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Employee value proposition attributes attracting business students to South African telecommunications

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Employee value proposition attributes attracting business students to South African telecommunications

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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

The South African telecommunications industry is suffering from high employee churn rate. Employee turnover has a negative impact on the organisational stability in terms of culture, skills and payroll. It is therefore important for the managers and leaders in the telecommunications industry to know what could attract business students to their organisation.

This research investigated the top ten attributes of Employee Value Proposition (EVP) as ranked by business students who would consider employment in the South African telecommunications industry. The printed survey was given to business students where they were requested to partially rank their top ten attributes from the list of 28 attributes. The list was a modified version of the 38 attributes list developed by Corporate Leadership Council.

The rankings from the respondents were analysed using a quantitative method called *Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm.* The overall ranking was determined and also ranking by age groups and by gender. There was insufficient data for quantitative analysis by race.

The analysis by gender and age group was for further insight only and was not necessarily required to answer the research question. The top attributes that are preferred by male and female business students were investigated and found to be similar. The top four attributes of EVP included compensation, future career opportunities, development opportunities and health benefits. Also the 28 or less and 29 or above years age groups were investigated and found to prefer the abovementioned top four attributes of EVP.

The top ten attributes are, in descending order, compensation, development opportunities, future career opportunities, health benefits, empowerment, work-life balance, innovation, meritocracy, respect and ethics. Compensation was also found to be number one in other similar studies and the top seven attributes were also fairly consistent with other studies.

DECLARATION

I, Nkosinomusa S MPANZA, 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.

Nkosinomusa S MPANZA

Signed at ……

On the …….. Day of …… 2015

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my parents who encouraged me to try harder, also to my wife Ntokozo and children, Sandisa and Onami, for their understanding and support during my MBA studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Mr Conrad Viedge for helping me navigate this research topic. Without his assistance I would have not completed this report.

I would also like to thank Prof Anthony Stacey for running the *Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm* that allowed me to get the partially ranking of attributes.

I would also like to thank Human Resources personnel who helped with the shortening of the attributes list that was finally used in the survey.

I would like to thank Wits Business School for allowing me to interact with their students. Also a very special thanks to all students who participated in the survey, without you, I would not have had anything to analyse.

Lastly but not least, I would like to thank my organisation, Total South Africa for their full support during my studies.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to identify and rank employee value proposition attributes that may attract business students to the South African telecommunications industry.

1.2 Context of the study

It is widely accepted that people are the greatest assets in an organisation. The effective employee value proposition may be used to attract potential employees including business students and possibly retain them if practiced as expected. Employee value proposition (EVP) refers to the collective array of benefits that an organisation offers in exchange for employment (TowersWatson, 2011). Prof D Pandita (2011) defined EVP as “the mix of characteristics, benefits, and ways of working in the organisation” (p. 56). The EVP therefore gives a visibility on what an employee should expect from the organisation which should help when deciding whether to take employment or not. Employers must know which attributes matters most to the potential group of employees. When the organisation advertises its EVP, it is likely to attract people who are going to be with them for long as there should be an alignment of interests. This minimises organisation’s recruitment and training costs as employees stay longer, which is good for the bottom line.

Telecommunications is defined by South African government as the emission, transmission or reception of a signal from one point to another by means of electricity, magnetism, radio or other electromagnetic waves, or any agency of a like nature, whether with or without the aid of tangible conductors (Africa, 2014). Telecommunications industry in South Africa has grown rapidly especially cellular phones. In fact, mobile phone use by adults has increased from 17 percent in 2000 to 76 percent in 2010, about 4.2 million fixed-line telephone, however, there are new

players like Neotel that are competing in this space, under the sea cables are also increasing connectivity (SouthAfrica, 2014b). All these drastic changes in the telecommunications industry have increased the demand for human capital and poaching has therefore increased.

South Africa is a developing economy country that became democratic state in 1994 (SouthAfrica, 2014a). Prior to that it was ruled by apartheid government which resulted in sanctions and a lot of companies pulled out or were not allowed to operate in the country. The dawn of democracy allowed many businesses to operate in the country; however, there are a limited number of skilled people as the good education system was reserved for the few.

1.3 Problem statement

1.3.1 Main problem

The main problem of the proposed research is to identify and rank the most important attributes of the employee value proposition that may attract business students to the South African telecommunications industry.

1.3.2 Sub-problems

The first sub-problem is to identify the attributes of the employee value proposition that may be applicable to business students who want employment from the South African telecommunications industry.

The second sub-problem is to rank those attributes of the employee value proposition according to their importance to business students who would consider employment from the South African telecommunications industry.

1.4 Significance of the study

There are many attributes of the employee value proposition that may be used to attract employees and business students in particular. There is no study that could

be found that looked at those attributes that are more likely to attract business students to the telecommunications industry in South Africa. This research will attempt to identify those attributes that are perceived to be important by business students. Organisations in the industry may then use that information when designing their employee value proposition statement so that they may stand a good chance of attracting business students.

The high churn rate in the telecommunications industry might be as a result of many things including the misalignment between employee expectation and practice in the organisation, and skills shortage as a result of rapid industry growth. The focus on business students is derived from the fact that they are generally trained to occupy management positions and hence may positively influence organisation's growth and sustainability.

1.5 Delimitations of the study

- Study will only focus in the Telecommunications industry in South Africa. All other industries are excluded;
- Business students doing post graduate studies or equivalent are the respondents. All other business students that are doing under graduate degree are excluded from the survey and population;
- The research also focuses on business schools. All other institutions of higher learning that are not considered business schools are excluded from the study;
- The research is only concerned with the ranking of attributes without any attempt to establish the reasons for the choices made by business students.

1.6 Definition of terms

The terms below are defined in the context of this study:

Attraction: Is the desired interaction between a potential employee and the images, value and information about the organisation (Coldwell, Billsberry, Van Meurs, & Marsh, 2008).

Attribute: Elements of employment that are desirable by an employee, like salary (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

Employee value proposition (EVP): It is a set of associations and offerings provided by an organisation in return for the skills, capabilities and experiences an employee brings to the benefit of the organisation (Review, 2012).

Telecommunication industry: It is concerned with the transmission of sound, images, data or any other information via cables, broadcasting, relay or satellite (Statssa, 2012)**.**

1.7 Assumptions

The following assumptions are made:

- Respondents are familiar with the telecommunications industry workings in South Africa and they focus on the industry when ranking different attributes;
- Surveyed business students responses are a true reflection of the view held by their peers anywhere else in the country. If not, the results of the study may not be generalised to the targeted population;
- It is assumed that data that will be collected will be of sufficient quality and quantity to make a conclusive ranking.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the report commissioned by McKinsey called “Making talent a strategic priority”, they noted that the war for talent is still on the rise and they encourage executives to think about ways and means of attracting, motivating and retaining employees (Guthridge, Komm, & Lawson, 2008). Many people do agree that employees are the source of competitive advantage; however, there seems to be little that is done in ensuring that the right talent is attracted and retained.

Traditional telephone monopolies did not pay much attention to talent management as the competition was not intense (Isern, 2011). However, with the rise of middle class in South Africa and the increase in the number of players in the telecommunications space, it has become critical to have a people strategy that is aligned to business strategy, for everyone who wants to remain competitive.

Lance Harris noted in his article that SA’ ICT skills shortage is a long term problem that starts from basic schooling to tertiary institutions and the industry that does not do enough to build skills for the future (Harris, 2011). The scarce technical and leadership skills in the telecommunications industry points to an industry that is highly prone to poaching of high performers as everyone is chasing the handful talent and that has a negative effect on the payroll.

The EVP is a mechanism that may be employed to attract, engage and retain talented employees. Compuways *(IT recruitment company)* CEO Arnold Graaff noted that IT employees are generally known for not being loyal to organisations but with a focused effort that goes beyond financial reward, organisations may attempt to keep them (Harris, 2011). He went on to make examples like flexible working hours and tax-efficient packages. It is for that reason that we seek to understand those EVP attributes that may contribute positively in employee attraction, with particular interest to business students.

This literature review seeks to identify EVP attributes that may be useful in attracting employees to the telecommunications industry. Those attributes will then be ranked

in order of importance to business students. The literature review will focus on six sections.

Section 1 is the review of the concept of employee value proposition. It looks at how different researchers define, view and see the significance of employee value proposition as a tool to attract potential employees;

Section 2 is the review of the approaches used by different researchers in identifying attributes of employee value proposition. The section is concluded by selecting a set of attributes that might be used in this proposed research;

Section 3 looks at various ranking methods that have been used in attributes ranking but also in the ranking problem in general. The main purpose of this section is to identify different ranking methods and it is concluded by selecting the one that might be used in this proposed research;

Section 4 reviews attributes that are highly ranked by business students from the studies conducted abroad and in South Africa. It is concluded by identifying attributes that generally make it to the top five;

Section 5 gives a background to the telecommunications industry in South Africa. Major players in the industry are identified. The section is concluded by showing why the industry is suffering from the high employee churn rate;

The last section is the conclusion where the EVP attributes list and ranking methodology are chosen based on the literature review. The section is concluded by reinforcing the two research questions.

2.2 Employee value proposition concept

Employee value proposition is about marketing organisation's strengths and employee's needs that it may better fulfil, compared to its competition (Gering, 2002). Internally, there are a number of ways that an organisation may employ in identifying EVP that matters to their employees. These may include focus groups, surveys and exit interviews.

Minchington (2005) defines EVP as a set of associations and offerings provided by an organisation in return for the skills, capabilities and experiences an employee brings to the organisation(Browne, 2012). This definition was further collaborated by Lrk Krishnan & Dr A Sethuramasubbiah (Krishnan, Nadu, & Sethuramasubbiah, 2008). The EVP is an employee-centric approach that seeks to integrate workforce planning strategies and is driven by the internal employees and the targeted employees. EVP must be unique and compelling if it were to drive talent attraction, engagement and retention.

EVP may also be defined as the value or benefit an employee derives from his employment in an organisation (Heger, 2007). He further argued that EVP is the main driver of employee engagement and retention. Although there is a benefit for the employee, there is also a financial and non-financial benefit for the organisation, the magnitude of which was yet to be determined. Employees who perceive that their organisation's EVP is less competitive than the alternative employer are more likely to disengage or resign, to the detriment of the organisation's sustainability.

KPMG has simply defined EVP as a holistic framework that addresses the aspirations of a high performer (Punia, 2014). These aspirations are classified into intrinsic, symbolic and functional factors. These factors also have decision drivers that determine if the potential employee would join the organisation or if the current employee would stay. They also emphasised that EVP must be unique, relevant and bold if it was to act as a catalyst to talent attraction, performance and retention.

EVP has become closely related to the concept of employer branding. In 2005, Minchington argued that EVP is at the centre of corporate branding (CRL, 2011). He argued that employer brand strategy must begin by considering employee experience. This is due to the fact that employees want to know what is in for them before they may be committed to the needs of the organisation. Talented employees are being head-hunted by competitors and if an organisation does not excite them, they will leave.

2.3 Approaches to EVP attributes identification

In a study where Heger (2007) was examining the relationship between various EVP attributes and employee engagement, he identified 41 useful attributes. There were initially at 52; however, were reduced after factor analysis and internal consistency test. These attributes were grouped into 11 categories and there are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Eleven EVP categories with 41 attributes

1. DAY TO DAY WORK	**2. LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT**	**3. COMPENSATION**
1 Co-worker quality	10 Career development tools	17 Base pay
2 Decision-making	11 Development plan	18 Bonus
3 Job autonomy	12 Development program	19 External equity
4 Job challenge	13 Job movement	20 Paid time off
5 Job fulfilment	14 Job training	21 Profit sharing
6 Process efficiency	15 Mentoring	22 Retirement savings plan
7 Resources	16 Networking	
8 Task variety		
9 Workload		
4. GOALS & OBJECTIVES	**5. FLEXIBLE WORK**	**6. UNIT LEADERSHIP**
23 Goal alignment	25 Telework	26 Open & honest communication
24 Goal communication		27 Employee concern
		28 Open-minded
7. HEALTH BENEFITS	**8. PAY FOR PERFORMANCE**	
29 Health benefit – competitive	31 Pay for performance – bonus	
30 Health benefit - value	32 Pay for performance - Merit	
9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	**10. RESPECT & INTEGRITY**	**11. RESULTS FOCUS**
33 Performance evaluation	37 Integrity	40 Customer focus
34 Performance expectations	38 Manager reputation	41 Internal communication
35 Performance feedback	39 Show respect	
36 Recognition		

In another study that looked at the EVP attributes that were important to the MBA students, from the leading European university, in their decision to accept or reject the job, 11 attributes were considered (Hiltrop, 1999). Initially, there were 67 attributes that were narrowed down to 11 using a factor analysis. The final attributes list is given below:

1. Salary
2. Job security
3. Autonomy
4. Working hours
5. Social climate
6. Opportunities for advancement

7. Training opportunities
8. Challenging and interesting work assignments
9. Level of responsibility
10. International career opportunities
11. Variety of activities resulting from the job

The study found that the top three important attributes were social climate, international career opportunity and then training opportunities (Hiltrop, 1999). The significance of this study in the context of the proposed research is that it looked at the EVP attributes that matters the most to business students and MBAs in particular.

Another interesting study in our context looked at the EVP attributes that appeal to potential small enterprises employees (Tumasjan, Strobel, & Welpe, 2011). They started with 55 statements and eventual reduced down to 9 attributes after consulting with experts and removing synonyms. Their argument was that big organisation's environment is different from the small organisations in that the latter is more intimate and may attract a different kind of employees. Nine attributes that they identified are given in Table 2 below.

Table 2:Start-ups attributes and their descriptions (Tumasjan et al., 2011) p.120

Start-up attribute	Start-up attribute description
1. Flexibility of working schedule	Has flexible working hours Has regulated working hours
2. Hierarchy	Hierarchy is rather flat Hierarchy is rather steep
3. Team climate	The team climate is rather communal, with a strong sense of community among members The team climate is rather formal, with a weak sense of community among members
4. Company shares	Offers company shares as payment Does not offer company shares as payment
5. Responsibility or empowerment	Comprises rather high responsibility and early empowerment of employees Comprises rather low responsibility and no empowerment of employees
6. Task variety	Comprises multiple various tasks Comprises few specialised tasks
7. Leadership functions	Offers the opportunity to get the leadership functions early on Offers the opportunity to get leadership functions only after an extended time period
8. Learning curve	Comprises a steep learning curve Comprises a flat learning curve
9. Entrepreneurial knowledge building	Offers the opportunity of gathering knowledge for own entrepreneurial activity by close contacts of founders Offers only sparse opportunity of gathering knowledge for own entrepreneurial activity because contacts to founders are rare

The significance of these attributes is that there are specific to small enterprises which are common in South African telecommunications environment and their inclusion in our study will capture a broader view of EVP attributes that are desirable.

Another research looked at employer attractiveness (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). They defined employer attractiveness as the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organization. The research objective was to develop and validate a scale to assess employer attractiveness. After focus groups discussions, they developed 32 attributes. After a reliability analysis, 25 attributes were left and were further categorized into five factors using the exploratory factor analysis. The factors and their attributes are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3: 25-item Employer Attractiveness

FACTORS	DEFINITION	ATTRIBUTES
Interest value	Assesses the extent to which an individualis attracted to an employer that provides an exciting work environment, novel work practices and that makes use of its employee's creativity to produce high-quality, innovative products and services.	14.Working in an exciting environment
		15. Innovative employer – novel work practices/forward-thinking
		16. The organisation both values and makes use of your creativity
		17. The organisation produces high-quality products and services
		18. The organisation produces innovative products and services
Social value	Assesses the extent to which an individual is attracted to an employer that provides a working environment that is fun,happy, provides good collegial relationships and a team atmosphere.	4. A fun working environment
		10. Having a good relationship with your superiors
		11. Having a good relationship with your colleagues
		12. Supportive and encouraging colleagues
		30. Happy work environment
Economic value	Assesses the extent to which an individual is attracted to an employer that provides above-average salary, compensation package, job security and promotional opportunities.	19. Good promotion opportunities within the organisation
		28. Job security within the organisation
		29. Hands-on inter-departmental experience
		31. An above average basic salary
		32. An attractive overall compensation package
Development value	Assesses the extent to which an individual is attracted to an employer that provides recognition, self-worth and confidence, coupled with a career-enhancing experience and a springboard to future employment.	1. Recognition/appreciation from management
		5. A springboard for future employment
		6. Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organisation
		7. Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organisation
		8. Gaining career-enhancing experience
Application value	Assesses the extent to which an individual is attracted to an employer that provides an opportunity for the employee to apply what they have learned and to teach others, in an environment that is both customer orientated and humanitarian.	20. Humanitarian organisation – gives back to society
		24. Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution
		25. Opportunity to teach others what you have learned
		26. Acceptance and belonging
		27. The organisation is customer-orientated

They perceived their five-factor model as a refinement and extension of the three dimensions model proposed by Ambler and Barrow in 1996. They viewed Interest value and Social value to represent 'psychological benefits'; Development value and Application value to represent 'functional benefits'; and economic value has an economic dimension. The significance of this model in our context is that attributes were categorized into five factors that are easy to understand (Berthon et al., 2005) . This categorisation helps the respondent with attribute context.

