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**THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT MECHANISMS TO
NURTURE THE NEW GENERATION OF ACADEMIC
PROGRAMME (nGAP) OF BLACK FEMALE
ACADEMICS INTO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

By

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

Student number 2019463419

I, Zola Zuzani, declare that the study hereby submitted for the Philosophiae Doctor degree in the field of Education Management and Leadership in the Faculty of Education, University of Free State, is my original work, and that all the references cited have been acknowledged. I further declare that this work has not previously been submitted by me at another university/institution/faculty. I also hereby grant copyright of this work to the University of the Free State.

Signed: Zola Zuzani

Date: July 2023



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ABBREVIATIONS

nGAP	New Generation of the Academic Programme
TM	Talent Management
ECA	Early Career Academics
HE	Higher Education
SSAUF	Staffing South African University Framework
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DST	Department of Science and Technology
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
HAI	Historically Advantaged institutions
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged institutions
CHE	Council on Higher Education
NPC	National Planning Commission
ADU	Academic Development Unit
TA	Thematic Analysis
EVP	Employee Value Proposition
STM	Strategic Talent Management
FITM	Fully Inclusive Talent Management
ACRA	Academic Career Readiness Assessment
CIPP	Context, Input, Process and Product

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine how talent management, as a management concept, can be infused into the nGAP initiative as a driving force towards developing and mentoring black female academics. The study explored talent management's theoretical framework and functions for acquiring, assessing, developing, and deploying talent of early career academics. The talent management strategies implemented by companies in South Africa and internationally have been extensively explored. The study aimed to determine whether talent management could be incorporated into higher education during the development programme.

Despite its successful implementation in the business environment and universities in Europe, talent management in African universities still needs to improve. The study presented essential lessons African universities could adopt to incorporate talent management in their development programmes for early career academics. As universities aim to attain a competitive advantage in their environment, they require the development of a talent pool of high-potential academics to take over from retiring academics and go through a rigorous mentoring support structure. To fully understand the success of talent management, an overview of talent management practices was done, followed by a discussion on the current possible challenges that could affect implementing successful talent management practices meant to retain talented academics.

In order to understand the incorporation of talent management in various universities, this interpretative-qualitative phenomenological study analysed the lived experiences of black female academics in the new Generation Academic programme. It employed semi-structured interviews, document analysis and thematic analysis to generate data from the interviews with five (5) female academics i.e four black females and one coloured female. The interview participants' data revealed that universities still need an official and structured talent management programme, which is crucial in attracting, developing and retaining academics. Participants revealed other aspects that necessitated incorporating talent management in universities.

The study concludes by presenting findings and recommendations which identified induction as a pertinent differentiator whether the nGAP lecturers felt "empowered" or not. Furthermore, a credible evaluation process of the nGAP lecturers was

recommended. Some credible evaluation tools, such as CIPP, were recommended to benefit early career academics during the nGAP training. A recommended guiding policy for mentors and nGAP lecturers has been suggested to add more significance and depth to the nGAP training program.

Key words: nGAP, Talent Management, Early Career Academics, Thematic Analysis

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CHAPTER 1

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the lived experiences of black female academics in selected higher education institutions in South Africa. This chapter provides the background to this research to convey the challenges facing black female academics with their academic career progression. A brief history is discussed to provide the context on the evolution of South Africa's higher education system and the establishment of the New Generation Academic Programme (nGAP). The study's problem statement, research questions, aims, and objectives are all discussed to give the focus of the study. The data interpretation and analysis through thematic analysis. This method promotes an open and transparent discussion on how the nGAP can achieve its primary goals (Nowell, 2017:1). Issues relating to data analysis are also discussed. The researcher provides a short section on the essentiality of his writing style to justify the use of self in the research. The researcher briefly outlines the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The value of the study reiterates some essential aspects of this study. The researcher concludes this chapter by providing an outline of the chapters of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

In the past few years, research on talent management has helped organizations meet the demands of increased competitiveness. Moosa (2020:73) states that talent management (TM) is crucial for early career academics (ECAs) in achieving success in higher education (HE) by effectively managing their career paths. Various kinds of literature on career progression within universities observe a lack of developmental support mechanisms for black female academic recruits to aspire for leadership roles during their mentoring phase (Acker, 2014:74). Leadership roles in the context of this study should be understood to include progression from junior lecturer to lecturer, to

senior lecturer and probably to associate professor. It is essential to acknowledge that black female academics face challenges in receiving equal treatment compared to their male colleagues. Mason et al. (2013:375) identify various challenges black female academics face compared to their male colleagues. These challenges include cases where black female academics are less likely to achieve successful outcomes. Research has shown that black female academics may face discrimination, such as being marginalized in research groups and experiencing a yearly pay gap compared to their male counterparts. Unfortunately, they may never catch up, as per Aiston and Jung's findings (2015:205). Some publications state that there are multiple reasons why black female academics continue lagging behind their male colleagues, including poor or absent mentoring (Levine et al., 2020:1). According to Mason et al. (2013:376), black female academics with children tend to remain in lower ranks than their male colleagues because of extra the responsibilities of housework and family care. The literature suggests that black women academics in different countries experience the same challenges (Larkins, 2018:1; Santos & Dang Van Phu, 2019:1). In countries like Nigeria, gender inequality has resulted in fewer opportunities for female academics than for their male colleagues. According to Ogbogu (2013:36), out of 20,214 staff currently employed in Nigerian universities, only 3,174 (15.7%) are female, while the majority, 17,040 (84.3%), are male. Despite ongoing efforts to promote gender equity, progress has been slow. According to Omotoso's (2020:85) study, some institutions in Nigeria had predominantly male academics, although there was a slight increase in female academics from 2015 to 2019. The increase in female academics reflects the universities' efforts to increase the representation of women in leadership positions across various institutions (Igiebor, 2021:339). Igiebor further states that the study also highlights that some universities are progressing, with seven female heads of departments (30.4%) out of twenty-three being the highest number recorded. This information demonstrates that female academics in Nigeria are slowly being recognized and making strides towards gender equality in academic leadership. A report published by Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC, 2021:7) shows that Botswana's distribution of academics by field of research illustrates gender disparities in scientific research, with men prominent across the "hard sciences" of natural sciences, engineering and technology, as well agricultural sciences and natural sciences. However, the gap has been slowly closing in South Africa in the distribution of staff by title and qualification level. In the article from University World News, James

(2023:np) reveals that there has been a significant improvement from 2000 - 2018 to show that the higher education sector in South Africa is closing the gap because previous studies found that males predominantly held senior academic positions. The chart below summarises James' report on closing the gap.

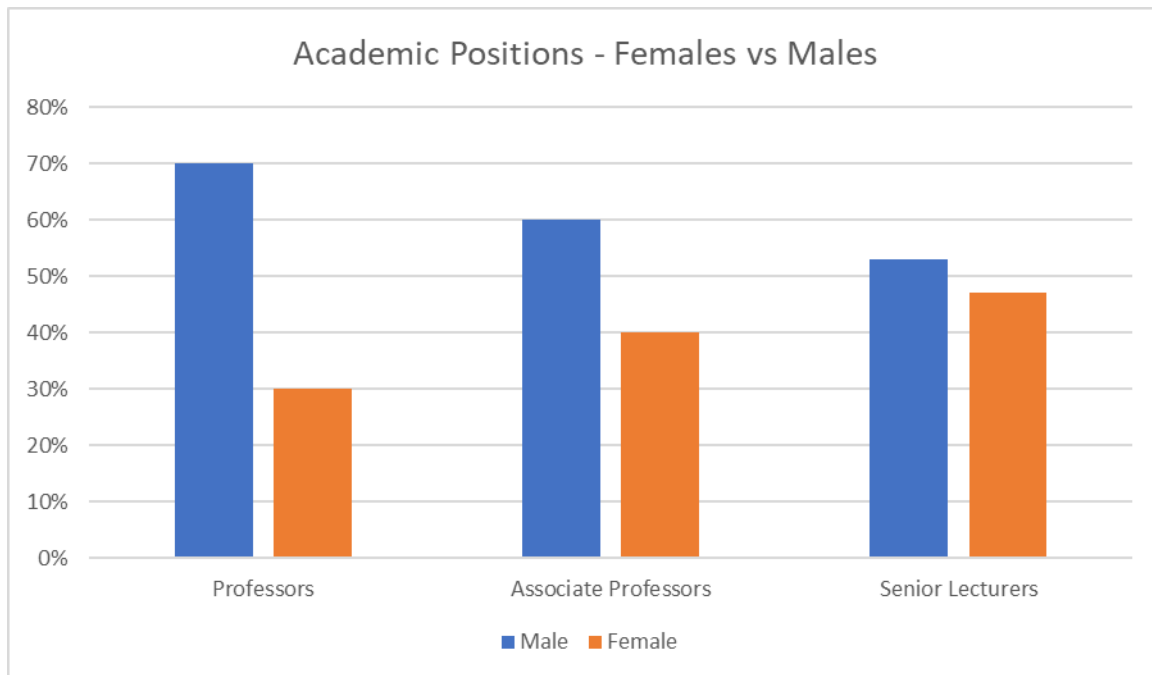


Figure 1.1: Adapted from University World News (Alicia James, 2023)

This chart shows a steady improvement in closing the gap in terms of gender inequality. This report shows that the progress is not fast enough to bridge the gap in gender inequality, but improvement has been evident. James observed 2,601 professors; males constituted 86% (2,247), and females constituted 14% (352). However, in 2018, there has been a slightly different shift, where the total of 3,125 professors, males comprised 70% (2,183) and females 30% (942). There is a significant increase in the presentation of females at that professoriate level. This observation is observed by Breetzke and Hedding (2018:11) in the changing demography of academic staff at higher education in South Africa. Again, this shift is apparent in the associate professor segment; where the total of 1,289 associate professors in 2000, 78% (1,000) were males, while the remaining 22% (289) were female. In 2018, of 2,715 associate professors, males constituted 60%, while 40% (1,085) were females. This is another improvement from 22% in 2000 to 40% in 2018. The last category shows that male senior lecturers declined from 66% (3,380) in 2000

to 53% (3,338) in 2018, while the proportion of female senior lecturers increased from 34% (1,725) in 2000 to 47% (3,011) in 2018.

Tassels, White and Web (2011:654) posit that insufficient talent management mechanisms support career progression for black female academics. Certain institutional cultures that favour the progression of men over women seem to stall talent management targeting black female academics and perpetuate their exclusion from senior university positions (Rabe & Rugunanan, 2012:53).

The new cohort of academics in South African universities under the New Generation Academic Programme (nGAP) was to establish a programme suite that focuses on advancing the transformation agenda in South African universities (Mokhele, 2013:613; Grugulis, 2009:229; White et al., 2010:294, as cited in Moodly and Toni, 2015a:45). The pressing agenda was identifying academic staff development under the Staffing South African University Framework (SSAUF). Below is the diagram representing all the important areas within the framework:

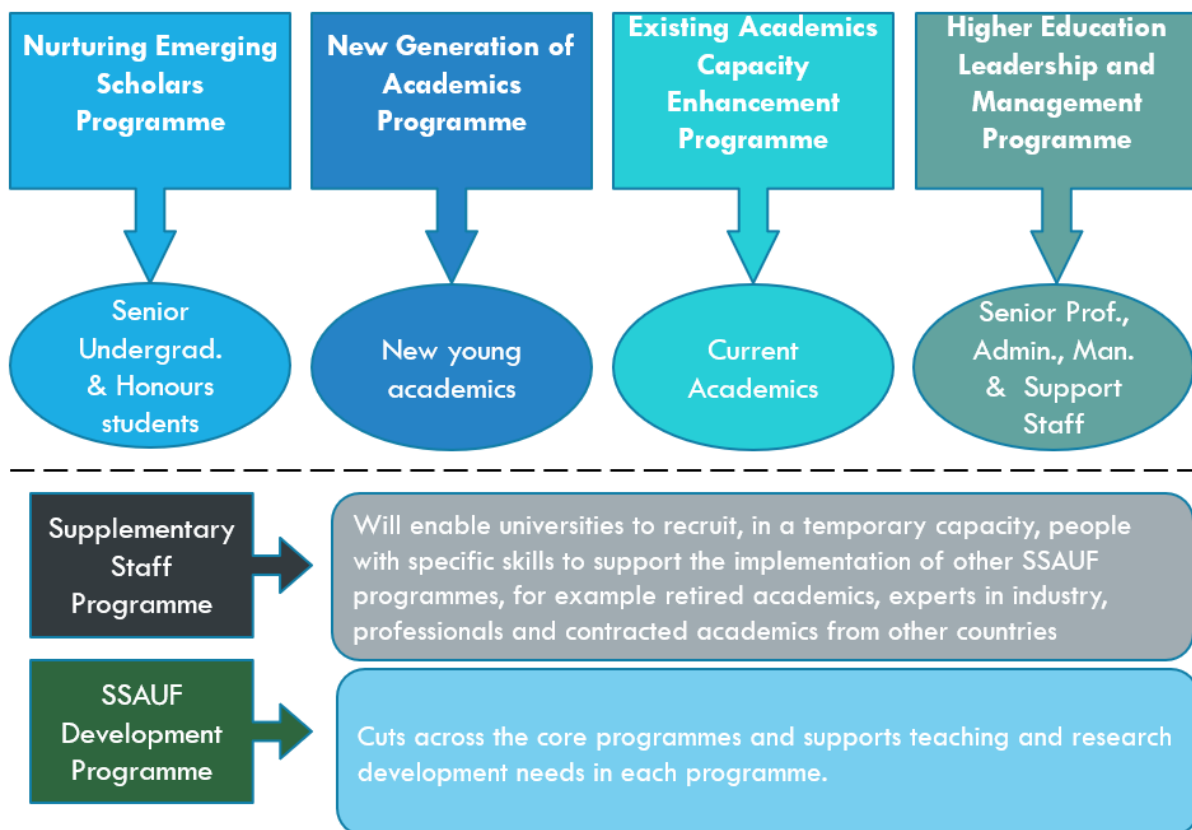


Figure 1.2: The New Generation Academic framework

Source: DUT (2017:4)

Hlengwa (2019:2) explains SSAUF as a structural response to the challenge of 'size, composition and capacity of academic staff'. According to her, the nGAP is a crucial programme for assisting early-career academics in the SSAUF. The nGAP initiative aims to create a more unified approach to recruiting and developing young academics. It has the potential to significantly impact the transformation of the higher education system (DHET, 2015: np). The partnership between the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and universities aims to foster the growth of effective teaching, impactful research, and community involvement among nGAP lecturers (Strydom, Hen-Boisen, and Yeld, 2015:73). According to Hlengwa (2019:13), universities have the responsibility to provide recruits with the required skills to adapt to the university's unfamiliar culture. Bringing in new academic lecturers through the nGAP is a strategic mechanism for managing the recruitment and retention of new academics at the beginning of their careers. As a national programme, the nGAP considers the reality that South African higher education institutions are at different stages of development regarding teaching, learning and research capacity. The nGAP initiative has placed new academics to help them develop their skills and benefit from the programme.

Implementing nGAP involves multiple layers within the university system and its units (Johannes et al., 2019:144). It is a complex process. The programme places people at the centre and focuses on developing their capabilities (Magabane, 2022:3). However, its implementation involves complex relationships between role-players, including lecturers, nGAP managers, mentors, other university divisions and units, and the government. The Standard Operating Procedures (2018:2-4) stipulates critical aspects of the nGAP as follows:

Employment: Lecturers applying for the nGAP are appointed based on a rigorous selection process under the university policies and procedures. The university provides the management and administrative support required for recruitment and appointment functions. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) ensures that lecturers follow the nGAP conditions thoroughly. After confirming compliance, they no longer play a role in the employment relationship between the university and the lecturer. The world of the lecturers for the first three years is at 20%,

and those lecturers with doctoral degrees or embarking on post-doctoral studies should be allocated 50% of the workload or even more. For lecturers to be eligible for the nGAP, they must have at least a Master's degree. However, in certain exceptional situations, an honours degree may be considered.

Doctoral/Post-Doctoral study: Lecturers who embark on the nGAP are encouraged to enrol for doctoral or post-doctoral programmes. Any lecturer entering the programme with an honours degree is encouraged to progress gradually to doctoral degree within six years of the nGAP. The DHET allocates money for the lecturer who undergoes the nGAP. The lecturer has to be guided by an experienced mentor within a specific field of study. The lecturer must study elsewhere instead of where she is appointed for the nGAP.

Mentoring: The university must appoint a lecturer to assist the lecturer with teaching and research needs. Mentors should be experienced and successful in academics. The mentor should perform the following duties:

- Keeping track of agreed developmental milestones and plans;
- Providing assistance with personal plan for professional development;
- Advising on professional development activities;
- Assisting with the registering of a PhD;
- Assisting with personal problems, time management, financial management; and,
- Reflective discussions on teaching and research experiences (DHET:undated).

The mentor should not be playing the role of a supervisor because their roles are different. The mentor may be appointed as a current or retired academic.

The nGAP requires a high level of professionalism between the lecturer and mentor (Owusu-Agyeman, 2019:65). The study's investigation has shown that all parties involved in the nGAP understand the programme's significance and prioritize developing teaching, research, and social engagement capacities for the entire higher education system over early career academics interests.

The following diagram visually represents how the nGAP is regarded as a programme for developing teaching, research, and social engagement capabilities. It also offers an overview of the skills and abilities the national government, higher education institutions, and how nGAP participants need to perform their responsibilities efficiently in facilitating the programme's execution.

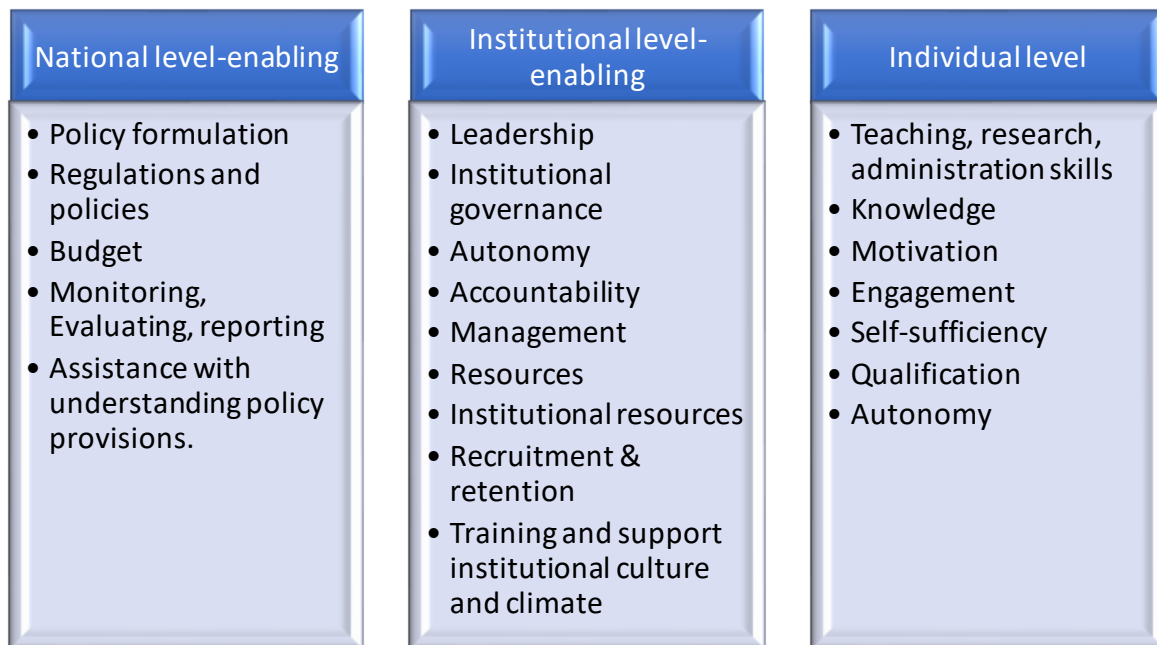


Figure 1.3: Adapted from Magabane (2022:73) - The nGAP as building blocks of capacity enablers for various stakeholders

Magabane (2022:73) explains that the nGAP operates through three interconnected and interdependent building blocks. The government provides funding and regulation, which are essential for the existence of the nGAP. Meanwhile, universities offer support and create conducive environments. At the same time, lecturers participate in the programme as mentors (Owusu-Agyeman, 2021:66). According to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the nGAP (2018:8), the funds for the programme are given to each university at the start of the phase. The use of these funds is contingent upon the university's confirmation of its adherence to the policies and procedures for managing the nGAP. In order to finish the procedure, the nGAP lecturer needs to sign an agreement document that will be sent to their university and then submit it to the DHET. Higher education institutions must provide their lecturers with various support

mechanisms, such as infrastructure and ICTs, leadership, research and teaching cultures, and collaboration opportunities (Coman et al., 2020:6). In its recruitment efforts, nGAP strives for equal opportunities without discrimination. The recruitment process aims to prioritise Black individuals (including those of African, Coloured, and Indian descent) by reserving 80% of the available positions for them.

Furthermore, among these positions, there is a preference for Black women to occupy 55% of them. In terms of age-group, applicants must be 40 years or younger in age. Lecturers who apply for nGAP posts must have Master's and PhD degrees, motivation, skills, and passion for their field of study (SOP, 2018:2). If universities fail to draw in lecturers for the programme or the government fails to offer consistent funding for nGAP positions, they may not fulfil their partnership commitments, putting the programme at risk. Institutions must recruit nGAP lecturers who engage in research, teaching, and other development opportunities to become well-rounded academics. For the nGAP programme to be successful, it requires much support from all stakeholders, lest its core purpose and aim fail to succeed.

The new cohorts of Black female academic recruits may face unfair labour practices if they are not capacitated and supported enough with leadership skills during their mentoring process (Seeletse & Thabane, 2016:112). The literature has also noted that a lack of the management of developmental support mechanisms may expose these black female academic recruits to various barriers, such as attitudinal and organisational biases, gender-related discrimination, and lack of career progression (Tassens, White & Web, 2011:654; Rabe & Rugunanan, 2012:53; Shober, 2014:319; Johnson & Christensen, 2014:2).

It has been noted from the literature that a lack of the management support mechanism for new Black female academic recruits during the mentoring process not only deprives them of career growth but disadvantages them in today's dynamic competitive environment that exists in academe (Mathafena, 2015:1). Furthermore, Acker (2014:74) cautions against a lack of the management of developmental support mechanism where some black female academics find themselves entering leadership roles by 'accident' through employment equity and affirmative action policies, rather than through proper mentoring support structures. Attaining a sustainable competitive advantage in today's academic environment requires the development of a talent pool

of high-potential academics who go through a vigorous mentoring support structure (Mathafena, 2015:213).

Historically, the management of Black female academic career progression, both in junior and senior academics, has been experiencing division based on intersecting factors of gender and race (Ramnund-Mansingh & Seedat-Khan, 2020:57). Despite nearly twenty years of efforts to promote gender equity and transform higher education, there are still challenges faced by Black female academics in the sector. Despite efforts to create equal opportunities, race and gender still play a role in facing these challenges. The development of black female academics in universities has garnered global attention. The pace of advancement towards institutional equity and mentorship for Black female academics appears slow, indicating a need for attention from leadership (Walser-Smith, 2019:5).

Responding to the urgent need to increase the number of doctoral graduates is essential, but it also poses a challenge. Mohamedbhai (2020:1) warns that as enrolment increases, the inevitable issue of the quality of doctoral education arises. He further states that the inevitability is because of inadequate doctoral supervision in African universities. The other challenge is that a supervisor is assigned far too many PhDs to supervise, which may compromise the quality of work. The other challenge has been caused by the ongoing issue of racial and gender inequality that affects the management of Black female academics and their academic careers. This issue has its roots in history and persists today (Mdleleni, Mandyoli & Frantz, 2021:127). This racial and gender inequality is still a concern that requires attention as it interferes with the mentoring process. Booi, Vincent, and Liccardo (2016:11) state that an unobserved issue within nGAP is that the mentors these academics are assigned may be less experienced and qualified in their field. They further emphasise that some people believe that older individuals with certain qualities, such as age, race, and cultural identity, are not valued contributors to the evolution of higher education in South Africa.

The previous view brings to question the effectiveness of the management of nGAP in different South African universities. As a result, the ineffectiveness of the management of the nGAP can have adverse outcomes for the current cohorts of

academics because of some of the views mentioned by Booie, Vincent and Liccardo (2016:11).

1.2.1 A brief history of South Africa's higher education

Before 1994, South Africa's higher education system was divided based on race, ethnicity, geography, and language. The management of the higher education system followed the same pattern of differentiation and diversification (Magabane, 2022:2). Magabane continues to mention that policies implemented by the then regime, referred to as 'apartheid', aimed to benefit what is commonly known as the historically advantaged institutions (HAIs), which were primarily urban. The cost of historically disadvantaged institutions (HDIs), mostly found in rural areas, was greatly affected by the policies of the apartheid. The Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2016:304) states that while the higher education system has progressed from a past of racial discrimination to a more democratic approach that prioritizes equity and redress, there are still noticeable patterns of advantage and disadvantage regarding the management of universities. The Council on Higher Education (CHE) review in 2016 acknowledges these demands and, more particularly, the effect on the academic profession (2016:305). Studies on the experiences of Black female academics have recognized the difficulties they face in various universities. Naicker (2013:1) notes that the legacy of apartheid has dramatically affected the advancement of Black women in higher education. Unfortunately, black women have faced more significant obstacles than men. Both groups have endured exploitation and discrimination.

With the establishment of a democratic government, it became necessary to make institutional changes that allowed equal opportunities for all academics, regardless of their experience level (Lumadi, 2020:2). Several committees were tasked with implementing changes to improve the management and advancement of Black female academics. According to a report by the National Commission of Higher Education in 1996, women held 32% of research and teaching positions, but most Black women held junior lecturer or lecturer positions (Chitsamatanga, Rembe and Shumba, 2018:80). At historically White universities in South Africa, 89% of women held the position of junior lecturer, and 45% held the position of lecturer (Zulu, 2020:20). These findings highlight the need for action to address inequalities in academia. In South Africa, the Ministerial Committee on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the

Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions also found a few inadequacies in 2008 when assessing higher education transformation. The inadequacies included racial and gender discrimination. Despite improvements in the headcount of Black staff (i.e. African, Indian and Coloured), female staff accounted for 43% of academic staff and 35% of executive and management staff. While the increased number of black women gives a positive impression, most are junior lecturers or lecturers, and a few are professors. In South African public universities, the percentage of permanent academic staff by race and qualification type has improved from 2010 to 2016 (Gumede, 2020:5). It is essential, however, to do more to address the needs of women and people of colour. By 2016, the number of Black academics with PhDs increased from 19.4% to 27.9%, whereas the number of White academics with the same qualification declined from 67.4% to 55.1%. The decline in white PhD academics in South Africa is attributable to several factors, including retirement and an increase in Black staff (Gumede, 2020:6). Gumede (2020:7) notes that development initiatives introduced by the government are responsible for the growth of Blacks, Coloureds, and Indians. The NCHE 1996 made several recommendations, including the government's vision for higher education. These recommendations are explained explicitly by Gumede (2020:3-4). He says the National Commission on Higher Education recommendations led to the development of the Green Paper on Higher Education (1996), the White Paper on Higher Education (1997), and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001). These recommendations included the following key points:

- (a) To promote equity of access and fair chances of success to all seeking to realise their potential through higher education while eradicating all forms of unfair discrimination and advancing redress for past inequalities.
- (b) To meet, through well-planned and co-ordinated teaching, learning and research programmes, national development needs, including the high-skilled employment needs presented by a growing economy operating in a global environment.
- (c) To support a democratic ethos and a culture of human rights through educational programmes and practices conducive to critical discourse and creative thinking, cultural tolerance, and a shared commitment to a humane, non-racist and non-sexist social order.

(d) To contribute to advancing all forms of knowledge and scholarship, particularly addressing the diverse problems and demands of the local, national, southern African and African contexts, and uphold rigorous standards of academic quality.

