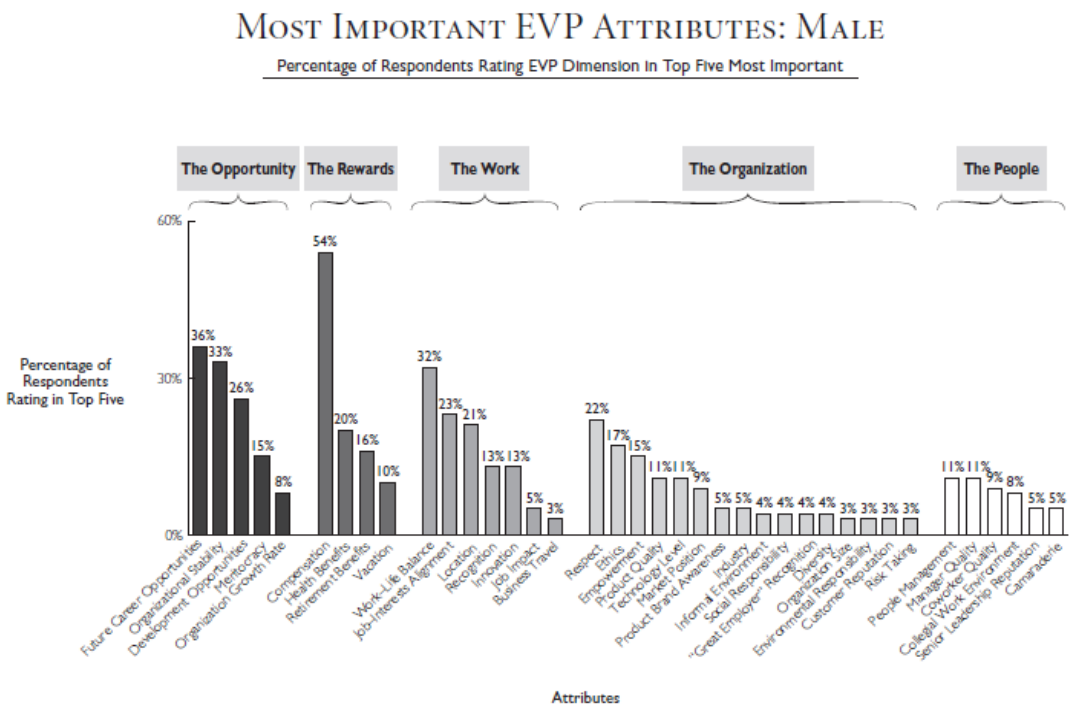


Figure 16: CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes for Males (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:174)

CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes: Female

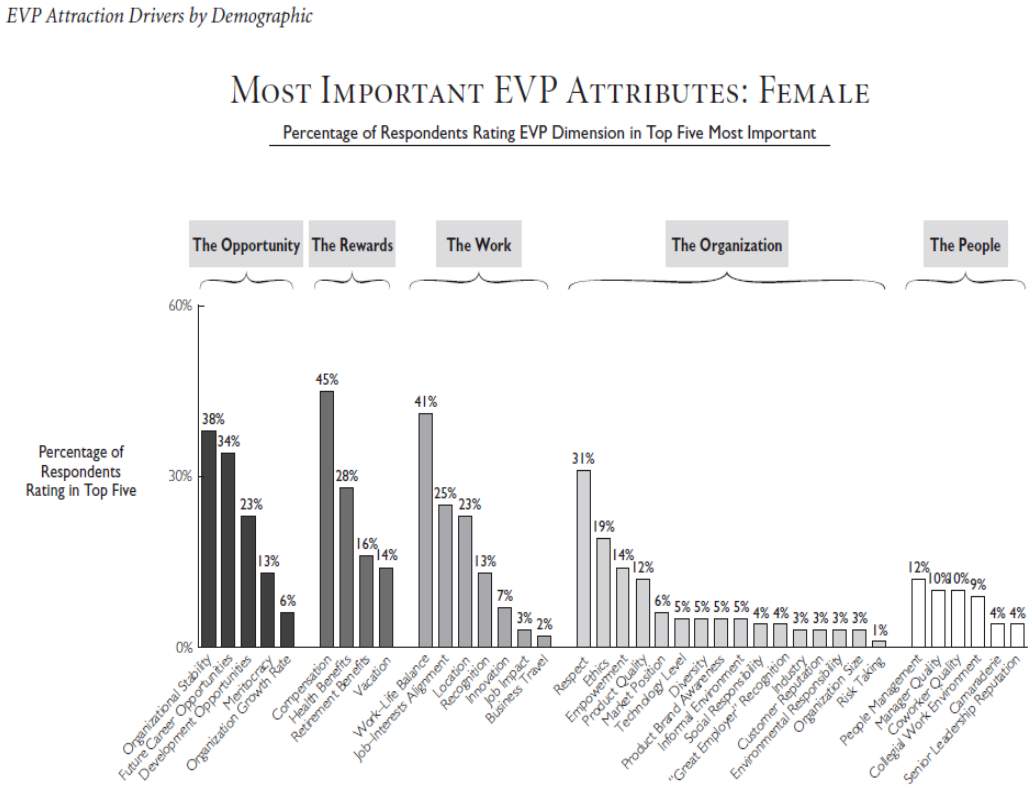


Figure 17: CLC's Most Important EVP Attributes for Females (Corporate Leadership Council 2006a:175)

APPENDIX H

Profile of HR Experts and Business Line Managers

Table 26: Profile of HR experts and business line manager respondents

Respondent Role and Title	Organisation	Industry	Contact Details	Age	Gender	Race
General Manager: Human Capital Management	MTN Group	Telecoms	0832120428	51-60	Male	White
Senior Manager: Employee Value Proposition	MTN Group	Telecoms	0832124123	31-40	Male	Black
Manager: Talent Management	MTN Group	Telecoms	0832005865	41-50	Female	White
Ex HR Director	Sandoz, South Africa	Pharmaceutical	0824663676	31-40	Female	Indian
Talent Management & Succession Director	Emirates Telecommunications Corp	Telecoms	jludike@hotmail.com	41-50	Male	White
Principal Member & Non-Executive Director: Fees, Incentives and Recognition	Rewards Results	Privately Held; Fine Art Industry	0833335865	31-40	Male	Indian
General Manager: Stakeholder Management	MTN Group	Telecoms	0832120199	31-40	Female	Indian
Eband Manager: Corporate Audit Department	Eskom	Power Utility	0725228640	31-40	Female	Indian

Respondent Role and Title	Organisation	Industry	Contact Details	Age	Gender	Race
General Manager: Benefits & Remuneration	MTN Group	Telecoms	0832120199	31-40	Male	Indian

Profile of MBA Respondents

Table 27: Profile of MBA respondents

Description of Institution and Qualification	Respondent (study year & period)	Number to be Sampled	Gender	Age
University of the Witwatersrand – MBA	(2009-2012) part time	>= 100	Both males and females to be included in each sample of 30	Each sample of 30 to include Generation X and Generation Y and baby boomers where possible
University of the Witwatersrand – MBA	(2011) full time	>= 100		
Gordon Institute of Business Science – MBA	(2010-2012) full time	>= 30		
University of Stellenbosch – MBA	(2009-2011) part time	>= 30		
University of Cape Town – Executive MBA	(2009-2011) part time	>= 30		