In a similar fashion, Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) segmented EVP attributes into five categories (Council, 2006), in Figure 1 below. These categories are Rewards, Opportunity, Work, People and Organisation. CLC sees EVP as a tool for attracting employees and for ensuring their commitment. Although Heger (2007) looked at EVPs with respect to employee engagement; however, it is clear that, that may not be separated from the EVPs that are attraction focused. The reason being that once you have attracted a right employee you must keep her, otherwise the whole effort would be useless.

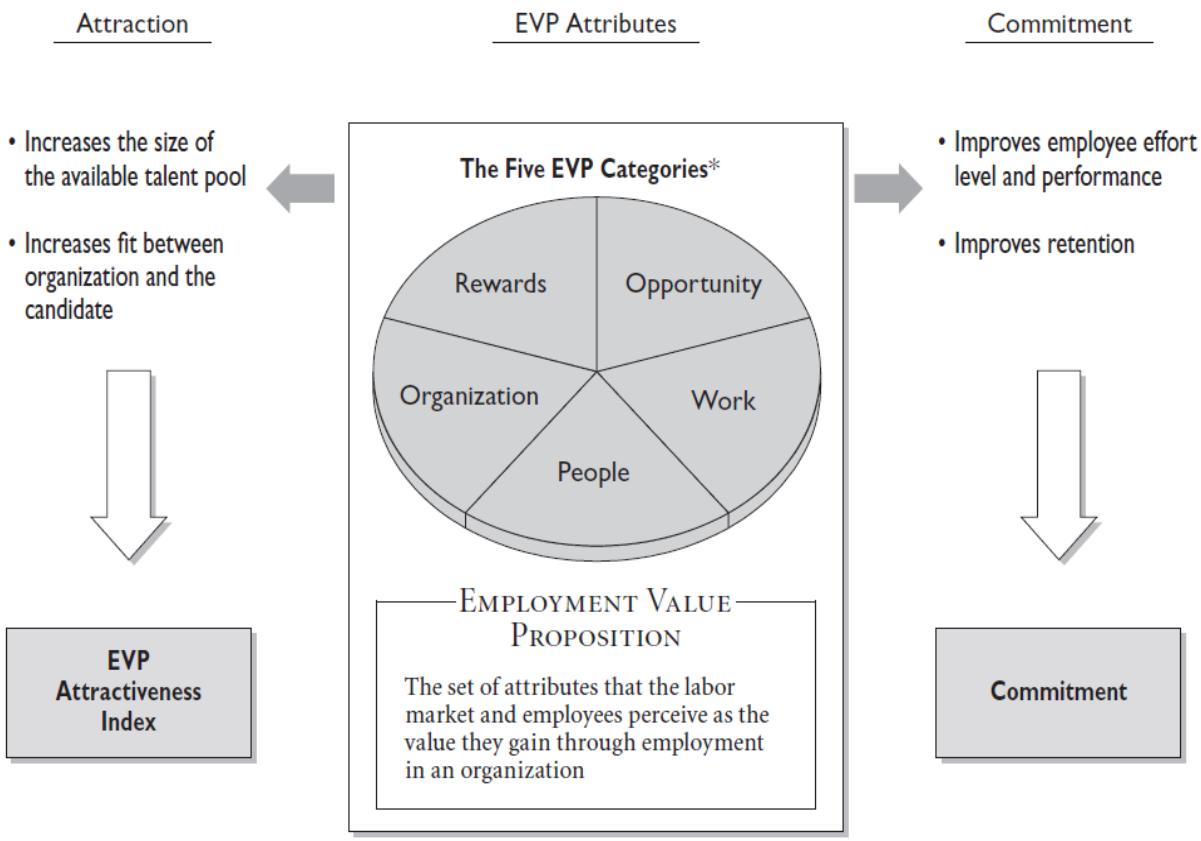


Figure 1: EVP as a driver of attraction and commitment (Council, 2006) p. 6

Combined, these five categories have a total of 38 attributes. The detailed attributes are given in Table 4 below.

Table 4: CLC's Definitions of Employee Value Proposition Attributes (Rajha, 2012)

		ATTRIBUTE	DEFINITION
REWARDS	1	**Compensation**	The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package
	2	**Health Benefits**	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's health benefits
	3	**Retirement Benefits**	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's retirement benefits
	4	**Vacation**	The amount of holiday/vacation time that employees earn annually
OPPORTUNITY	5	**Development Opportunities**	The developmental/educational opportunities provided by the job and organisation
	6	**Future Career Opportunities**	The future career opportunities provided by the organisation
	7	**Meritocracy**	Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted on the basis of their achievements
	8	**Organisational Growth Rate**	The growth rate of the organisation's business
	9	**Organisational Stability**	The level of stability of the organisation and the job
ORGANISATION	10	**Customer Reputation**	The reputation of the clients and customers served in performing the job
	11	**Diversity**	The organisation's level of commitment to having a diverse workforce
	12	**Empowerment**	The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career
	13	**Environmental Responsibility**	The organisation's level of commitment to environmental health and sustainability
	14	**Ethics**	The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity
	15	**"Great Employer" Recognition**	Whether or not the organisation's reputation as an employer has been recognised by a third-party organisation
	16	**Industry**	The desirability of the organisation's industry to the respondent
	17	**Formal/Informal Work Environment**	Whether the work environment is formal or informal
	18	**Market Position**	The competitive position the organisation holds in its market(s)
	19	**Product Brand Awareness**	The level of awareness in the market place for the products' brand
	20	**Product Quality**	The organisation's product or service quality reputation
	21	**Respect**	The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees
	22	**Risk Taking**	The amount of risk that the organisation encourages employees to take
	23	**Organisation Size**	The size of the organisation's workforce
	24	**Social Responsibility**	The organisation's level of commitment to social responsibility
	25	**Technology Level**	The extent to which the organisation invests in modern technology and equipment
WORK	26	**Business Travel**	The amount of out-of-town business travel required by the job
	27	**Innovation**	The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects
	28	**Job Impact**	The level of impact the job has on outcomes
	29	**Job–Interests Alignment**	Whether the job responsibilities match the respondent's interests
	30	**Location**	The geographic location of the job that the organisation is offering
	31	**Recognition**	The amount of recognition provided to employees by the organisation
	32	**Work–Life Balance**	The extent to which the job allows employees to balance their work and their other interests
PEOPLE	33	**Camaraderie**	Whether working for the organisation provides opportunities to socialise with other employees
	34	**Collegial Work Environment**	Whether the work environment is team-oriented and collaborative
	35	**Co-worker Quality**	The quality of the co-workers in the organisation
	36	**Manager Quality**	The quality of the organisation's managers
	37	**People Management**	The organisation's reputation for managing people
	38	**Senior Leadership Reputation**	The quality of the organisation's senior leadership

There are clear themes or attributes that may be found from the five EVP attributes models identified above. We will focus on the financial reward as an example. Heger (2007) developed 41 EVP attributes that fell under 11 categories, one of which was compensation which had 5 attributes; base pay, bonus, external equity, paid time off, profit sharing and retirement savings plan. In another case, instead of breaking down all elements of financial reward, only 11 attributes were developed and where the financial reward was only referred to as a salary (Hiltrop, 1999). These attributes were reduced from 67. Another study that looked at the EVPs relevant to small enterprises started with 55 statements and finished off with only 9 EVP attributes (Tumasjan et al., 2011). The financial reward was identified as the company shares.

The last two EVP studies are significant in our context because there are both generic in nature and covered wide attributes possibilities. The first one looked at employer attractiveness where 25 attributes were identified from 32 themes (Berthon et al., 2005). The financial reward came up clearly under the economic value category where the attribute was ‘an above average basic salary’.

The second one by Corporate Leadership Council looked at attributes that are in play in the labour market where employers are after the best employees and employees want to be employed by the best employers. It is the most significant study as it gave a holistic view of the labour market without any segmentation. With 38 attributes under 5 categories, the financial reward also came up under rewards category as financial compensation.

The main difference between the last two is that the first one is looking at the organisation attractiveness from the employee’s perspective while the second one, by Corporate Leadership Council, looked at the attributes from both the employer and employee perspectives. That makes CLC study to be superior as it seeks to identify attributes that match both parties’ perception of employment benefits.

2.4 Attributes ranking methods

There are essential two main ranking methods that are interval and ordinal (Van Calker, Berentsen, Giesen, & Huirne, 2005). In the interval ranking, the respondents

are asked to rank each attribute relevant to a particular aspect based on the perceived importance. A Likert scale of 1 to 5 is used, with 1 being not important and 5 being very important. The scale may be increased to 7 if desired. The second approach, ordinal ranking, respondents are asked to put the list of attributes in order of importance. For the final ranking, the mean and standard deviation of the relative importance weights of attributes were calculated for each respondent and ranking done.

In a study where Heger (2007) examined the relationship between various EVP attributes and employee engagement, he used a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (extremely unimportant) to 7 (extremely important), where employees were asked to rate the importance they placed on each of the attributes being considered. The attribute with the highest mean would then be considered to be important and therefore ranked highest.

In another study that looked at the EVP attributes that were important to MBA students, from the leading European university, in their decision to accept or reject the job, 11 attributes were considered (Hiltrop, 1999). From the list, students were required to select the important employee value proposition attributes. The attribute that was selected by most students was considered to be important and ranked number one.

Another interesting study in our context looked at the EVP attributes that appeal to potential small enterprises employees (Tumasjan et al., 2011). The final survey had 9 attributes that were ranked after doing a conjoint analysis. Attributes were ranked in descending order according to their mean standardised utility in the sample. The attribute with a higher mean and smaller standard deviation was ranked higher.

Stacey (2006) conducted work where he presented a practical method of analysing a partially rank ordered survey. He recognised that the analysis of rank ordered responses was simplistic and at times inappropriate (Stacey, 2006). The approach that he developed was designed to be applied to partially rank ordered data, where respondents have been asked to rank the most preferred items from a list of many items. This method, Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm was used in

a study that looked at the EVP attributes that appeal to South African MBA students (Rajha, 2012). It was also used in a study; Attributes that Generation Y business student's desire in an employee value proposition in management consulting in South Africa (Bhoola, 2013).

2.5 Business students highly ranked EVP attributes

In the study that looked at EVP attributes that were important to MBA students, from the leading European university, in their decision to accept or reject the job, 11 attributes were considered (Hiltrop, 1999). The result of that study showed that 83% of students perceive that the social climate was important when making a decision to either accept or reject the job, second was the international career opportunities at 78%, and at a third place was training. Job variety and working hours made it to the top five refer to Figure 2 below.

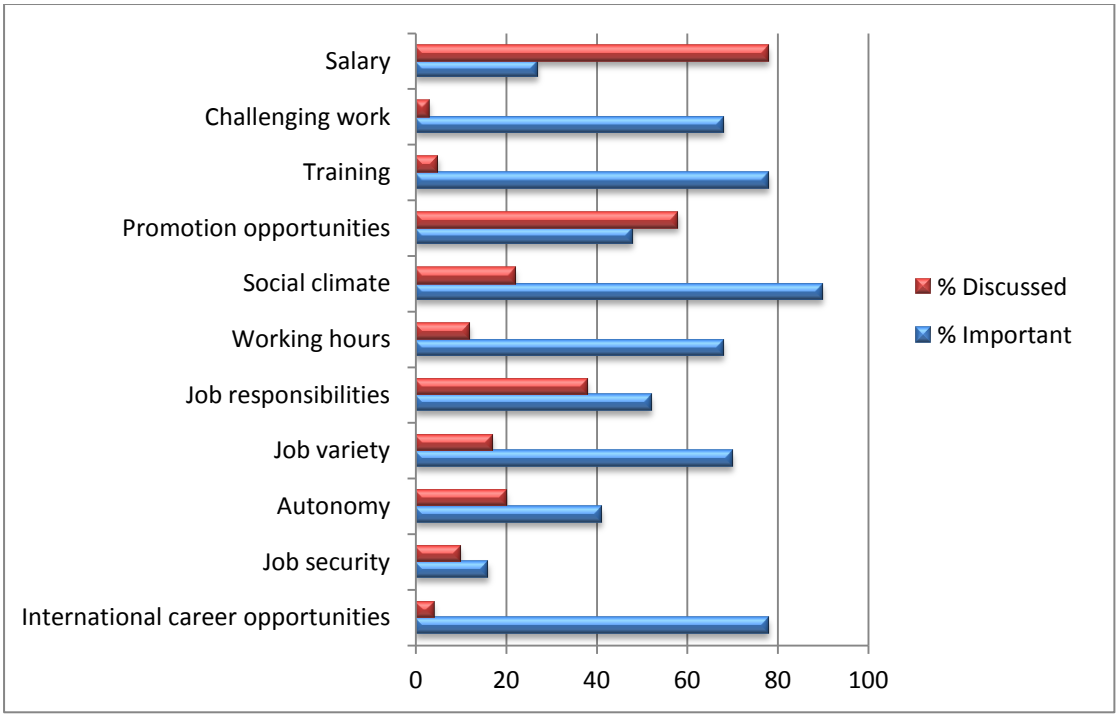


Figure 2: Perceived importance and discussion of job attributes in recruitment interviews. (Hiltrop, 1999) p.429

In South Africa, the study conducted by Rajha (2012) looked at the employee value proposition attributes that are appealing to MBA students, the finding showed that compensation; job meaning, purpose and impact; future career opportunities; work-life balance; empowerment – level of involvement; and development opportunities are the most appealing in descending order. Unlike their European counter parts, SA students are concerned with compensation as opposed to social climate. They are willing to compromise the quality of work environment as a long as they are compensated well. However, career opportunities made it to the top three in both cases.

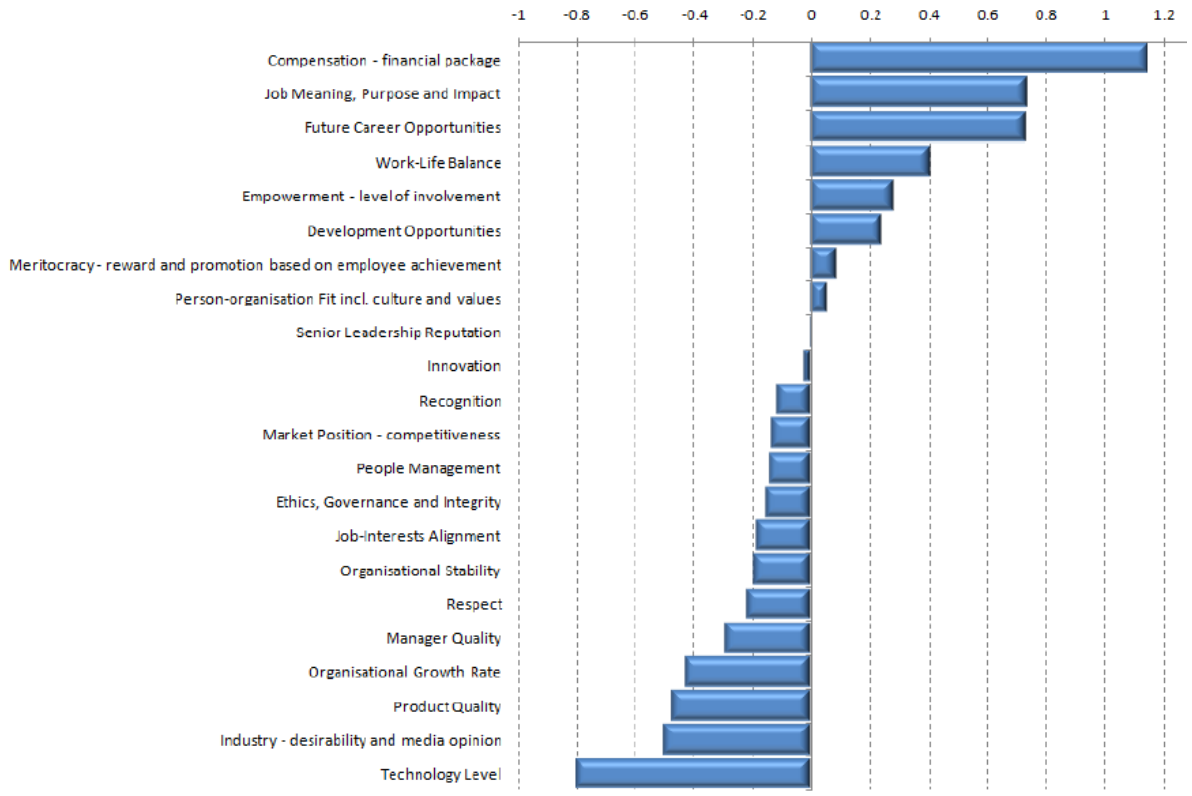


Figure 3: Significant attributes to South African MBAs. (Rajha, 2012) p.79

Figure 3, shows that 'compensation' mean is about +1.18. The high attribute mean is an indication that that particular attribute was highly ranked by most respondents. The same study also showed that the top five attributes of EVP preferred by female MBA students were; Compensation; Job impact; Empowerment; Future career opportunities; and Job-interest alignment (Rajha, 2012). The male MBA students

ranked their top five attributes as; Compensation; Future career opportunities; Job impact; Empowerment; and Work-life balance (Rajha, 2012).