The establishment of the nGAP came because of the shortage of older academics retiring and skilled ones leaving South Africa for greener pastures overseas (Musakuro and de Klerk, 2021:2). To compensate for this deficit, universities must replace the workforce with those that have more competence, commitment, and drive to perform the university's mission, goals and tasks (Szelagowka-Rudzka, 2017:210).

Despite the government's good intentions to launch an integrated policy initiative under the name of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) to empower Black people and redistribute wealth across the spectrum of the population, there still appear to be imbalances in the workplace for senior Black women, whether in academia or the private sector (Francis and Valodia, 2021:4). Black female academics are promoted to executive positions in some White higher private institutions as a strategy for these institutions to receive high ratings from the government (Rheede, 2022:92).

It is, therefore, the aim of this study to examine how talent management, as a management concept, can be infused into the nGAP initiative as a driving force towards developing and mentoring black female academics.

The section below shows efforts that have been made towards the implementation of the development programme in South Africa's higher education.

1.2.2 Implementation of development programme in South Africa higher education

South African universities have always faced challenges in developing a younger generation of academics (Dhanpat et al., 2019:5). Through the National Planning Commission, the South African higher education landscape has recognised the need to recruit and develop young, predominantly black female academics (Hlengwa, 2019:1). However, racial and gender disparities from a developmental and equity points of view have always marred South African universities. Since the birth of democracy in 1994, the Higher Education Department and Training (DHET) has led to

the establishment of various commissions whose main aim was to reform the higher education system in South Africa (Tewari and Ilesanmi, 2020:3).

The pursuit of transformational agenda by the DHET is on the premise that the nGAP initiative would abolish the apartheid-entrenched systematic policies that excluded Black women academics in the mainstream higher education system, thus making them feel under-represented compared to their White colleagues (Hobololo, 2020:121). The gendered working environment and patriarchy previously pushed women away, especially Black female academics, arguing that females had no place in academia (Zulu, 2021:250). The introduction of the nGAP refutes the notion that higher education is only for men, predominantly White men. Through the nGAP, the gendered working culture is systematically addressed and dealt with (Prozesky, Mlitwa, and Redelinghuys, 2021:101). Higher education in South Africa still hires on the basis of gender and race preferences. Over the years, women's academic experiences have changed because South Africa was transitioning from the apartheid regime into a new dispensation of a democratic government. The agenda was to eliminate many social and economic structures, making it challenging to transform higher education. The democratic government in South Africa realised that the agenda of advancing a better life for black women in academics was a priority (Badat, 2010:18). Various interventions were introduced as a way of compensating the damages caused by the apartheid government in suppressing black women's needs and their aspirations to thrive in their academic careers. According to Naicker (2013:3), these interventions included making research grants available for black women, opening more senior positions at the university level, and affording black women available mentoring programmes, which they were previously deprived of during the apartheid regime. Lessons were taken from the first-world countries to amend all the shortcomings caused by the apartheid regime. Black women have struggled significantly to survive in the world of apartness, which the apartheid government promulgated. Petit (2010:639) understands and laments the severity of placing black women at the bottom of the ladder. He says, "Black women, and people of colour in general, can only hold borrowed power as Whiteness still represents the "final authority". However, the advent of a democratic government has changed the lens Black academics used to view the world around them. The introduction of equal opportunities and affirmative action legislation served as a means of correcting

historical inequalities in higher education in South Africa (Van der Bank et al., 2015:289). However, the battle of race in the new dispensation has been weakened, though it still exists, to a point where Black women academics are now beginning to find their rightful place in occupying positions previously reserved for white people. Issues of gender inequalities are still cited as complex barriers in higher education (Johnson & Thomas, 2012:162). The rampant gender inequalities have shown that black women still shoulder heavier teaching loads than their male colleagues. As one of the issues South African higher education still grapples with regarding the upward trajectory of black female academics, some transformation window is slowly taking shape (Ramohai, 2019:3). Young Black female academics can now participate in the development programmes like the nGAP. The nGAP initiative has been envisaged to ease the teaching load Black female academics are still experiencing (Moosa, 2020:73). Moosa further states that it is the purpose of the nGAP initiative, notwithstanding previous challenges faced by Black female academics during the apartheid government, to equip the new nGAP recruits with a rigorous mentorship process. The Department of Higher Education and Training has introduced the nGAP initiative to attract young people pursuing their postgraduate qualifications and wishing to make academics their chosen careers.

Historical challenges which affected Black women during the apartheid era are now monitored to ensure that the old systematic policy of excluding black women academics does not find its way back to the democratic government (Van Rensburg, 2014:4). The transformational and forward-thinking efforts to include recruits through the nGAP initiative in South African higher education will ensure that discriminatory challenges that affected Black women's academics during the apartheid era are now a thing of the past.

Despite the increased number of Black female academics entering higher education, their composition and size still require improvement so that the new cohort of young Black female academics is not perceived as being underrepresented (Van Broekhuizen & Spaul, 2017:11). The Department of Higher Education and Training introduced the nGAP initiative as the link to new academics' quality, equity, and success, specifically, South African Black female academics entering universities.

The idea behind improving new academics' quality, equity, and success was to create a group of teachers who could fill the gaps left by retiring faculty members and maintain high standards of teaching, research, and social engagement in higher education (Garcia & Weiss, 2019:4). The goal was to create scholars who could inspire beneficial transformations in the education system. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) presented in 2015 a comprehensive, transformative approach to building staff capacity and developing future generations of academics. In addition to providing research and teaching development, the SSAUF (Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework) provided training and mentoring to academics who were part of its framework. Each of SSAUF's four core programmes includes a cross-cutting support program (NRF, 2022:1). As part of the academic development pathway, SSAUF recognised the need for different types of support. Various universities have established the nGAP, but it is essential to evaluate the challenges young Black female academics face in more detail. The next segment deals with nGAP as a government tool to develop and empower the new cohorts of academics.

1.2.3 nGAP as a government development mechanism

In response to the need for 'staff development', DHET launched the Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework (SSAUF) (Hlengwa, 2019:2). A prominent core programme of the SSAUF was the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP), intended to be a driving force in recruiting and developing staff (Magabane, 2022:277). Those included in this programme are newly recruited members of the academia pursuing master's and doctoral studies (Mouton et al., 2022:151). As explained by Hlengwa (2019:2), the nGAP is intended to attract early-career academics (ECAs) and retain them through various mentoring techniques. The programme intends to address the development imbalances between Black and female academics.

The nGAP requires more than just a development programme in place. DHET must also implement the growth and supply strategy of a new generation of academics. Moosa (2020:73) observes that talent management (TM) is integral to achieving success in higher education (HE) for early career academics (ECAs), mainly black and female academics. Various studies have shown that black female academic recruits

lack developmental support during mentoring as they strive for leadership positions (Acker, 2014:74).

In this study, leadership includes a progression from junior lecturer to lecturer, to senior lecturer, and likely to associate professor. In the leading world countries, this phenomenon mainly affects female academics from Black communities (Larkins, 2018:1; Santos & Dang Van Phu, 2019:1). It has also been shown that universities in some African countries like Nigeria and Botswana face human resources management challenges like gendered work environments that tend to favour men over women (Ogbogu, 2011:6). There is a similar trend at South African universities to these global trends. Tassens, White and Web (2011:654) argue that there is a lack of talent management mechanisms to support Black women's academic career advancement. The institutional culture favouring men over women seems to stall talent management targeting Black women in academics and perpetuating their exclusion from senior university positions (Rabe & Rugunanan, 2012:53).

The nGAP initiative generates new knowledge and seeks to mentor others in theorizing and problematizing (Gumede, 2020:10). While the number of Black academics has increased in recent years, mentoring issues, gender bias, and working conditions need to be adequately addressed. A cohort of Black female academics in South African universities under the New Generation Academic Programme (nGAP) may also suffer exclusion from senior positions if leadership training or alignment is not integrated into their mentoring process (Mokhele, 2013:613). When Black women academic recruits are not adequately equipped with leadership skills during their mentoring process, they are likely to be mistreated on the job (Seeletse & Thabane, 2016:112). Research also indicates that an absence of a development support mechanism can lead to attitudinal biases, gender discrimination, and career barriers for black women academic recruits (Tassens, White & Web, 2011:654; Rabe & Rugunanan, 2012:53; Shoher, 2014:31; Johnson & Christensen, 2014:2).

A lack of support mechanisms for Black women university recruits during the mentoring process prevents them from not only progressing in their careers but also from becoming competitive in today's dynamic academic environment (Mathafena, 2015:1). In addition, Acker (2014:74) warns against the lack of effective regulation of mentoring support mechanisms that lead to some black female academics being

promoted to leadership positions by 'accident', without proper mentoring support. Developing a talent pool of high-potential academics with a solid mentoring support structure is essential for achieving a sustainable competitive advantage in today's academic environment (Mathafena, 2015:213). This study must contribute to the body of knowledge by utilizing all the necessary academic tools.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As Shinkafi (2020:1) notes, one of the challenges early career academics in Africa face is getting training, mentoring, and guidance from experienced scholars, even though that South Africa is slowly closing the gap but not fast enough. A further barrier that early career academics face internationally, in addition to the lack of resources, supportive interactions, and transparent career prospects (Jackson et al., 2022:159), is the lack of opportunities for research, teaching, and community engagement (Bidandi et al., 2021:2).

The researcher notes that Black female academics are still lacking adequate developmental support mechanisms in their mentoring phase as these are not well-established and properly managed in certain institutions of higher education (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020:133). There may be exceptions to this rule for a few South African universities. As a result, the lack of proper processes in the development programmes at South African universities threatens the advancement of the knowledge economy (Phale et al., 2021:2). Barkhuizen et al. (2022:4) argue that Black female academics lack mentorship and career planning opportunities for advancement to senior leadership positions. The mentorship process benefits novice academics as they transition into their profession by socializing them and showing them how the profession works (Li et al., 2018). Mentorship is vital to assisting new academics in developing their teaching, research, and service profiles. According to Moosa (2020:73), managing the careers of early career academics through talent management is essential. Given the competitive demands for international business talent, TM has yet to be a focus at HE, as Abiwu and Martins (2021:np) stated.

The study intends to impact policies and practices while helping the audience to comprehend the development of research capacity in higher education, especially for young and upcoming academics.

1.3.1 Research questions

The study was conducted to discover how talent management is implemented in universities, not only to train nGAP black female academic lecturers, but also to mentor them to aspire for senior positions in academia. The main research question posed by the study is:

- How are the development mechanisms to nurture the new generation academics programme black female academics into leadership positions managed?

The following sub-questions questions were also addressed:

- How do universities manage, mentor and advance career progression of nGAP black female academics?
- What built-in mechanisms in the management models used to reduce biases towards nGAP black female academics?
- What are the views of nGAP academics and Heads of developmental units on the management of career progression system used?

The participants were selected based on having one nGAP lecturer and one mentor/line manager from the same faculty. Furthermore, the selection was made with an awareness of the challenges that new young academics face in various universities with regard to mentoring and support in general to advance their academic careers (Archer & Parker, 2016:44). The aim was to find out if the nGAP from different universities used the same processes and systems as part of their academic development.

1.3.2 Aim of the study

The primary research aim of the study was to find out how are the development mechanisms to nurture the new generation academics programme black female academics into leadership positions managed.

1.3.3 Objectives of the study

Primary aim

The primary research aim of the study was to find out whether the developmental units are implementing some aspects of TM to advance nGAP black female academics during the mentoring period.

Research objectives

- To find out how do universities manage, mentor and advance career progression of nGAP black female academics.
- To understand built-in mechanisms in the management models used to reduce biases towards nGAP black female academics.
- To find out views of nGAP academics and Heads of developmental units on the management of career progression system used.

1.4 THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this section was to perform a literature review across several areas related to the objectives of this research. A literature review is a process of summarising studies about a topic (Creswell 2013:190). The purpose of a literature review is to follow a process as illustrated in the diagram below:

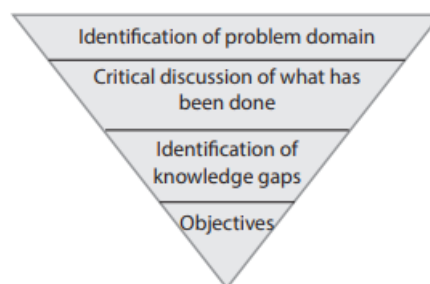


Figure 1.4: The process of literature review

Source: Maier (2013:4)

1.4.1 Theoretical framework

This section examines critical issues about talent management's effectiveness during early career academic development programmes (Lesenyeho, 2017:21). The researcher was aware of some limiting factors related to talent management (TM) when it comes to the management of development programme in higher education. It is a truism and known fact, among other challenges, that despite some inroads made into the theory and practice of talent management in the business world, research on the application thereof, in the higher education context, and especially for the management of early career academics, remains scarce (Barnes, Du Plessis & Frantz, 2021:1).

According to Lles et al. (2010:182) talent management encompasses the entire process of planning, recruiting, developing, managing and compensating employees. Furthermore, TM allows organisations to utilise it as a strategic method to attract and retain professionals as a way of promoting competitive advantage, and the higher education is not immune to issues of attracting and retaining high-quality employees (Musakuro, 2022:1). According to Musakuro (2022:11), implementing effective strategies to attract and retain talent through aligning a talent management framework and early career academic development can significantly improve universities' ability to address the challenges an ageing academic population poses. The literature acknowledges that there are many frameworks for talent management, but they are not explicitly addressing any talent management issues pertaining to the management of development programme in higher education (Gallardo-Gallardo, et al. 2013:291). This study understands that the private sector and South Africa's higher education face similar challenges when it comes to the management of employees. The researcher has consciously decided to use the key functions of talent management as a guideline to better explain the talent management system for the purpose of this study. The following key functions of talent management are used to form a basis for the theoretical framework of this study to gain further insights of the management of TM and its interconnected functions can apply in the nGAP initiative: planning, acquiring, developing, managing, and retaining talent (Van Zyl et al., 2017:17). The purpose of using these functions was to find out how talent management can be integrated to the nGAP, as a development programme for young academics in South African universities (Mtshali, 2014:28). It is significant to highlight that, for the sake of

this study, the researcher will interchangeably use the terms 'organization' and 'university' to indicate or draw the same conclusion.

1.4.2 Exploration of Literature

Recent scholarly research has highlighted the increasing importance of incorporating talent management into development programmes in higher education, specifically concerning early career academics. It has been recognized that effectively managing the career paths of these academics through talent management is crucial for achieving success in higher education (Moosa, 2020:73). The success of higher education largely relies on early career academics, as many seasoned academics (i.e. baby boomers) are retiring and creating a void that must be filled. It is worth mentioning that being young or new to the academic field does not necessarily mean being in the early stages of one's career. These terms are becoming less popular as descriptors (Price, Coffey & Nethery, 2015:681). However, the review of the literature focused on the challenges of young Black female academics. According to Crome et al. (2019:718), early career academics face numerous challenges, such as increasing work demands, inadequate rewards and recognition, and over-commitment to work. If these issues are not addressed through talent management, disengagement among this workforce may become a concern. Higher education has used theories, like the determination theory, to explore why early career academics intend to pursue an academic career. This is due to the support and intrinsic motivation they receive, which results in higher satisfaction with their academic training and performance (Litalien, Guay & Morin, 2015:2). The literature noted that early career academics find their competence in engagement in higher education, and this is attributed to the development programme they get as they commence their academic career. The principles of talent management play a critical role in reinforcing the engagement of ECAs in higher education (Crome et al., 2019:726). The literature mentions that early career academics felt a need to get adequate mentoring and coaching support to be fully engaged in their development programmes so that they can excel in teaching, research, and social engagement (Browning, Thompson & Dawson, 2012:143). However, the literature emphasises the importance of having influential and experienced mentors allocated to the cohort of ECAs, who will motivate them to thrive

and continue to remain in their academic careers while fostering relationships (Scaffidi & Berman, 2011:685). In universities where ECAs strive while given sufficient talent management tools for autonomy in their career, it is attributed to high-quality developmental performance reviews. According to Crome et al. (2019:729), improving professional development and performance reviews will require universities' involvement. One way to ensure best practices in performance reviews is by updating policies and providing appropriate training. To ensure that early career academics (ECAs) receive ongoing talent management support throughout their nGAP training, promoting their leadership and management skill development is crucial. Doing so can motivate them to pursue higher positions in their academic careers (McAlpine & Emmioglu, 2015:1771). The nGAP initiative aims to produce high-quality early-career academics who can perform various roles in a university, including teaching, research, and social engagement. To ensure the success of the nGAP programme, a talent management function has been implemented to oversee the development of early career academics. This involves recruiting individuals based on a fair and balanced approach, considering equity considerations and the areas of greatest need within their discipline. Another aspect critical in the management and development of early career academics is mentorship. While this study recognises the importance of mentorship of the nGAP young academics, mentoring has been acknowledged as a conventional process for the career development of early career academics (Owusu-Agyeman, 2022:66). According to Sarabipour et al. (2022:2), mentorship provides mentees with gentle guidance and requisite insight to make decisions about their academic careers.

The study provided extensive information concerning how effective mentoring is essential for mentees to attain professional success, enhance their self-belief, and develop their academic competence.

Though it was not clear during the interviews with participants who was responsible for the management of the training and development of the nGAP, most of the literature identified the human resources department as responsible. The researcher included individuals during the interviews who have successfully graduated with MAs and PhDs and are in a transitional phase of their academic careers.

According to the literature, the nGAP (the New Generation of Academic Programme) was implemented differently across faculties and schools due to resource differences. Training access can be improved to enhance perceived organizational support, but practical resources are also essential. These include financial assistance to attend conferences, appropriate computer and laboratory equipment, and dedicated office spaces (Browning et al., 2014:126). The literature highlights the significance of assisting ECAs by offering development opportunities, creating a vibrant social atmosphere, and providing fair access to practical resources. These actions can effectively encourage greater participation from ECAs. The process of developing a new cohort of young academics has become commonplace; many universities across the world have participated in this widening participation agenda by replenishment of the academic workforce (Matthews et. al., 2012:112). Development programmes in most countries are under the learning and development unit of the human resources department, while in other countries like Australia they are referred to as academic development units (ADUs) (Matthews et. al., 2014:113).

In the South African context, the literature is advancing the view that less attention has been given to the form or shape of talent management in higher education (Al Ariss et. al., 2014:174). According to Moosa (2020:81), although national training was funded, ECAs' professional development on the nGAP was restricted to the university's offerings. This limited professional development may have resulted in different experiences for ECAs across institution types and departments. To retain ECAs and provide them with a fulfilling experience, universities should manage talent to enable the new generation of academics to flourish in their academic careers by engaging with, and critiquing, the nGAP. The incorporation of talent management framework to the nGAP programme, through the evidence presented by the literature, showed its potential success in the management of recruiting and retaining of the ECAs in the nGAP training. Moreover, the fact that it is equally implemented in South African universities proves that the difficulties encountered by young Black female academics in higher education may become a thing of the past.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section will briefly discuss concepts under the following subheadings:

1.5.1 Paradigm

Interpretivism paradigm – aims at understanding the dynamics of a sociocultural system as well as of how people interpret their world (Sarantakos, 2013:219). Interpretivism emphasises on interpretations, stories, narratives, and perceptions (Saunders et al. 2016:134). The paradigm philosophy ‘has its roots in *verstehen* (understanding) of social life, which is connected with the work of Max Weber (1864-1920), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), and the Neo-Kantian philosophers Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915) and Heinrich Rickert (1863-1936)’ (Sarantakos, 2013:40). Interpretivism is relevant for studies that are inductive, include subjective meanings, have small samples, and involve qualitative in-depth investigation (Mohammed, 2018:120). The diagram below shows all the characteristics of this philosophy.

Interpretivism			
Complex, rich	Theories and concepts too simplistic	Value-bound research	Typically inductive.
Socially constructed through culture and language	Focus on narratives, stories, perceptions and interpretations	Researchers are part of what is researched, subjective	Small samples, in-depth investigations, qualitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be interpreted
Multiple meanings, interpretations, realities	New understandings and worldviews as contribution	Researcher interpretations key to contribution	
Flux of processes, experiences, practices		Researcher reflexive	

Figure 1.5: Characteristics of interpretivism

Source: Sarantakos (2013:136)

Having reviewed this paradigm based on the information provided above, the researcher was convinced this philosophy fit the current study because of its specified characteristic and sole emphasis on qualitative meanings.

1.5.2 Approach

Qualitative approach – According to Creswell (2013:185), this is a common approach utilised by social science researchers to discover and realise the meaning groups ascribe to a human issue. It operates within a naturalistic, interpretive domain, guided by the standards and principles of a *relativist orientation*, a *constructivist ontology* and

an *interpretivist epistemology* (Sarantakos, 2013:36). The researcher is aware that a qualitative approach is not “routinized”, meaning there are many different ways to think about qualitative research and the creative approaches that can be used (Guest et al., 2013:2). The qualitative approach was adopted for this study because the emphasis was on bringing forth the expectations and experiences of early academics in a holistic and in-depth manner.

1.5.3 Design

1.5.3.1 Phenomenology – The term ‘phenomenology’ is normally associated with “lived experience”, meaning there is interest in how a person’s (or group’s) experience becomes embedded in consciousness and what meaning that carries (Englander & Morley, 2021:33). There is a sharp focus on the essence of an experience; that is, on trying to understand the basic structure of that experience and interpreting the meaning it has for a person or group. These lived experiences are expressed in the respondents’ own words (O’Leary, 2010:271). Furthermore, Neuman (2011:329) states that the phenomenological study focuses on personal experience of individual participants. The focus of the study is going to be on understanding how development units within selected universities apply talent management as a developmental support mechanism in relations to new cohorts of black women academics so that they are more rounded in all aspects of teaching, research, service, as well as in leadership. The researcher was able to understand the essence of the situation or experience within development units in relation to lived experiences of Black female academics (Bryman, 2012:30; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:145). The researcher’s choice of this design was based on the view that peoples’ knowledge of the world is rooted in their experience, and the task of the research is to describe, understand, interpret, and explain these experiences (Hammersley, 2013:27; Denscombe, 2014:94-95).

The study was based on coordination amongst five nGAP academics, three mentors of the nGAP academics, and the researcher.

Two more mentors of the nGAP academics did not join the interviews due to unforeseen reasons, though they had willingly agreed to be part of the study. Despite this challenge, the interviews were carried out in a successful manner. The arrangement of the interviews started with nGAP academics, where a range of

questions were asked to address the main research question of this study. It was followed by questions pertaining to some available mentors of these nGAP academics. The duration of the interviews for each participant was limited to 40 minutes due to the consideration of the participants' time and 'busyness'.

They were made to feel comfortable by being assured that their identity is ethically protected by allowing them to freely express their thoughts, feelings, experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas and preferences (Creswell and Creswell, 2018:444). The study considered several issues related to talent management concerning the participant's involvement in the study. Therefore, most participants felt comfortable sharing as much information as possible without worrying about any negative consequences from the universities that recruited them. The participants were in a safe space. As the interviewer, the researcher planned to conduct comfortable and safe interviews with each participant, ensuring their ethical obligation to create a secure environment (Broussard et al., 2019:3). The researcher documented every step of the educational research process, starting with obtaining permission from multiple universities. I needed to hold myself accountable as the primary researcher of the study.

The interviews were conducted and recorded for transcription through the Microsoft Teams application with the consent of the participants as they were in various provinces, and COVID-19 protocols guided the interviews. Microsoft Teams was an appropriate communication platform that allowed the researcher and participants to have uninterrupted interviews. This study's core characteristic was narrative in nature, which allowed the participants to share their views in an open-ended manner, and it also enabled the researcher to understand the thought process of the interviewees (Priede, Jokinen, Ruuskanen & Farrall, 2014:4).

Regarding the population sample, the study planned to involve young black academics from ten public universities. The idea was to have a population size of about twenty participants, but only eight participants (five nGAP academics and three mentors) from five universities were interviewed due to poor response; hence, the sample needed to be more significant. The researcher tried several times to contact various development departments that needed to be more responsive. Ethical considerations were sometimes provided, but the researcher needed help getting participants. The

research was conducted through Ms Teams as a data collection method. These interviews were recorded to assist the researcher in scribing notes at a later stage. Furthermore, the researcher wanted to pay more attention to the interview process without worrying about taking notes.

1.6 DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Data analysis for this study seeks to move from mere data collection to understanding, explaining and interpreting the phenomena in question (Taylor & Gibbs, 2010:1). The researcher also intended to analyse the data through Thematic Analysis (TA) data from open and transparent interviews on how nGAP can achieve its main objectives. The use of TA in this study was based on data on the likelihood of cooperating talent management in the GAP training process. Nowell et al. (2017:1) suggest that thematic analysis is a proper qualitative method, especially when working in research teams and analysing large qualitative data sets. While thematic analysis is an appropriate method, Nowell et al. emphasize the need for more guidance in conducting a rigorous analysis (2017:2). Braun and Clarke (2012:2) suggest that while thematic analysis is commonly used but needs to be a more well-defined qualitative data analysis method, it is gaining recognition as a distinct and valuable approach alongside established methods such as grounded theory, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis. The study evaluated nGAP as a concept based on principles and goals. This approach helps to identify the shared characteristics of how a particular topic is discussed or written about, allowing for a better understanding of those similarities. Although information can be shared, it may only sometimes be significant or necessary. By examining TA's patterns of meaning, researchers can determine the importance of the information concerning the topic and research question. The analysis uncovers the answer to a question which may take time to be apparent in some qualitative research. Various patterns can be discovered within any data set, but the analysis focuses on identifying those relevant to answering a specific research question. Qualitative data was first transcribed, then coded, organised into themes, and interpreted, followed by reporting through summaries (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:116). Coding is explained by Nieuwenhuis (2012:105) as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or unique identifying names. Kerlinger in Cohen et al. (2011:559) define coding

as the "translation of question responses and respondent information to specific categories" for analysis. Similar texts were grouped into codes or labels, and conclusions were drawn. Coding allows the researcher to simplify information given by participants then analyse and report on it.

1.7 ADOPTED WRITING STYLE OF THIS DISSERTATION

Academic writing does not always accept work written in the first-person format. However, in some sections of the study, the researcher has attempted to write in the first person. While most academics vary in opinions on whether writing academic work in the first person is acceptable, it is preferred in qualitative research. Researchers who want an objective tone in their formal research prefer writing in the third person. The passive voice in most literature I have reviewed seemed widely accepted. Shelton (2015:1-2) distinguishes significant categories of academic disciplines regarding academic writing styles. Shelton further mentions the following categories of academic disciplines which support writing in the first person:

- **Social sciences** – The American Psychological Association (APA, 2010:69) prefers or prescribes that their researchers use the first person and active voice in their writing. This description is to ensure accurate attribution of action. Writing in the first person is also appropriate to avoid ambiguity.
- **Arts and Humanities** – The Modern Language Association's researchers are not against using academic writing in the first person, but Baker University (2010:7) states that it should not be "overused".
- **Science, Engineering and Technology** – This category uses IEEE Editorial Style for scientific and technical writing, stating, "As a matter of style, passive voice is typical, though not always, inferior to active voice" (Perlman, 2013: np).

The supposition of interpretivism is not likely to be objective but is interested in the subjective meanings of the participants. The researcher was curious to discover and explore how to make sense of their surroundings, participants' activities, and perceive interpersonal-social relationships in the context they are surrounded in (Rubbin & Babbie, 2010:50-51).

Following the interpretivism philosophy assisted the researcher to create new, richer understandings of interpretations of participants' lived experiences through the interview process (Saunders, 2016:141). According to Bonache (2020:104), interpretivism attempt to understand the world from the perspective of its participants, which cannot be carried out without the interpretative effort of the researcher. The researcher had the responsibility of making sense of the meanings and subjective intentions of certain nGAP participants in a given context, without imposing a priori analytic categories. This approach motivated the researcher to be cognizant of the fact that interviewed participant did not live in a singular social reality but rather in multiple social constructed views of social reality (Babones, 2016:453).