In the same study generation X and Y was also looked at. Generation X is defined as people who were roughly born between 1965 and 1979 (Wiethoff, 2013). Generation Y are those people who were born between 1980 and 1990 (Clark, 2007). They have different interest and their priorities differs (Wiethoff, 2013).

Generation X results were; Compensation; Future career opportunities; Job impact; Development opportunities; and Work-life balance (Rajha, 2012). Generation Y gave Compensation; Job impact; Future career opportunities; Work-life balance; Development opportunities; and Empowerment (Rajha, 2012).

In another South African conducted by Bhoola (2013) that looked at EVP attributes that Generation Y business students desire in management consulting in South Africa found that the top ten ranking is as follows:

1. Compensation;
2. Development opportunities;
3. Future career opportunities;
4. Work-life balance;
5. Autonomy;
6. Innovation;
7. Empowerment;
8. Challenge;
9. Vacation and
10. Quality.

He then continued to split the respondents by gender group and the following ranking findings were made for both males and females; Compensation; Development opportunities; Future career opportunities; Work-life balance; and Autonomy (Bhoola, 2013).

In both South African studies, compensation was ranked first and the top five included future career opportunities and work-life balance. It is therefore reasonable to expect that employee value proposition attributes that matter to the business

students in South Africa will at least include these attributes and the telecommunication industry will be tested for similarities.

2.6 Telecommunications in South Africa

There are many definitions of telecommunications, however, the Republic of South Africa defined telecommunications, in the Telecommunications Act, 1996 as amended; as the emission, transmission or reception of a signal from one point to another by means of electricity, magnetism, radio or other electromagnetic waves, or any agency of a like nature, whether with or without the aid of tangible conductors (Africa, 2014)**.** This definition will be adopted for the telecommunications industry.

Telecommunications industry is regulated by The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) (ICASA, 2014). ICASA also regulates broadcasting and postal services sector. ICASA was established by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act of 2000, as Amended. ICASA regulation mandate is given in Electronic Communications Act of 2005 as Amended, for the licensing and regulation of electronic communications and broadcasting services, and by the Postal Services Act of 1998, for the regulation of the postal industry.

Telkom used to be a monopoly telecommunications company that operated under the Department of Posts and Telecommunications of the Republic of South Africa and was incorporated as a public company in 1991. It remained a wholly state-owned company till 1997 when 30% shareholding was sold to Thintana Communications ("Telkom," 2003). Neotel was launched in 2006 to be a direct competitor to Telkom, especially in the fixed-line space (Bouzaglou, 2006). It is clear that prior to 1994, Telkom did not have competition and the war for skills in the telecommunications industry was almost non-existed.

Mobile network operators include MTN, Vodacom, Cell C, Telkom 8ta and Virgin Mobile South Africa (Telecom-Week, 2014). All mobile operators were started from the 1990s. MTN and Vodacom were both launched in 1994, after getting their licences to operate in 1993 and they still remain the major operators in South Africa

and Cell C was launched in 2001 (Vodazone, 2014). The introduction of these players changed the telecommunications industry in South Africa in terms of skills demand and they needed to attract and retain the best in order to be competitive. High employee churn rate in the communications industry is partially due to the changes in the concentration of participants.

2.7 Literature review conclusion

The literature review revealed that there are different ways of looking at employee value proposition. The common view was that a meaningful EVP attribute must appeal to both the employee and the employer. Even though some researchers only looked at what employees wished for as opposed to what organisations stood for and what matters to them.

There are many attributes that are developed when planning to investigate employee value proposition. The common practice that was observed was to develop a list from literature review. The list was then given to industry experts to refine it based on their experiences on what is relevant to industry. In almost all cases, some of the attributes were dropped as there were found to be either irrelevant or very similar to each other. For the purpose of this study, the list developed by Corporate Leadership Council will be used as a starting point given its robustness and clarity.

There are two ranking methods that were identified. The first involves the use of Likert scale to determine the mean and standard deviation of each attribute. The one with the highest mean and lowest standard deviation was ranked higher in the list. The second method was a simple ranking of attributes by a respondent where they chose their number one attribute followed by two etc. For the purpose of this study, the simple ranking will be adopted and analysis done using the shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm as developed by Stacey (2006).

There have been a number of studies that involved the preferences of business students globally. In the studies observed, the number one preferred employee value proposition attribute by South African students was found to be compensation. Future career opportunities and work-life balance were also in the top five. However,

these were not specific to the telecommunications industry and that is what this study seeks to establish.

Gender preferences were found to be very similar between the two groups (Rajha 2012, Bhoola 2013). Different age groups, generation X and Y, in particular also displayed similarities in attributes ranking (Rajha, 2012) especially in the top ten.

Telecommunication industry was monopolised prior to 1994. With the democratisation of the country, new players both in the fixed-line and mobile space were given the licence to operate. This resulted in the fight for skilled employees and loyalty is low in the industry. Any player in the industry needs to have a good employee value proposition in order to attract employees, especial business students. The following research questions will be answered:

2.7.1 Research Question 1

What are the employee value proposition attributes that must be considered in the telecommunications industry?

2.7.2 Research Question 2

What are the top 10 attributes of employee value proposition that attract South African business students to the telecommunications industry?

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used in conducting the proposed research. The research methodology and design are given. The reasons for choosing a quantitative research paradigm will be discussed.

We will then describe the population, the sample and its size, and the sampling method used. The proposed research instrument will then be discussed and how it was used.

We will then describe how data was collected, analysed and interpreted. Lastly, we will discuss the research limitations, validity and reliability.

3.1 Research methodology/paradigm

The main purpose of this study was to identify and rank the attributes of the employee value proposition that are attractive to business students who would consider working for the telecommunications industry in South Africa.

Employee value proposition attributes identification was done through literature review as covered in Chapter 2. The attributes list developed by Corporate Leadership Council was used as the basis for the final list used in the survey. Refer to Table 4 in Chapter 2.3 for the original list. It was adopted for its robustness as it was compiled using a large volume of data. In fact more than 58,000 new hires and tenured employees from 90 organizations across 34 countries and 20 industries were surveyed using these 38 unique EVP attributes on candidate attraction and employee commitment (Council, 2006).

The same attributes list was used in South Africa by Corporate Leadership Council in determining the drivers of attraction in 2006 and 2009. It was observed that the results consistently showed the same bottom ten attributes, refer to Table 5 below. It also shows that there was a movement on the attributes positions from 2006 to 2009; for example, work-life balance was number 11 in 2006 and its ranking improved 8 places, as shown in the last column, to number 3 in 2009.

Table 5: CLC's South African attributes driving attraction: 2006-2009 (Corporate Leadership Council 2009:42)

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

After consulting with research experts, it was decided that the ranking of the top ten from the list of thirty eight attributes would be too much for the respondents. The researcher decided to reduce the list by twenty five percent or ten attributes. To achieve the reduced list, two experienced Human Resources personnel (Human Capital Manager at Total, Career Manager at Total) were approached separately. They have more than 15 years and 10 years of working experience, respectively. Human Capital manager had worked also worked in the telecommunications industry.

Two questions were asked; the first being how they would use the 38 ranked attributes list to develop the organisation's EVP; the second being the likelihood of the bottom 10 to be in the top 10 in the telecommunications industry. On the first question they agreed that they would consider attributes that are ranked in the top half of the list or top 19. On the second they agreed that attributes that are ranked

last in the list are likely to remain in that position as there has not be a radical change in South Africa from the period the last survey, in 2009 was conducted and telecommunications industry was not radically different from other industries. The last ten attributes from the results of the survey conducted by Corporate Leadership Council in 2009, were then excluded from the final survey list and only 28 attributes were left for the respondents to rank.

Employee value proposition attributes ranking is a quantitative paradigm. Even though there were interviews conducted with the experienced HR personnel however, the workload associated with that was minimal compared to the survey. It is for that reason that the overall research paradigm is considered to be quantitative as opposed to mixed approach. The quantitative approaches that incorporate standardised measures and statistical techniques are usually associated with a positivist paradigm that can be traced to natural sciences (McEvoy & Richards, 2006). This paradigm is based on the philosophy that our mental models should be set aside in order to objectively identify facts based on empirical evidence. In this paradigm, respondents are chosen using sampling techniques that are designed to eliminate potential sources of bias so that the generalisation may be made to a wider population from the observation made from the sample.

However, there is a debate on whether it is possible for the research to be totally quantitative or qualitative. The purist argue that it is possible, however, we will lean towards the pragmatist argument put forward by Creswell (2004) that neither qualitative nor quantitative alone are sufficient to develop a complete analysis and that they need to be used in combination so that they can complement each other (McEvoy & Richards, 2006). So it is not surprising that this research is having an element of qualitative paradigm even though it is predominantly quantitative. Business students surveyed were requested to rank attributes from the most important (1) to the least important (10), in relation to the telecommunications industry.

3.2 Research design



Figure 4: Process to be followed towards ranking the attributes

There are four main steps that were followed in identifying and ranking the attributes of employee value proposition that are attractive to business students who would consider working for the telecommunications industry.

Step 1: Attributes literature review and selection

The literature review was conducted to understand how the employee value proposition attributes are determined. As observed in Chapter 2, attributes are normally developed by having focus groups that determine what could be applicable in a particular environment. The list is normally refined by doing a factor analysis on the developed attributes. The output of the factor analysis is further discussed by experts in the field and a final list developed.

The outlined process was not followed for this research, instead given all the attributes lists that were developed in similar studies, a decision was made on which one may be used for our purpose. The reason for this approach was that the proposed research was focused on the attributes ranking as opposed to developing them which may be a full qualitative study on its own. This was not desirable given the time constraint.

The attributes list developed by Corporate Leadership Council (CLC) (2006) was chosen as a basis on which the final survey list was. The choice was based on its robustness as it had 38 attributes that were used in a very big sample and also in

South Africa in particular. The final survey list used for this study had 28 attributes after the bottom 10 from the study conducted by CLC was excluded in order to simplify the ranking process for the respondents, refer to Table 6. The assumption was that attributes that are at the bottom of the 2009 South African CLC ranking results are not likely to jump to the top 10 in the given timeframe and there were no unique elements in the telecommunications industry that would justify the radical swing in the attributes ranking.

Table 6: Final attributes list adopted in this research

	#	ATTRIBUTE	DEFINITION	RANK
REWARDS	1	**Compensation**	The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package	
	2	**Health Benefits**	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's health benefits	
	3	**Retirement Benefits**	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's retirement benefits	
OPPORTUNITY	4	**Development Opportunities**	The developmental/educational opportunities provided by the job and organisation	
	5	**Future Career Opportunities**	The future career opportunities provided by the organisation	
	6	**Meritocracy**	Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted on the basis of their achievements	
	7	**Organisational Growth Rate**	The growth rate of the organisation's business	
	8	**Organisational Stability**	The level of stability of the organisation and the job	
ORGANISATION	9	**Diversity**	The organisation's level of commitment to having a diverse workforce	
	10	**Empowerment**	The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career	
	11	**Ethics**	The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity	
	12	**"Great Employer" Recognition**	Whether or not the organisation's reputation as an employer has been recognised by a third-party organisation	
	13	**Market Position**	The competitive position the organisation holds in its market(s)	
	14	**Product Brand Awareness**	The level of awareness in the market place for the products' brand	
	15	**Product Quality**	The organisation's product or service quality reputation	
	16	**Respect**	The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees	
	17	**Organisation Size**	The size of the organisation's workforce	
	18	**Technology Level**	The extent to which the organisation invests in modern technology and equipment	
WORK	19	**Innovation**	The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects	
	20	**Job Impact**	The level of impact the job has on outcomes	
	21	**Job–Interests Alignment**	Whether the job responsibilities match the respondent's interests	
	22	**Location**	The geographic location of the job that the organisation is offering	
	23	**Recognition**	The amount of recognition provided to employees by the organisation	
	24	**Work–Life Balance**	The extent to which the job allows employees to balance their work and their other interests	
PEOPLE	25	**Co-worker Quality**	The quality of the co-workers in the organisation	
	26	**Manager Quality**	The quality of the organisation's managers	
	27	**People Management**	The organisation's reputation for managing people	
	28	**Senior Leadership Reputation**	The quality of the organisation's senior leadership	

Step 2: Attributes ranking by business students

A pilot study was conducted where the final list with 28 attributes was given to four business students to rank their top 10. The pilot respondents were two males and two females from the PDM class. The aim was to get the respondents to give their views on the survey instruction and ease of ranking those attributes. The respondents found the number of attributes manageable, however, the ranking instruction was not interpreted the same way way. The researcher made an attempt to clarify the ranking instruction in the final survey printout.

The final survey was then given to Wits Business School PDM students. Business students were requested to choose and rank their top ten most attractive attributes. This was done in class in the presence of the researcher. The researcher responded to clarification questions from the respondents who asked, however, there was no attempt to influence their ranking. Also potential respondents were made aware that they may choose not to participate in the survey.

Step 3: Data processing and analysis using Shotgun stochastic logarithm

The researcher collected survey sheets from respondents and capture them in the excel spreadsheet for record keeping and ease of analysis. Data was processed and analysed using the Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm as proposed by Stacey (2006). This data processing and analysis method was used successful in the similar attributes ranking studies conducted by Rajha (2012) and Bhoola (2013). It is deemed to be an appropriate method that may be adopted when analysing data that was partially ranked by respondents from the list of many items.

Step 4: Results interpretation and discussion

Statistical analysis that was found from the use of Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm was then interpreted and discussed. The interpretation was

done in the context of the telecommunications industry which is under the spot light. It was through this process that the final ranking of attributes was determined.

The main advantage of this research design is that it gave the desired ranking of the attributes of employee value proposition in the telecommunications industry in the reasonable timeframe.

3.3 Population and sample

3.3.1 Population

The population group for this proposed research are business students in any business school in South Africa. That is the only qualifying feature for this research.

3.3.2 Sample and sampling method

Students from the two business schools were to be used as a sample. The first institution was Wits Business School (WBS) and another. The arrangements to survey the students from business schools were made after the research proposal was approved by the WBS research proposal panel. WBS survey was secured and no other business school was surveyed. Another institution was not surveyed due to the fact that the respondents were already in their exam cycle.

From WBS the full time and part time students that are doing Postgraduate Diploma in Management (PDM) were surveyed. There is one full time class and two part-time classes.

The researcher had hoped to get about 160 respondents useful responses. The minimum sample size of 40 is advisable for statistical analysis (Lee, 2014). The envisaged respondents are four times the minimum. However, after securing one institution, 121 useful respondents were found which is still acceptable for statistical analysis.

The survey questionnaires were distributed to students during their normal class attendance. The survey sheets were then collected as soon as they finished filling

them up. Any student that was not in class on that particular day was left out of the survey.

The average age in WBS PDM is 23 (full-time) to 26 (part-time) (WBS, 2014). PDM sample was chosen since those business students are most likely to consider different industries other than the one that there are currently in. Most MBAs are settled in their organisations or industries given their years of experience and unless they are already working for the telecommunications industry, many of them were going to be disqualified anyway from the survey, if they would not consider telecommunications.

The disadvantage of this sample approach is that the possibility of getting a bigger sample size was reduced. However, as indicated above, a reasonable sample size was secured and it is believed that the results may be generalised to the broader community of business students that are in business schools.

3.4 The proposed research instrument

The 28 attributes final list was printed and given to the respondents to fill. In order to assist the respondents with each attribute meaning, a corresponding one line definition was given, which should be easy to read and understand. Respondents were asked to identify and rank these attributes with ‘1’ being the most preferred attribute and ‘10’ being the least preferred in the top 10. The ranking column was made available next to each attribute. All other attributes that did not make it to the top 10 were to be left blank.

The survey sheet also contained demographic information for possible further analysis of different groups within the sample. The demographic information was gender, age and race. The respondents were told in the sheet that the demographics section was for completeness and therefore anyone who did not want to give this information was allowed not to and the survey result would still be valid. The researcher chose this approach as the focus of the study is on the overall business students and not necessarily on the differences or similarities among different groups. For example, the background in terms of primary diploma or degree, years of experience, etc, were not asked as the detailed profiles of respondents were not

deemed critical or a requirement for answering the research question. Appendix A is the example of the survey printout given to respondents.

3.5 Procedure for data collection

3.5.1 Pilot study

For the pilot study, four students were given a survey printout and asked to fill in the presence of the researcher. Any question that rose was noted and answered. Among other things, time it took to respond was noted so that that information may be given to the actual respondents. Respondents were asked to give feedback as to their experience when filling the survey and any useful suggestions on making the process easy and clearer was considered. The outcome of that process was that the survey attributes were clear, however, the ranking instruction was not clear. The researcher revised the ranking instruction to say exactly what and how to be done.

3.5.2 Final survey

The final survey was distributed to three PDM classes at WBS. However, the classes were not arranged as was initially envisaged as they were doing electives and they were mixed as a result. This does not change anything as there was never an intention to compare the responses of different classes. The researcher introduced the survey to the class, distributed the survey printout and collected when they were done. All present students were given a survey and asked to indicate if they would consider working for the telecommunications industry. The respondents who had questions on how to fill or wanted clarity on the attributes were assisted, however, the researcher made sure that they were not at any point made to feel obliged to either participate or rank in a particular order.

The advantage of the proposed data collection method is that there was a good chance of getting the required amount of observations and the presence of the researcher helped in ensuring that the survey was filled correctly. The possible disadvantage of this approach is that some students might just fill the survey without putting an effort into thinking about the choices that really matters to them. To

mitigate the impact of the unwilling participants, the researcher verbally clarified that students are not obliged to participate; however, if they decide to, it is highly appreciated. The clarification on the right to not to participate was also captured in the survey printout.

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

All survey data collected from the students was manually captured into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for storage and analysis. The quantitative analysis was then done on the survey with the final aim of ranking the top ten attributes. The method suggested by Stacey (2006), *Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm*, was used for this purpose. Stacey (2006) proposed a six step approach to the estimation of the population means and standard deviations of the many survey items from which the sample was drawn. The analysis involved successive guesses that are randomly scattered around the optimal solution. The algorithm flow is a macro written in the Microsoft Excel. The six steps are:

1. Initial guesses for the items means and variances;
2. Means and variances are then standardised such that the total variance is equal to 1;
3. Population rank ordering responses are then numerically simulated by taking a very large simulated sample;
4. The sum of squared errors (SSE) between the observed sample proportions and the simulated population proportions across all preference variations;
5. If the last SSE is less than the previous one it is then taken as the best estimates of the items' means and variances;
6. Steps 2 to 6 are repeated until the SSE is no longer reducing with the multiple successive iterations.

Data was then analysed for the overall partially ranked-order attributes. It was desired, where possible, to check if there are any differences or similarities in ranking between different demographics that are gender, age and race. However, this was not the requirement for the research success. When comparing two groups a 'T-Test' may be used and for more than two groups an 'Analysis of Variance'

(ANOVA) approach should be used (Lee, 2014). It follows then that when comparing males and females, T-test may be used and for both age and race, ANOVA may be used. In the context of this research, the significant difference is considered when the p-value is less than five percent.

3.7 Limitations of the study

Quantitative research paradigm adopted meant that there was no effort put into modifying the adopted attributes to the telecommunications industry specifically. That process could have easily resulted in a total different attributes naming and definition, shorter or longer list. However, as discussed the adopted survey attribute list is believed to be robust enough.

Not all respondents might have an intimate knowledge of the telecommunications industry in South Africa and there will be requested to make an attribute judgement based on it, however, there is a good mixture of business students as they come from different backgrounds and industries and that should be a mitigating factor. The negative impact of this could be that some respondents will give a generic ranking that is not specific to telecommunications. To mitigate this, the researcher verbally clarified the focus area before distributing the survey and the same was communicated by the way of the question in the survey sheet. The question was "Would you consider working for the telecommunications industry?" Those who answered 'no' were excluded from the survey. So naturally, the study is limited to those business students who would consider working for the telecommunications industry.

The reliability and validity of the analysis method used, *Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm,* is guaranteed up to five rank ordering items, however, it may be used for higher numbers. The proposed research is to partially rank ten attributes and it is likely to suffer from the reliability and validity issues. This will be further looked at when running the analysis.

3.8 Validity and reliability

There are various definitions of validity. Hammersley (1987) said the account is valid if it represents accurately those features of the phenomena that it is intended to describe. In the proposed research context, it is about the validity of the attributes given to the respondents to rank. Reliability is about the agreement between two efforts to measure the same thing with the same methods or simply put reproducibility of results (Hammersley, 1987). In the context of the proposed research is about the ability to reach the same findings should the same methodology be applied in ranking the attributes.

3.8.1 External validity

External validity is about the ability to extrapolate and generalise the findings to the defined population (Maxwell, 1992). Ideally, it would have given more comfort to sample not only in one business school in Gauteng but to sample throughout South Africa. The sample was not randomly chosen however it was chosen based on convenience. Having said that, WBS students come from different provinces of South Africa and there is no reason to suspect a vast difference in views based on the geographical location of the school. It is thus envisaged that the results may be used as an indication of the views held by other business students in South African business school.

3.8.2 Internal validity

Internal validity is about whether the findings of the research relate to and are caused by the phenomena under investigation and not as a result of other unknown influence (Hammersley, 1987). To ensure internal validity, researchers may do things like factor analysis and other tests. In the context of the proposed research, internal validity was done by Corporate Leadership Council when they managed to reduce attributes to 38 from the long list that they started with. The list was further reduced to 28 attributes by the researcher by excluding the bottom 10 attributes. It is therefore not envisaged that there were concerns with internal validity since the 28 attributes definitions were not changed.

However, it must be noted that since the nature of attributes was not interrogated by telecommunications industry experts, the used list might have attributes that could have been grouped together or added to ensure highest internal validity in the context of telecommunications industry.

3.8.3 Reliability

Reliability as defined above is about reproducibility of results when the study is conducted in the same setting (Hammersley, 1987). To ensure reliability, the researcher ensured that the survey printouts are the same and the similar level of detail was given to respondents prior to them filling the survey.

It is envisaged that the respondents' views may change over time as a result of other factors. For example, compensation has been the number one attribute in many South African studies may be due to the country being considered as a developing economy, once people have accumulated wealth, may be it will drop to the second spot. However, this phenomenon is only expected in the long run and in the short run, in the absence of radical incidents in the country, the results should be reliable.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented and discussed at the same time given the nature of the research. This is a deviation from the norm; however, it is considered the best in the context of this study as to avoid repetition.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is for results presentation and discussion. The results are presented and discussed in such a manner that the research question is answered and other issues raised are also explained. The main question that the research seeks to answer is the ranking of the most desirable employee value proposition attributes that may attract business students, who would consider employment in the telecommunications industry.

The names of business students that participated in the pilot study or full survey were not captured as their identity was never a required input. The two experienced HR personnel, who assisted with brainstorming the reduction of attributes from 38 to 28, are known to the researcher, however, their input was on condition of anonymity and therefore are not disclosed.

4.2 Survey attributes development results and discussion

Employee value proposition attributes that were used to survey business students were derived from the literature review and modified in consultation with the experienced Human Resources personnel. The attributes list adopted was the one developed by Corporate Leadership Council with 38 attributes, Table 4. This attributes list was developed after an intensive work and has been used in its current form to more than 58,000 employees from 90 organizations across 34 countries and 20 industries, on candidate attraction and employee commitment research (Council, 2006).

The vast application of CLC attributes list across organizations and industries, makes it reasonable that it may also be used in the telecommunications industry as it

is robust. It was also used by CLC in South Africa in at least 2006 and 2009. From these two years, the preferred attributes trend could be observed. Attributes that were in the bottom 10 in 2006 remained in that region in 2009.That observation is significant as to a reasonable extent its attest to the attributes list reliability.

It also gave confidence that attributes that are ranked at the bottom will remain in that region. That was also significant as it allowed the researcher to consider reducing the list by excluding the lower ranked attributes. The reason for wanting to reduce the number of attributes was to simplify and make it easier for the respondents to focus on what matters. It is a common practice to refine the attributes list or items so that they may give the most value out of the study. All studies considered here went through some refining process including factor analysis (Heger, 2007; Hiltrop, 1999; Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005) and experts' focus groups to eliminate synonyms (Tumasjan, Strobel, & Welpe, 2011). These were done in a process of developing the list that was to be used in a specific setting.

The researcher did not have to develop the list, however, the desire was to simplify it by excluding those attributes that clearly would not feature in the top ten. In consultation with the two experienced HR personnel, the researcher established that the last 10 attributes in both 2006 and 2009 in the research conducted by CLC could be excluded from the final attributes list. The reason being there was no prospects for those attributes to feature in the top 10 which was the focus area as there has been no radical event that could have resulted in the ranking total swing from the 2006 to 2009 period. That resulted in the exclusion of the attributes in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Attributes excluded from the Corporate Leadership Council list

#	ATTRIBUTE	DEFINITION
29	**Customer Reputation**	The reputation of the clients and customers served in performing the job
30	**Social Responsibility**	The organisation's level of commitment to social responsibility
31	**Industry**	The desirability of the organisation's industry to the respondent
32	**Formal/Informal Work Environment**	Whether the work environment is formal or informal
33	**Collegial Work Environment**	Whether the work environment is team-oriented and collaborative
34	**Risk Taking**	The amount of risk that the organisation encourages employees to take
35	**Environmental Responsibility**	The organisation's level of commitment to environmental health and sustainability
36	**Vacation**	The amount of holiday/vacation time that employees earn annually
37	**Camaraderie**	Whether working for the organisation provides opportunities to socialise with other employees
38	**Business Travel**	The amount of out-of-town business travel required by the job

The excluded attributes, six are from the 'organisation' category: environmental responsibility, formal/informal work environment, industry, risk taking, social responsibility and customer reputation; two from 'people' category: camaraderie and collegial work environment; one from 'rewards' category: vacation; and one from 'work' category: business travel. The approach used when reducing the list also ensured that only the laggard attributes in the category were excluded and those that generally appeal remained in the list. The 28 attributes that made it to the final list are in the survey printout which is Appendix A.

The first research question was answered at this stage, that is: What are the employee value proposition attributes that must be considered in the telecommunications industry?

4.3 Attributes ranking results and discussion

4.3.1 Sample

The sample was eventually taken from one institution which is Wits Business School. This was a deviation from plan due to the unavailability of the students in the other targeted institution. The important question that arises from this is the sample size, validity and reliability. These are discussed in the rest of this section.

There were 121 usable respondents that were taken into account in the final analysis, 39 short of the targeted 160. The main contributor is that only one institution was surveyed. 19 survey results were not considered as the respondent either filled it incorrectly or they had ticked that they would not consider working in the telecommunications industry. Although the targeted number was not reached, however, 121 is considered a good number to conduct a quantitative analysis on as a minimum of 40 is considered reasonable by various statisticians(Lee, 2014). It is therefore considered that the number of respondents were sufficient to make a valuable analysis.

In order to get a further insight into various groups within a sample, demographic information was taken. That was age, gender and race. For the age group, there were 71: 28 year or below business students and 50: 29 years or above business students, refer to Figure 5 below. Each group had enough number to do a statistical analysis on as it was above 40.

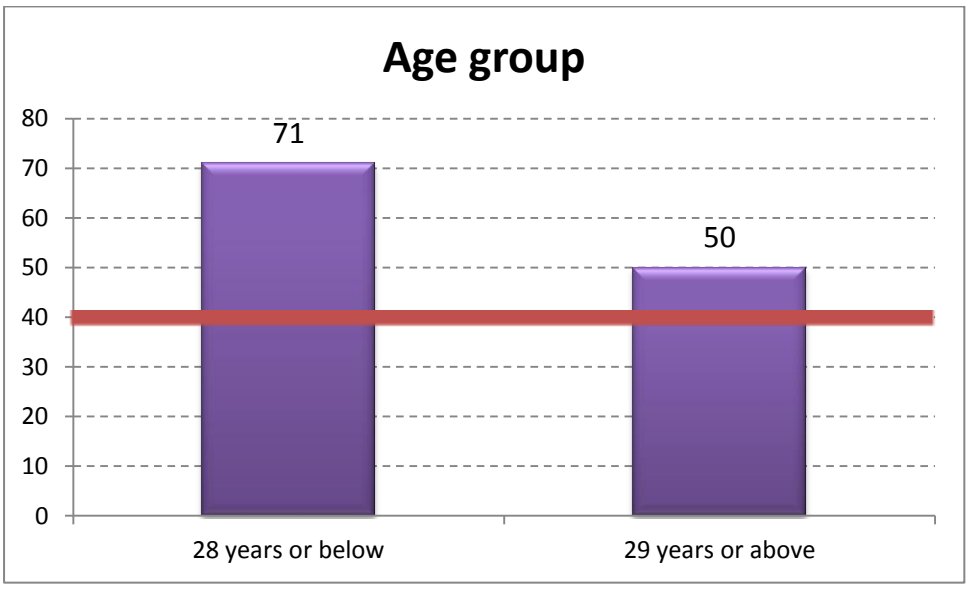


Figure 5: Number of useful observations by age group

For the gender group, there were 64 males and 57 females, refer to Figure 6 below. Both these numbers are above the minimum of 40 and therefore they could be used for statistical analysis.

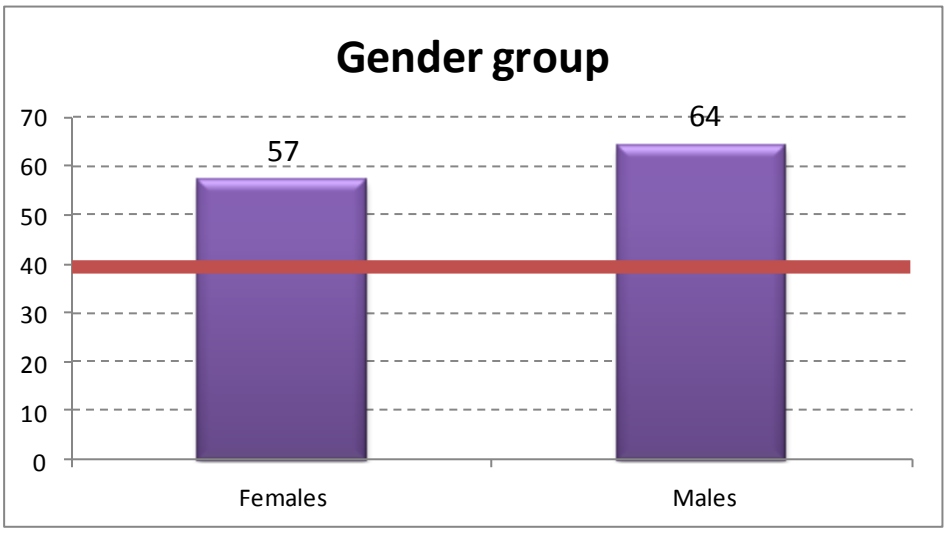


Figure 6: Number of useful observations by gender group

For the race group, there were 76 Black African, 6 Coloureds, 18 Whites and 21 Indians, refer to Figure 7 below. Three groups did not meet the minimum of 40 observations per race group. It must be noted that these results are by no means an indication of the race distribution in the PDM class; however, they only represent the profile of the business students who chose to participate in the survey. The researcher decided not to do the statistical analysis on race as the results would have been unreliable. It must be noted that this does not have a negative impact on answering the research question. It, however, leaves us with no insight on the preferences of each group and therefore organisations may use the overall ranking as a guide when designing their employee value proposition.