1.8 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study presents research findings from interviews and a literature review in a qualitative format. The study aimed to provide a summary of the conclusions and recommendations derived from all the previous chapters. The recommendations were derived from the combined results of all research participants. The study included a summary and conclusions based on the research questions and limitations of the study, as well as suggestions for further research. Chapter Five contains additional details on the topic.

1.9 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 1

According to Monte and Libby (2018:2), research aims to solve a particular existing problem so that a much larger audience is eager to support research that is likely to be profitable or solve problems of immediate concern. The intention was to contribute theoretically and practically to how various South African universities incorporate talent management into academic and developmental programmes such as the nGAP. In the academic sense, the study would add value methodologically (by utilising qualitative research and thematic analysis) and theoretically (by exploring the phenomenon of talent management incorporated into nGAP).

This study aimed at understanding how university development units apply talent management to new cohorts of young black female academics during their mentoring

phase. The purpose of such investigation is so that they will become more rounded in their teaching, research, service, and leadership. In Van Schalkwyk's (2012b:2017) view, mentoring introduces young scholars to university culture, support, and guidance, which both Msimanga (2014:2015) and Ndlovu (2014:2041) believe is necessary for cultivating excellence and success.

There could be an increase in the use of talent management tools as a developmental support mechanism in South African universities because of this study. Consequently, managing early career academics in universities, particularly Black female academics, can be fully addressed. Academic development programmes in South African higher education may improve if universities adopt them (Boughey, 2010:23). Despite changes in government ministers, this should be an ongoing programme to ensure that it gains traction in the future. The study sought to stimulate government policymakers' interest in creating policies that encourage recruiting and retaining talented young black women in academics. To retain talented academics, universities should also implement mechanisms that seek to develop employees. Eventually, this might improve the quality of teaching, research, publications, and scholarship. By attracting talented young people into academia, research, teaching, and service will no longer be governed only by retiring academics, which is a valuable exercise.

This study intended to stimulate policymakers to develop policies to help recruit and retain capable young black women academics within higher education institutions through talent management principles. By implementing mechanisms that also seek to develop employees, the study aimed to find out how selected universities will be able to retain talented academics. In due course, this might have a positive impact on the quality of teaching, research, publications, and scholarship. Such development mechanisms may be helpful as they will attract many talented young people into academia. They will ensure that research, teaching, and service will not only be in the hands of retiring academics.

There should be alignment between the importance of a researched topic and what the research proposal seeks to accomplish. The findings of this study should not only inform those who review it but also enhance their critical and analytical thinking. This study explored the opportunities for talent management incorporated into the nGAP development programme — a training opportunity for nGAP lecturers and a mentoring

opportunity to prepare them to be rounded in teaching, research, and social engagement. The findings of this study may share some insightful advantages into why universities in South Africa have not responded quickly enough to the transformational challenges black female academics face. This study investigated how talent management can be a development support mechanism to facilitate academic career progression among black female academic recruits at South African universities. The essential purpose of this study was to discuss the importance of integrating talent management principles into academic development programmes to promote a competitive advantage for young academic recruits.

It was essential to make the study meaningful by using academic literature review as a way of bringing credibility in the study is adequately used in a study of this magnitude.

1.10 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

This study comprises five chapters:

Chapter One

Chapter 1 of the research study highlights efforts to promote nGAP in higher education through written studies. The chapter sheds light on the obstacles that black female academics face, such as racism, gender biases, and racial discrimination, that hinder their progress in higher education. The government has introduced training and development programmes, and the chapter discusses who should take advantage of them. The study aims to demonstrate its value to policymakers by highlighting how a higher education institution's policy can help recruit and retain capable black women academics. The chapter also covers the importance of literature reviews and relevant theories. In the study, the challenges faced by black women academics, especially those who need mentorship opportunities, are discussed. Consequently, their academic careers do not flourish and develop. The study examined the integration of talent management concepts into the academic development of nGAP black females. The researcher formulated research questions to address young black female academics' challenges.

Chapter Two

This chapter focuses mainly on the theoretical framework and literature review on talent management to develop a generation of young black female academics, mainly black. The chapter presents a theoretical framework that is balanced and comprehensive but also includes some academic rigour.

Chapter Three

The researcher's scientific beliefs and values influenced the researcher's approach and thinking. Based on the study's findings, qualitative research proved to be the most effective method for obtaining an in-depth understanding of the integration of talent management into the development of nGAP lecturers. Using phenomenology was an appropriate approach because it emphasizes the participants' lives.

Purposive sampling was the most effective method for identifying and selecting participants for this study. Each participating South African university selected a lecturer and mentor/line manager for the nGAP programme.

The study used a semi-structured approach. Interviews were conducted with the recording function of Ms Teams to ensure validity.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four delves deeper into qualitative data analysis strategies. The process goes beyond gathering data and emphasizes explaining, interpreting, and gaining a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The chapter also discusses the researcher's role and data collection methods in qualitative research. Furthermore, the chapter extensively covers the use of Thematic Analysis to encourage open and honest discussion within the nGAP.

Chapter Five

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the results of the qualitative research through interviews with nGAP lecturers and mentors from specific universities. As limited nGAP policies are available, the researcher also reviewed various literature on early career academics and government documents related to reports that led to the creation of nGAP. The qualitative findings are discussed based on the data from interviews from the chosen universities.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter One, the study provided an introduction, background information, a brief discussion of relevant theories and literature, and explanations of essential concepts.

This chapter explores literature and relevant theories. The goal is to gain a deeper understanding of talent management and identify potential lessons that can be applied to manage nGAP effectively. The researcher presents a comprehensive and balanced theoretical framework with academic rigour. The historical roots of talent management and its various definitions are explained extensively by accompanying them with academic backing. Talent management is discussed in detail to understand how it fits in this study. The literature on the different aspects of talent management is available to help comprehend the significance of talent management in a professional setting. This study extensively explores the importance of talent management in universities worldwide. The researcher also looks at academic development programmes underpinned by talent management. The focus zooms in on South Africa's higher education environment.

2.2 THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE OF LITERATURE REVIEW AND RELEVANT THEORIES

By reviewing the phenomenon already known about the topic, Bazeley (2016:41) suggests approaching a project from the perspective of what is already known and what methods other people have used to research it. Randolph (2010:2) states that conducting a literature review demonstrates an author's knowledge about a particular field of study, including vocabulary, theories, key variables and phenomena, and its methods and history. Conducting a literature review also informs the student of the influential researchers and research groups in the field.

Yin (2012:61) suggests that while literature reviews have been an instrumental part of most empirical research, earlier, qualitative research resisted formal literature reviews

prior to the onset of collecting some field data. Ridder (2017:286) states that the resistance stemmed from the belief that qualitative studies attempt, most of all, to capture the "meaning" of events, including their unique time, place, and distinct historical moment. Qualitative research, in theory, aims to capture the "meaning" of events as much as possible, including unique times, places, and distinct historical moments (Aspers & Corte, 2019:148). Further, the most meaningful interpretation would likely come from those present at that time and place rather than from a researcher's perspective. Sutton and Austin (2015:226) argue that qualitative research can help researchers access the thoughts and feelings of research participants, enabling the development of an understanding of the meaning that people ascribe to their experiences. Research reviews can provide valuable information to inform new studies and create unwanted filters and lenses that could hinder or bias new studies. The researcher was also cognisant of being directly involved in the interviewing process to capture the meanings of events and interpret participants' lived experiences, which is a core matter of qualitative research.

DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019:3) emphasize that new investigators need to be aware, if not adept, of identifying relevant lines of research — and the meanings they discover under similar circumstances — that may directly affect a new study's topic, data collection methods, and data source. Therefore, the first part of this research reviews the literature on academic development programmes and talent management in universities in South Africa and abroad. Using government documents on nGAP, the researcher immersed himself deeper into this topic. The researcher also used books, research reports, articles from periodicals and journals, and newspaper articles about nGAP from various universities in South Africa (VirginiaTech Library, undated). This study may yield impressive results. A well-supported and relevant argument is presented after thorough research and analysis of appropriate literature. Literature reviews should identify "the state of knowledge in a particular field, clarify information that is already known, illuminate the implications of the analyzed problem, link theory with practice, identify gaps in existing literature, and place the dissertation/thesis within the research agenda of that field" (Leite et al., 2019:1).

Maxwell (2013:40) explains that formulating a research problem is one of the most critical steps in designing one's study. Interpretivism underpins this study. A central premise of interpretive research is that there is no objective social reality. Rather,

reality seen as being produced and reproduced among people and socially constructed through their interactions (Munkvold & Bygstad, 2016:3). My role as a researcher becomes imperative when it comes to trying to understand the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants (Tanh & Tanh, 2015: 24).

Talent management is a theoretical framework for attracting, growing, and retaining talent in knowledge-driven organizations (Scullion et al., 2010:106). In its early stages, TM focused on identifying and promoting managerial characteristics indicative of success (Dumse, 2011:23) but has evolved to include a variety of aspects related to the management of talented employees (Al Ariss et al., 2014:173). In addition to employee development, Mphuthi and Schultz (2020:66) state that talent management drives performance management.

The nGAP academics get recruited in a deliberate process that identifies critical academic needs and then fills those needs with incumbents who demonstrate high potential. Through the evolution of TM practices, talent trends specific to people have been considered.

2.2.1 Importance of a theoretical framework

The theoretical framework is a crucial part of the research process that needs more attention in the research process. It sets the structure for the entire research project (Casanave & Li, 2015:104)

The theoretical framework serves as a "blueprint" for a study inquiry. Grant and Onsloo (2014:14) figuratively liken the theoretical framework to house design. According to this concept, a researcher is like an architect responsible for selecting what to build and how to construct the property, based on their imagination. According to Nhan (2020:2), the theoretical framework is the "blueprint" for the dissertation inquiry. According to Rashid et al. (2019:2), the theoretical framework serves as a structure to guide, support and rationalise how you approach the study's problem statement, objectives, and research questions. It can take the form of a collection of related concepts, theoretical statements, or claims that present a systematic view of a subject of study to explain or predict it. It is essential to clearly state one's perspectives in

research as they reveal underlying assumptions and impact decisions regarding the purpose, design, methodology, and data analysis (Moon & Blackman, 2014:2).

Nieuwenhuis (2012:106) indicates that for research to be valid, it is essential to understand the nature and form of reality (that which can be known). A study outline provides the structure for defining how one will philosophically (a system of generalised views of the world, which form beliefs that guide action), epistemologically (relates to how things can be known), methodologically, and analytically approach the study (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:29). It is important to note that a theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated ideas based on theories. The theory concept aims to explain the reasons behind things and how they work in nature and other phenomena.

Kivunja (2018:46) define a *theoretical framework* as "a structure that summarises concepts and theories, which you develop from previously tested and published knowledge which you synthesise to help you have a theoretical background, or basis for your data analysis and interpretation of the meaning contained in your research data". Swanson (2013:122) explicitly asserts that, "The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study."

A holistic grasp of talent management and its related concepts requires expertise in the domain and the broader context. Although most of the literature on this subject focuses on private sector organisations, there is a growing interest in expanding knowledge within higher education as well (Bradley, 2016:15). Despite the differences between the two sectors, they share common challenges related to attracting and retaining talent, as Musakuro (2022:1) note.

Luft et al. (2022:3) state that reviewing relevant course readings and research studies is essential to develop a robust theoretical framework. These sources provide valuable insights and analytic models that can help address the research problem effectively.

When choosing a theory, it is essential for the researcher to consider its appropriateness, how easy it is to apply, and how well it explains the topic.

The researcher used the following key points to determine which theory to pursue and strengthen the theoretical framework. The source of this information is Jaccard and Jacoby (2010:5).

1. Clearly stating the theoretical assumptions allows the reader to evaluate them critically.
2. The theoretical framework connects the researcher to existing knowledge, providing a basis for hypotheses and guiding the choice of research methods.
3. Articulating the theoretical assumptions of a research study prompts one to address questions of why and how to facilitate the transition from merely describing a phenomenon to generalising about various aspects of it.
4. Theoretical frameworks help identify the limitations of these generalisations by specifying the key variables that influence the phenomenon of interest and highlighting the need to examine how they may differ under different circumstances.

Management of an organisation's long-term health and success, including in higher education, relies on retaining key employees (Boakye, 2022:42). Furthermore, employers that fail to retain high-performing employees end up not only understaffed but also staffed with under-qualified personnel, which can truncate their ability to have an urge over competitors (Mahmud & Idrish, 2011:71). A related study conducted by Amutuhaire (2010:1) mentioned that satisfaction of employees is critical to the success of higher education institutions. It further states that the satisfaction of academics directly impacts research output, teaching effectiveness, and the growth of academic staff. In order to retain top talent, higher education institutions need to focus on employee retention management by prioritising compensation, recognition and rewards, growth opportunities, decision-making involvement, work-life balance, training and development, as well as leadership and job security. According to Das and Baruah (2013:10-12), these factors contribute to job satisfaction and reduce employee turnover. Moreover, the literature argues that the talent management process is a frequent development, adjustments and change to ensure that the process remains aligned with organisational strategies and goals (Mabope, 2018:2). This study does not suggest that talent management is a temporary intervention. Instead, it should be a continuous process integrated into the nGAP initiative. The following section provides more insights into talent management and its origins.

2.2.2 Historical roots of talent

- **What does talent mean?**

It is crucial to establish a connection between talent and talent management in order for them to be relevant to each other. According to Kahn and Louw (2010:179), talent refers to an employee's specific skills and competencies. Meanwhile, Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez-Crux (2013:294) define it as an individual's abilities, achievements, and aptitude, which include education, training, experience, motivation, and opportunities. Talent management is when a company considers these factors when selecting and hiring employees. As part of talent management, companies proactively identify suitable talent pools to attract, develop, retain, and utilize employees with the necessary skills and aptitude to meet current and future organizational needs (Bluen, 2013:1-2). The following section looks at talent and some of the definitions related to it.

There is no universal definition of talent, as it can be defined in various ways within an organization, as stated by Tansley (2011:266). Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and Gonzalez-Cruz (2013:291) show several inexact definitions of talent in the world of work by various scholars. The table displays a few definitions.

Table 2.1: Definitions of talent

Source	Definition of talent
Silzer and Dowell (2010:13-14)	“In groups talent can refer to a pool of employees who are exceptional in their skills and abilities either in a specific technical area (such as software graphics skills) or a competency (such a consumer marketing talent), or a more general area (such as general managers or high-potential talent). And in some cases, “the talent” might refer to the entire employee population.”

<p>Bethke-Langenegger (2012:3)</p>	<p>“We understand talent to be one of those workers who ensures the competitiveness and future of a company (as specialist or leader) through his organisational/job specific qualification and knowledge, his social and methodical competencies, and his characteristic attributes such as eager to learn or achievement oriented.”</p>
<p>Ulrich and Smallwood (2012:60)</p>	<p>“Talent = competence [knowledge, skills and values required for todays' and tomorrows' job; right skills, right place, right job, right time] x commitment [willing to do the job] x contribution [finding meaning and purpose in their job]”</p>

As noted above, one can observe that many definitions of talent exist. One might get the impression that the absence of a universal talent definition creates confusion that hinders the establishment of widely recognized talent management theories and practices (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013:291). In this research, talents refer to the unit of sampling highly valued by their organization for their exceptional skills and contributions. Their employers identify these employees as talents due to their significant impact on the organization. It is essential to develop well-established theories in this area for further improvement. While talent may not be easily identifiable, certain traits such as creativity, confidence, energy, drive, and willingness can be commonly associated with it (Paadi, 2019:31).

When trying to understand the vagueness and ambiguity of the word ‘talent’, one will find themselves "opening a can of worms" (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013:292). To better understand what ‘talent’ means, let us explore its historical roots and provide a

clear definition. According to Adamsen (2016:77), 'talent' has existed in multiple languages for thousands of years - as illustrated by the Parable of the Talents. According to Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013:292), the word "talent" has its roots in Latin (talentum) and was later adopted into Old English. The term 'talent' has its roots in the Greek word *tálanon*, which translates to "balance weight" or "sum of money" (Stevenson, 2010:4656). The term 'talent', according to Adamsen (2016:78), previously had a denotative meaning that may have indicated wealth when referring to a monetary unit that emphasized an actual, large sum of money. Adamsen (2016:78) points out that the noun had a denotative meaning before the 14th century. However, this denotative meaning began to change after the 14th century, as more abstract, indefinite, and indefinable meanings emerged, such as 'inclination', 'disposition', 'mental endowment', and 'natural ability'. As in the New English Bible, in which the Greek word 'talent' is translated into the word 'capital' (Adamsen, 2016:78). Some of these translations are also found in later interpretations and translations of the Parable of the Talents, some of which appear in later translations and interpretations. Tansley (2011:267) describes talent as an abstract, indeterminate ability or aptitudes and faculties of all kinds (superior mental powers, mental abilities). People view talent as an individual's quality rather than just a characteristic. It also makes sense to think of talent as something one 'is' rather than as something one 'has' (Adamsen, 2016:80). Despite the semantic problems of the term 'talent', Tansley (2011:267) concludes that it is not such a terrible idea not to have a restrictive, rigorous definition of 'talent', since "having such a restrictive definition can hinder the finding of evidence that identifies talent." To clarify, the term 'talent' can be viewed subjectively, but that is outside the scope of this study's objective. The study describes talent as an approach concerned with nurturing and developing the competencies and capacities of people, particularly young Black academics. The following section explores whether academic talent is an innate ability or a result of skill development.

The following section will explore whether academic talent is an innate ability or a result of skill development.

- **Baby boomers versus Millennials as talents**

Many demographers and social commentators have drawn attention to the shift in attitudes across generations. As the baby boomer (born between 1946 and 1964)

generation slowly fades away, universities must attract the right young talents to drive their transformational and inclusive agendas. Tansley and Tietze (2013:11) define inclusion as mentoring and developing talent to achieve its utmost potential. The inclusive agenda involves an approach that ensures that all employees feel included in the talent development process. This perspective becomes relevant as the workforce has become more diverse and consists of different generations. Now that universities are beginning to recruit "millennials" or "Generation Y" (those born between 1980 and 1990), they are obliged to consider the values, interests, and expectations of this group as they formulate their strategic goals (Festing & Schäfer, 2014:263). The study focused on the demographic commonly referred to as "Generation Y". It did not include research on "Generation Z", which refers to those born between 1997 and 2012. The age-group for this study participants is between 35 years and 40 years, which fits the "Generation Y" category. Hence, the focus is going to be on this age-group category.

Talent development has evolved over the years, and the mentoring process concerning career development has proven to make a great deal of difference when it comes to generational changes in the workplace. Management and development of talent in higher education have also shown a substantial generational difference in values, interests and expectations. The diagram below shows the different working patterns of baby boomers and millennials. When mentoring early career academics, it is crucial to consider their developmental requirements to help them become established academics. The diagram summarizes the characteristics of baby boomers and Generation Y characteristics. The researcher has positioned the nGAP academics as Generation Y. The nGAP academics interviewed are currently in the mentoring phase in the nGAP training. The mentors that the researcher interviewed are part of the baby boomers. Because of their age, these individuals are often associated with the baby boomer generation. It should be noted that the exact age of the participants was provided in a confidential document and will not be disclosed to preserve their anonymity. The baby-boomers academics are positioned as mentors because of their academic experience and the knowledge they can impart to early career academics.

Table 2.2: Characteristics of Baby Boomers and Millenials

	Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964)	Millennials or “Generation Y” (born between 1981 and 1996)
Talent	<p>Baby boomers are characterized as driven workaholics who work efficiently for personal fulfilment. They consider higher education and the university environment a great expectation. They tend to see relationships and business results as intertwined. They believe mentoring is the most effective way to share knowledge with the next generation in their workplace (Hayes, 2013:19). Senior academics are usually appointed to mentor early career academics in higher education to ensure that there is a talent flow that creates and maintains the required talent pool (Guan et al. 2015:230).</p>	<p>The ability to attract quality young academics remains a challenge for many South African higher education institutions (HEIs) (Lesenyeho, Barkhuizen, and Schutte, 2017:1). According to Nästesjö (2021:240), there are difficulties in trying to determine who early career academics are, what they do and how they develop as academics. Lesenyeho, Barkhuizen, and Schutte (2017:9) identified the following factors that could attract early career academics. These include career development and advancement, opportunities to contribute, employer branding and prestige, job security, flexible working hours, intellectual stimulation, innovation, an opportunity to apply skills and autonomy (Bradley, 2016:3).</p>

Career Development	They Focus on developing their careers through continuing academic development opportunities. They are involved in a developmental relationship between themselves, as more experienced individuals (mentor) and less experienced early career academics (mentee) (Paadi, 2019:35).	A good publications record, experience of teaching, administration, supervision experience, knowledge of funding opportunities, and ideally evidence of successful funding applications. Experience of professional networking to raise your profile and, increasingly, entrepreneurship or knowledge transfer experience will also be advantageous (Vitae, 2019).
Training and Development	Training contributes to the organization's goals but is also a path to promotion. The mentor is responsible for creating a positive learning environment and job engagement. They are motivated by the fact that it enables career progression in early career academics, which increases job satisfaction and fulfilment. They develop mentees through discussion and reflection (Peiser, 2018:6).	Willing and eager to take risks, do not mind making mistakes - they consider this a learning opportunity. Early career academics participate in training and development for the improvement of their skills and abilities (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013:244).
Mentoring	They provide support at a career or vocation level in the way of sponsorship,	Mentoring has been acknowledged as a conventional process for the career development of early career

	coaching, protection, exposure and allocating challenging assignments to mentees. They provide development relationship, where they provide assistance and support to new academics (Hobololo, 2020:123).	academics. It provides mentees with gentle guidance and requisite insight to make decisions about their academic careers better (Wingfield & Wingfield, 2023:23).
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- Definition of talent management**

Talent management is a concept that has been introduced previously in human resource management (Sparrow, 2019:167). Talent management is the act of managing potential employees in the workplace to enhance employees' performance and, by that, boost productivity (Ngiu et al., 2021:376). Talent management act can be done by engaging employees in daily activities and making decisions. Another act of talent management is conducting periodic training and development programmes to upgrade the employees' skills and ensure career growth in the long run. Implementing effective talent management practices in the workplace leads to improved productivity and performance. Niedzwiecka (2016:804) notes that the issue of talent management gained prominence at the end of the 1990s. The growing interest in this sphere has two fundamental causes.

First and foremost, there was the dissemination of the view that human resources played a crucial role in creating a competitive advantage in enterprises operating in a knowledge-based economy. The second cause had to do with changes in the labour market. This case concerned the demand for specialists in areas of strategic importance to those companies and the problems involved in recruiting and retaining them. A talent management strategy allows organisations to increase their human capital and achieve success. It involves developing a culture of engagement, capacity, and capability, by acquiring, identifying, developing, engaging/retaining, and deploying talent to align with business objectives (Joel, 2010:6). As part of talent management,

recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, employee compensation, and retention are all considered (Paadi, 2019:45).

Many organisations view talent management as a mechanism for driving the performance management process and employee development while ensuring their talent meets their business needs (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:234). Collings and Mellahi (2009:305) describe talent management thus:

... activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of critical positions which differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organisation.

According to Mejri and Doghan (2021:504), talent management (TM) involves a series of actions aimed at identifying and recruiting skilled individuals for critical roles and ensuring they stay with the organization. The selected definitions of talent management are presented in Table 2.3:

Table 2.3: Selected definitions of talent management

	Author	Definition
1.	Khatri (2010:40)	Talent Management as including three main sets of activities related expressly to key positions: (1) recruitment, staffing, and succession planning, (2) training and development, and (3) retention management.

2.	Moczyłowska (2010:38)	Talent management is a set of activities taken vis-à-vis personnel with outstanding talents, to ensure their development and increase their operational efficiency, while simultaneously achieving corporate goals.
3.	Silzer and Dowel (2010:xxi)	An organization's talent management system consists of processes, programs, and cultural norms that work together to attract, develop, deploy, and retain employees to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs.
4.	Jamka (2011:196)	Talent management is the “attraction, development, and retention” of the talents, i.e. the most valuable staff members, by creating conditions conducive to their potential development, so that they can be put to use for the company’s operations for as long as possible.
5.	Wayne (2017:82)	Management of the entire workforce from the attraction of talented employees to their promotion and finally to find a successor after they retire.
6		

	Mejri and Doghan (2021:504)	Talent Management consists of three main processes: input – which refers to talent identification and acquisition, throughput – which focuses on competency development, career management, motivation, and rewarding, and output – which is aimed at talent retention and responding to potential turnover.
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Many definitions of TM view it as a multi-phase process. In this research, the researcher used the definition suggested by Mejri and Doghan (2021:504), as it aligns with the process-oriented approach of this study. The study aims to help early career academics excel in teaching, research, and social skills by addressing all necessary development components. Rigorous mentoring is integral to the process of nurturing such talent.

Mentoring young academics is one way to introduce fresh talent and ideas to a university. Universities are acknowledged as significant sources of talent for the future, especially young talent (Armstrong & Taylor, 2013:233). Mentoring has become imperative to have a steady supply of talented young academics, especially talented black females, in universities. The nGAP initiative aims to mentor early-career academics in teaching, research, and social engagement to help them become well-rounded professionals. Many higher education institutions (HEIs) have recognized the importance of providing mentoring support to ECAs. It is crucial to equip the future generation of academics with the necessary knowledge and skills to meet society's expectations of the profession.

- **Talent management as job enrichment mechanism**

Universities are slowly adopting a more strategic management approach and system, which differs from traditional institutional structures (Musakuro, 2018:17). Universities have been under increasing pressure to demonstrate their relevance and significance to society (Bekele & Ofoyuru, 2020:1). Thus, universities are expected to contribute

significantly to innovation, economic growth, and development, and, directly, to democratization, social cohesion, and sustainability, which are more strategic management approaches. These expectations seem to trigger universities' generation of "strategic responses mainly" (Pinheiro et al., 2015:1). Promoting societal engagement has become essential, and universities have identified two nonexclusive strategies. One of them has been explained by Mansen (2014:33) thus: a "third mission has emerged for higher education – next to its two traditional missions of education and research – which reflects an expected close engagement, in the first place economic, of higher education with society. This type of service is commonly referred to as university community service and can be either paid or unpaid consulting. The other, what looks more recently as a budding strategy, is to embed community service into the academic core-education and research. University teaching and research are presumably framed within and directly contribute to serving real societal needs (NTNU, 2019:133). It is stated that traditional functions of universities as ideology expression, elite selection and socialization, knowledge generation, and training of skilled labour force, as extensively discussed in Castells' (2021) work, and particularly the mechanisms used, seem to require further reconceptualization. It is for this reason that universities embark on strategic management planning.

Bradley (2016:2) acknowledges that a strategic management approach can help overcome challenges caused by increased competition and accountability. University competition has increased the government's willingness to provide more funding and autonomy in a deregulated market (Bradley, 2016:3). This has stimulated engagement and enthusiasm in the workplace, as shown in the adapted diagram below. In Africa, the management of talent poses serious challenges. Lack of funding, improper management, heavy teaching loads, and inadequate infrastructure are some challenges universities have faced in retaining top faculty members (Akpey-Mensah, 2018:13). Assisting universities in building talent pipelines is essential for talent management in Africa. A key component should be the inclusion of young black female academics to upgrade universities and the overall economy. Managing, developing, and retaining talent is about attracting individuals with high potential, and developing, managing, and retaining them (Fapohunda, 2014:4). Young black female academics

must be allowed to excel in their roles as they have been historically denied this opportunity.

Job enrichment allows employees to thrive in their roles. This leads to motivation that translates to good performance (Güngör, 2011:1511). According to Tumi, Hasan and Khalid (2021:125), the autonomy given to the employees leads to job satisfaction. The table below shows that enriching work experience improves employee motivation and job commitment (Baral & Bhargava, 2010:274).

Table 2.4: Job enrichment to create meaningful career development opportunities for early career academics:

Job enrichment to create meaningful career development opportunities for early career academics.

TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Instil jobs with:

- Motivation
- Autonomy
- Meaningfulness
- Co-worker support

Employees, whether new or experienced, need motivation to perform their duties. *Motivation* drives individuals to perform effectively to meet the organisation's needs (Achim et al., 2013:685). The literature identified three influential determinants of employee motivation compensation, job enrichment and enlargement, and training. Strengthening the exchange relationship between

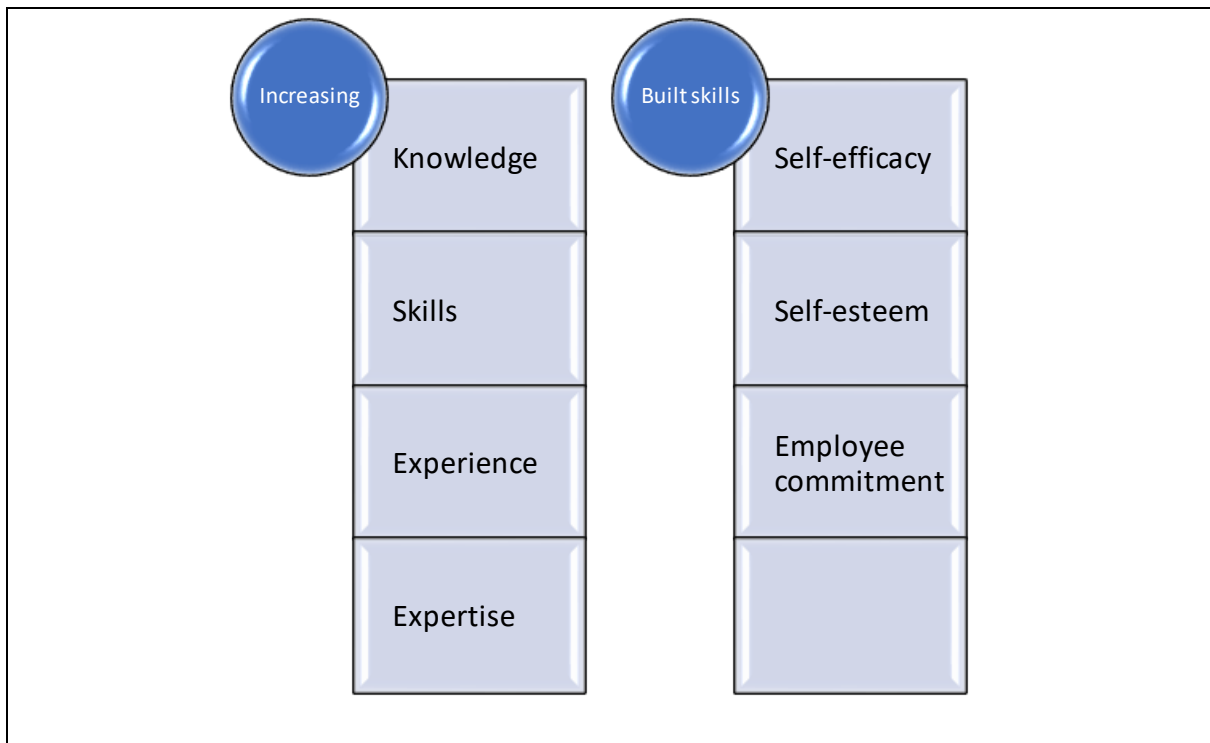
employees and employers through a reward system can positively impact employee motivation. The compensation system comprises monetary and non-monetary rewards adopted by an organisation to improve its employees' efficiency through increased motivation (Thaiefi et al., 2015). In higher education institutions (HEIs), compensation systems and performance appraisals help institutions attract a highly skilled workforce to join and improve the education system (Küster & Canales, 2011:73).

Another process that motivates employees to reach a particular capacity to assist in achieving desired organisational needs is training. Davis and Werther (2010:164) emphasised that "training prepares people to do reviews their present jobs and development prepares employees needed knowledge, skills, and attitude." Training is essential for organisations to satisfy the increasing demand for employees' knowledge and skills.

Enriching employees' work experience improves their motivation and job commitment (Ali et al., 2010:2796). Besides promoting motivation, job enrichment and enlargement have a significantly positive effect on self-control, self-actualisation, and self-respect (Dost & Khan, 2012:95).

TO ENHANCE COMMITMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

When organisations prioritise their commitment to employees, they can gain their support and ultimately increase productivity and individual performance, resulting in more significant benefits for the organisation and its employees (Osa & Amos, 2014:108).



Motivation is the process of increasing employee commitment. It is considered one of the critical fundamentals which are essential for organisational success (Upneja & Ozdemir, 2014:31). Organisations should provide job training to enhance knowledge and skills, as well as offer job enrichment and enlargement opportunities for the employees to expand their motivation, resulting in organisational success. Higher institutions can utilise the same principles to provide nGAP training for early career academics.

In the diagram above, Osa and Amos (2014:108) show the importance of the "power of job enrichment", which promotes five "core" or motivational job characteristics: skill variety, task identity, task significance (which collectively contribute to a sense of work meaningfulness), autonomy, and performance feedback. Robyn and Preez (2013:11) state that job enrichment mechanisms must give early-career academics the resources to do their work. According to them, resources include challenging tasks and the availability of assistants. Academic leaders' role is to promote employee engagement, such as interventions to ensure organisational support, including role clarity, good relationships with supervisors, clear information communication and participation in decision-making. Applying these job enrichment mechanisms fits perfectly in this study as it seeks to explore and investigate the development of Black

female academics under the nGAP programme, specifically through rigorous mentoring, and how this leads to them becoming fully-fledged academics. Helping ECAs succeed in the nGAP requires a rigorous mentorship process with various motivation incentives, as suggested by Osa and Amos (2014:108). Higher education must commit to providing ECAs with the necessary support to increase their engagement and build self-efficacy. Dore and Richards (2022:3) have found that low self-efficacy and self-esteem adversely affect job performance.

Meanwhile, Zhang et al. (2019:390) recommend maintaining a fair reward system that recognises good performance on time, to boost emotions and confidence. One effective talent management strategy to boost the credibility and confidence of ECAs is to offer more networking opportunities. Providing this type of assistance has proven to be beneficial. Furthermore, Nseobot and John (2021:93) state that the relationship between career development, organisational commitment, and tertiary educational institutions in developing economies is yet to be extensively studied. Literature has only recently started exploring the relationship between career management and organisational commitment in educational institutions, even in developed economies.

2.2.3 Synopsis of the literature: Facets linked to talent management.

Research on talent management mainly focuses on industries outside of education, and the limited studies within the higher education sector are not specific to South Africa. Talent management research in general in the higher education sector is limited (Paisey & Paisey, 2018:1197). It is vital to visit all facets of talent management to understand it when linked to higher education. Attracting and retaining academic staff, especially young academics, is a significant challenge for many South African universities. A study commissioned by the Department of Science and Technology in partnership with the Department of Higher Education (2018:8) considered it appropriate to establish a national academic development programme to prepare early career academics.

There is a shortage of young professionals who can replace the retiring generation of professors, according to various professional bodies (DST, 2018:63). Furthermore, Mokhele (2013:612) emphasized that the shortage of young academic workforce in

South African universities, especially young Black female academics, was considered a significant challenge facing this country. According to Krishen et al. (2019:8) a disproportionate number of white women and men work in academia. Due to this, the government must ensure that it addresses the racial and gender disparities caused by the apartheid regime. A study conducted by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET, 2013:1) recognised the importance of equipping young academics. The same study also presents some strategies and mechanisms that are more inclusive and aimed at building the next generation of academics to address this imbalance caused by unfair labour practices (DHET, 2013:2). A balance between race and sex, however, must be achieved by including more Black female academics in the programme (Sadiq et al., 2019:427). It is impossible to attract young academics in an environment that has stayed the same because development tends to benefit a selected few, not everyone. The new generation of young academics, also known as Generation Y, has specific needs that require consideration. Robyn and Preez (2013:2) explain that "Generation Y" refers to the younger or upcoming generation of employees, typically born between 1980 and 2000. Experts have varying definitions but generally agree that each generation has distinct traits that influence their work ethic, relationships, adaptability to change, and attitudes towards the organisational structure. In Brosdahl and Carpenter's (2011:548), categorisation of generations, they use the after-1981 birth date for Generation Y, even though they are quick to point out that there is yet no widespread agreement on the start and end point for Generation Y. As articulated by Robyn and Preez (2013:2), Generation Y individuals look to develop new skills, are progressive thinkers, can process information quickly, are eager to embrace change, and are constantly looking for new approaches and seeking the next challenge. Robyn and Preez further quote Henry's (2006:1) explanation of Generation Y:

...are self-confident, outspoken, passionate, opinionated, loyal and impatient. They are easily bored and happily move on to other things and interests. They have high expectations of their parents, friends, colleagues, and managers. They are ambitious, in a hurry and expect work and life to co-exist harmoniously, even though they are not sure how to make it work yet. They are in demand in the workplace, and they know it.

Based on the explanation above, to effectively meet the knowledge needs of South Africa, Generation Y academics need to be equipped to take responsibility for teaching, conducting research, and publishing. To uphold high standards in research and teaching, institutions must focus on keeping newly recruited and trained academic staff, as this is an imperative of talent management in the process to help employees to excel in their careers (Zengeya, 2020:63). In their work, Robyn and Preez (2013:3) recognize that talent management in higher education is encountering distinctive obstacles. These include competition with the private sector and the need for the next generation of academics to possess the necessary teaching and learning skills to produce excellent graduates and promote fairness in student opportunities and outcomes (Kunene, 2019:22). Additionally, future academics must contribute to changing institutional cultures, particularly at historically White institutions in South Africa.

The researcher identified a need for more information on challenges facing Generation Y academics in South Africa, which could hinder growth and development. Potential staff shortages and decreased organizational performance may occur, particularly in higher education, where projected shortages exist (Cheema & Asrar-ul-Haq, 2017:679). The perception that academic careers are unattractive could broadly impact higher education, society, and the economy. Reducing and managing the intention to leave academics is now more critical than ever, posing a significant challenge (Chaacha & Botha, 2021:2). A major obstacle is that younger academic faculty members frequently receive more attractive incentives from other industries. This move can lead to them acting on their intention to leave, which increases the staff turnover rate (Dube & Ngulube, 2013:7).

Young academic staff respond differently, which may cause conflicts between them and their supervisors and mentors (Luscombe et al., 2013:274). As Luscombe et al. explain the phenomenon further, young academic staff believe they can manage their career development without supervision or mentoring. However, mentoring is essential for them as they are still inexperienced. It is critical from time to time to test the relevance and mandate of the academic development programme against the government's developmental plans (Johannes et al., 2019:148). This test is essential because South Africa, as a developing democracy, is learning the development trends from global universities when developing its workforce. Therefore, it is critical to show

universities' different steps to develop their staff, especially early career academic recruits.

2.2.4 Key aspects linked to talent management

Today's organisations operate in a volatile and complex market (Schoemaker et al., 2018:27). These include higher education institutions. Market survival requires highly developed talents to adapt to ongoing change, be flexible, and act rapidly. Piwovar-Sulej (2021:6) states that in this era of a fast-expanding knowledge-based economy, the quality of human resources has assumed crucial relevance. In the current challenging and complex market environment, there is a demand for outstanding and talented individuals. The essential talent management factors are described in detail below:

(a) Employer of choice and best company to work for brand

Employer branding is one of the growing areas of interest for organisations such as universities, according to Aboul-Ela (2016:154). It is challenging to achieve the goal of becoming a "desired employer" in the eyes of applicants. Aboul-Ela says employer branding refers to how an organisation will market itself to current and potential external personnel. Employer branding is a process combining activities related to human resources management with a general development strategy. Employer branding is "a specific form of managing corporate identities by creating, both within and outside the firm, an image of the organisation as a distinct and desirable employer" (Xie et al., 2015:124). It is widely acknowledged in the literature that significant research on organisational branding has been done, but more attention needs to be given to the educational sector. Studies of early-career academics demonstrate that the reputation of host HEs, the research resources available to them, and the connection between the job posting and their research preferences, are the key factors influencing their mobility decisions (Agarwal & Ohyama, 2013:3). Williams and Omar (2014:223) contend that the efficiency and effectiveness of higher education provide a framework for evaluating the significance of events and activities, both on and off campuses. Hiring highly educated and bright academics has become essential for

higher education to retain its competitiveness in the modern, fiercely competitive, and globally integrated business environment. They further state that the need for more resources results from rising job mobility, changing demographics, an ageing workforce, and an unquenchable demand for skill, experience, knowledge, and education. It is crucial to comprehend how employer branding and talent management contribute to strong organisational identification and, ultimately, to a healthy work environment. Early career academics work more effectively in institutions where the strategic goal indicates the desired position within a specific timeframe. Saurombe, Barkhuizen and Schutte (2017:3) assert that healthy universities should use strategic plans to monitor their policymaking as a recommended practice. More than simply focusing on the policy plans is required; one must also pay attention to what is at their core.

University strategic planning is essential for employer branding, but it is also crucial for universities to establish themselves as centres of excellence for teaching and research. According to Huisman and Pausits (2010:10), having a solid organisational identity — by which each institution distinguishes itself from another regarding developmental plans — is the foundation for professional management and the development of early-career academics. Organisational identity is accompanied by having a positive attitude from significant stakeholders in the same way that organisations desire an amplified opinion of their purpose and culture. Furthermore, Saurombe, Barkhuizen and Schutte (2017:4) say that the organisations' images and reputations are essential components in forming identity. The opinions of members of organisations regarding what outsiders think of their specific organisation can affect how they perceive those organisations and how they feel, including how highly they value themselves (Cian & Cervai, 2014:183). The research shows that members' perceptions of how people perceive their organisations impact how they perceive those organisations themselves, which impacts the identity of those organisations. The following modified model by Bali and Dixit (2016:186) can, therefore, be used to summarise employer branding and its usefulness for the talent management process.

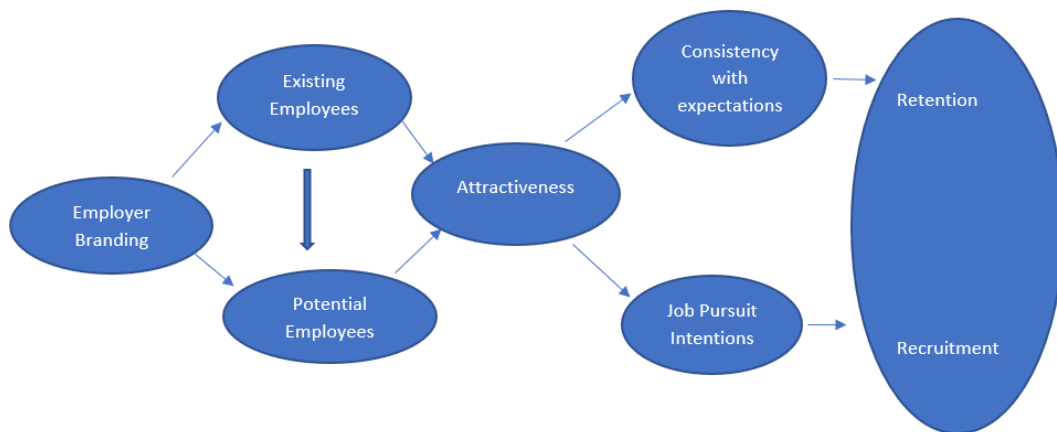


Figure 2.1: Employer branding and its usefulness for the talent management

Adapted from: Bali and Dixit (2016:186)

Both academic research and professional practice place more and more emphasis on employer branding. Due to talent shortage, Stahl et al. (2012:6) state that organisations must stand out from the competition and promote their brand to potential candidates to manage their talent demands effectively and promptly. In addition, according to Bali and Dixit (2016:190), companies should put efforts into upholding their commitments to their current workforce to turn them into brand ambassadors who help with branding initiatives. According to King and Grace (2010:938), building a solid brand image supports an organisation's ability to manage talent, which also encourages the development of brand ambassadors within the company. However, developing an organisation's brand image results in a long-term competitive advantage and demands consistent efforts.

(b) Employee engagement

Employee engagement has been a hot research topic among human resources researchers and management practitioners in recent years (Sun & Bunchapattanakda, 2019:64).

Different definitions of employee engagement are presented according to selected categories in the Table 2.5 below:

Table 2.5: Selected definitions of employee engagement

Authors	Definitions	Categories
Bakker (2011:265)	A positive, highly awakened emotional state with two features: energy and involvement	Employee engagement as a multi-faceted construct
Soane et al. (2012:530)	A work-role focus, activation and positive affect.	
Xu et al. (2013:60)	Employees' organizational identity, work attitude, mental state, responsibility effectiveness	
Xiao & Duan (2014:36)	Employees' initiative, loyalty, effectiveness, recognition and commitment	

Liu (2016:66)	Employees' organizational identity, dedication, absorption, vigour, pleasant harmony	
Demerouti et al. (2010:209)	Independent of burnout: vigour	Employee engagement as the opposite of burnout

According to Bakker (2011:266), work involvement may vary daily among individuals. Depending on what happens during the day, employees display varying degrees of interest in their work tasks. Work engagement is informed by the following drivers:

- (i) *Job resources* – According to previous research, workplace resources like social support from coworkers, performance feedback, skill variety, autonomy, and learning opportunities are all positively related to work engagement. According to Bakker (2011:266), job resources are those organizational, social, or physical characteristics of a job that might lessen the demands of the job and the physiological and psychological costs that go along with them, help attain work goals, and promote individual learning, growth, and development.
- (ii) *Personal resources* - Personal resources, which refer to a person's perception of their capacity to influence and control their surroundings successfully, are positive self-evaluations associated with resiliency. Bakker (2011:267) states that it has convincingly shown that positive self-evaluations can lead to goal setting, motivation, good performance, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and other desirable outcomes.

The management of HEIs should systematically attend to the employee engagement levels of academic staff by measuring them. Tucker and Williams (2011:1) state that employee engagement can be boosted in various ways at different points in the talent

management cycle. Attract, develop, and retain are the three foundational elements of talent management in the typical organization of today. These are sturdy building supplies. The challenge is that mortar is necessary for these bricks to stick together. Additionally, employee engagement is the glue. These three crucial pillars must be combined with mortar, using a solid, effective talent management process. HEIs must use these elements to recruit and retain critical early-career academic talent.

(c) Organizational culture and values

Although the concept of organisational culture is difficult to define, academics who have researched organisations generally concur that it refers to the shared values and statement of beliefs of an organisation or to the overall ways that organisations have improved the climate and practices around their interactions with people (Chong et al., 2018:976). According to a study by Haid, Sims, Schroeder-Saulnier and Wang (2010:8), shared beliefs and values about how employees behave and engage in work-related activities must be compatible with the intended culture in order to meet corporate goals and support talent management strategies. The specialised sources are also the foundation for university management. According to Beytekin and Dogan (2010:3), the three main influences on university culture are group members' learning experiences as their organisations change and the founders' beliefs, ideals, and presumptions. It is possible that values, beliefs, and assumptions significantly impact decision-making processes at universities and shape the behaviours of both individuals and organisations. However, a certain amount of prudence is necessary when managing talent. According to Bradley (2016:15), it is becoming increasingly crucial for universities to transform their current transactional human resources systems into strategically helpful ones. Talent management must be considered at the university level, where top executives are employed, and at the organisational unit level, where academic supervisors, managers, and heads of schools and departments work. Researchers have acknowledged organisational culture as a crucial factor affecting an organisation's success (Bamidele, 2022:3). Organisational culture has become a significant area of study. To increase consistency and efficiency at work, organisational researchers and managers have studied culture in various contexts. Universities are under growing pressure, according to Beytekin and Dogan (2010:2),

to adjust to fast-changing social, technological, economic, and political factors coming from both the localised and more generalised post-industrial external world. These changes have a crucial role and do not occur in a vacuum. Universities require a talented academic workforce to place talents in the correct positions. Finding the proper talent depends heavily on the talent management process. When executed correctly, the alliance of talent management and organisational culture may influence employee performance. The nGAP may profit from talent management since it will be seen as a performance-based project rather than just a developmental initiative.

(d) Alignment of business strategy to talent management

Talent management, which can take many forms, from highly structured to casual, is a commonly employed technique in business and industry. Regardless of the procedure used, the goal of talent management in these settings is obvious (Riccio, 2010:18). Bradley (2016:15), however, notes that talent management can be considered a suitable framework to help universities transition their present transactional human resources systems into something that is strategically enabling. Teaching and research have always been the two central undertakings of universities. The main factor influencing global university rankings has been thoroughly documented (Frenken et al., 2017:860). Universities must identify key, high-value roles in teaching, research, and community engagement activities due to the significance of these endeavours from a talent management perspective. Saidi (2023:14) believes that universities should align teaching, research, and community engagement as their strategic imperative for early career academics, emphasising performance. By implementing this strategic imperative, the nGAP initiative will serve as a training programme and a business strategy to foster excellence among newly recruited individuals. University leadership must take these initiatives seriously, in partnership with the Department of Higher Education and Training. These leadership positions are crucial for successfully implementing a university's strategy. They form the heart of the necessary roles. Incorporation of talented management has the potential to boost both the scope of the research and its quality, through improved training and development (Bradley, 2016:16). Considering that no two university plans are the same, each university must identify any extra jobs that are vital to the execution of their unique

strategy. To strengthen their early career academic talent pool, universities participating in the nGAP must implement their talent management with the university strategy.

(e) Career life stages and phases

According to existing research (Mattocks & Briscoe-Palmer, 2016:476), various groups experience career development and progression differently. Because there is no single track through the stages of an academic career, it takes much work to manage it. More research that is explicitly focused on these stages is necessary due to the intricacy of comprehending academic career stages. In contrast to corporate career stages, the higher education system impacts academic career progression, and significant differences exist between countries and fields (Lee & Kuzhabekova, 2018:370). Higher education is characterized by factors like increased academic mobility and improved systems for international credential recognition, in contrast to the career life stages in the business sector, where career stages are identifiable. So, according to Kindsiko and Baruch (2019:122), "the factors contributing to a successful academic career are far from clear." The doctorate, however, is considered by Frick et al. (2016:215) as the starting point for early-career academics to advance in their careers, where development through active mentoring is a continual process during and after the study's completion. Early-career academics improve their teaching and research skills through mentorship. Recent research has shown that academic success in early-career academics is favourably related to a PhD degree. According to Frick et al. (2016:204), certain traits may not fully develop during the doctoral programme and can still be shaped afterwards. Academic growth may also continue beyond the candidacy stage of the programme.

(f) Multiple generational workforce

The concept of generation was initially introduced in the 1920s to analyse social stratification in contemporary sociology realistically (Nešpor & Večerník, 2023:1). The sociology of generations explores various concepts related to social class, such as generational conflict, mobility, and ideology (Jones, 2017:21). Every generation's

preference, expectations, attitudes, and work methods have been influenced by socioeconomic experiences throughout history. The Pew Research Centre (2015) suggests that talent management is linked to generational analysis. Various elements, such as demographics, attitudes, historical events, popular culture, and the research community's general consensus, may influence this process. In academia, baby boomers (mentors) and millennials (early career academics) are impacted by socioeconomic issues directly affecting talent management.

Becton, Walker and Jones-Farmer (2014:176) discovered that a generation, also known as a cohort, is a similar group of people who share their birth years, ages, and significant life events at pivotal phases of development. This explanation aligns with the discussion of the essential developmental phases in which talent management plays a crucial role.

In order to keep baby boomers and early-career academics, management must motivate them to stay. It is essential to understand why people leave organizations, but it is even more critical to identify the organizational traits that keep employees with companies (George, 2015:103). Retaining new faculty members and seasoned college professors is another talent management responsibility. Institutions should strive to retain their top academic talent in order to avoid the expenses of recruiting, selecting, and hiring new staff. This way, they can easily replace critical personnel when needed (George, 2015:106).

2.2.5 The global view on talent management in universities

2.2.5.1 *The deficiency of developing talent in universities*

Employers who support employee development motivate staff to improve performance and advance in their careers. In addition to helping them cover skill gaps, having a trained staff also makes it easier for them to keep that workforce.

Universities and most corporations view human capital as their most valuable asset. Although many institutions of higher learning realise this, very few have created institutional programmes to nurture the talent that already exists (OECD, 2011:85). Higher education has traditionally had an egalitarian ethos that is antagonistic to formal generational identification (Riccio, 2010:34). According to Adnan et al.

(2019:104), talent management implementation is a crucial component of higher education. Higher education institutions have an advantage over counterparts that don't cultivate talent and successors from within in producing future leaders. The benefit of organisational development is that it can help maintain its objectives over time. Obtaining higher education is crucial for developing skills and gaining a competitive advantage. This viewpoint is shared by McDonnell et al. (2017:87), who suggest that education is essential in nurturing talent. Higher education institutions need a competitive advantage to attract and keep the best personnel. Effective talent management strategies are one way to achieve this. Other management literature acknowledges the shortage of research on talent management concerning higher education. Musakuro (2022:532) also observes that there is scant research on talent management in higher education, which suggests that only a few institutions adopt formal developmental programmes and rely on chance rather than a methodical and deliberate process to determine growth opportunities.

The reluctance of higher education to implement talent management was demonstrated by their slow adoption of corporate management practices in the past. Even if many institutions still need to invest in their people formally, the business sector still recognises the value universities offer their employees. Institutions limit the advantages of such services to internal employees, while providing training and development services to external entities. The relevance of employing talent management as a commonly employed technique in companies and industries has been made clear by a profusion of literature from different management publications (Rinaldhy, 2021:4). In South African higher education, this study suggests including talent management in the development plans for new academics. The researcher has looked at various academic works and determined the significance of including talent management in an organisation's strategy.

2.2.5.2 *The reason talent management is essential in higher education*

It is crucial to note that any university operates based on a strategic plan. Therefore, any development programme such as nGAP must discuss that strategic plan. It becomes harmful for the university to lose highly skilled talent without a plan to replace

it with well-trained talent. The current cohort of nGAP academics came up due to a need to train a new talent of academics.

Higher education in South Africa needs to attract new academic talent and retain them to ensure that the visions and missions of the universities are attained (Ng'ethe et al., 2012:106). Furthermore, having a developed and skilled young academic workforce does not only contribute to economic growth but also the decrease in poverty (Kawar, 2011:4). The higher education system in South Africa has faced numerous challenges, such as the departure of experienced academics seeking better opportunities, limitations on self-development, and inadequate recognition of academic staff's good performance (Musakuro & De Klerk, 2021:2). However, the nGAP programme has come at a perfect time to train new academics who can help address the problems caused by these challenges. The inclusion of young Black female academics means they now have a crucial role to play. Most Black female academics face obstacles due to racial issues in universities (Zulu, 2021:240). In the following discussion, I explore the role of talent management in addressing the nGAP issue.

2.2.6 Academic development programme underpinned by talent management

Proactively incorporating these into a policy to retain talent is critical to maintaining the knowledge economy in South African higher education. These initiatives involve recruiting and keeping academic personnel who are competent, capable, and experienced. Attracting and retaining talented early-career academics require the university leadership to focus on investing resources into managing talent in Black female academics (Kissoonduth, 2017:4). It is crucial to highlight the importance of attracting and retaining young academics. Institutional deficiencies, including insufficient mentorship, inadequate funding for research and state support, non-competitive research incentives, and lack of employment equity initiatives, can adversely affect the retention of early-career academics (Lesenyeho et al., 2018:4). According to numerous sources, many South African HEIs require assistance in luring and keeping talented young academics. It is essential to attract and retain young academics and provide opportunities for talent development. Success can be attained by exposing individuals to challenging experiences and providing them with coaching and mentoring to foster growth and development. Phillips and Edwards (cited in

Mukweyi, 2016:8) assert that when organisations develop their people's talent, the overall talent pool increases and the war for talent decreases. In order to meet these developmental goals, HEIs are in charge of assisting academics in the beginning stages of their careers to thrive towards meeting their developmental goals. Adi (2012:339) states that implementing particular strategies to meet developmental goals is not only about nurturing and guiding early career academics and the ability to retain them in their roles, but also understanding, managing and developing their talent in the best possible way. As part of the development process, a transparent and understandable performance management system must be established to guarantee fairness and effectiveness (Masenya et al., 2018:113). As a result, it must entail outlining the criteria for promotions and applying them consistently.