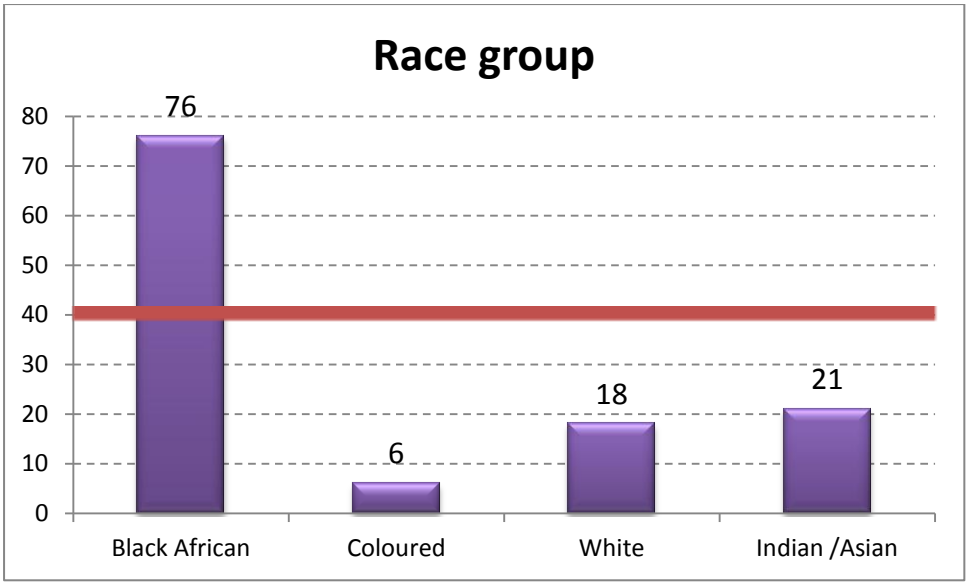


Figure 7: Number of useful observations by race group

Validity is about the accurate representation of the features of the phenomena that it is intended to describe (Hammersley, 1987). Internal validity was addressed by Corporate Leadership Council when they developed the attributes list. External validity is the main focus to the researcher which is about the extrapolation and generalisation of the findings to the defined population (Maxwell, 1992). The population group for this research are the business students in any business school in South Africa. WBS is one of the most prominent business schools and its students are not expected to be unique in terms of how they rank their preferred attributes it is therefore not envisaged that there is an issue with generalisation. The fact that the overall sample size is about three times the minimum required size to form a view, gives the researcher comfort that generalisation of the result found, is valid.

The last question is that of reliability which is about reproducibility of results when the study is conducted in the same setting (Hammersley, 1987). The consistent approach to the actual data collection ensured that the survey questions had the same meaning to the respondents and that the reproducibility is possible in the absence of other factors like for example the radical change in the socio-economic conditions that may result in the change of taste by business students. However, in the short to medium term, there is no issue of reliability that may arise based on the care taken by the researcher in ensuring a consistent approach.

It is therefore the view held by the researcher that the sample size, results validity and reliability requirements were met in this research.

4.3.2 Overall ranking

The ranking results from the Shotgun stochastic parameter estimation algorithm are given in Figure 8 below. As can be seen, the top ten attributes are, in descending order, compensation, development opportunities, future career opportunities, health benefits, empowerment, work-life balance, innovation, meritocracy, respect and ethics.

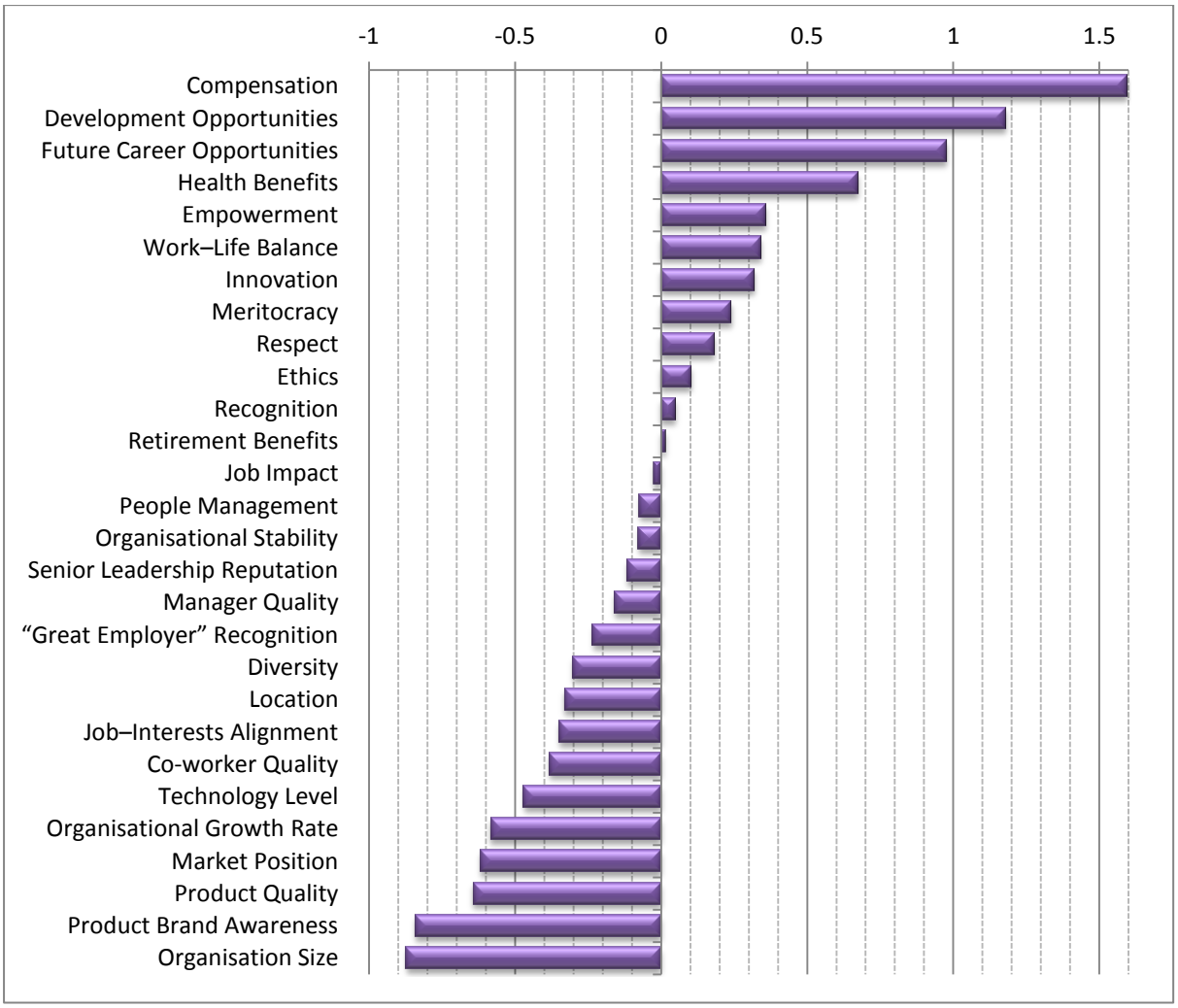


Figure 8: Attributes ranking by South African business students

To further test the rankings, t-values and p-values were calculated in the results. The 5% significance level was adopted in this research. Table 8 below gives the ranking of all attributes in the survey.

Table 8: Overall attributes ranking normalised mean, t-values and p-values

Attributes	Ranking	Normalised Means	T-value	P-value
Compensation	1	1.59	21.33	0.000
Development Opportunities	2	1.18	15.75	0.000
Future Career Opportunities	3	0.98	13.06	0.000
Health Benefits	4	0.67	9.00	0.000
Empowerment	5	0.36	4.77	0.000
Work–Life Balance	6	0.34	4.58	0.000
Innovation	7	0.32	4.28	0.000
Meritocracy	8	0.24	3.22	0.002
Respect	9	0.18	2.43	0.016
Ethics	10	0.10	1.39	0.166
Recognition	11	0.05	0.67	0.503
Retirement Benefits	12	0.02	0.21	0.835
Job Impact	13	-0.02	-0.31	0.755
People Management	14	-0.07	-0.96	0.341
Organisational Stability	15	-0.07	-1.00	0.320
Senior Leadership Reputation	16	-0.11	-1.53	0.128
Manager Quality	17	-0.16	-2.09	0.039
“Great Employer” Recognition	18	-0.23	-3.08	0.003
Diversity	19	-0.30	-3.98	0.000
Location	20	-0.33	-4.39	0.000
Job–Interests Alignment	21	-0.35	-4.63	0.000
Co-worker Quality	22	-0.38	-5.05	0.000
Technology Level	23	-0.47	-6.24	0.000
Organisational Growth Rate	24	-0.58	-7.77	0.000
Market Position	25	-0.62	-8.23	0.000
Product Quality	26	-0.64	-8.57	0.000
Product Brand Awareness	27	-0.84	-11.22	0.000
Organisation Size	28	-0.87	-11.62	0.000

The top ten attributes are given in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Overall top ten attributes as ranked by business students

Attributes	Ranking	Normalised Means	T-value	P-value
Compensation	1	1.59	21.33	0.000
Development Opportunities	2	1.18	15.75	0.000
Future Career Opportunities	3	0.98	13.06	0.000
Health Benefits	4	0.67	9.00	0.000
Empowerment	5	0.36	4.77	0.000
Work–Life Balance	6	0.34	4.58	0.000
Innovation	7	0.32	4.28	0.000
Meritocracy	8	0.24	3.22	0.002
Respect	9	0.18	2.43	0.016
Ethics	10	0.10	1.39	0.166

The attributes that are deemed significant are those with the positive t-value and p-value of 0.05 or less. With this criterion, all top ten attributes have a positive t-value and all have p-value that is less than 0.05 with the exception of ethics which is the last attribute in the top ten. These will be discussed individually in order to assess their significance to the study.

4.3.2.1 Compensation

Compensation	**The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package**

Compensation was ranked number 1 attribute in this survey with mean = 1.59, t-value = 21.33 and p-value = 0.0000. Thus it is significant at 5% level. Compensation was also ranked first in the South African studies that were conducted on MBA students(Rajha, 2012), conducted on generation Y with respect to the consulting management sector (Bhoola, 2013) and to wide range of industries in South Africa in 2006 (Council, 2006). However, it showed a slight drop to second place in the repeat study conducted by CLC in 2009.

Compensation package involves elements which may include basic salary, over-time pay, performance bonuses, rewards for special contribution like innovative idea,

and others based on each business. Organisations must decide on the compensation element that they would like to differentiate themselves based on the nature of the vacancy that they want to fill.

Like any other employee value proposition that the organisation prides itself on, it is important it is backed by tangible results. Organisations may for example not afford to pride themselves on competitive bonus only to find that it is a laggard in the telecommunication industry. Organisations must constantly align their employee value proposition to their capabilities.

South Africa is one of the emerging economies and is having an increase in the middle class coupled with stretched government public resources. It is envisaged that financial compensation will remain in top of mind for business students that seek employment in the telecommunications industry. So any organisation in this industry must make sure that it features competitive compensation package if it were to attract business students.

4.3.2.2 Development opportunities

Development opportunities	**The developmental or educational opportunities provided by the job and the organisation**

Development opportunities was ranked number 2 attribute in this survey with a mean = 1.18, t-value = 15.75 and p-value = 0.0000. Thus it is significant at 5% level. This attributes was ranked 2(Bhoola, 2013), ranked 6 (Rajha, 2012) and ranked 4 by CLC in 2009. It is clear that development opportunities attribute is in the top as evident in the three different studies conducted in South Africa.

Development opportunities are important to business students who intend working in the telecommunications industry. Telecommunications industry is closely related to technology and employees in this space must keep on educating themselves in order to keep up with the changes. It is therefore not surprising that it became number 2 in the ranking. Organisations still have a responsibility to give developmental and educational assistance to business students that are aligned to their individual interests. Having a blanket educational programme will not help with retention of business students; however, this should be the focus of the individual

development plan as part of the ongoing performance management and organisation's succession planning.

The importance of development opportunities is envisaged to remain relevant for a long time in South Africa especially given the poor basic education in public schools where most of the employees come from. After the primary degree and business studies, students still want to acquire more knowledge so that they may achieve even higher goals.

4.3.2.3 Future career opportunities

Future career opportunities	**The future career opportunities provided by the organisation**

Future career opportunities was ranked number 3 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.98, t-value = 13.06 and p-value = 0.0000. Thus it is significant at 5% level. This attributes featured 3rd in the study conducted by Rajha (2012) and Bhoola (2013), and 1st by CLC in 2009. No matter how you look at it, this attribute is in general in the top three and it may not be ignored.

Future career opportunities is definitely a good attracting attributes, however, employees will quickly know whether it is practiced in the organisation as soon as they get in. One of the indicators of good career opportunities is the number of years' service of employees and the roles that they have held in the organisation. If the attracted business student were to find that there is no growth path for the role that s/he is in and the conversation that is having with colleagues does not indicate any career opportunity prospect, they will be discouraged from having a long term employment with the organisation.

Organisations in the telecommunications industry must therefore make sure that they have a retention strategy which includes a clear career growth path. They must have also have a focused effort on ensuring that business students do progress so that they may have a good reference to their future career opportunities rhetoric.

4.3.2.4 Health benefits

Health benefits	**The comprehensiveness of the organisation's health benefits**

Health benefits was ranked number 4 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.67, t-value = 9.00 and p-value = 0.0000. Thus it is significant at 5% level. This attributes was not in the top ten in the study conducted by Rajha (2012) while it was number twelve in the study conducted by Bhoola (2013). In the CLC in 2009, it was ranked nineteen. All these studies quoted above showed that health benefit is not top of mind for the most people, however, for the telecommunications industry was found to be number four. There were no attempt to found out the reasons for people to rank in a particular order and that present an opportunity for a further work.

Telecommunications industry may be characterised with high work pressure if you for example looking at broadcasting. If the people are watching their favourite game, they would be highly dissatisfied if the broadcasting stream would be off-line even for a minute. So organisations in the telecommunications industry must have health benefits that are aligned to stress that comes with that particular job. For example they may consider having their high performers qualify for a full body massage once per annum which is something not popular.

Health benefit will remain one of the critical attributes of employee value proposition given the healthy trend that is still developing in the world and also in South Africa in particular. People pay more attention to what they eat, how much exercise they get, all in an attempt to live a healthy life and health benefit will increasingly become more relevant when people are choosing their potential employers. This coupled with the public health care system that is under a lot of pressure.

4.3.2.5 Empowerment

Empowerment	**The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career**

Empowerment was ranked number 5 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.36, t-value = 4.77 and p-value = 0.0000. Thus it is significant at 5% level. Empowerment featured seven in the study conducted by Bhoola (2013) while it was ranked nine in the study conducted by CLC (2009). Both these studies, even though they were in different contexts, however, they show that empowerment is one of the top ten attributes. Especially so in South Africa after the dawn of democracy, general public and business students in particular, wants to be in control of their destiny.

Organisations may empower business students by involving them in the development of their job profile. This may be partly done by having an effective individual development plan where employees may sculpt their career in that organisation and beyond. To also support empowerment, organisations must develop and nurture the culture of inclusiveness where employees may voice their opinions without fear of being disciplined for challenging management and leadership. This may sound extreme especially in the twenty first century; however, it is important that organisations in the telecommunications industry have a focused effort in breaking the communication barriers and build vibrant organisations.

Empowerment will remain one of the most important attributes in the telecommunications industry where loyalty to the employer is minimal. Organisations in this industry must always make sure that they involve their employees otherwise they will lose them to competition. Telecommunications industry demands high level of creativity in getting ahead of competition. Naturally, business students that are attracted to this industry will demand empowerment.

4.3.2.6 Work-life balance

Work-life balance	**The extent to which the job allows employees to balance their work and their other interests**

Work life balance was ranked number 6 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.34, t-value = 4.58 and p-value = 0.0000. Thus it is significant at 5% level. This attributes was number four in both studies conducted by Rajha (2012) and Bhoola (2013). In the CLC (2009) study it was at number three. This attribute is clearly in the mid of the top ten.

It is not surprising to have work-life balance in the top ten especially in light of the empowerment discussion above. Business students want flexibility to live and work. Baby boomers are well known for their working and then live approach to life, however, the current generation is more inclined towards living and then work. Organisations in the telecommunications industry must make sure that employees and business students in particular are given space to attend to their interests while delivering to the demands of their jobs.

In order to create this work life balance, organisations must look at flexible working hours, incremental leave days based on years of service, working from home on particular days where possible, sport leave days, free tickets to social events etc. Management has a duty to communicate with their employees and find out what really matters to them. Using this attributes to attract employees might be tricky if the organisation then focuses on only one part. So organisations must develop a wide range of possibilities that will address individual definition of work-life balance.

4.3.2.7 Innovation

Innovation	**The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects**

Innovation was ranked number 7 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.32, t-value = 4.28 and p-value = 0.0000. Thus it is significant at 5% level. In the study conducted by Rajha (2012) it was ten and in the one by Bhoola (2013) it was ranked six. In the CLC (2009) study it was ranked twelve. The simplistic conclusion is that innovation is in the late top ten.

Innovation is the name of the game. Business students are motivated and they would like to have a contribution that may add value to the business. It is therefore important to include stretch targets in job design so that an employee may have an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. Organisations may achieve this by carefully designing role objectives. At least one of the objectives must focus on coming up with the solution to a challenge that the organisation is facing. That might unleash an incremental innovation or even a disruptive innovation.

Some of the thriving businesses today are built on disruptive innovation, the likes of Apple. Business students in general would like to be part of the something big that changed the world as we know it. Telecommunications industry in particular is built around technology that is changing at the fastest pace in human history. It is for that reason that business students that are in the telecommunications industry must be given a challenge and space to innovate so that they themselves may remain relevant in their careers.