According to Gordon (2019:8), giving mentorship, regular feedback, and training opportunities for teaching, research, and community services can also be a great help. The nGAP lecturers have constantly raised the issue of heavy workload. In response to this issue, Bartlett et al. (2021:2-8) present rules to empower early career academics to act in improving their well-being, while also providing a call to action for institutions to increase mechanisms of support for early career academics so they can thrive and move forward in their careers. These rules include the following:

- (1) Long hours do not equal productive hours;
- (2) Examine your options for flexible work practices;
- (3) Set boundaries to establish your workplace and time;
- (4) Commit to strategies that increase your efficiency and productivity (these strategies include managing your time, minimising decision fatigue, collaboration, do not overcommit, discovering your own strategies);
- (5) Have a long-term strategy to help with prioritisation, and review it regularly;
- (6) Make your health a priority;
- (7) Regularly interact with family and friends;
- (8) Make time for volunteer work or similar commitments that are important and meaningful to you;
- (9) Seek out or help create peer and institutional support system; and,

(10) Open a dialogue about the importance of work-life balance and advocate for systemic change.

Academic development programmes are deemed to cause fatigue among early career academics when having heavy scheduling during their academic training (Yangdon et al., 2021:419) However, the above rules encourage them to prioritise health and well-being to become more productive.

Moosa (2020:73) emphasises the importance of comprehending the implementation of higher education development programmes to ensure fairness and effectiveness in attracting and retaining early-career academics.

2.2.6.1 *Understanding the concept of academic development programme in South Africa's higher education*

Academic development programmes are a new concept in South African universities. Academic programmes offer support for teaching, research, and social engagement to academic staff. According to Johannes et al. (2019:144), these opportunities are great for new members to enhance their leadership abilities and build a brighter future for themselves. However, to ensure that the programme is effective, a systematic scholarly approach should be used to evaluate eligibility and application (Snyder, 2019:334). Using theory-informed evaluation as a tool can help measure the impact of mentor-mentee collaboration on professional development (CHE, 2017:17). Without a practical framework and evaluation mechanism, these programmes may face discrepancies in accountability (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015:63). Universities that adopt academic development programmes should prioritize effective execution and evaluation to develop future leaders. Several successful organizations integrate the principles of talent management into their strategy, which supports the argument that the nGAP should adopt it to empower its recruits. Talent management aims to develop employees' skills through training, mentoring, and coaching. The nGAP initiative shares the same talent management objectives, focusing on training, mentoring, and coaching as crucial aspects of the development process. The training and mentoring of nGAP recruits are for them to become better academics and contribute to the knowledge economy that the country desperately sought.

2.2.6.2 *Demands versus benefits of recruiting young academics*

South African universities face the challenge of high demand for young academic staff, and the importance of systematic talent management has become increasingly significant in the rapid technological change of the 21st century and the difficulty of acquiring talents that can contribute to organisational strategy effectively. Hence, according to McDonnell (2011:170), talent management will continue to be a significant challenge for organisations in the next few decades. To gain a competitive advantage, universities adopting the nGAP need to attract and retain talented academic staff, which could benefit the country economically. The nGAP may also help reduce poverty and address the shortage of skills. Neglecting the management of academic staff can have severe consequences for an institution's hiring, training, and development of new employees (Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013:245). Therefore, it is essential to equip the remaining academics to continue spearheading the university's vision and mission. Organisations using employee development programmes are getting positive results, which may benefit both the individual and the organisation. Incorporating talent management into nGAP can also be beneficial in higher education. The diagram below shows the importance of developing talented employees in an organisation.

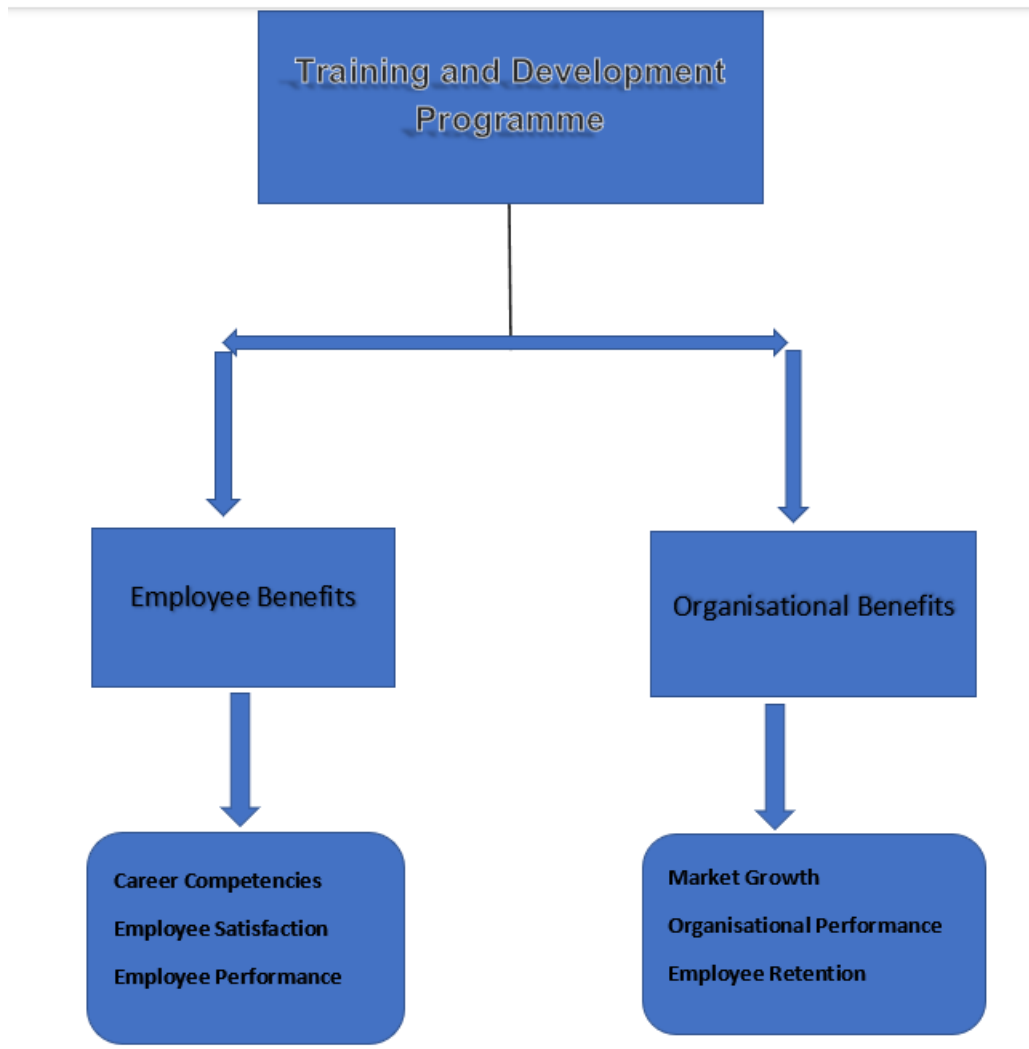


Figure 2.2: Importance of developing talented employees (Adapted from Jehanzeb & Bashir, 2013:246-247)

A) Employee benefit

- *Career competencies*

Career competencies are critical for the progression of academic careers, especially for early career academics, as they influence the availability of academic talent. However, some strategies must be put in place to ensure that the development and sustainability of national priorities are recognised across the board (Barnes et al., 2021:5). Additionally, there is a great deal of pressure on South Africa's higher education system to teach and develop its academic staff in order for them to comply with the objectives outlined in the National Development Plan (2030) (Republic of

South Africa [RSA], National Planning Commission [NPC], 2013:319). The number, makeup, and capacity of the sector's academic personnel present serious issues, according to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2019). The DHET acknowledges that having sufficient and capable academics at all university levels is essential to accomplishing the country's higher education goals (DHET, 2019). The success and effectiveness of academic professionals in their careers will play a crucial role in addressing the challenges of workforce ageing and the transformation agenda. The higher education sector currently needs more professors, which makes it essential to sustain growth by replacing them at the necessary rates. It will help the advancements in higher education that call for academics to have higher levels of knowledge (Subbaye, 2018:246). Additionally, training and development are essential for academics in their early careers since they help them improve the technical and soft skills needed for their employment (Bashir & Jehanzeb, 2013:246).

- *Employee satisfaction*

If an organisation does not value its employees, Bashir and Jehanzeb (2013:246) contend that it loses all purpose. Bashir and Jehanzeb further state that caring organisations add value by investing in their workforces. Taking care of ECAs may bring crucial advantages, including increased confidence and a sense of belonging. Early career academics (ECAs) have been facing several challenges for a long time, including extensive workloads, extended work hours, and stressful work environments in a culture that emphasises close monitoring (Acker & Webber, 2017:542). According to Monk and McKay (2017:228), this may have caused low confidence in the ECAs' ability to develop an academic identity and a sense of agency within their role. However, ECAs gain more confidence if they have the necessary tools to improve their self-awareness and self-control. According to Dore and Richards (2021:10), there are several strategies to equip ECAs with the skills necessary to boost their confidence in all aspects of their roles, such as providing evidence-based training on confidence-building specifically for ECAs.

- *Employee performance*

This process involves identifying the differences between the current talent pool and the required skill set to achieve business success. Talent management is also about placing the right people in the correct positions, a crucial aspect of the process. Developing and retaining talented employees within the organization is achieved by recognizing their potential and providing training and growth opportunities. Wright and Boswell (2015:248) define talent management as a business-oriented approach that ensures that the right individuals are available at the right time to fill the appropriate positions, based on institutional goals.

According to Osibanjo, Oyewunmi and Ojo (2014:68), an organization's career development involves continuously enriching HR practices in alignment with the needs of both employees and the organization. Tang, Wang and Xiao (2015:107) note that providing career growth and training opportunities can benefit both enterprises and employees. Lyria, Namusonge and Karanja (2017:33) also state that career management can enhance organizational performance. This section focuses on equipping early-career academics with the necessary skills to perform well during the nGAP training at the highest level. Early-career academics include post-doctoral fellows, junior lecturers, or doctorate students with teaching and research responsibilities (Matthews et al., 2014:113). Their progression from "emerging" professionals to "distinguished" academics involves various levels of performance depending on their development stage (Cameron & Woods, 2016:185). To collaborate and communicate effectively with other academics, managers, and students, ECAs must possess high emotional intelligence (EI) (Kannaiah & Shanthi, 2015:148). The proficiency and abilities of a company's staff have become more critical for its competitiveness, advancement, and achievement. However, researchers have found that ECAs from historically under-resourced Black universities receive less support than those from historically advantaged White institutions. Marembo, Chinyamurindi and Mjoli (2018:407) argue that high emotional intelligence is essential for functioning efficiently in a historically disadvantaged university. Nonetheless, the literature suggests that formal and scheduled training is necessary for ECAs because informal

and unscheduled training can lead to workflow issues and poor performance (Singh & Mohanty, 2012:81).

B) Organisational benefit

Developing employees through training within an organization can improve their productivity and performance. Singh and Mohanty (2012:75) suggest that universities should implement a "relationship cycle" to improve the performance and productivity of early career academics. This cycle involves equipping employees with the necessary skills, promoting positive attitudes towards their roles, and providing knowledge through experienced mentors. By doing so, employees can gain innovation and creativity towards their roles.

- *Market growth*

For any university to remain competitive, it is crucial to establish a learning environment that enhances the knowledge and competitiveness of its academic workforce. To achieve this, universities can implement talent development strategies that provide training and career development opportunities. These HR strategies are essential in today's highly competitive labour market and dynamic business environment. Singh and Mohanty (2012:76) note that formal and structured training and development programmes improve the quality of employees. The programmes, such as the nGAP, are a vital initiative to provide mentoring exercises that equip early-career academics with the necessary skills to excel in teaching and research. Therefore, continuous training and development are necessary for universities to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage. Comprehensive training and development for ECAs enable higher education institutions to establish and maintain this competitive edge. Singh and Mohanty (2012:77) assert that development programmes aligned with employees and organizational goals, consistent with the business strategy, will deliver a competitive advantage. Additionally, career development plays a crucial role in promoting organizational sustainability. Therefore, talent development programmes should enhance all employees' talents and capabilities to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage.

- *Organisational performance*

According to Hilman and Abubakar (2017:35), higher learning institutions comprise a team of intellectuals and human resources who serve students. Research-based education in universities and other higher institutions has proved to be strategically important, especially in areas close to the world technology frontier (Aghion et al., 2010:28). Higher education also contributes to economic growth, according to Khattak (2012:146), who recommends nations and governments prioritize education in public policies. Higher education institutions develop highly skilled labour, making their performance crucial in national economic development (Saint, 2015:110). As a result, universities are now under pressure to operate like businesses and treat students as customers. University management is striving to provide maximum satisfaction to all stakeholders (Hilman & Abubakar, 2017:37). Collaboration and effective leadership are factors that can contribute to university performance (Ahmed, 2015:125; Touama, 2014:66; Breakwell & Tythereigh, 2010:494). Incorporating strategic talent management into the nGAP training can help improve South Africa's higher education performance.

- *Employee retention*

According to Lenyehelo (2017:6), employee retention is a process whereby employees are encouraged to remain with the organisation for the maximum period or until the completion of a project.

Different literature mentions that many South African higher education institutions still need to improve their ability to attract quality talent from young academics (Kunene, 2019:7). The nGAP initiative aims to support the growth and development of early-career academics by providing rigorous mentoring processes. Even though the nGAP initiative has no uniform processes from different interviewed participants, its intentions to give South Africa's higher education a competitive advantage are still ideal. Finding ECAs has proven difficult for South Africa's higher education (Bazana et al., 2018:2). South African universities require a new generation of young academics since the older-generation academics are becoming fewer and fewer. Higher education faces significant challenges as it competes with the industry to retain young,

skilled, talented academics. Unfortunately, many young academics are leaving higher education due to more attractive compensation opportunities elsewhere (Chaacha and Botha, 2021:2). Therefore, the talent retention of early career academics is an important matter that needs full attention, as many experienced academics ponder various opportunities to pursue greener pastures overseas and even retire from teaching (Makondo, 2014:170). While the nGAP aims to address career development for ECAs, the government must establish a funding model to encourage more young academics to pursue academic careers. Black female academics who are young deserve more opportunities in the nGAP. Discriminatory practices in the past led to their unfair exclusion from developmental programmes (Hemson and Singh, 2010:934). Because of the lack of talent management in South Africa's higher education, many academics leave due to poor leadership and the lack of direction from management (Hundera, 2014:58).

2.2.7 Talent management theoretical framework

Organisations recognise that people are a crucial aspect of their survival and success, which led to the creation of talent management as a framework to deal with this process (Abdul-Kareem, 2016:98). Talent management refers to an organisation's steps to recruit, develop, and retain its top talent. These steps should be creative and avoid bureaucracy. They involve attracting, retaining, motivating, developing and succession planning for individuals with the aptitude and abilities to meet not only current needs but also future organisational requirements (Nel et al., 2011:6). Talent management recognises a person's unique skills, traits, and personality, and matches them to a suitable job. The Human Resource Department places candidates with prudence and caution, to avoid hiring the wrong fit, which results in further hiring, re-training, and wasteful activities (Mathe, 2011:46). Talent management benefits both the organisation and its employees. The organization benefits from:

- Increased productivity and capability (Ngui, 2021:376);
- A better linkage between individual efforts and business goals (Kheirandish, 2014:125); and,

- Valued committed employees, reduced turnover, improved bench strength, and better alignment between job roles and skills (Lee et al., 2020:2).

Employees benefit from higher motivation and commitment, career development, increased knowledge about and contribution to company goals, sustained motivation, and job satisfaction.

Academic research on talent management requires a theoretical framework. This framework should aid universities in effectively implementing talent management strategies for recruiting nGAP academics. The study uses an adapted Hudson Research and Consulting model for talent acquisition, assessment, development, and deployment.

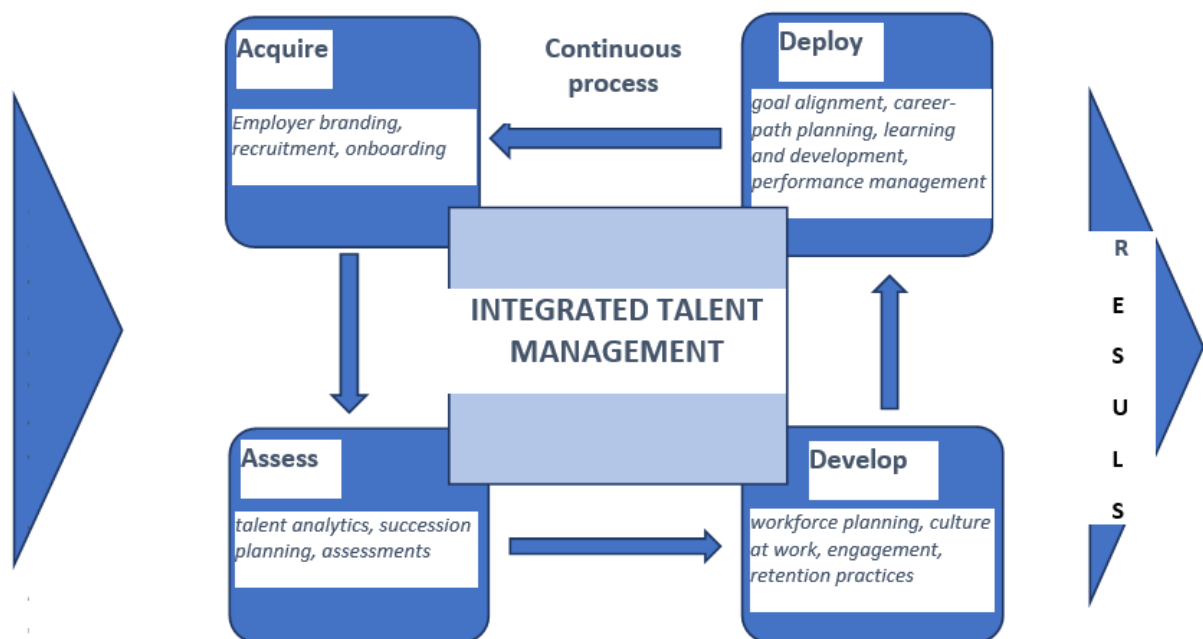


Figure 2.3: An adapted model of talent management

Adapted from: Hudson Research and Consultation

According to Marrybeth, Brackz, Hadson and Zlong (2019:251), having the right employees can lead to their satisfaction. However, talent management involves many practices and requires a deliberate approach (Campbell & Hirsh, 2013:10). The approach mentioned sparks conversations regarding where the organization is

headed in the future (Mtshali, 2014:28). The theoretical framework for this study is structured around four essential principles as follows:

2.2.7.1 *Acquire*

One of the most essential steps for any organisation is putting the right people in the correct positions to achieve the organisation's goals. Musakuro (2022:3) states that acquiring talent is vital to talent management, which involves attracting, recruiting, selecting, and employing talent as categories. There are also sub-categories involved, like employer branding, recruitment, and onboarding (Mohammed, 2018:44). Organisations often use the employee value proposition (EVP) to attract talent, a set of benefits and rewards that encourage people to consider working for the organisation and persuade current employees to stay. According to Bagieńska (2018:370), EVP is a critical component of employer branding. It is a collection of attributes perceived as valuable in the organisation or outside. These are why people decide to take a new job or remain with their present employer (Ober, 2016:350). Bagieńska (2018:370) further states that a compelling and realised EVP could attract new employees, thus increasing their interest in the employer; that is employer branding. Employer branding is a process focused on building the image of an employer whose aim is, among other things, to hire and keep employees with given skills, experience and knowledge coming to the company's expectations.

Furthermore, organisations aim to be great workplaces and the most attractive employer (Bagieńska, 2016:345). CIPD (2017) defines the employer brand as "the way in which organisations differentiate themselves in the labour market, enabling them to recruit, retain and engage the right people". In order to effectively attract and retain top talent, talent management experts such as Musakuro (2022:3) suggest that companies must create a unique Employee Value Proposition (EVP) that goes beyond just offering competitive compensation. This proposition includes implementing measures to retain high-performing employees and attract new ones to join the organisation. A critical aspect of talent acquisition is the recruitment process, which involves notifying potential job candidates of available vacancies and selecting the best fit for the position. The process of hiring new employees can be impacted by the requirements of workforce planning, as noted by Erasmus et al. in (2014:271). In order

to participate in the nGAP initiative, organisations must follow appropriate procedures to ensure that they select the most suitable candidates among early career academics. Furthermore, the nGAP training should create a simple self-assessment, which describes essential skills and experience needed for each early academic career in the institution.

2.2.7.2 Assess

According to Mathafena (2015:178), the hiring process should be comprehensive and consider not only the necessary skills and competencies for a job but also the fit with organisational culture and an individual's style. This process is vital to prevent job dissatisfaction and mismatches. Talent analytics, which involves analysing employee-related data, can help understand the patterns of new employees. Kaur and Fink (2017:1) explain that this approach is becoming more popular in different sectors of the economy as it improves hiring and talent management decisions regarding new employees. Conrad (2022) reports that human resources and talent management data analytics is rising and can provide insights into employee engagement, performance, retention, and attrition. Talent analytics can also help with hiring, employee retention, and recruitment. Furthermore, it can improve the employee experience, encompassing everything they feel and sense during their work experience, including the physical workspace and interactions with colleagues.

Talent analytics is complete once the knowledge of retiring employees is completely retrieved and transferred to new employees. According to Osigwelem (2017:11-12), promoting succession planning and providing training and mentoring programmes for young academics can effectively transfer knowledge within the university. A succession planning strategy develops talented young academics for leadership positions to allow the transfer of their expertise and knowledge among staff members. This talent management process can help early-career academics understand their essential capabilities and produce an effective climate that professionally empowers them to underpin, capture, and develop these talents into individual productivity (Sparrow & Makram, 2015:250). Therefore, talent management is essential to inform the selection of high-performance early-career academics to be part of the development process.

2.2.7.3 *Develop*

Organisations must develop talented employees in a competitive business environment so as to increase productivity quickly (Malmgren et al., 2016:10). Therefore, developing talent should be integrated into the staffing process and considered a successful strategy for improving the skills of highly qualified staff members. The development of talent within higher education also assists in retaining talented early-career academics, which is beneficial for increasing its ranking and profits. The abilities of top-performing academics are closely linked to university rankings. These skilled individuals play a vital role in a university's success by attracting new students, providing excellent teaching, engaging in advanced research, and securing funding for research. All of these factors are influenced by the calibre of the university's workforce (Bradley, 2016:15). As a strategic imperative, talent management is premised on attracting the right talent and providing them with potential contributions via strategic workforce planning and high-quality development experiences that build the organisation's capabilities. Having identified talent to be part of the development is not enough. However, it is also a strategic function for identifying talent gaps and managing succession planning, along with attracting, selecting, motivating, developing, and maintaining highly qualified individuals (Cerdin & Brewster, 2014:31). The literature on institutional culture acknowledges the importance of viewing the culture of higher education with the understanding that any attempt to appreciate the processes within the system must have an advanced comprehension of the culture of higher education (Callaghan, 2015:2). Maguad (2018:230) also asserts that the higher education institutional cultures have always been regarded as resistant to change, which hampers the engagement of its workforce.

Furthermore, Campbell and Hirsh (2013:21) state that being emotionally and rationally committed to an organisation result in the employees voluntarily putting in extra effort. According to Barne et al. (2021:9), when an organisation's chosen values align with the personal values of its employees, it leads to a more significant impact on engagement and individual effectiveness. In other words, when employees feel that the organisation's values align with their own, they are more motivated to put in effort

and energy at work. However, if an organisation fails to value its employees, they may seek employment elsewhere. A healthy working environment is crucial in retaining talent, as it enables the containment of knowledge and wisdom. Mathafena (2015:157) supports this assumption.

2.2.7.4 *Deploy*

The literature states that the deployment process is a crucial strategic element in any organization (Rosemary & Brocke, 2015:128). According to Porter and Happelmann (2015:18), examining the deployment process's feasibility is essential as it helps organizations implement strategic plans more effectively. They further say that deploying talent is like building a car, where all the correct pieces must be assembled in the right places to create a complete product. Misalignment in goals and strategy of critical parts can hinder an organization's sustainable high performance (Tallon & Pinsonneault, 2011:480). It is crucial to ensure alignment between a university's strategy and its recruitment, development, retention, and reward of academic talent. Talent management can help identify and develop critical people in an organization, and its implementation at all levels of the university hierarchy can help deliver on strategic objectives (Bradley, 2016:18). However, there is a need to develop reliable and valid metrics to enable open and transparent implementation of talent management within the university sector. Managing talent in South African universities should take centre stage, especially in developing academic talent, by providing career growth opportunities leading to advancement towards senior management roles. Universities must constantly assess their educational performance to earn relevance and improve the quality of educational performance. Measuring and evaluating talent performance impact on overall business strategy and value add is also an essential practice (Aguinis, 2013:2-3). Early-career academics should be exposed to performance opportunities to recognize their path to success in the academic environment. Supporting employees' career goals and aspirations can increase their loyalty to the organization, leading to higher levels of commitment.

2.2.7.5 Results

Having discussed the importance of breaking down each element of the proposed integrated framework of talent management, it became evident that a shortage of academic talent, especially young Black academics, poses an obstacle that hinders the implementation of successful strategies in universities. Incorporating talent management into developing nGAP's lecturer programmes can yield positive outcomes, especially when utilizing the best practices of talent management.

The importance of incorporating talent management in the development of early academic academics is to bring about high academic performance, as has been alluded to above.

Talent management is an integrated framework encompassing all necessary vital elements that can benefit the nGAP academics during mentoring (Musakuro, 2018:37). It is a continuous, inclusive process. This framework encourages the process of mentoring to address the mentor/mentee relationship more holistically.

Sheokand and Verma (2014) argue that talent management is the key to preparing future leaders. A similar trend is occurring in higher education, especially in faculty development and retention (Bradley, 2016:13). While talent management is significant for its positive impact on organizations, it does not exist in a vacuum. Talent management must align with a company's strategy, performance, and management. Organizations are shifting from generating profit to creating employee value through talent management. According to Robyn and du Preez (2013:1), organizations should take a strategic approach to acquire an interest in people rather than concentrating only on profitability. Support mechanisms for developing talent include talent attraction, development, and retention. Organizations gain a competitive advantage by placing people at the centre of training, and mentoring programmes (Dinolfo & Nugent, 2010:14). Finally, attraction, development, and retention of talent are essential for the growth and success of higher education institutions in the long term by engaging an institution's strategy with its highly qualified employees.

2.3 TALENT MANAGEMENT AS A BEST PRACTICE

Organisations can gain a competitive edge by prioritising talent. Therefore, focusing on talent can lead to numerous practical benefits for organisations. For example, talent assists in increasing rankings and profits as well as the performance and productivity management of higher education organisations (Hazelkorn, 2017:6). Furthermore, Musakuro (2022:532) affirms that South Africa's higher education is facing a severe problem until it incorporates talent management to mitigate the shortage of trained young academics to fill the gaps left by the retiring generation. Masakuro says that the talent management system must receive much attention in higher education so that there is no lack of high figures from young academics entering academia. As has been revealed in the literature, there are poor talent management practices in South Africa's higher education. Therefore, there is a need to investigate critical business processes associated with talent management in SA HEIs to address gaps created by retiring employees and recruit high-potential individuals. The literature states that the best practices of talent management in higher education maximise the talent of individuals and institutions for personal, institutional, and economic goals and stakeholder benefit (Aina & Atan, 2020:2). To promote sustainable performance in higher education, it is recommended to follow these best practices of talent management:

- Leveraging talent;
- Caring for talent;
- Talent coaching;
- Creating talent;
- Calibrating for talent; and.
- Cultivating talent.

These practices work in synergy to ensure maximum availability, optimal leverage, and wellness of crucial talent. Many top organisations and institutions have implemented talent management practices. Below are the practices and how high-performing organisations use them for managing talent, which may also benefit the nGAP process, as shown in Figure 3 and as adapted from Omotunde and Alegbeleye (2021:2).

The leading practice approach identifies and maximises individual and organisational talent for personal, organisational, investor, and stakeholder benefit. Practices such as these are key performance areas. They ensure talent's maximum availability, optimal productivity, and well-being.



Figure 2.4: Talent management practices: Adapted from Omotunde and Alegbeleye (2021:2)

- **Leveraging talent**

To successfully achieve an organisation's strategic goals and objectives, effectively deploying and engaging employees' skills is essential. According to Eneh and Awara (2016:34), South Africa's higher education institutions must use talent management processes to prepare early-career academics entering academia. According to Brown et al. (2019:34), higher education institutions must utilise talent through project and performance management to achieve success. Furthermore, the talents of early-career academics must be utilised and connected to accelerate economic growth and workflow in higher education. In order to achieve higher rankings, academic professionals must utilise their research, teaching, and community engagement skills to solve problems and harness the country's total economic potential. Brown et al. (2018:35) emphasise that involving employees in determining talent requirements is vital and can be influenced by strategic intent and market dynamics. Employers should evaluate the impact of talent programmes on the organisation's vision, mission, and goals to determine their effectiveness. Lesenyo, Barkhuize, and Schutte (2018:2) suggest that engaging talent leads to ownership and high participation, which can be achieved by involving individuals in tasks or projects to promote accountability and creativity. *Effective talent management* is a core strategic goal that can positively impact an organisation's success.

- **Talent caring**

Talent management involves rewarding employees. When employers focus on their employees' wellness, particularly potent employees with various bits of intelligence, they engage employees and increase productivity. Developing well-designed achiever wellness programmes will ensure that star performers remain healthy, inspired, and engaged. In addition to correct nutrition, physical, emotional, and spiritual exercise must be promoted to maintain health. The essential practices of wellness coaching must be covered.

Talent management processes in caring for talent in higher education include coaching and mentoring early-career academics in teaching and research. Caring for talent in higher education is to invest in the development of early career academics as a

focused and differentiated strategy, which has far-reaching consequences and implications for South African higher education institutions and the development and sustainability of national priorities (Barnes et al., 2021:4)

Monitoring talent management involves measuring employee engagement. The engagement between an employee and an employer defines their relationship. In addition to emotional satisfaction, the importance of the job determines engagement, clear expectations, opportunities for learning and career development, regular feedback, and enjoyable working relationships with colleagues and managers (Barnes et al., 2021:5). Employees who are engaged contribute discretionary effort to projects.

Aon's (2015:13) study provided the following three categories of employee engagement levels:

1. There are two types of engaged employees: highly engaged and moderately engaged. Highly engaged employees provide more value to the organisation than their moderately engaged counterparts.
2. Employees who are disengaged or passive may feel uncertain about their jobs and employers, and their responses can be positive or negative. Proper management can increase engagement, while ineffective management could lead to complete disengagement.
3. Actively disengaged employees do not strive to go the extra mile, do not see a long-term path, or say positive things about the organisation. Almost two out of ten employees in an organisation are actively disengaged.

Organisations should encourage talent to flourish by offering employees the necessary resources and guidance to perform their jobs effectively and evaluate their roles. In order to effectively manage talent, Nikolic, Peric and Bovan (2020:5) emphasise the importance of regular mentoring and coaching to staff. It is essential that employees feel their opinions are valued when making decisions.

Furthermore, Mamula, Peric and Bovan (2020:4) suggest that informing employees of their significance as sources of knowledge, learning, inspiration, and moral and financial support is essential. The key to retaining employees is nurturing solid relationships between managers and employees. Retention must be approached proactively, with an understanding that each employee has unique needs, motivations,

and requirements. Addressing potential issues early on is crucial to prevent them from becoming major problems that cause disengagement and discomfort.

- **Talent coaching**

Coaching aims to introduce new employees to the actualities of organizational cultures, competition, and the potential challenges they could encounter in their careers. Supporting employees in mastering their profession is essential to ensure career advancement, meaningfulness, and competence. Coaching is a crucial component where individuals learn through workplace experience, develop specialized skills, and are empowered to do their work. The approach prioritizes talent management by inspiring managers and coaches to cultivate talent proactively. Mathafena (2015: 182) emphasizes that talent management should be treated as a deliberate professional craft to liberate and maximize a person's potential, empowering them to develop skills and virtues that nourish personal interests, fulfilment, and emotion.

Many higher education institutions (HEIs) have recognized the importance of offering mentoring support to early career academics (ECAs) to prepare them for the demands of their profession and meet society's expectations. While there are various methods to support ECAs, mentoring has been identified as a valuable way to facilitate their career development. Mentoring involves experienced colleagues, known as mentors, providing emotional and career support to their mentees to help them learn and grow professionally. Research has shown that effective mentorship is crucial for ECAs to achieve professional success, increase their self-confidence (Schriever & Grainger, 2019:721), and foster a sense of community among teaching professionals (Simmonds & Dicks, 2018:287).

The organization creates an environment that attracts talent, providing opportunities for self-actualization and nurturing talent through education, training, and development. Identifying talent for critical roles requires a rigorous, systematic, and responsive talent calibration process. The action-learning process can speed development through team connections, collaborations, and successful projects. Developing talent can be achieved through various methods, such as mentoring, coaching, and performance management. Involving talent in strategic initiatives, goals,

and objectives and holding them accountable for delivering business results is vital. Consistently recognizing and rewarding success and good performance is also crucial.

Research has proven that academic achievement is closely related to teaching, research, and community participation. When evaluating one's research performance, several factors are considered, such as research quality, productivity, output, and the capability to obtain competitive grant funding (Owusu-Agyeman, 2022:80). While student ratings of teaching are essential, the consensus is that successful academics are those who are productive researchers with established networks, a growing reputation in their field, and a track record of winning research grants. Moreover, successful academics are good colleagues with a strong sense of self-efficacy. They prioritize personal satisfaction, balance, productivity, and collegiality to achieve success.

- **Creating talent**

Developing top talent for organisations involves identifying potential, offering education, and training, and rewarding success. Skilled and competitive personnel is critical for generating revenue and gaining a competitive advantage. According to Rahimli (2012:37), a knowledge-based approach recognises knowledge as the most significant strategic resource for a company, as it can provide possible competitive advantages. To meet current and future human capital needs, companies must analyse their business growth plans and offer internal leadership, graduate development programmes, and bursaries to attract future talent (van Zyl, Mathafena & Ras, 2016:17).

Organisations like universities need to establish an appealing employment brand to attract the best employees and consider why individuals want to work for them. Receiving recognition for being the best workplace can enhance their public image. For universities, brand image is critical.

A successful academic career can present challenges, from career preparation to doctoral studies.

- **Calibrating talent**

Organizations need to assess the quality and quantity of their talent. To achieve this, they must establish talent specifications using an instrument. This tool ensures that employees' skills and abilities are in line with the company's requirements in a consistent way. Talent specifications include abilities, passions, interests, experience, and survival skills (Omotayo, 2015:4).

Developing and updating talent databases is crucial. Talent profiles are databases containing information about a person's abilities, experience, knowledge, and skills (Handel, 2012:7). Having this information is essential when job vacancies require filling.

Bureaucratic work allocation can negatively affect talent (Musakuro & De Klerk, 2021:6). Organizations need to assign their top talents to the most significant tasks. They should be creative when choosing assignments, teams, and jobs to achieve this. Performance calibration in higher education is critical. It is a two-step process that includes mentors responsible for the performance evaluations and the reviewer who examines the early career academics evaluations. The calibration process provides a forum for discussion of young academic performance to ensure mentors apply similar standards for all early career academics and eliminate biases to the greatest extent possible.

- **Talent cultivation**

Developing effective leadership involves nurturing managers and leaders to become mentors who can empower employees. A similar process applies when developing early-career academics to aspire for senior academic positions. Brave leaders trust their team members with new initiatives and allow them to take responsibility for their projects (Lesenyeho et al., 2018:8). To prevent boredom and generate enthusiasm, assigning tasks that match their abilities and provide a challenge is essential. Coaching, advising, and mentoring are crucial components of leadership and management that help to develop positive behaviours and mindsets.

In talent cultivation, accountability is essential, and managers must be held responsible for their employees' development, knowledge sharing, collaboration, and

informed hiring decisions. Executives are responsible for building robust talent pools, developing bench strength, and ensuring the availability of capable employees for assignments. By prioritizing accountability, talent management becomes more effective, resulting in a more robust workforce.

During times of complexity, career management and progression in higher education are crucial, especially in engaging and cultivating key talent. According to Szelągowska-Rudzka (2018:212), a university's success relies on several factors, including the academic profession, career advancement, satisfaction, dedication, and drive to improve the quality of education and research.

2.4 TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY LANDSCAPE

It is essential to highlight the efforts the democratic government introduced after 1994 to bring about differences in higher education. Incorporating a strategic management framework into plans to enhance literary production in the current era would be beneficial (Bryson et al., 2018:332). This incorporation would enable new academics to receive practical training without worrying about any knowledge gap caused by older academics. After observing the challenges faced by early-career academics in their professional development, the researcher carefully selected the TM framework for this study. According to Musakuro (2018:53), a talent management framework in higher education would allow universities to use more entrenched methods to attract and retain young academics.

The study considers the importance of staying within the proposed framework to ensure clarity among selected participants. Emerging trends relating to the discipline of talent management have presented unique sets of challenges and opportunities even for nGAP academics. Theron et al. (2014:4) state that there is a growing demand for academic staff in higher education institutions, and the economic outlook predicts a further increase in the global. Therefore, having mentors to help nGAP lecturers to excel in teaching, research, and social engagement is a talent management prerogative that this study seeks to achieve (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011:64). All elements of talent management have been discussed in this chapter to clarify its role concerning the higher education. Mentoring aims to improve and nurture newly

appointed lecturers, also known as nGAP lecturers, through continuous guidance and assistance from experienced mentors. This process involves senior academics providing support and advice to inexperienced academic mentees, as stated by Warnich et al. (2015: 355). This study advocates for a rigorous involvement of mentoring process in higher education for inexperienced academics.

In order to fully grasp the role of talent management in developing early career academics, Mathafena (2015:154) examines several vital aspects. She argues that proactive employers must provide clear career paths, competitive compensation, safe working environments, and opportunities for growth and development. Engaging employees is crucial, especially when combined with formal mentoring (Fountain, 2018:1), as employee engagement is essential for attracting, retaining, and developing talent (Mathafena, 2015:155). Creating an enabling environment is necessary for establishing these foundational building blocks. A company's organizational culture should foster an environment where all employees can flourish, as Morcos (2018:1) argues. The author identifies organizational culture is integral to talent management strategy in highly successful organizations. However, making these aspects effective and meaningful requires a well-designed business strategy, as Fapohun (2014:4-7) explains. A successful talent management strategy can offer numerous benefits to a company, including increased revenue, improved innovation, productivity, quality, and customer satisfaction. By aligning talent management with business strategies, companies can help their employees reach their full potential.

Mathafena (2015:155) points out that individuals with solid skills and deep knowledge are in high demand. In today's multigenerational workplace, where millennials are quickly becoming the majority (Doyle, 2017:17), talent management must be in sync with business strategy. However, Black women remain a minority in the private and public sectors. Black women in academia also have fewer opportunities than men. Sheokand and Verma (2014:11) note that the baby-boomer generation is retiring, making it harder to recruit skilled workers. Universities face similar challenges as the private sector, with a shortage of young-talent academics, particularly young Black women, due to trends such as increased mobility of academics and retirement of the baby-boom generation (van den Brink, Fruytier & Thunnissen, 2013:180-181). This study aims to identify the necessary modifications to increase demand for skilled nGAP black female academics in South Africa. The following section will focus on

understanding other aspects of talent management. This section examines the application of talent management in developing black female early career academics.

2.4.1 Developing young black female academics

Universities must go beyond merely accepting academics based on equity and instead implement career development programmes to cultivate a competitive edge. According to Kanyumba and Lourens (2022:398), these programmes are institutional strategies aimed at building the capacity of university academics to adapt to the constant changes in the sector. The literature also highlights the benefits and importance of career development programmes in talent management, particularly for black female academics. Studies indicate that implementing black female-only programmes can empower and equip black women with the necessary skills (Tessens et al., 2011:656; Parker et al., 2018:11). However, the literature notes that career development programmes in South Africa have little impact due to the lack of follow-up sessions and opportunities for black female academics to share and reflect on their experiences (Isabirwe & Kakoe, 2018:4; Chitsamatanga & Shumba, 2018:79).

Research has demonstrated the significant impact of mentoring on the growth of black female academics (Collins et al., 2014:92). According to Collins et al., mentoring programmes offer encouragement and a chance for participants to consider academic career options and decision-making. The mentoring literature now includes viewpoints from early-career academics on career advancement, which complements the perspectives of academic managers and developers. Collins et al. also highlight that mentoring enhances professional competency and transforms participants' self-perception (Collins et al., 2014:95).

Kanyumba and Lourens (2022:398) created the career development concept to focus on the professional growth of black female academics, specifically emphasising South African cultures.

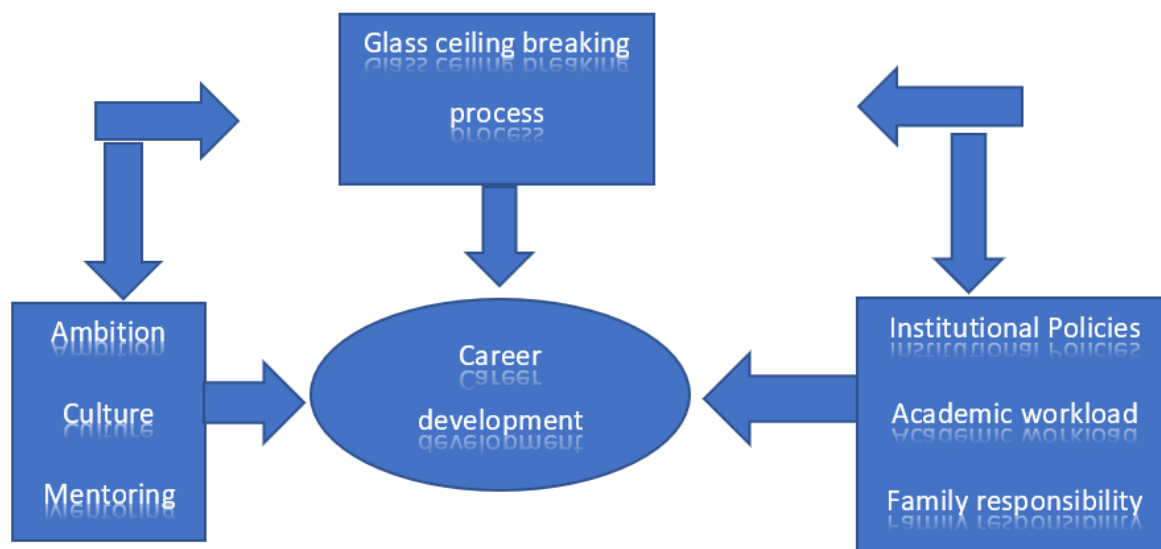


Figure 2.5: Career development conceptual model

Source: Kanyumba and Lourens (2022:398)

The above model shows that there are many factors, both internal and external, that influence the career development of black women in academia. Black women in South Africa face obstacles to their progress and require more excellent representation in leadership roles in higher education. While there has been some progress in the past decade, the percentage of black female leaders still needs to be higher. It is essential to support the development of black female academics, especially early career academics.

To facilitate black female career development in South Africa, ambition, culture, and mentoring are crucial factors. Individuals who lack ambition may face obstacles in their career development. Culture also plays a pivotal role in enhancing black female career development, although South African culture is less favourable to women than in other countries.

In today's challenging environment, universities must prioritize developing their programmes more than ever. As Madsen and Longman (2012:5) and Quinn (2012b:28) note, these programmes play a crucial role in shaping future leaders. By challenging lecturers' assumptions and providing them with new skills, development programmes can improve the quality of educational offerings and promote more

equitable outcomes for students, ultimately transforming higher education in South Africa.

Institutional cultures and structures often hinder the advancement of black women academics seeking leadership positions in their careers (Naicker, 2013:4). Mismanagement and inadequate mentoring of young academics can negatively impact developing countries like South Africa (Mokgojwa et al., 2017:1). To address the skills gap in universities, an integrated talent management model is the most effective tool, as demonstrated by Van der Waldt (2020:5). This model illustrates how talent management processes can benefit an organization and guide human resources policy decisions, management interventions, organizational systems, and behaviour necessary to achieve the overarching talent management objective (Millar, 2013:1; Tetik, 2017:4). It is, therefore, crucial to understand the impact of talent management models in managing and mentoring young academics, particularly Black females. As older academics retire, universities face pressure to attract a new generation of academics, especially black women. They must plan accordingly to address the gap created by academics seeking better opportunities (DHET, 2015:2). The recruitment of black female academics into development programmes within universities as early career academics must follow the talent management process.

- **How black female academics are attracted/acquired**

Lamont et al. (2014:2) state that men's qualities are generally considered more valuable than black women's. There is a common belief that men are generally more competent than women. Unfortunately, black women in academia are frequently viewed as less productive and less capable of attaining success in full-time, tenure-track roles. This means that black women are held to higher standards than men and have to deal with more scrutiny. Studies have shown that when men are assertive, it is seen as a positive trait, but when women exhibit the same behaviour, it is viewed as hostile and aggressive (Carli et al., 2016:251). The workplace has been challenging for women due to various forms of gender inequality. However, the nGAP selection process has made it easier for black women to be involved in academic development. The Department of Higher Education and Training has recognised the importance of

creating a balanced hiring process considering gender and racial disparities (DHET, 2022:65).

Talent attraction comprises several components, including recruitment and selection, employer branding, employee value proposition, and employer of choice, as indicated by Aina and Atan (2020:6). Organisations considered the best workplace often have excellent standards for managing talent and human resources (Flores-Araoz & Furphy, 2012:2). They focus on building their brand to attract different stakeholders and offer career development opportunities. These organisations' brand orientation is a magnet attracting different talents (Merrilees, 2017:1). Potential employees prefer to be associated with reputable organisations, and young academics consider better research or teaching opportunities when choosing universities (Selesho & Naile, 2014:301). The availability of better working conditions, job flexibility, recognition, practical employee training and development, and other factors may also appeal to young academics (Barkhuizen et al., 2020:2). However, male academics still dominate many South African universities, and few aspiring Black female academics exist. Encouraging aspiring black females to see universities as centres of attraction is a matter of creating opportunities. Professional support is available to ensure that career progression benefits everyone. Ensuring talent development is crucial for the success of new nGAP academics in their academic careers.

- **How black female academics are getting learning and development**

According to Remmik et al. (2011:187), the first few years of an academic career play a significant role in shaping a university lecturer's understanding of teaching and learning, personal values, and professional identity as a scholar. Studies on novice lecturers or early-career academics have shown that they experience support and isolation while adjusting to different communities. In higher education, managing the career paths of these early-career academics through talent management (TM) is crucial for success. However, the demand for such individuals exceeds the supply. Each person needs to receive guidance and support for a company to succeed and develop its strategic approach. Talent development is crucial in allowing individuals to thrive through coaching and mentoring tools. These tools should be implemented in South African universities to help the nGAP cohorts advance in their careers. Talent

development expands the talent pool and enhances skills, as noted by Mukweyi (2016:10). It includes talent audit and risk analysis tools to prepare for potential departures from the organization (Adi, 2012:341). Talent development ensures that individuals acquire and broaden their skills and competencies. Every university in South Africa with the nGAP programme should have talent development policies to track individuals' success profiles. In an academic setting, talent development leads to more research output, more staff with postgraduate qualifications, funding opportunities, and increased postgraduate supervision output (Singh, 2015:1). A talent development programme also fosters interest in leadership positions by allowing individuals to succeed in their current roles. Recognizing talent through rewards is also crucial.

- **How black female early career academics are assessed?**

Staff that is not motivated due to a lack of rewards is likely to have low self-esteem and be less productive. Recognition of efforts and dedicated work can increase individuals' engagement and motivation (Mukweyi, 2016:12). Performance evaluations recognize staff members. The incentives make employees feel valued, which may affect attraction and retention. This evaluation tool encourages staff productivity, which may also be helpful during the nGAP phase. There is a critical need for Black academics in South Africa, especially young Black female academics who can contribute to their discipline through publications on matters of national importance (Lesenyeho et al., 2017:3). Rewards enable the placement of talented individuals in suitable positions.

- **How black female early career academics are deployed and transitioned**

It is the responsibility of any organization to place personnel in the correct positions to enable them to perform at their peak. Through this dimension, recruits become familiar with an organization they are part of (Van Zyl, Mathafena & Ras, 2017:15). This view is not limited to the private sector. In addition, it may apply to emerging Black academics participating in the nGAP programme, which strongly influences the positive image of the institutions where they work. For new members to fully integrate

into this dimension, they must be paired with a mentor who will help them contribute to the organization (Johnson, 2011:450). The system facilitates the integration of new academic recruits with knowledge management skills, particularly those who possess them, to benefit those who require them as a competitive edge (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014:233). Mentoring creates a relationship based on collaboration between mentors and mentees. According to Paadi (2019:34), the mentor and mentee can enhance the learning process by applying textbook knowledge in practical situations at the workplace. It is essential to recognize how talent management can affect trainees and mentees as a tool for learning and development.

2.4.2 The impact of the talent management mechanism

Regarding managing talent, Mathafena (2015:195-196) has compared and contrasted various approaches from South Africa and around the world. Although there are some differences, these approaches share many similarities. As Ishiyama (2021:4) states, organizations must clearly define their business strategies and the necessary individual profiles to understand them fully.

One approach suggests that strategic talent management (STM) should only focus on specific employees, an idea known as exclusive implication. Talent management is a practice considered to be exclusive and normative. It aims to develop a select group of high-performing employees with high potential within the organization (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries & Gonzales-Cruz, 2013:290). However, Ishiyama (2021:1) points out that this one-sided approach is not the only way. An alternative to this approach is fully inclusive talent management (FITM), which views all employees as talented (Swales et al., 2014:6). This inclusive approach aligns with the objective of this study. By examining these approaches more closely, we can see distinct differences. The researcher clarifies STM and FITM to determine the preferred mechanism for this study. According to Veldsman (2011:359), there are several building blocks to strategic talent management. Mathafane (2015:175) explains these building blocks extensively, which could benefit the nGAP initiative. This programme aims to recruit and develop early career academics in higher education, and incorporating talent management could be helpful.

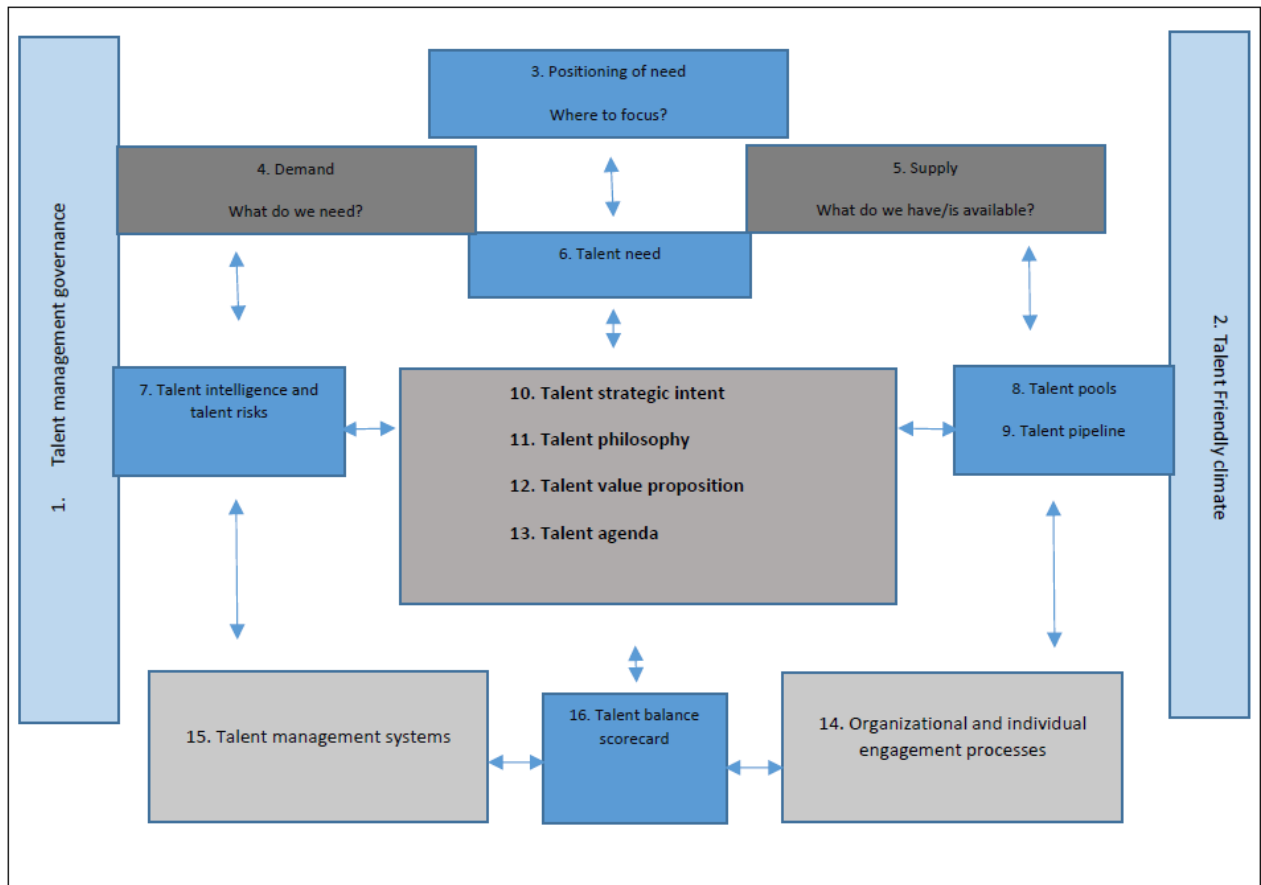


Figure 2.6: Strategic talent management building blocks

Source: Mathafena (2015:175)

According to Mathafena (2015:175), this approach offers a comprehensive view of strategic talent management by presenting a talent management landscape. Mathafena further states that the landscape contains three interconnected dimensions of strategic talent management: the strategy (what), the process (how), and the resulting plan from the strategy and process. The strategic talent management process helps achieve the desired outcome or goals. It results in a strategic talent plan that guides talent management, closely aligned with, and supportive of, the business strategy.

Mathafena (2015:175-176) more explicitly summarises Veldsman's strategic talent management building blocks.

Creating a framework for talent management governance is essential for overseeing the different components of talent management within an organisation. Establishing a talent-friendly culture is also crucial as it provides a shared understanding and

approach towards talent management. To make informed talent decisions, assessing the organisation's internal and external talent needs is essential. Managing different talent pools, such as succession and high-flyer pools, is also essential through an integrated talent pipeline. Developing a talent strategic plan, supported by a talent philosophy and value proposition, provides direction for talent management. Engaging and retaining the organisation and individuals is critical, as well as implementing fit-for-purpose talent management systems, such as succession planning and career pathing. Finally, tracking and monitoring talent management through a talent balance scorecard is necessary to ensure the alignment of all activities towards organisational success. All these building blocks are interconnected and necessary for effective talent management. The effectiveness of strategic talent management in an organisation determines whether talent management is inclusive or exclusive. The building blocks are essential in making this determination.