In South Africa, First National Bank and Discovery, are the organisations that are regarded as highly innovative. Organisations must come up with means of developing and nurturing the innovative culture. Organisations may have rewards for innovative ideas where employees are entitled to the certain percentage of the profit generated from their ideas, allow employees to resign and offer a unique solution to the organisation as a service provider, etc. Depending on the nature of the organisation within the telecommunications industry, decision should be made on the best way of unleashing innovative ideas.

4.3.2.8 Meritocracy

Meritocracy	**Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted on the basis of their achievements**

Meritocracy was ranked number 8 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.24, t-value = 3.22 and p-value = 0.0016. Thus it is significant at 5% level. Meritocracy was ranked seven in a study by Rajha (2012) and eighteen in a study by Bhoola (2013). In a CLC (2009) study, it was ranked twenty-four after it was ranked twelve in 2006. This was the biggest jump out of all other attributes that were observed.

Pitching the importance of this attribute based on other studies might be difficult; however, one may generally say that it is in the top fifteen. It also shows that when approaching the tenth attribute, views may start to differ and it is important for organisations to carefully decide on that attribute if they were to use it to attract business students as a significant pool might not be interested in that particular attribute. Nonetheless, meritocracy remains one attribute that must be considered when the organisation is designing its employee value proposition.

Irrespective of the ranking, it is good practice to reward those who perform an outstanding job. The fact that compensation was ranked number one in this study, it shows that the notion of performance and then reward is still relevant to the minds of people and business students in particular. One of the reasons that students chose to do business studies is for them to get ahead of their peers and have better opportunities to succeed in the organisation. If the organisation were to display a culture to the contrary like nepotism, most business students would be discouraged and the word of mouth might render the employee value proposition useless.

4.3.2.9 Respect

Respect	**The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees**

Respect was ranked number 9 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.18, t-value = 2.43 and p-value = 0.0164. Thus it is significant at 5% level. Respect was ranked seventeen in a study by Rajha (2012) and twenty-one in a study by Bhoola (2013). In a CLC 2009 it was ranked seven. The current study ranking is more in line with the CLC 2009 results. As commented on meritocracy, there is now a big discrepancy in the results when one looks at various studies. That does not necessarily imply that there is a better or worse study, however, it means that the user of the information must be carefully and do more research when planning to use these attributes as a core of their employee value proposition.

In South Africa, general public is starting to understand their rights better and naturally, they expect those to be respected by the employer. Business students in particular, they know most of their rights and they expect those to be respected at all times. Respect is also important in building trust. When the employer disrespects employees that environment becomes contaminated and it is difficult to work in harmony with each other. That may also slow decision making process and consequently low productivity. Even though respect was not at the top of the list of attributes, however, it remains important for other reasons like maintaining harmony with labour.

Organisations in the telecommunications industry must make sure that they display respect, if not for attracting business students, at least for building teams. Although individual contribution is important, team contribution is more important as it brings diverse experiences and views that may make an even better solution. Employees get to learn and become better individuals that may contribute at an even a higher level.

4.3.2.10 Ethics

Ethics	**The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity**

Ethics was ranked number 10 attribute in this survey with a mean = 0.10, t-value = 1.39 and p-value = 0.1657. Thus it is not significant at 5% level. Ethics was ranked fourteen in a study by Rajha (2012) and fifteen in a study by Bhoola (2013). In both cases the results were insignificant. However, CLC (2009) found it to be number six. From the eighth attribute, meritocracy, there has been a big discrepancy from the results found in different studies. Even though ethics was ranked tenth, the fact that the results were found to be insignificant, one is discouraged to using it as an attracting attribute.

Table 10 below, gives the comprehensive results comparison of the similar attributes studies conducted in South Africa.

Table 10: Comparison of different South African attributes studies

#	ATTRIBUTE	RESEARCHERS			
		CLC (2009)	Rajha (2012)	Bhoola (2013)	Mpanza (2014)
1	**Business Travel**				
2	**Camaraderie**				
3	**Collegial Work Environment**				
4	**Compensation**	√	√	√	√
5	**Co-worker Quality**			√	
6	**Customer Reputation**				
7	**Development Opportunities**	√	√	√	√
8	**Diversity**				
9	**Empowerment**	√	√	√	√
10	**Environmental Responsibility**				
11	**Ethics**	√			√
12	**Formal/Informal Work Environment**				
13	**Future Career Opportunities**	√	√	√	√
14	**"Great Employer" Recognition**				
15	**Health Benefits**				√
16	**Industry**				
17	**Innovation**		√	√	√
18	**Job–Interests Alignment**		√		
19	**Job Impact**		√		
20	**Location**				
21	**Manager Quality**				
22	**Market Position**				
23	**Meritocracy**		√		√
24	**Organisational Growth Rate**				
25	**Organisation Size**				
26	**Organisational Stability**	√			
27	**People Management**	√			
28	**Product Brand Awareness**				
29	**Product Quality**				
30	**Recognition**	√		√	
31	**Respect**	√			√
32	**Retirement Benefits**				
33	**Risk Taking**			√	
34	**Senior Leadership Reputation**		√		
35	**Social Responsibility**				
36	**Technology Level**				
37	**Vacation**			√	
38	**Work–Life Balance**	√	√	√	√

The list of the top ten attributes discussed answers the second research question, that is: What are the top 10 attributes of employee value proposition that attract South African business students to the telecommunications industry?

Further analysis was done for age, gender and race groups in order to get further insight in this study and not necessarily to answer the research question.

4.3.3 Ranking by age group

This section shows the results of the attributes based on generation X (28- years) and generation Y (29+ years) responses. In the survey printout there was an option for four age groups and there was no one who was 21 or below and also no one above 38 years old. The age groups that were then analysed were 28 or below and 29 or above. These results are there to give a further insight to the preferences of different generations and not necessarily to answer the research question.

4.3.3.1 Age: 28 years or below

This age group falls in the generation Y category. It was found that compensation is still important to them as per the overall ranking, refer to Figure 9 below. Unlike in the overall ranking, future career opportunity was number two followed by development opportunities. Younger people are more concerned with their future career in the organisation. They want to know that their hard work will be rewarded in future and they may have a good platform to take their careers to the higher level within that organisation.

Health benefit was at number four as in the overall ranking. Innovation was ranked five better than seven in the overall ranking. At this age people are thinking fast pace and they are not afraid of coming up with new and the so called ridiculous ideas. Innovation is important to them as it might guarantee future career opportunities that they ranked second.

Ranked six was empowerment, slightly less than the overall ranking where it was five. At number seven was meritocracy better than number eight in the overall ranking. These attributes came ahead of work-life balance which was ranked eight. This ranking is worse than number six in the overall ranking. This age group seem to

accept that work-life balance must come after meritocracy and empowerment. They are willing to compromise that balance in favour of building their careers.

In number nine was respect as in the overall ranking. Lastly was recognition. Ethics were number ten in the overall ranking and recognition did not feature. It is clear that the business students in this age group want to be recognised and rewarded for their contribution.

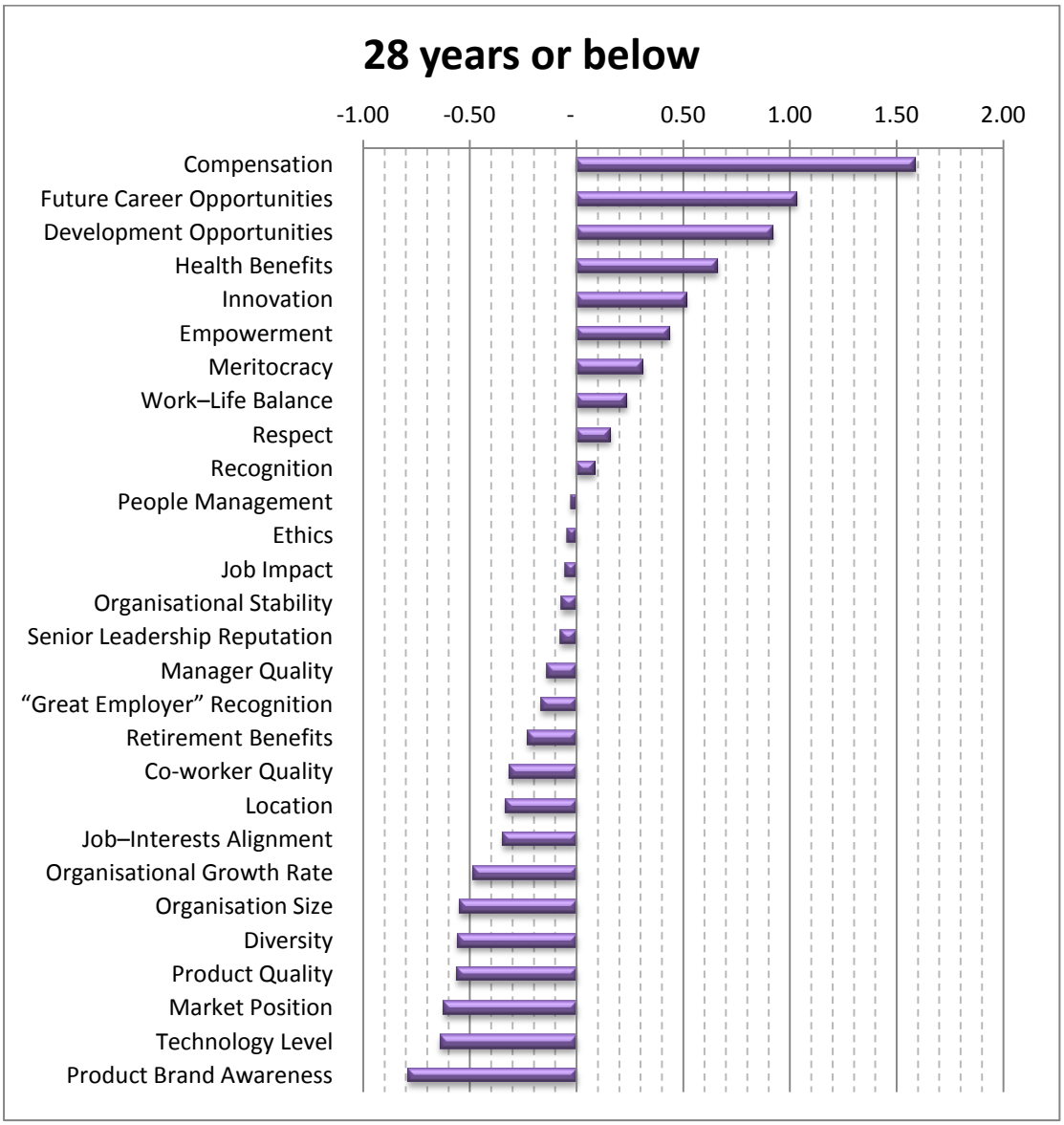


Figure 9: Ranking by 28 years or below age group

The top ten attributes selected by 28 years or below, are similar to the overall ranking. However, it was observed that this group gave a better ranking to future career opportunities, innovation and meritocracy as the position of these attributes moved up. Work-life balance remained in the top ten but with less emphasis on it. Recognition made it to the list.

Organisations in the telecommunication industry must recognise that younger business students are willing to compromise their work-life balance in favour of future career opportunities. Also they put more emphasis on innovation and meritocracy. Probably they see these as important when considering an employee for future career opportunities and compensation.

4.3.3.2 Age: 29 years or above

This age group falls in generation X category. Compensation was also found to be the number one ranked attribute, refer to Figure 10 below. This is the same as in the overall ranking. Business students are pushed to improve their knowledge so that they may be compensated accordingly by their employers for the contribution that they make. Telecommunications industry is no exception. Organisations in this industry must make sure that they remain competitive in their compensation; otherwise they may easily loose good employees to competition.

Also, the ranking of number 2 to 7 is in the same position as the overall ranking, that is; development opportunities, future career opportunities, health benefits, empowerment, work-life balance and innovation. It is clear that the outcome of the overall ranking was highly influenced by this group's attribute ranking.

At number eight, they put retirement benefits. This attribute did not feature in the overall ranking. This group has between eighteen and twenty-six years before early retirement age which is fifty-five years in South Africa. They are concerned about the ability and willingness of their organisation to take care of them when the retirement time comes. Business students get to learn a lot and they generally have a desire to start their businesses while they are still healthy and a good retirement package mighty help them to do that. Alternatively, they want to know that they may retire comfortably. Organisations in telecommunications industry must focus on designing a retirement package that is in line with the working life of their potential employees.

Ethics were ranked number nine, up one place from the overall ranking. At this age and stage of your career, your reputation means a lot. Being employed by an unethical organisation might make it difficult for you to secure your next job. As soon as the potential employer sees that you are coming from the unethical organisation, they might be discouraged from considering you. Older business students are aware of this danger and organisations in the telecommunications industry must make sure that their behaviour is both ethical and legal.

Meritocracy was ranked number ten, two places down from the overall ranking. This age group seem to understand that it is not only about good work but also about strong networks. They seem to be more aware that, in reality promotions and career advancements do not only depend on your merits but also on internal dynamics or politics. Organisations need to be careful when choosing this attribute to attract older business students as it might not appeal much.

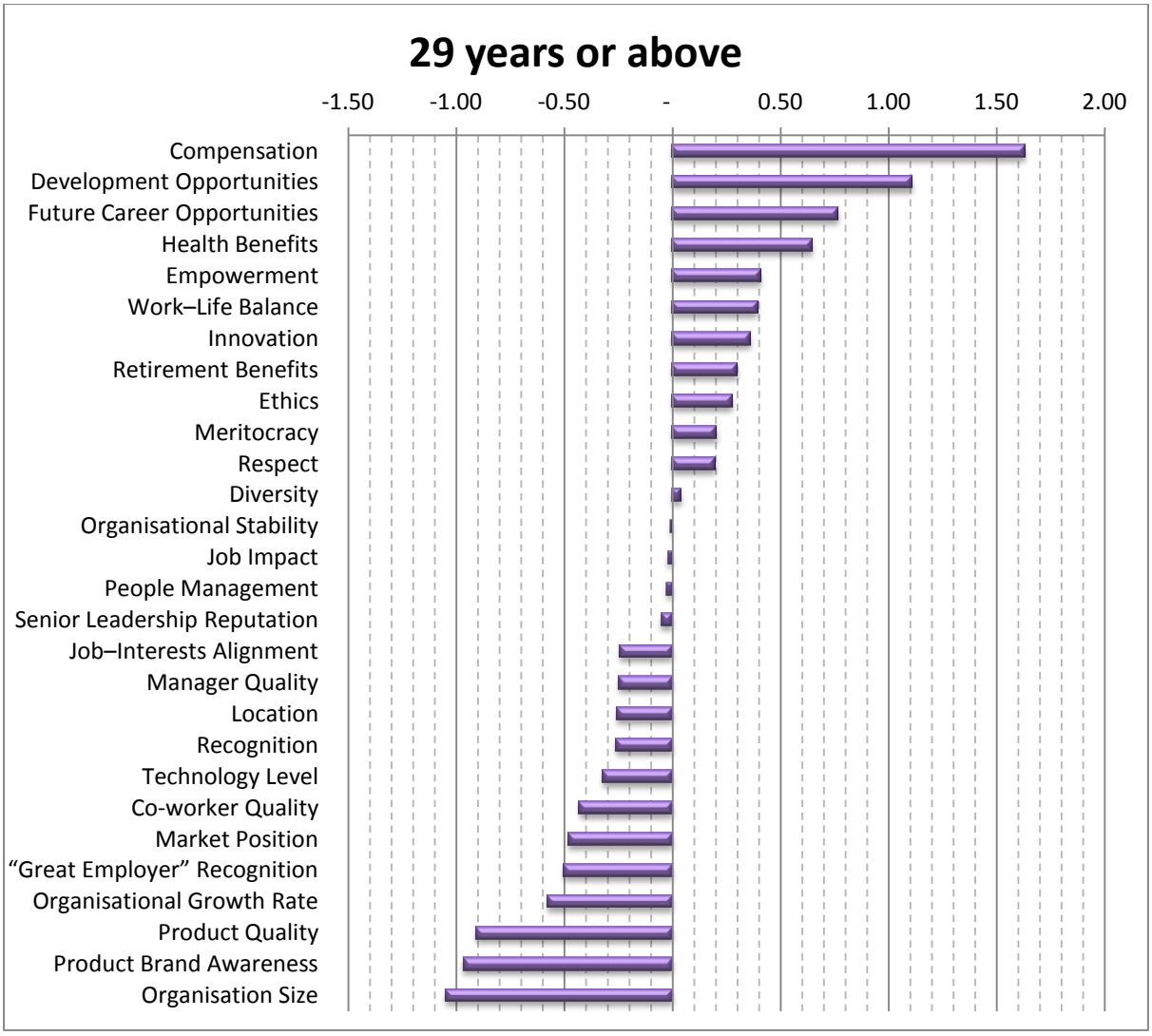


Figure 10 : Ranking by 29 years or above age group

The top ten attributes selected by 29 years or above, are identical to the overall ranking from number one to seven. However, it was observed that ‘retirement benefits’ was introduced at number eight. It was then followed by ethics and then meritocracy last.