2.4.2.1 Exclusive talent management mechanism

Organisations often use talent pooling or headhunting as a standard strategy to find and hire top-performing employees for important positions (Minbaeva & Vardi, 2018:5). This method aims to attract individuals with great potential who can add significant value to the organisation and improve workplace morale (Al et al., 2020:2). However, this approach can be limiting as it focuses on a few star employees, potentially overlooking others with valuable skills and potential. The selective approach in higher education, especially during the nGAP period, will not materialise as it is excluded others in the process. Stahl et al. (2012:9) state that specific organisations have set-up rules or protocols to decide which individuals should be part of their talent pool. Despite these challenges, talent pooling remains famous for organisations seeking to establish a strong and thriving workforce.

2.4.2.2 Inclusive talent management mechanism

Inclusive talent management is the approach that contributes to the objectives of this study. It recognises that all employees have talent, with a potential for growth through evaluation and deployment (Swailles et al., 2014:6). FITM, or fully inclusive talent

management, focuses on recognising individual talent for the benefit of the individual. Therefore, FITM aims to enhance human well-being (Trehan & Rigg, 2011:277). Under this mechanism, employees find more purpose and meaning in their work concerning life goals (Steger & Dik, 2010:131). This view is in line with what the objectives of this study are to achieve by introducing talent management in selected universities. FITM is a preferred mechanism to nurture the talent of young Black female academics because it is selective, based on gender and race. According to Meyers (2015:12), FITM aims to identify employees' strengths and develop their capabilities to become the most effective at what they do. This approach prioritises cooperation rather than competition (Savanevičienė & Vilčiauskaitė, 2017:247). The organisation's effectiveness can be affected by factors like its size, culture, values, mission, and strategy, as explained by Thunnissen (2016:61).

2.4.2.3 Talent management philosophies

Meyers and Woerkom (2014:194) emphasise aligning talent management with organisational values and philosophies. Talent management within Meyers and Woerkom's four models highly depends on the philosophies organisations promote.

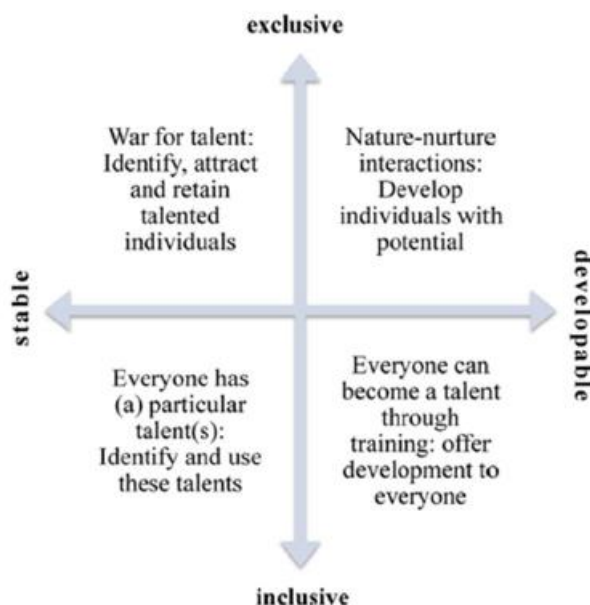


Figure 2.7: Meyers and Woerkom's model of talent management

Source: Meyers and Woerkom (2014:194)

Focusing on the stable and inclusive side of the spectrum typically relates to the standard approach of talent management that draws from positive psychology, precisely the "Pygmalion effect" that emphasises employee strengths. According to Meyers and Woerkom (2014:197), using TM can lead to positive outcomes for individuals by increasing happiness, energy, and motivation. Research indicates that there is a correlation between employee happiness and productivity. However, the rigid mindset that some organisations have towards talent management assumes that skills and abilities are fixed and cannot be improved, limiting opportunities for career growth and learning for all employees (Swales et al., 2014:2). The inclusive/developable end of the continuum comes closest to Swales et al.'s learning-oriented 'fully ITM' approach. The inclusive/developable brings in the ability to self-actualise, as "ordinary employees can grow into extraordinary performers" (Meyers & Woerkom, 2014:198) and be excellent if they work in fields that bring out their talent. Two conditions are necessary. There are two ways to help employees reach their full potential. The first is to put them in suitable positions to encourage growth and development. The second is to provide them with the necessary training to become top performers. It is essential to prioritise learning within the organisation and provide training opportunities like on-the-job training and job rotation to improve employee performance. It is also essential to provide regular feedback on their performance and focus on their individual career development. Everyone's experiences, skills, and ideas are valued and considered valuable contributions in an inclusive organisation (Nishii & Rich, 2014: 33).

2.4.3 A proposed policy to develop black female academics

This section discusses the policies needed to support the development of Black female academics in South African universities. Despite efforts to promote gender equity in academia, young black women still face challenges, as noted by Lewin (2019:26). To address this issue, universities can implement policies encouraging academic talent development. In order to address the challenges faced by black female academics, particularly in South African universities and Europe, it is necessary to implement progressive policies (Morley, 2011:224). In order to make progress, it is essential to measure and monitor transformational goals regularly (Lange, 2014:3).

Mentoring can be highly effective in guiding and supporting academics, particularly black female academics, as they navigate their career paths (Chitsamatanga, Rembe & Shumba, 2018:53). The lack of mentorship is a major cause of employee dissatisfaction. It has also affected the career mobility of Black female academics (Zikhali & Maphosa, 2012:220). Formalizing mentoring as a policy for all early career academics, especially young Black female academics, is essential. Mentoring can help achieve career goals, create opportunities for mobility, understand the university context, and address the gender imbalance (Chitsamatanga et al., 2018:53). Mentoring is not just a checkmark on the list but a structured process that should help black women in academia to progress in their careers.

In order to make progress, universities should include mentoring in their strategic plans and embed it strategically within their developmental plans. The following section demonstrates how to integrate strategies into the university's development plans.

2.4.3.1 *Strategies to mentoring in universities*

Throughout the history of higher education, there has been a noticeable lack of representation for black female academics (Morley & Crossouard, 2015:16-18). This trend persists despite the recent increase in women in academia. This gender imbalance is due to low salaries, unfair treatment, and lack of exposure (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015:1). Male academics have more opportunities to participate in mentoring programmes, which are crucial for black female academics to maintain their presence in the workplace. Furthermore, Hu et al. (2014) assert that mentoring involves a mentor offering a protégé the chance to learn, practice, and receive rewards, ultimately increasing their knowledge, performance, and motivation and building a solid working relationship. It is essential to note that both black females and males should have equal opportunities to progress in their careers within the workplace. There are two types of mentoring available, whether short-term or long-term:

- **Informal mentoring:** Conway et al., 2018:1 mention that this relationship may occur during a meeting or conference. Their characteristics are brief but carry valuable information for one's career trajectory. This type of relationship is

commonly known as a short-term relationship without any predetermined schedule.

- **Formal mentoring:** In a mentoring programme set-up by a department or organization, a more experienced staff member is paired with a junior faculty member to provide guidance and support in achieving excellence. Enslin and Schulz (2015:22) explain that this partnership allows for transferring knowledge and developing one's career.

Informal and formal mentoring may be valuable, especially when black female academics find it challenging to develop formal mentoring relationships due to lacking black female role models (Bynum, 2015:70).

2.4.3.2 *A Global need of mentoring in universities*

It is difficult for junior academics to aspire to leadership positions if there is a disproportionate representation of black women in academia at the highest positions (Bynum, 2015:71). The literature makes mention of the view that there is a shortage of black women in academia, especially in leadership level positions to mentor women (Steele et al., 2013:1131). It is significant to note that men still hold most senior positions. It is clear that this is also observed in various universities in South Africa, as stated by Kayi (2013:8). Men are often in senior leadership positions due to organisational expectations that favour male-oriented traits, according to Conway et al. (2018:3). Mentoring in the university setting may play an empowering role in black women's career advancement. According to Gamble and Turner (2015:83), there has been a lack of effort in empowering black female academics, particularly in African countries. The development programmes is a legitimate initiative to promote mentoring for black females and other previously disadvantaged groups. Black female academics are encouraged to seek mentorship programmes by collaborating with senior faculty members on various activities, including teaching, research, and community service. According to literature (Steele et al., 2013:1130), balancing work and family can impede the career trajectory of junior black female academics. Mentoring strategies, both informal and formal, can assist early career academics, especially Black women,

to build collaborations with faculty seniors in their fields. South African universities can apply this strategy to their current nGAP cohort. However, a strategy of this nature can apply in a formalised academic career development plan. The section below looks extensively at academic career development and progression.

2.4.3.3 Academic career development and progression

In career development, individuals and employers undertake various tasks to enhance the work-related identities of employees (Bothma & Roodt, 2012:3). While career development and management are related, they have different focuses. Research on career development by Zacher, Rudolph, Todorovic and Amman (2019:3) examines how individual and contextual factors impact career changes. Some believe academic career development only applies to those in academic positions at universities and higher education institutions. Scholars' progress is affected by their performance in various roles, including research, teaching, and administration within academic institutions. Career management should combine the approaches of individuals and organizations, as career development research suggests. Zacher, Rudolph, Todorovic and Ammann (2019:5) argue that the lack of integration hinders scientific research and theoretical development. Furthermore, integrating different stakeholders' perspectives can benefit everyone since they interact (Maguad, 2018:229). Understanding career management requires understanding the concept of career.

2.4.3.4 Career

A career refers to the various work-related roles someone occupies over their lifetime, as defined by Coetzee (2015:31). The term 'career' has evolved. However, the most relevant definition in the field of organizational development was proposed by Super in 1976, as cited in Patton and McMahon (2014:4): "The sequence of major positions occupied by a person throughout his pre-occupational, occupational and post-occupational life; includes work-related roles such as those of student, employee, and pensioner, together with complementary vocational, familial and civil roles." After clarifying what a career is, it is necessary to realize that career management is a process of interventions, such as strategies and practices designed to map and shape

an employee's development and progression following the organization's talent management needs to generate the necessary talent pool (Guan et al., 2015:230). Career development has been a long-standing goal of improving the workforce and is familiar. The nGAP programme focuses on developing young academics into fully-fledged professionals.

2.4.3.5 Career management challenges

Various career management issues affect individuals and organizations, as the literature discusses. These issues include personality, work overload, role conflict, inadequate compensation, inadequate performance management, insufficient support for teaching and research, and discrimination based on race and gender. Barnes, du Plessis and Frantz (2021:2) emphasize the importance of transparency and communication. Early-career academics need help in the academic environment, which can hinder their progress. Furthermore, they require more opportunities for permanent employment in academia. The tenure and promotion process for women academics with different racial identities is different and needs more structured performance reviews, limited publications, and unbalanced roles and responsibilities (Barnes et al., 2021:11). Therefore, it is crucial to identify theories that underpin academic career development.

2.4.3.6 Theories in academic career development

This section explores whether talent management can benefit from applying social-cognitive career theory and life-span, life-space theory. There are different approaches utilized to verify the accuracy of these theories. They were initially designed for career development research, aligning with talent management principles. Secondly, both theories encompass the process and content of career development, including psychological and contextual factors. Lastly, a broad range of empirical evidence supports both theories (Zacher et al., 2019:7).

- **Social-Cognitive Career Theory**

This theory focuses on career interests, career choices, and individual and contextual influences on career behaviour. Nik Yusoff et al. (2019:808) explain that the social-cognitive career theory explores how people's career choices are affected by their career environments, cognitive and interpersonal factors, and internal and external influences.

Through a cognitive-behavioural process, the theory explains how personal inputs (e.g., gender, predispositions) affect career and work performance. According to Zacher, Rudolph, Todorovic and Amman (2019:8-9), social-cognitive career theory can be divided into three themes:

(a) Individual characteristics and personal resources

As per the social cognitive career theory, career development can be impacted by an individual's learning processes and psychological behaviour regulation (Wang et al., 2022:4).

(b) Contextual influences

Social-cognitive career theory states that an individual's career development is shaped by the opportunities and limitations found in their environment (Wang et al., 2022:3). This includes primary factors like working conditions, social connections, career advancement initiatives, targeted interventions, and more distant factors like academic fields, professional organizations, and broader societal and cultural contexts.

(c) Active regulation of behaviour

The social-cognitive career theory focuses on forecasting an individual's career-related actions, such as making career decisions and working towards career objectives. Wang (2022:3) studied this theory and reviewed the literature on

academic career development, including goal setting, long-term planning, specific strategies, and seeking feedback.

- **Life-Span, Life-Space Theory**

South Africa's higher education is a challenging environment for young academics to navigate their academic careers (Hollywood et al., 2019:998). The literature also acknowledges that early-career academics are facing the challenge of operating in an environment where the quality of teaching and research is under a lot of scrutiny and comparison with the kind of quality which has been lagging over the past decade as a profession (Kenny, 2017:898). The challenges that have decreased the opportunities for early-career academics to thrive in academia have put so much strain on them in terms of working under stressful circumstances where support and mentoring are hindering the academic development prospects for these budding academics. These challenges have deep-rooted effects on early-career academics, which require much action to be taken against exploitative employment practices (Breeze & Taylor, 2018:2). As a result of these challenges are also an expanding category, stretching to include more extended periods from PhD completion, just as short-term research and teaching contracts proliferate beyond the 'early' career (Breeze & Taylor, 2018:3). According to life-span theory, people occupy different roles at different stages of their lives and careers, including work and non-work roles:

Breeze and Taylor further state that academic duties can go through different career stages. Advancing in an academic career involves managing specific milestones, challenges, and tensions (Zacher et al., 2019:358). The table below outlines these factors that determine career progression:

Table 2.6: Factors determining career progression

<p>Early Career Academics</p>	<p>Various literature defines "Early career academics" (ECA) differently. Among those different definitions is that of Bosanquet et al. (2016:1), who define "early career" in academia</p>
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	<p>as the five years following a PhD completion, specifically regarding research capability. Therefore, there is no single definition that encompasses the ECA experience.</p> <p>The international literature highlights that academic success is primarily associated with research, such as research output, quality, productivity, and competitive grant funding (Hollywood et al., 2020:998). The African literature equates ECAs to assistant lecturers, lectures or occasionally senior lecturers (Merritt et al., (2019:6). Early career academics (ECAs) are a diverse group with varying contract types depending on their job focus (e.g. research only, teaching only, or a combination of both) and status (e.g. fixed-term or permanent). However, all ECAs share a common experience of starting a new academic career and managing individual career aspirations alongside performance targets. Research outputs are more crucial to academic success than teaching (Bosanquet et al., 2016:11).</p>
<p>Mid-Career Academics</p>	<p>The literature on the career pathways of early and mid-career academics needs to be more cohesive. Mtwisha et al. (2021:5) also note that the terms 'mid-career' and 'ECA' do not have objective universal definitions. Mid-career is a transitional stage following ECA, which includes developmental interventions such as teaching, research, and social engagement capacitation. According to Carey's article (2014: np),</p>

	<p>promotion to senior lecturer marks entry into the midpoint of an entire academic career. Establishing a solid foundation in the early stages and planning for future advancements is crucial, highlighting its significance. Mtwisha et al. (2021:3) define mid-career academics as professionals who manage small research or academic teams. In the African context, it is essential to gather more information about the approaches and viewpoints of mid-career academics. These individuals are responsible for leading themselves, as well as others, towards academic excellence and research. The literature highlights the importance of universities aiming for competitive advantage by attracting, retaining, developing, and promoting mid-career academics. Universities that follow the academic development route contribute to innovation and economic growth and encourage individuals to aspire to leadership roles, such as mid-career.</p>
<p>Established Academics</p> <p>Career</p>	<p>Established career academics with academic prowess are generally chosen to mentor young academics. These usually are full professors who have extensive teaching and research experience. Academic excellence through an experienced academic mentor is a proven ability to work, produce and excel in academic learning (Okoli et al., 2021:137). The impact of established academics is the highest development of intellectual capacity and skills of</p>

	young academics. By imparting the skills and experience of experienced academics, universities can maximise academic competencies and skills to stay within or ahead of the competition. Experienced academics play a critical role in academic excellence that can be used to improve the intellectual capacity of mentees. The utilisation of these experienced academics should be encouraged by and embedded by university management as part of the culture of higher educational institutions.
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2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter examined talent management theories and critical factors based on various literature sources.

Furthermore, the researcher has examined various factors that shape the theoretical framework of talent management in this chapter. These fundamental elements of talent management include acquiring, assessing, developing, and deploying talent. I researched talent management strategies implemented by major companies in South Africa and worldwide and how talent management is integrated into the university's nGAP programme. The literature also examined the relevance of talent management in the modern era and its historical background. The literature also discusses the differences between exclusive and inclusive talent management. The literature would have been sufficient if it had not been for understanding the implications of academic career progression for talent management. The literature was quite illuminating and aligned with the interview results of selected nGAP lecturers.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a detailed outline of the research design of the qualitative study to promulgate the considerations of incorporating talent management in the nGAP in various universities in South Africa. The chapter discusses the methodology and research used in the study. It presents a detailed explanation of the research paradigm, research design, sources of qualitative data, and selection of research participants. Essentially for this study, I provide a detailed discussion of ethical considerations, the scope and limitations of the study, and a summary. In order to comprehend the incorporation of talent management in nGAP in various universities, I employ semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis to generate data from the interviews.

3.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY AND RESEARCH PARADIGM ADOPTED

3.2.1 Research Philosophy

In order to understand research philosophy, Saunders et al. (2016:124) describe it as a set of beliefs and assumptions that guide the development of knowledge in a specific field. Research philosophy plays a crucial role in the research process by allowing researchers to consider different possibilities, which can improve their research skills and self-confidence (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019:2). Saunders et al. (2016:135) explain that research studies are classified into philosophical categories, including positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism, and pragmatism. The research question and methods determine which research philosophy a researcher will adopt. For this study, interpretivism was chosen by the researcher because it was applicable and suitable for the current study (Mohammed, 2018:119) that sought to generate qualitative data. The researcher's beliefs played a role in the decision to choose interpretivism.

3.2.2 Interpretivist philosophy

In research, interpretivism refers to the researcher's philosophical position. According to Saunders et al. (2016:127), interpretivism emphasises interpretations, stories, narratives, and perceptions. Sarantakos (2013:40) notes that interpretivism is not a new philosophy and has its roots in the *verstehen* (understanding) of social life, which is associated with the work of Max Weber (1864-1920), Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), and Neo-Kantian philosophers like Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915) and Heinrich Rickert (1863-1936). According to Sarantakos (2013:40), *Verstehen* denotes an interpretive position and is distinguished from *Erklären* (explaining), which concentrates on causality. Consequently, interpretivism is suitable for inductive studies that involve small samples, subjective meanings, and in-depth qualitative investigation. The researcher has adopted this philosophy because it aligns with the study's emphasis on qualitative meanings.

Munkvold and Bygstad (2016:3) explain interpretivism along the lines that there are no objective social realities, and the realities are produced by human interaction and reproduced among human beings. Observing the world through the participants' perceptions and experiences (Tanh & Tanh, 2015:24) becomes paramount to my success as a researcher. I intended to interact with the participants to describe and interpret their experiences of the nGAP academics as authentically as possible (Lin, 2013:470-471).

The philosophy of interpretivism is founded on the principles of epistemology, which set it apart as an interpretive approach in research. The interpretivist ontological position was also discussed in detail.

3.2.2.1 Epistemology

This epistemological position is explained by Al-Saadi (2014:2) as assumptions we make about the kind or nature of knowledge or how it is possible to find out about the world. In other words, it is a way of looking at, and making sense of, the world. Al-Saad further explains that epistemology embodies a particular understanding of what that knowledge entails. It deals with the 'nature' of knowledge, its possibility, scope and

legitimacy. Epistemological positions as the philosophical choice of the researcher can be highlighted in the diagram below:

Table 3.1: Key philosophical research position as adapted from Al-Saad (2014:7)

EPISTEMOLOGICAL POSITION (nature of knowledge and how it is acquired)	
Position	Assumptions
Interpretivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researcher and the social world impact each other. • Facts and values are not distinct. • Objective and value-free inquiry is impossible since researchers' perspectives and values inevitably influence findings. • Methods of natural science are not appropriate for the study of social phenomena, for the social world is not governed by law-like regularities but mediated through meaning and human agency. • Knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding the social world of the people being studied. • Knowledge is seen as personal, subjective and unique. • The researcher understands the social world using his/her and the participants' understanding.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The social world is approached through the understanding of human behaviour.
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3.2.2.2 Ontology

According to Junjie and Yingxin (2022:10) ontological stance of interpretivism is based on the constructivist ontology, which emphasises the importance of cognitive orientation in interpretivism, arguing that social processes are driven by humans through interaction and action under the assumption that social structures are not naturally formed.

ONTOLOGICAL POSITION (nature of existence and structure of reality)	
Position	Assumptions
Interpretivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researcher embraces the idea of multiple realities. • Reality can be explored, and constructed through human interactions, and meaning actions. • Discover how people make sense of their social worlds in the natural setting by means of daily routines, conversations and writings while interacting with others around them. These writings could be text and visual pictures. • Many social realities exist due to varying human experience, including people's knowledge, views, interpretations, and experiences.

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Table 3.2: Source: Mayer (2015:54)

3.2.3 Qualitative research approach

A qualitative approach was used in this study. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:3) explain qualitative research thus: “Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world.” Qualitative research consists of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. Qualitative research involves creating representations of the world through field notes, interviews, photographs, recordings, and memos to oneself. This approach is interpretive and naturalistic, as researchers aim to understand phenomena in their natural settings and interpret them based on the meanings people attach to them. The researcher chose the qualitative research because it is conducted in a natural setting in which social actors or participants act naturally (Babbie & Mouton, 2011:270; Maxwell, 2010:478; Denzin & Lincoln, 2015:3). Leedy and Ormrod (2010:94) state that qualitative research “involves looking at qualities or characteristics that cannot be reduced to numerical values”, that is, it is a study based on words instead of numbers. Parkinson and Drislane (2011:2) suggest that “qualitative research uses methods such as participant interviews which result in a narrative, descriptive account of a setting or practice.” Due to two reasons, this study is qualitative because (i) the researcher collected data through participant interviews, and (ii) the results will be presented in narration form.

Delpont and De Vos (2011:65) define *qualitative study* as an unstructured form of research that uses small samples to gain insights and understanding. In this study, participants were chosen based on their involvement as lecturers and mentors of lecturers mainly involved in the New Generation of Academic Programme. The selection process occurred at multiple universities in different provinces throughout South Africa. As previously mentioned in this study, the data collection method would be semi-structured interviews and document analysis. If the lecturers and mentors/line managers came from the same faculty, nGAP lecturers and mentors/line managers could be selected. If the mentor chosen for the nGAP programme was from a different faculty than the Psychology faculty, it would not benefit either party. In terms of their relationship, that would not constitute alignment. According to Olivier (2012:20),

qualitative data stem from verbatim data collected from interviews, which are then transcribed into narratives. As part of this study, semi-structured interviews, literature reviews and audio-visual material were utilised. Review of research documents and interviews are primary sources of qualitative data collection, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2015:137). Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2014:395) state that the significant qualitative data sources may be observations, interviews, questionnaires, physical traces, document reviews and audio-visual materials. The researcher is cognisant of the view that this study centres around extracting meanings from the research participant through their lived experiences.

Understanding the experiences of individuals can be challenging due to the intricate nature of human behaviour and the multidimensional aspects that contribute to their experiences, including psychological, cultural, and social factors (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022:1). In order to analyse this study properly, there is a need to first understand the critical qualitative research method of phenomenology.

There are pros and cons associated with qualitative research approach, which are stipulated in the following table:

Qualitative Research Approach	
Pros	Cons
Produces the thick (detailed) description of participants' feelings, opinions, and experiences; and interprets the meanings of their actions	qualitative research approaches sometimes leave out contextual sensitivities, and focus more on meanings and experiences.
candidate behaviour, interviewer behaviour, interlocutor behaviour, and cross-cultural influences on behaviour during the speaking tests	Qualitative research may neglect the social and cultural constructions of the variables studied
It discovers the participants' inner experience, and to figure out how meanings are shaped through and in culture	In terms of research method, smaller sample size raises the issue of generalizability to the whole population of the research
During the data collection, the researchers interact with the participants	Data interpretation and analysis may be more difficult/complex

directly such as it happens while data collection through interviews.	
This approach has a flexible structure as the design can be constructed and reconstructed to a greater extent	The analyses of the cases take a considerable amount of time, and one can generalise the results to the larger population in only a very limited way (Flick, 2011:483)

The data collection process was not an easy task for the researcher because of less cooperation from other institutions where there was no assistance. The researcher had to deal with small sample as envisaged.

3.2.4 Phenomenological research

The research used a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach. According to Teherani et al. (2015:669) phenomenology can be defined as an approach to research that seeks to describe the essence of a phenomenon by exploring it from the perspective of those who have experienced it. Teherani et al. seek to clarify the encounter's significance, detailing the experience's nature and manner. Furthermore, Neubauer, Witkop and Varpio (2019:9) argue that choosing a phenomenological research methodology requires the researcher to reflect on the philosophy they embrace. Phenomenological studies are based on individual participants' experiences and seek to understand the lived experiences of respondents. Creswell and Poth (2018:146) assert that phenomenological study describes the ordinary meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. In their own words, respondents describe their own experiences (O'Leary, 2010:271; Neuman, 2011:329). Phenomenology has a robust philosophical component, and it is well-known in other major disciplines, including education (Creswell & Poth, 2018:147).

According to Babbie to Mouton (2011:74), a research design describes how the researcher intends to conduct the research. It involves the collection of data, measurement of the data, and analysis of the data, all to answer the research question.

An outline of the research design explains how the research process will be carried out to meet the research objectives; this framework links the decisions to be made with the data to be collected. In a research design, the focus is on the end product and all the steps necessary to reach that goal. The research problem determines methods and procedures, assert Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2010:66). Furthermore, Babbie and Mouton (2011:75) assert that research methodology is primarily concerned with the method, the tools, and the procedures involved in conducting research. Leedy and Ormrod (2010:12) submit that research methodology refers to the researcher's general approach to the research project. In addition, Struwig and Stead (2010:115) affirm that research methodology generates and analyses data to justify a hypothesis. The research method is how data is collected and analysed. It is also necessary to ensure that the emerging data are trustworthy (De Vos, Delpont, Fouché & Strydom, 2011).

The primary objective of the study is to determine how development units within selected universities use talent management as a developmental support mechanism concerning new generations of black women academics so that they become more rounded in teaching, research, service, and leadership. The research intended to provide an understanding of the situation or experience within development units concerning the lived experiences of black women academics (Bryman, 2012:30; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013:145).

According to Bryman (2012:30), researching participants' perceptions of their social world is considered a preferable research method. The data generated, analysed and interpreted describes people's behaviours, perceptions, and conversations. The way people understand their personal experiences shapes the world. As a researcher, it is essential to accurately describe, interpret, and explain these experiences, according to Hammersley (2013:27), and Denscombe (2014:94-95). The participants' experiences were conveyed using a combination of textual and structural descriptions. The textual descriptions explained what the participants experienced, while the structural descriptions highlighted the conditions, situations, or contexts in which they experienced it. Creswell and Poth (2018:152) outlined this approach. The researcher became involved in the study as an interviewer and observer during the data collection phase.

The semi-structured interview approach is outlined below:

3.2.5 Interview

To collect data, researchers conduct interviews and pose questions to participants regarding the subject of their investigation (Johnson & Christensen, 2012:198). An interview is a conversation between the researcher and participant, as defined by DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2018:1). Sisi (2018:88) emphasizes that interviews are a crucial tool for data collection because they allow the researcher to interact with participants and gain a deeper understanding of the subject. Researchers can obtain more meaningful insights and knowledge about the topic through interviews.

Doody and Noonan (2013:28) indicated that a range of formats are available from which to choose, including structured, unstructured and semi-structured interviews.