Organisations in the telecommunication industry must recognise that older business students are also concerned with retirement befits and ethics more than their younger colleagues. This must obviously be considered in the context of overall ranking, as the added point.

Table 8 below shows the top ten for the overall ranking and the two groups. In the two age groups, the first four attributes are shared even though there is a switch between number two and three. From five onwards, there is a difference in ranking. Work-life balance is more important to 29 or above as it is two places above their counter-part. Also retirement benefits did not make it to the top ten for the 28 or below age group. For the 29 or above age group, innovation was less important as it is two places below their counter-parts.

Organisations in the telecommunications must emphasise the top five ranked attributes in the overall ranking as it at least appeal to both age groups. Depending on the level of work experience or estimated age group of the candidate being sought after, an organisation may consider customising the emphasis on attributes on top of the first five in the overall ranking. For example, if a four years degree and 10 years working experience is required in a role, mostly likely the minimum age of that person will be 31 (when assuming that at least s/he completed the primary degree at the age of twenty one). It follows that work-life balance and retirement benefits must be highlighted as the ideal candidate falls in the 29 or above category.

Table 11: Overall and age group ranking comparison

Ranking	Overall Ranking	28 or below Ranking	29 or above Ranking
1	Compensation	Compensation	Compensation
2	Development Opportunities	Future Career Opportunities	Development Opportunities
3	Future Career Opportunities	Development Opportunities	Future Career Opportunities
4	Health Benefits	Health Benefits	Health Benefits
5	Empowerment	Innovation	Empowerment
6	Work–Life Balance	Empowerment	Work–Life Balance
7	Innovation	Meritocracy	Innovation
8	Meritocracy	Work–Life Balance	Retirement Benefits
9	Respect	Respect	Ethics
10	Ethics	Recognition	Meritocracy

These attributes found were further compared with the previous studies conducted by Rajha (2012) and Bhoola (2013), and were found to be similar, refer to Table 12 below.

Table 12: Age group ranking comparison with similar South African studies

#	ATTRIBUTE	Generation X			Generation Y		
		Rajha (2012)	Mpanza (2014)		Rajha (2012)	Bhoola (2013)	Mpanza (2014)
1	Business Travel						
2	Camaraderie						
3	Collegial Work Environment						
4	Compensation	√	√		√	√	√
5	Co-worker Quality						
6	Customer Reputation						
7	Development Opportunities	√	√		√	√	√
8	Diversity						
9	Empowerment		√				√
10	Environmental Responsibility						
11	Ethics						
12	Formal/Informal Work Environment						
13	Future Career Opportunities	√	√		√	√	√
14	"Great Employer" Recognition						
15	Health Benefits		√				√
16	Industry						
17	Innovation						√
18	Job–Interests Alignment						
19	Job Impact	√			√		
20	Location						
21	Manager Quality						
22	Market Position						
23	Meritocracy						
24	Organisational Growth Rate						
25	Organisation Size						
26	Organisational Stability						
27	People Management						
28	Product Brand Awareness						
29	Product Quality						
30	Recognition					√	
31	Respect						
32	Retirement Benefits						
33	Risk Taking						
34	Senior Leadership Reputation						
35	Social Responsibility						
36	Technology Level						
37	Vacation						
38	Work–Life Balance	√			√	√	

4.3.4 Ranking by gender group

This section shows the results of the attributes based on females and males responses. These results are there to give a further insight to the preferences of both gender groups and not to necessarily answer the research question.

4.3.4.1 Gender: Female

Compensation retained a number one position for females like in the overall ranking, refer to Figure 11 below. Female business students want to be compensated in the in the telecommunications industry. Good compensation is important as it helps with financial freedom and independence. Business students who are ladies also have needs either as singles or partners. Irrespective of their personal relationship status, they want to have enough money to contribute to their families or any other course of their interest. It is therefore important for organisations in the telecommunications industry not to discriminate ladies on compensation. The cost of living has increased for both females and males and any attempt to give unbalanced compensation will discourage ladies from joining the organisation.

On number two was a future career opportunity followed by development opportunity which is a switch from the overall ranking. What is important is that these attributes are in the top three as in the overall ranking. So organisations must make it clear that they have both future career and development opportunities for females. This might help them settle well as soon as they join the organisation.

Health benefits and empowerment took number four and five, respectively. This is the same as the overall ranking. Respect came at number six, three ranks higher than the overall ranking. Female business students recognise that they still need to fight for their place in the workplace. They expect any progressive organisation to treat them with respect and give them opportunities to advance their careers. Organisations in the telecommunication industry must therefore make sure that they have female friendly policies, if there were to attract and retain them.

Work-life balance came at number seven, one place lower than the overall ranking. Females seem to understand that the expectation for them is higher than their male counter-part. To that extent, they acknowledge that work-life balance might be

compromised in favour of their career progression. Organisations must, however, strive to make it easier for females to have a good work-life balance. If it is missing, some of them might have to resign and join progressive organisations or alternatively exit the job market. Either way, that does not bode well with the employment or gender equity policy that most progressive organisations have. At number eight was meritocracy as in the overall ranking.

Innovation came at number nine, three places below the overall ranking. This might be an indication of lack of confidence in terms of coming up with innovative ideas. It could be that females are a bit sceptical of rocking the boat. However, organisations must get over their fears of giving power and allow females to shape the future of the organisations that they are in. Business students have studied wide topics. Progressive organisations must show trust to female business students by being receptive to their innovation capabilities. Number ten was taken by ethics like in the overall ranking.

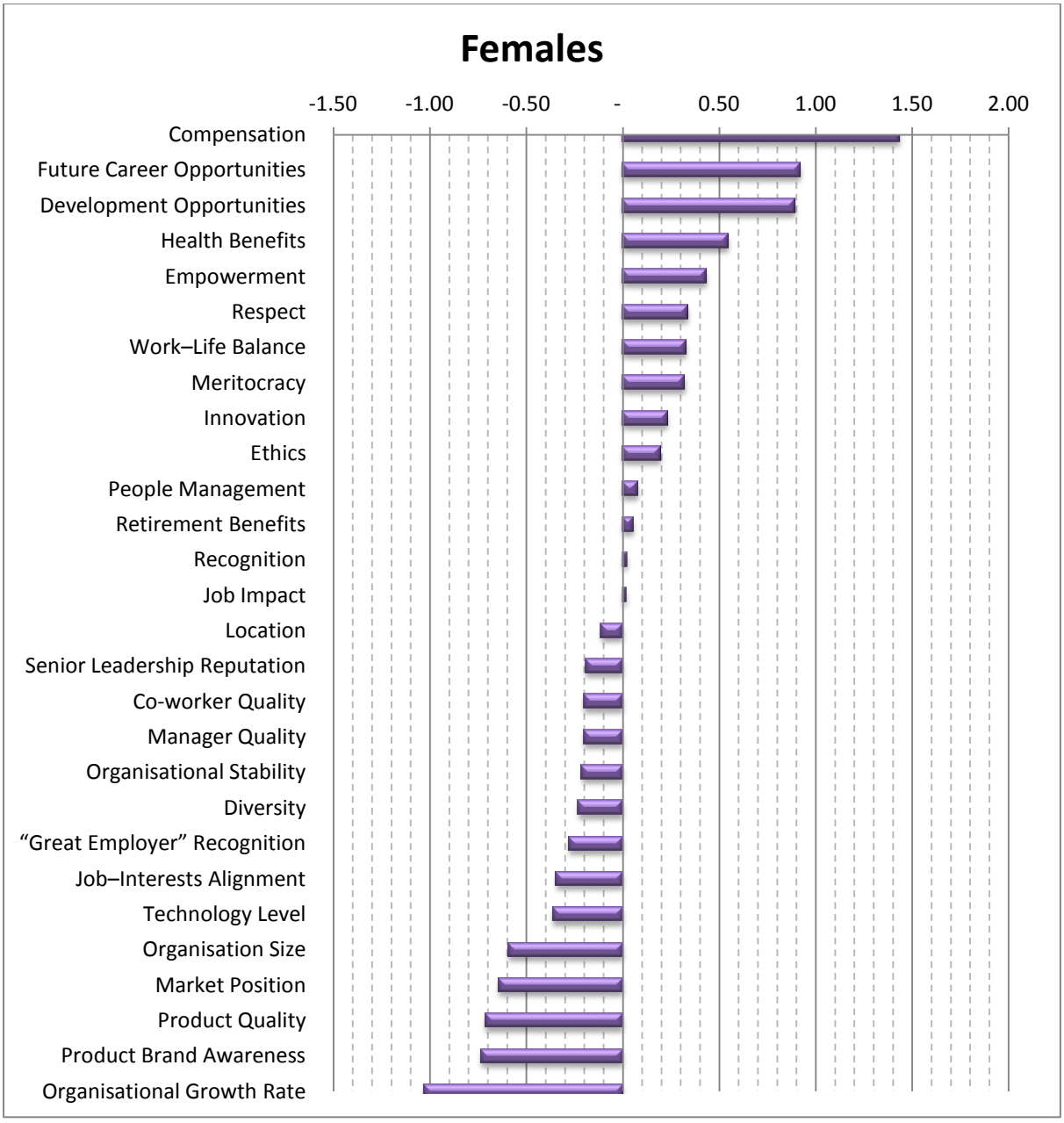


Figure 11: Ranking by female gender group

The top five females ranking is very similar to the overall ranking. The main observation was that they seem to like respect. It is therefore important for organisations to ensure that their systems are aligned to the needs of female business students. It was also observed that they put less emphasis on work-life balance and innovation. Be that as it may, organisations should not take advantage of this and push females to a corner as they may be forced to exit the workplace. For example, organisations may consider having a crèche within their office building so

that parents may have access to their kids as and when they need them. This relaxed set-up might even help with creativity and innovation that is required for the organisation in order to remain competitive.

4.3.4.2 Gender: Male

Compensation was also number one attribute for males, refer to Figure 12 below. This is the same with the overall ranking. Males as traditional family supporters certainly find it important to get the right compensation for the job that they perform.

Like in the overall ranking, males put development opportunities, future career opportunities and health benefits in the second, third and fourth place, respectively. Development opportunity puts a person in a better position for future career opportunities. It is therefore interesting that males seem to understand that career opportunities are at least derived from development as they ranked this higher. Health benefits are also important as they at least guarantee you that you will get some medical assistance in the event of an unfortunate situation. Business students are generally aware that they need to be in good health in order to perform at their best. Organisations in the telecommunication industry must therefore ensure that the health benefit package is attractive to business students.

Ranked five was innovation, two places higher than the overall ranking. Males are keener on working on innovative projects. If a business student were to do something innovative for the organisation, he stands a better chance to get higher compensation and possibly promotion. Males are therefore aware that they need to do a job or a project that may allow them to shine so that they may get the recognition that may help them advance in their careers. So organisations in the telecommunication industry must create a balance between this desire for males and gender equity initiative. Even though males would like to drive any project that they may get their hands on, however, organisations must also make it a point that females are also afforded similar opportunities.

Ranked six was work-life balance like in the overall ranking. Males derive their pride as parents on the success of their kids, especially boys. South Africa is having drug and alcohol abuse challenges so it is important for the parents to work and also have time to fulfil their family responsibilities.

At seven was empowerment, two places below the overall ranking. Males seem to be less concerned with empowerment, in the context of the overall ranking. It could be that they are comfortable with their ability to advance in the organisation since those that controls the organisations are predominantly males and their gender biases is in favour of other males. That said there is still an expectation for empowerment from males, since this attribute made it to the top ten. Ranked eight was meritocracy, in the same position as in the overall ranking. Males still believe that meritocracy is important.

At number nine was recognition which did not make it in the overall ranking. Recognition refers to the amount of recognition provided to employees by the organisation. Recognition is important to males as discussed under innovation above. When an employee is recognised two things are at least achieved. The first is that the employee gets that satisfaction that his work is appreciated and that is good for the confidence and focus. The second benefit is that whenever there is a promotion opportunity, at least someone who is a decision maker is likely to think about you. It is therefore important for organisations in the telecommunications industry to recognise those who performed exceptionally well, for the benefit of both parties.

Ranked ten was organisational stability which refers to the level of stability of the organisation and the job. This attribute did not make it in the overall ranking top ten. Males are concerned with stability since most of the time they are the main providers in their families. Job security is important to them. Organisations in the telecommunication industry must make sure that there is a reasonable stability in the company so that they may attract male business students.

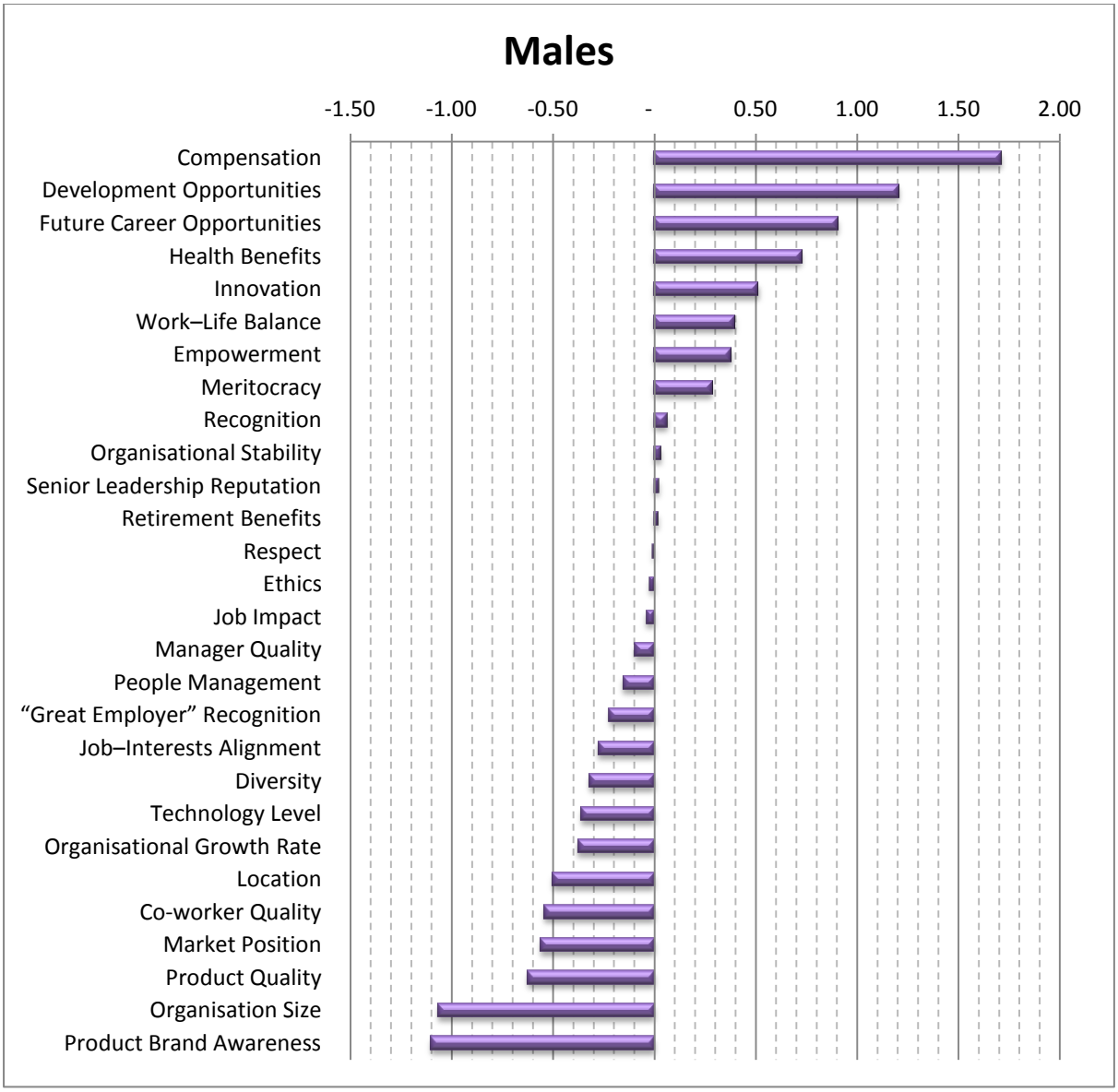


Figure 12: Ranking by male gender group

The top five male ranking is very similar to the overall ranking, refer to Table 9 below. However, there was more emphasis on innovation as opposed to empowerment. The addition to the ranking was recognition and organisational stability at number nine and ten, respectively. It is a responsibility of the organisation to highlight these attributes to the male business student. Employee value proposition may be communicated with the job advert and also during the interview. Knowing these biases, may help organisations to customise their EVP based on who they are talking to at that particular time.

Table 13: Overall and gender group ranking comparison

Ranking	Overall Ranking	Females Ranking	Males Ranking
1	Compensation	Compensation	Compensation
2	Development Opportunities	Future Career Opportunities	Development Opportunities
3	Future Career Opportunities	Development Opportunities	Future Career Opportunities
4	Health Benefits	Health Benefits	Health Benefits
5	Empowerment	Empowerment	Innovation
6	Work–Life Balance	Respect	Work–Life Balance
7	Innovation	Work–Life Balance	Empowerment
8	Meritocracy	Meritocracy	Meritocracy
9	Respect	Innovation	Recognition
10	Ethics	Ethics	Organisational Stability

These findings were further compared to the study conducted by Rajha (2012) and there are similar, refer to Table 14 below.

Table 14: Gender groups ranking comparison with similar South African studies

#	ATTRIBUTE	Males			Females	
		Rajha (2012)	Mpanza (2014)		Rajha (2012)	Mpanza (2014)
1	Business Travel					
2	Camaraderie					
3	Collegial Work Environment					
4	Compensation	√	√		√	√
5	Co-worker Quality					
6	Customer Reputation					
7	Development Opportunities		√			√
8	Diversity					
9	Empowerment	√			√	√
10	Environmental Responsibility					
11	Ethics					
12	Formal/Informal Work Environment					
13	Future Career Opportunities	√	√		√	√
14	"Great Employer" Recognition					
15	Health Benefits		√			√
16	Industry					
17	Innovation		√			
18	Job–Interests Alignment				√	
19	Job Impact	√			√	
20	Location					
21	Manager Quality					
22	Market Position					
23	Meritocracy					
24	Organisational Growth Rate					
25	Organisation Size					
26	Organisational Stability					
27	People Management					
28	Product Brand Awareness					
29	Product Quality					
30	Recognition					
31	Respect					
32	Retirement Benefits					
33	Risk Taking					
34	Senior Leadership Reputation					
35	Social Responsibility					
36	Technology Level					
37	Vacation					
38	Work–Life Balance	√				

4.3.5 Ranking by race group

Ranking by race group was not done since the survey data collected did not have enough observations. It is therefore advisable for organisations in the telecommunications to use the overall attributes ranking equally to any race group.

4.4 Conclusion

This section has discussed the results of the study and has concluded by answering the two research questions. The results found in the study were contrasted with the results found in other studies of similar nature. The research questions answered were:

4.4.1 Research Question 1

What are the employee value proposition attributes that must be considered in the telecommunications industry?

The attributes list that was developed by Corporate Leadership Council was found to be robust enough to be used in the telecommunications industry. It was then trimmed by excluding the last ten attributes in their South African survey which was conducted across industries in 2009. This question was a step towards answering the main research question.

4.4.2 Research Question 2

What are the top 10 attributes of employee value proposition that attract South African business students to the telecommunications industry?

Business students ranked the attributes as follows;

1. Compensation;
2. Development opportunities;
3. Future career opportunities;
4. Health benefits;
5. Empowerment;
6. Work-life balance;

7. Innovation;
8. Meritocracy;
9. Respect and
10. Ethics.

Further investigation by age groups and by gender groups showed that the first five attributes are common to the groups and beyond that the ranking is mixed. There was no sufficient data to formulate a statistical result on race groups.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the key outcomes of the study and the recommendations. It summarises the attributes of employee value proposition that are applicable to the telecommunications industry. It also summarises the top ranked attributes of employee value proposition as determined from the study results.

5.2 Conclusion of the study

It was concluded that the attributes list developed by Corporate Leadership Council is applicable to the telecommunications industry. It is robust enough and has been used across industries and in a bigger sample.

The top five attributes were commonly ranked by different age and gender groups, beyond this there were different ranking order but still within the overall top ten. The overall attributes ranking was as follows:

1. Compensation;
2. Development opportunities;
3. Future career opportunities;
4. Health benefits;
5. Empowerment;
6. Work-life balance;
7. Innovation;
8. Meritocracy;
9. Respect and
10. Ethics.

Compensation: Is highly regarded by business students who desire employment in the telecommunications industry. This result is in-line with the attributes study conducted in South Africa, in different context though by Corporate Leadership Council (2006, 2009), Rajha (2012) and Bhoola (2013). It is clear that any organisation, be it in the telecommunications or not and also whether it wants to

attract business students or any employees, compensation is in top of mind for all South Africans. With the increase in cost of living, compensation might remain the number one attributes for a long time as employees and business students in particular have a lot of financial needs as they want to maintain a good social standard.

Development opportunities: This attribute is in the top six of other studies observed. It is in the top three for both gender and age groups. Development opportunities are more important to the business students since the telecommunications industry is in the technology space and anyone who wants to remain relevant must continuously develop. Business students are generally highly motivated individuals and they want to be in the fore front of technological changes that are happening. Organisations must therefore have a clear development program for business students in particular.

Future career opportunities: It is not surprising that future career opportunity is in the third place. Business students, as mentioned above, are motivated and want to progress in their careers. A significant number of business students have a non-business primary degree. One of the reasons they join Business Schools is to acquire that business skill on top of their technical skill with the aim of being one step ahead of peers. Organisations must therefore give opportunities for business students to swell the ranks.

Health benefits: This attribute was not in the top ten of other studies observed. However, in the current study it remained at number four in all age and gender groups and also in the overall ranking. It shows that business students are becoming more aware of the need to remain healthy so that they may add value to their organisations. Also in South Africa, the public health system is under a lot of pressure and as a result a good health benefit is becoming more important to business students, more so in the telecommunications industry where there is constant pressure to be innovative.

Empowerment: It is one of the strong attributes as it is in the mid of the top ten attributes in the studies observed. At number five in the current study, empowerment should be the focus of any organisation in the telecommunications industry.

Business students are widely learned and they have opinions in the decisions that may affect their roles and careers. There are also laws in South Africa that seeks to ensure that employees are empowered. It is up to each organisation to ensure that they have mechanisms in place to involve business students in the decision making process.

Work-life balance: This attribute is also a strong top ten participant in other studies. Baby boomers are known for their weak work-life balance with a bias towards work. The generation surveyed consisted of generation X and generation Y. These guys as indicated by the results want to have a good work-life balance. They prefer to live life to the fullest while working, as opposed to working very hard till you retire at 65. Organisations should be very sensitive to this and must make sure that there is proportional compensation for the effort that they require from business students.

Innovation: Many business students have technical skills in the area of their primary degree and/or have work experience. That combined with business skills they acquired, put them in a good position to lead or at least contribute to innovative projects. Organisations have the opportunity to take advantage of this rare breed of people and give them stretch targets that may challenge them. Failure to do so may result in poor attraction.

Meritocracy: This attributes received a mixed ranking from various ranking studies, some putting it in the top twenty-five. In fact, it jumped twelve places in the study conducted by CLC in 2006 and 2009, from number twelve to number twenty-four. There is a general lack of consistency between the studies beyond the top seven attributes. The ranking towards the latter part of the top ten is mixed even within the age and gender groups observed in this study. It is therefore advisable that organisations take this attribute and the following with caution when designing their employee value proposition package. Having said that, meritocracy remains one of the important attributes and organisations may use it to their advantage in identifying talent that may be groomed.

Respect: Depending on which study you are looking at, respect is also occupying a very wide ranking range. Be it in work or social environment, respect is one of the

values that an organisation must display towards its employees. This is not only important for attraction, it is also important in building winning teams.

Ethics: This is the last attribute that made it to the top ten, however, it was found to be statistical insignificant. Organisations are therefore not encouraged to pay too much attention on this attribute when putting together their EVP package. This does not mean that ethics are not important in organisations it only means that it is not a significant attribute that may be used in attracting business students to the organisation that operates in the telecommunication industry.

Organisations in the telecommunications industry may consider these attributes for all business students' attraction with main focus in the top seven. It is also important that organisations market only those employee value propositions' attributes that they have capacity to deliver on, failure to do so may result in reputational damage in the eyes of business students.

5.3 Recommendations

The research was undertaken to contribute towards the understanding of the employee value proposition attributes that are important to the business students who intend to work in the telecommunications industry. The recommendations are mainly directed to the human resources practitioners in the organisations that operate in the telecommunications industry, especially those who occupy management and leadership roles.

- Compensation is the highest ranked attribute of employee value proposition not only in this study but to other similar studies. Organisations have to make sure that they have this attribute in their package in order to attract business students. Needless to say, it must be competitive in the industry. Non-financial compensation must also be considered as there is a constant need to manage the payroll in any organisation. For example, organisations may consider having a Sabbatical leave policy which should allow employees to rejuvenate after a stressful period.

- In the top ten highly ranked attributes, the top seven was found to be highly common among different groups observed. It is also in line with other studies of similar nature. Organisations must therefore focus on those when developing their EVP package and customise it accordingly. The onus is on each organisation to highlight the outstanding elements of the attributes that they choose to use for attraction purposes. For example, saying we offer future career opportunity alone, is not captivating enough. Organisations must be specific and also must consider bringing in some of their marketing talent to assist when developing EVPs.

- A further insight to the age groups revealed that there are different preferences. Business students who are 29 years or above ranked work-life balance and retirement benefits higher than the 28 years and below. This may be used by the organisations to customise their adverts based on the age group that there are targeting. For example, when the organisation is advertising a senior position that is likely to be occupied by someone in the 29 years or above age group, these attributes must be highlighted on top of the overall attributes.

- Similarly, a further investigation to the different gender groups revealed that there are slightly different preferences. Female business students ranked empowerment higher than their male counter parts. It is therefore imperative for an organisation to make that point clear when dealing with a female business student. Most jobs in the telecommunications are gender neutral and it might be difficult to know which gender will respond to a particular advert. In this case some of the emphasis should be reserved for the interview when the potential candidate is known.

- The organisation must also make certain that they are able to support the chosen attributes of employee value proposition. So the EVP package design must be in line with the organisations resources and capabilities, and it must take into account the overall organisation strategy. Failure to deliver on your marketed EVP may damage your reputation not only with the business

students but also with the Business Schools where they come from. Business Schools will be reluctant to encourage the students to join your organisation or even give you an opportunity to advertise your organisation to students.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

This research focused on the ranking of the attributes of employee value proposition that appeals the most to business students in South Africa. The existing attributes list was modified and used for the survey. The suggested further research is based on the limited scope of the research conducted and other observations that were made during this work.

- Attributes list used was modified by excluding the bottom ten attributes in the South African study conducted by CLC in 2009. It was believed that those attributes would not affect the outcome of the study. It is suggested that a repeat study may use a full list.

  The following research question may be formulated:
  What are the attributes of EVP that attracts business students to telecommunications industry in South Africa?

- Attributes list used in this study was adopted and modified from a list that was developed across industries and wide employees' background. Although the developers of the list used it in South Africa, it is suggested that attributes may be developed specifically for the telecommunications industry in South Africa. Also that should take into account the target population which is business students.

  The following research question may be formulated:
  Which attributes of EVP that are applicable to the telecommunications industry in South Africa?

- There was no insight gained on the preferences of the different race groups due to limited observations to do a credible statistical analysis on. It is

suggested that a bigger sample may be used in order to gain this insight. This may be done through targeting almost all South African business institutions through online survey which should allow for a wider reach.

The following research question may be formulated:
Which attributes of EVP that are preferred by different race groups in South African telecommunications industry?

- A study may be conducted to understand the drivers of the ranking choices made by the respondent. This will give an insight to the actual drivers for business students to make certain choices. This information may then be used in the actual design of the organisations' EVP. Respondents may be asked to rank the attributes and then give a reason for their choice.

  The following research question may be formulated:
  What do you understand about attribute X?

- A study may be conducted to understand the important elements of the top five attributes. For example, most studies including this one showed that compensation is number one attribute. Compensation may include basic salary, over- time pay, performance bonuses, rewards for special contribution, etc. It will be important to know what exactly the respondent wants if s/he chooses compensation.

  The following research question may be formulated:
  Why attribute X is important to you?

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Survey printout

Survey: **Ranking** of the 10 most preferred attributes of employee value proposition in the **telecommunications industry** (e.g. MTN, SABC, and Telkom)

Dear participant,

The purpose of this survey is for you to please rank the attributes that matters most to you in the telecommunications industry, **'1' being the most preferred attribute while '10' is the least preferred.**

Demographics section is for information only and will appreciate if you fill for the completeness of the study. The survey is **anonymous and the study is for academic purposes only**. There is no obligation to participate.

Please indicate that is applicable:

1. **Would you consider working for the telecommunications industry?**

YES	NO

2. **Gender** :

Male	
Female	

3. **Age (years)** :

21 and below	
22-28	
29-37	
38 and above	

4. **Race** :

Black African	
Coloured	
White	
Indian /Asian	
Other	

P.T.O

Ranking procedure: From the 28 attributes below, please rank your top 10, where 1 is the most and 10 the least preferred attribute. There should **be one number 1, one number 2, ...one number 10.**

	#	ATTRIBUTE	DEFINITION	RANK
REWARDS	1	**Compensation**	The competitiveness of the job's financial compensation package	
	2	**Health Benefits**	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's health benefits	
	3	**Retirement Benefits**	The comprehensiveness of the organisation's retirement benefits	
OPPORTUNITY	4	**Development Opportunities**	The developmental/educational opportunities provided by the job and organisation	
	5	**Future Career Opportunities**	The future career opportunities provided by the organisation	
	6	**Meritocracy**	Whether or not employees are rewarded and promoted on the basis of their achievements	
	7	**Organisational Growth Rate**	The growth rate of the organisation's business	
	8	**Organisational Stability**	The level of stability of the organisation and the job	
ORGANISATION	9	**Diversity**	The organisation's level of commitment to having a diverse workforce	
	10	**Empowerment**	The level of involvement employees have in decisions that affect their job and career	
	11	**Ethics**	The organisation's commitment to ethics and integrity	
	12	**"Great Employer" Recognition**	Whether or not the organisation's reputation as an employer has been recognised by a third-party organisation	
	13	**Market Position**	The competitive position the organisation holds in its market(s)	
	14	**Product Brand Awareness**	The level of awareness in the market place for the products' brand	
	15	**Product Quality**	The organisation's product or service quality reputation	
	16	**Respect**	The degree of respect that the organisation shows employees	
	17	**Organisation Size**	The size of the organisation's workforce	
	18	**Technology Level**	The extent to which the organisation invests in modern technology and equipment	
WORK	19	**Innovation**	The opportunity provided by the job to work on innovative, "leading edge" projects	
	20	**Job Impact**	The level of impact the job has on outcomes	
	21	**Job–Interests Alignment**	Whether the job responsibilities match the respondent's interests	
	22	**Location**	The geographic location of the job that the organisation is offering	
	23	**Recognition**	The amount of recognition provided to employees by the organisation	
	24	**Work–Life Balance**	The extent to which the job allows employees to balance their work and their other interests	
PEOPLE	25	**Co-worker Quality**	The quality of the co-workers in the organisation	
	26	**Manager Quality**	The quality of the organisation's managers	
	27	**People Management**	The organisation's reputation for managing people	
	28	**Senior Leadership Reputation**	The quality of the organisation's senior leadership	

Appendix B: Consistency matrix

Research problem stated here					
Sub-problem	**Literature Review**	**Hypotheses or Propositions or Research questions**	**Source of data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
To identify the employee value proposition attributes that may be applicable to business students who want employment from the South African telecommunications industry	Heger (2007) ,(Hiltrop, 1999), (Tumasjan, Strobel, & Welpe, 2011), (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005), (Berthon et al., 2005), (Council, 2006), (Rajha, 2012), Bhoola (2013)	What are the employee value propositions attributes that must be considered in the telecommunications industry?	Literature review on the already known attributes of employee value proposition.	Nominal data - a list of employee attributes that will be used to survey business students	The attributes list that was generated after a detailed research and is broad and clear will be adopted for the proposed study.
To rank the employee value proposition attributes according to their importance to business students who want employment from the South African telecommunications industry.	Heger (2007) ,(Hiltrop, 1999), (Tumasjan, Strobel, & Welpe, 2011), (Van Calker, Berentsen, Giesen, & Huirne, 2005), (Stacey, 2006), (Hammersley, 1987), (Maxwell, 1992), (Rajha, 2012), Bhoola (2013)	What are the top 10 employee value propositions attributes that appeal to South African business students?	Students from the two business school will be used a sample, that are Wits Business School (WBS) and another. PDM students will be given a survey where they will be requested to rank their most preferred employee value proposition with 1 being the most preferred and 10 being the least preferred.	Ordinal data - partially ranked attributes of employee value proposition	Quantitative analysis using a Shotgun stochastic model to analyse means and standard deviations which will be then be used for order ranking of attributes that are preferred by business students in the telecommunications industry