Table 3.2: Types of interviews

Types of interview	
Structured	A structured interview is a common type of survey study. One of its main benefits is that it ensures consistency in the information gathered, making it easy to compare data. This interview aims to obtain precise answers from the participants, which is essential in achieving the study's goals. Structured interviews are typically precise, which reduces the possibility of variations. This interview makes data processing and analysis more manageable and reduces the likelihood of errors. (Rashidi et al., 2014:33). This type of interview is irrelevant to this study because of the nature of its process.

<p>Unstructured</p>	<p>Qu and Dumay (2011:245) state that the unstructured interview process is tailored to each situation and context to put the interviewee at ease and avoid judgment. The unstructured interview relies on the notion that interviewers may have prepared only some required questions. Jamshed (2014:87) adds that unstructured interviews may be informal and conversational based on an unplanned set of questions generated instantaneously during the interview. The purpose of this study was not to conduct unstructured interviews.</p>
<p>Semi-structure</p>	<p>According to Jamshed (2014:87), semi-structured interviews are a standard method used in qualitative research. During these interviews, a set of pre-planned questions are asked to individuals or groups. They usually last 30 minutes to an hour (Dyment et al., 2014:86). During an interview, the interviewer follows a semi-structured guide that outlines the topics or questions they will ask. This approach enables the interviewer to make the most of the interview time by approaching topics in an organized and comprehensive manner.</p> <p>Recording the interviews is often preferred to taking handwritten notes, as the latter can be unreliable and may cause the researcher to miss important points. Recording the interview allows the researcher to focus on the content and verbal prompts and allows for generating a "verbatim transcript" of the interview. The</p>

	researcher in this study used semi-structured interviews to gather data from participants.
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This study involved semi-structured interviews where the researcher wanted to understand the lived experiences of the nGAP participants. There is a section in this chapter dedicated to explaining why the researcher selected a semi-structured interview approach.

Furthermore, the research objectives largely guide the method, supporting answering the research questions. As with other data collection methods, interviews have advantages and disadvantages.

Table 3.3: Advantages and disadvantages of interviews

Advantages and disadvantages of interviews as a method of collecting data	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Using them can provide valuable understanding and background information.	The participant may feel that they are being intruded upon.
They assist individuals in expressing the things that matter to them.	Interviews require a lot of time and effort, from scheduling and traveling to the venue, to conducting the interview, transcribing notes, and analysing the data afterwards.
Generating quotes and stories is one of their useful functions.	They can be expensive compared with other methods.
They enable the researcher to develop a rapport	Interviews on a personal and/or intimate subject can evoke strong feelings and

	these feelings need to be handled with great sensitivity.
They give the researcher the opportunity to observe as well as listen	<p>They are susceptible to bias, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The participant's desire to please the researcher. - Saying what they think/feel the researcher wishes to hear, such as giving an official point of view rather than their personal view. - The desire to create a good impression may lead to participants not answering honestly. - There is a tendency to say something rather than nothing if the participant cannot answer a question or has nothing to say on a topic. - The researcher's views can influence the participant's responses by expressing surprise or disapproval.
The researcher can explain the purpose of the research and answer any questions the participant may have about the study.	
The researcher can probe the participant's responses and seek further clarification.	
Participants can seek clarification of a question	

They help the participant to give detailed responses.	
Can explore participants' reasons for acting in a certain way or their interpretations of events.	
They are more appropriate for certain groups, such as those with reading or writing difficulties.	
Interviews can be a rewarding for participants as they stimulate self-exploration and discovery.	
Personal benefit: the telling of one's story.	

The interviews in this study were conducted through the semi-structured approach.

3.2.5.1 Semi-structured interview approach

A semi-structured interview is a method of research commonly used in social sciences. Knott et al. (2022:1) state that in-depth interviews are a flexible method of gathering qualitative data that social science researchers commonly use. These interviews enable individuals to express their comprehension and perception of the world in their own words. Interviews may seem like a regular social interaction where people ask and answer questions, but they are a valuable research tool.

In the case of the semi-structured interview, Magaldi and Berler (2018:3) define it as an exploratory interview, which is in-depth in nature. Nowell et al. (2017:4) suggest that exploratory interviews are used to understand unknown phenomena better, such as their characteristics, appearance, and possible alternative solutions. Magaldi and Berler (2018:4) note that semi-structured or exploratory interviews are usually guided by a predetermined set of questions and focus on a central topic, providing a general

framework. A semi-structured interview also allows a researcher to go deep for a discovery, regardless of the topical trajectory provided before the interview. A semi-structured interview allows the researcher to ask more questions based on what the interviewee said (Ruslin et al., 2022:3). This study was primarily conducted via Microsoft Teams since most participants were from different parts of the country. The research remained neutral to better understand the roles of participants by probing. I opted for this interview method because of its convenience and versatility, intending to gather as much information as possible.

The interviews were planned for the participants' free time outside of work, in a comfortable environment where they felt at ease answering questions. The interviews were conducted individually and lasted approximately 30 - 40 minutes each. Before each interview, participants were asked if they would participate when available and ready to contribute. The participants were notified that the interview would be semi-structured and additional questions would be asked as needed, to get clarification. The notes from the conversations and decisions were documented, and the attendees were guaranteed that the notes would be disposed of once the research was finished. During transcription, a recording device was utilized to capture the conversation. However, the recording was erased once the transcription and analysis were completed. Before the interview, every participant was asked for their permission to record it. According to Jamshed (2014:87), recording the interview helps the researcher to concentrate on the content and verbal cues, which allows the transcriptionist to create a "verbatim transcript" of the interview.

Throughout the interviews, the researcher collected insights from individuals involved in the nGAP regarding the obstacles and possibilities of the programme currently being put into effect in various South African universities. During this process, participants were encouraged to share their knowledge and experiences. Research documents were referenced during the document review to ensure consistency and rationality. All interviews were conducted through MS Teams as the researcher observed the COVID-19 protocols. Furthermore, most universities were in different provinces of South Africa.

3.2.6 Document review

The study reviewed research books, research journals, and other relevant documents relevant to early-career academic development programmes in academia worldwide that address the challenges of implementing such programmes, as well as examining how young academics' careers grow when mentored by experienced academics. Mentorship on talent management was also analysed in these documents for its importance to young academics. The documents may have information from other sources. To check for this, I reviewed existing documents, whether in hard copy or electronic form. According to Bowen's approach to social research, it is recommended to first skim through the documents to get an overall idea (Mignotte et al., 2020:4). Next, one has to identify relevant categories for analysing the entire set of documents, and finally, one interprets the body of documents (Dalglish et al., 2020:1425). The researcher analysed both printed and internet-transmitted materials for this study. The document review was utilised in this study as a secondary means of collecting qualitative data and triangulating data acquired through interviews and voice-recorded material for validity. Using information and documents available from the government and the internet proved to be an inexpensive process. Upon reviewing documents, I discovered issues that needed to be visible at first glance. This review has led to the exposure of problems that would have otherwise gone unnoticed.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Before delving into the specifics of the study's methods and data collection, explaining the nature of the research underpinned by the research philosophy is essential. As Mohammed (2018:121) suggests, this will provide a framework for understanding the study's outline and processes.

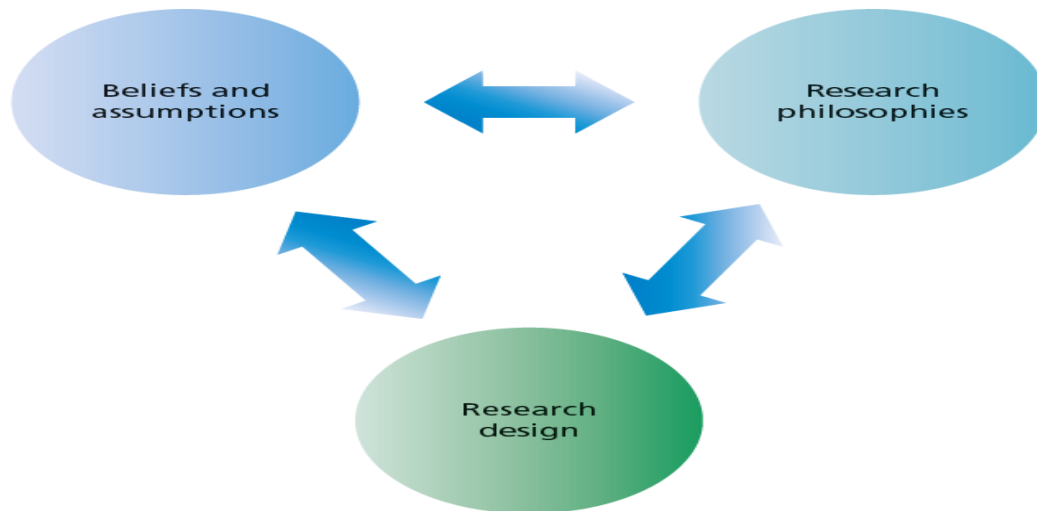


Figure 3.1: Nature of the research

Source: Saunder (2016:126)

In developing one's research philosophy and designing a research project, it is essential to recognise that philosophical disagreements are an intrinsic part of the research.

3.3.1 Recruitment of research participants

To ensure the successful recruitment of nGAP academics and their mentors, the researcher chose to work with the heads of developmental units at selected universities. These individuals possess a thorough understanding of the challenges associated with hiring early-career academics.

The New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) has identified ten South African universities in different provinces to tackle faculty composition and capacity challenges. There was a random selection of participating universities. The study focused on one nGAP lecturer and their mentor/line manager from the same faculty. The selection process was mindful of the challenges that new young academics face, particularly concerning mentoring and support to advance their academic careers.

To conduct the study, we followed the protocols set by the university. We needed to complete Request for Access to Staff Ethical Information forms to obtain access to ethical information about the staff. After receiving permission to recruit participants,

the HR personnel responsible for coordinating the nGAP programme were contacted. During a virtual meeting, the participants were informed about the research objectives and requested to provide their contributions. To ensure the study's validity, the researcher clarified their views on developmental support mechanisms and how to acquire scientific knowledge about nGAP support mechanisms that incorporate talent management principles in selected universities. Additionally, Nieuwenhuis (2012:111) advises that to establish research validity, one must understand the nature and form of reality and what can be known.

3.3.2 An overview of the participants' profile

The researcher deliberately determined beforehand which evidence to collect and which analysis techniques to use with the data to answer the research question (Family Health International, 2015:01). The purpose of this research was to explore and comprehend how development support mechanisms could inspire the nGAP black female academics to aspire for into leadership in universities. The researcher selected two participants from each university of the ten identified for this research. The researcher intended to interview 20 participants but interviewed eight due to various challenges during the recruitment process. The participants included five nGAP lecturers and three mentors. The researcher mainly analysed the nGAP's lived experiences and the mentoring support of the mentors. The study specifically targeted black female nGAP lecturers, primarily Black and Coloured academics. The study intentionally focused on black female lecturers in nGAP. Understanding the nGAP's lecturers' career development journey and lived experiences were essential. Chapter Five presents the findings from the interviews conducted. Different topics are being discussed to give an understanding of the things that impact their everyday existence.

The participants consisted of four black females and one coloured female. Two participants have had academic experiences, taught a few classes and did administrative work. Two nGAP lecturers interviewed came from two universities in the Eastern Cape Province, one from the Free State Province, one from the Gauteng Province, and one from the Limpopo Province. The response from the mentors could have been better. One mentor from the Eastern Cape Province, meaning one of the nGAP lecturers, was not represented by her mentor. A mentor representing the

university in the Free State province was available, and one mentor from a university in Gauteng. It is important to note that two of the mentors who willingly accepted the interview invite were non-South African, a male and a female. The only mentor who freely accepted the invite was a female mentor. Most of the mentors who turned the invite down were South African, across different universities selected.

3.3.3 Data collection method

As per qualitative studies, the researcher is the primary instrument for collecting data and considers himself the primary tool for gathering data (Sutton & Austin, 2015:227). The study aimed to meet qualitative research requirements by focusing on a phenomenon dependent on its context. Therefore, the researcher collected the data in a way suited to the natural environment in which the experiences occurred.

Interviews were conducted virtually on Ms Teams (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:444) and guided by COVID-19 protocol. The researcher identified ten universities for this study and requested one nGAP mentor/line manager and one nGAP lecturer from the same faculty to participate. The researcher provided participants with a thorough explanation of the research. This explanation ensured that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained and that the research would only be conducted for academic purposes. The participants were assured that they could exit the situation at any time if they felt their rights were violated. The type of questions asked to the nGAP academic lecturer, and the designated mentor were addressed separately.

The preferred interview technique was semi-structured interviews since they allowed for asking questions, recording and documenting responses, probing for more information, providing clarity, and obtaining the information needed. Interviews, according to Qu and Dumay (2011:239), are regarded as nothing more than casual everyday conversation. Qu and Dumay also state that in research interviews, there can be an asymmetry of power in that the researcher oversees the questioning of a voluntary and sometimes naive interviewee. The collected data were used purely for academic purposes to solicit for data on how talent management can be incorporated into the academic development programme in various universities. Throughout the

study, we closely monitored the development programmes at both local and foreign universities. Additionally, we conducted a series of interviews over some time.

- **Selection of qualitative methodology**

According to Collins and Stockton (2018:8), there is a clear connection between the qualitative process and the chosen study by the researcher. They provide a diagram that illustrates this connection.

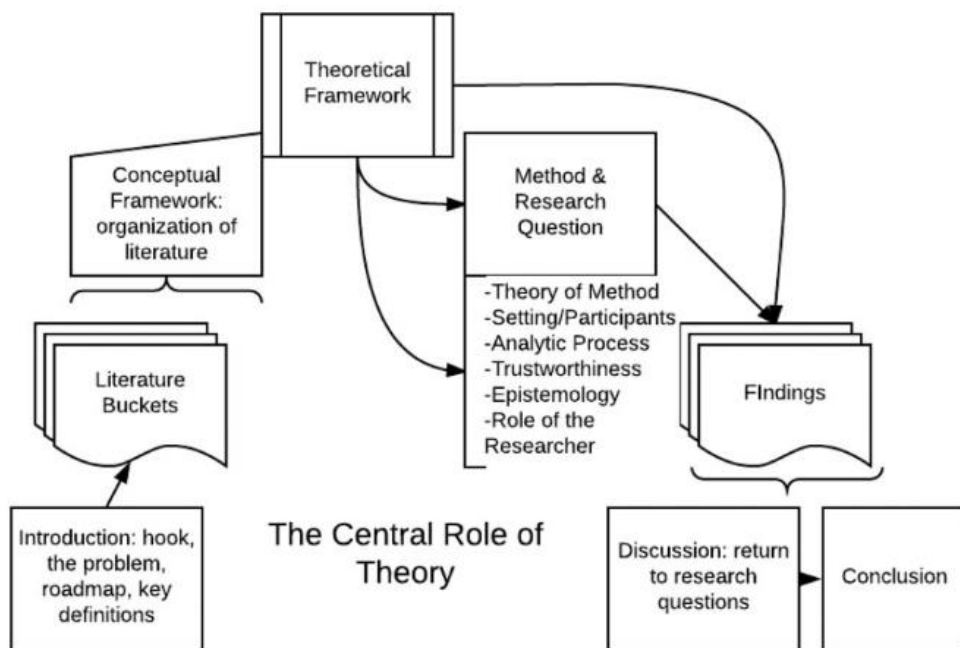


Figure 3.2: The qualitative process

Adopted from: Collins and Stockton (2018:8)

According to Ravitch and Carl (2016:46), when conducting research, it is vital to consider the design and engagement factors shown in the diagram above. The diagram, as explained by Collins and Stockton (2018:8), demonstrates the connections between the theoretical framework, research questions, and methodology, emphasising the analytic process. The theoretical framework can impact predetermined codes, and the deductive approach should include a search for negative or discrepant cases concerning the theory. Additionally, the selection of

theory can provide insight into the role of the researcher. The analytic approach also influences the findings and contributes to the discussion. Choosing the appropriate qualitative research method relies on multiple factors, such as the research question, the researcher's theoretical viewpoint, the level of uncertainty surrounding the phenomenon under investigation, the researcher's competencies, and academic considerations (Collins & Stockton, 2018:7). Qualitative research, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2011:372), is based on a naturalistic phenomenological philosophy grounded in the idea that multiple realities are socially constructed through individual and collective definitions. According to Nduna (2020:91), qualitative research occurs in natural contexts, so it is more "true to life". In this study, all remarks and actions by participants are taken as clues to understanding human behaviour (Narayanan & Georgiou, 2013:2). As McMillan and Schumacher (2011:374) note, qualitative researchers often use emergent designs - that is, they make decisions about data collection strategies as they go. To explain the phenomenon under study, the information or theories derived from the data must fit within the setting or context. Qualitative research has excellent flexibility in both the methods and the process. A flexible research design allows concepts, insights, and understanding to be developed from data patterns. In qualitative research, the researcher immerses himself or herself in the phenomenon to be studied, past or present, since it focuses on the process rather than the outcome.

This study's qualitative research approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to investigate and describe the observed phenomenon from the participants' viewpoint. (Tomaszewski et al., 2020:2). Based on Tomaszewski et al.'s (2020:5) argument, qualitative research investigates typical human behaviour in natural contexts to better understand it. Several aspects of qualitative research are more holistic and emergent, including the specific design, measurement instruments (e.g. interviews), and interpretations that develop along the way of investigation (Mohajan, 2018:23). In addition to recording interviews with participants, ethnographers perform interactive roles (McMillan & Schumacher, 2011:372). When starting research, it is essential to approach the field with an open mind and recognise that the data collected and analysed will shape the outcome.

Understanding how individuals behave is best accomplished by closely observing their social interactions. A qualitative research approach allows this because the researcher

can reconstruct the lived experiences of the subjects, according to Marshall and Rossman (2010:68). According to Sutton and Austin (2015:226), understanding human behaviour requires qualitative analysis rather than statistical procedures. Using research methodology for a particular problem is always determined by the nature of the data that will be collected to resolve the problem, according to Alshenqeeti (2014:44). Research methods are determined by the nature of the problem, not the other way around. Research methods can be qualitative or quantitative, or a combination of both, but researchers often must decide which method to use.

Several factors, including the audience, the time limit, and others, determine the research method, according to Mwita (2022:532). Research knowledge is constructed using an appropriate method based on the problem and purpose of the study. Exploratory research methodology would allow the problems to be explored and the questions to be asked to become more specific as the study progresses. For this study, it was considered suitable to carry out qualitative research. The researcher examined how talent management is implemented in South African universities. This implementation is not just to train nGAP black female academic lecturers but to mentor them so that they can aspire to senior faculty positions. This investigation provides a method of exploring, describing, and explaining what has been observed.

3.4 SOURCES OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Data gathering can take different forms and shapes and largely determine how the data are collected (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:85). Cooper and Schindler define data as the facts presented to the researcher from the study's environment. It is commonly believed that data accurately represent reality when they closely align with the observed phenomena. Primary and secondary sources were used as critical sources of data collection for this study (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:86).

3.4.1 Primary data

In order to achieve specific research objectives, a researcher may collect primary data using tools such as interviews, which were utilized in this study (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:152). For this study, primary data were collected through qualitative methods,

which encompass a range of data collection techniques, including semi-structured interviews (Busetto et al., 2020:1). Busetto et al. (2020:2) suggest that semi-structured interviews are a preferred technique for this study, as they allow for unexpected topics to emerge, which can overcome biases found in written surveys. They note that qualitative interviews are typically conducted in an interactive format, either through audio or video recording or through written notes, depending on the feasibility and acceptability of the interviewer. Using qualitative interviews as a data collection method gives researchers a more interactive and dynamic approach to gathering data.

The New Generation of Academic Programme (nGAP) is still in its infancy stage, with the Phase 1 cohort having completed the programme by the end of 2021. Although different universities have reported good progress in implementing the nGAP programme, the researcher is interested in the support mechanism embodied in this programme concerning talent management. As a way to explore this phenomenon, several universities in South Africa were chosen. Further investigation was carried out through interviews and examining academic and governmental documents.

3.4.2 Secondary data

Researchers can utilize secondary data from various sources, including books, reports, theses, journals, scientific magazines, and official statistics. These sources are readily available and accessible (Cooper & Schindler, 2014:130). Published data are helpful to a researcher as they are widely available (Kratz & Strasser, 2015:3). Mohammed (2018:135) states that the secondary data save cost and time; these data are faster and less expensive to acquire than primary data as the researcher can access secondary data quickly and cheaply. Moreover, the researcher has to investigate secondary data for dependability, transferability, bias, and format (2014:258). The following table briefly overviews the various aspects of secondary data:

Table 3.4: Aspects of secondary data

Credibility	This term relates to the level of trust in the accuracy of both the data and its interpretations.
Confirmability	It is about the accuracy of the study's findings based on the participants' viewpoints.
Transferability	The goal is to determine how applicable the study's results are in a different environment or situation.
Dependability	It refers to the trustworthiness of the findings of the study

3.5 SELECTION OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS (SAMPLING)

The study's participants were selected through a careful process using the purposive sampling method, which is also known as judgemental, purposeful, or criterion-based sampling. (Johnson & Christensen, 2014:264-9). Purposive sampling intentionally selects participants based on their unique characteristics, experiences, attitudes, or perceptions. As researchers conduct interviews, they may identify conceptual or theoretical categories of participants and seek out new individuals to further explore emerging patterns (Cooper & Schindler 2014:152). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018:249) also agree that purposive sampling is a crucial feature of qualitative research.

3.5.1. Population and sampling

This section contains two subcategories for selecting research participants: target population and sampling, which in turn includes two sampling criteria and sampling size.

Target Population - A population is any integral group of independent elements from which a sample is selected (Bell et al., 2022:387). It was the researcher's role to determine this study's target population before collecting data (Al Haidari, 2015:134). According to Cooper and Schindler (2011:345), deciding on the target population is the first stage of selecting a sample; it is an integral group of population elements related to a research topic.

Initially, the study planned to involve talented individuals from ten public universities. However, only eight participants from five universities were interviewed. The participants were selected for this study primarily for the following reasons:

1. Collecting data from them was convenient and easy because of their responsiveness.
2. The researcher could save time and money by conducting virtual interviews instead of travelling to all selected universities. However, he still had the option to visit some of them if needed.
3. The researcher might have yet to receive a favourable response from other universities, despite the processes that had to be followed. However, the mentors who accepted to participate in the study played a critical role in the growth and mentoring of the nGAP academics (Bradley, 2016:15). The researcher was convinced that the universities mentioned are capable of attracting, developing, and retaining talented early career academics based on the feedback from the participants.
4. There is a potential for universities to succeed in incorporating talent management into their strategic plans. However, all universities must plan and take the whole process seriously.

Sampling - After identifying the target population, the next step was the sampling stage, which involved selecting a portion of the population based on a particular proportion, according to Cooper and Schindler (2011:347). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018:202) take this idea further by stating that the quality of research depends on the suitability of its methodology, instrumentation, and sampling strategy. Qualitative researchers often use purposeful sampling to choose specific cases with valuable information related to their topic of study. Among various purposeful sampling methods, criterion sampling is the most commonly used in implementation research (Palinkas et al., 2015:1). Strydom (2011:223) says the study population sets boundaries on the study units, which are participants with specific characteristics. According to Mesa et al. (2015:326), a research population is a group of participants selected for participation in a study. The participants in this study were recruited based on their academic experience and knowledge about the New Generation of Academic Programme (nGAP). This study was designed to interview one nGAP lecturer and one mentor from each university, selected using a convenience, non-probability sampling method. The researcher obtained necessary permissions and approvals from the ethics committees of specific departments in various universities to choose the participants. I used a purposive sampling method, which is a non-probability sampling technique. Participants were chosen from different stages of their nGAP training, and their interviews were conducted virtually through the Ms Teams portal in compliance with COVID-19 safety protocols. As already stated, the sampling strategy used for this was a non-probability, also known as a purposive sampling. The chosen participants received clear instructions on how the interviews would ensue.

3.5.1.1 Non-probability sample

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018:218), various non-probability sampling methods work well with qualitative research, including convenience and purposive sampling. This study will use purposive or judgmental sampling.

Purposive or judgemental sampling - This type of sampling involves determining the typical characteristics of participants who could be included in the sample (Palinkas et al., 2015:4). The researcher developed the inclusion criteria and used them to include specific study participants deliberately. As illustrated in the diagram

below, the researcher used his judgement to select the nGAP lecturers and their mentors from the population of each university selected to participate in an in-depth interview. The selection aimed to determine if the developmental units in certain universities are utilizing TM to help nGAP academics progress in their careers during the mentoring phase. Targeted populations were identified based on their experience in the study and involvement in the nGAP. Participants provided reliable and trustworthy information during the interview.

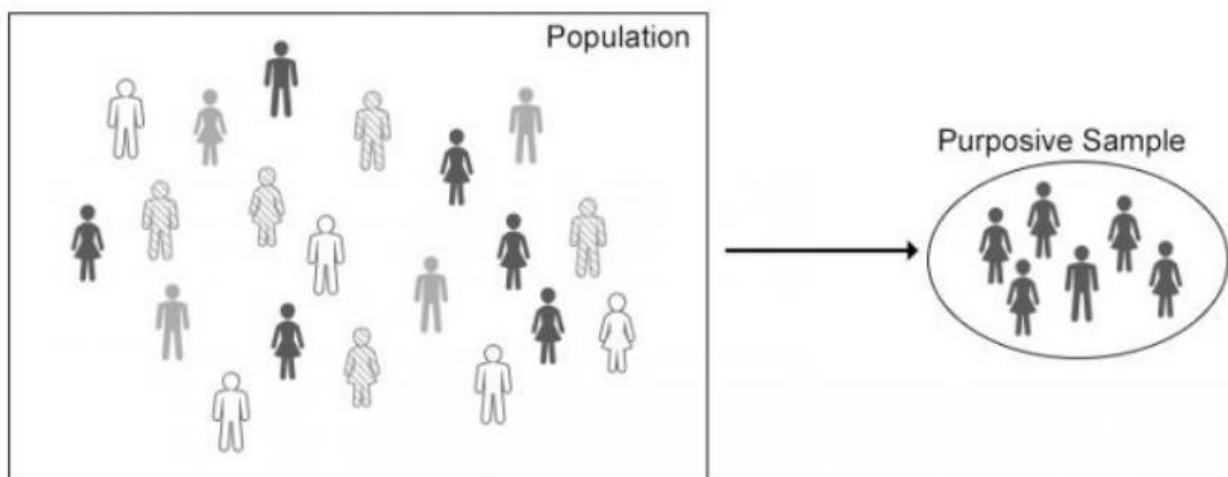


Figure 3.3: Population and sample

Source: Business Research Methodology (undated)

A vital aspect of this study was to recruit 'knowledgeable people' who had in-depth knowledge of issues based on their roles, contacts, expertise, or experience (Barnes et al., 2015:18). There is little benefit in seeking a random sample when most of the random sample may be largely ignorant of particular issues and unable to comment on matters of interest to the researcher, in which case a purposive sample is vital (Cohen et al., 2018:219).

The participants were comfortable with the researcher recording their interviews. Repeated listening may be necessary to support analyses and establish reliability when reporting.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In response to society's expectation of increased accountability, ethical conduct has received increased attention (Zegwaard et al., 2017:146). In order to conduct ethical research that avoids causing harm or adverse outcomes, the researcher must adhere to ethical behaviour guidelines before beginning their study (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:34). Furthermore, Cooper and Schindler state that some scholars have recommended that, in any academic research project, ethical considerations are essential to guide a researcher in conducting his/her applied research and provide sample participants with information about the aim of the research. However, avoiding ethical problems as part of human interactions between sample members is also essential (Saunders et al., 2016:127). Mohammed (2018:140) states that potential issues include lack of informed consent, affiliation and conflicts of interest, ethical dilemmas, harm to participants, and invasion of privacy. This study involved semi-structured interviews. Therefore, the researcher applied all required procedures to obtain ethics approval from the University of the Free State's Office of General/Human Research Ethics Committee (GHREC). Appendix A includes the approval letter from the University of the Free State. This study highlights three important ethical considerations concerning adhering to ethical guidelines. These include evaluating the benefits and risks, obtaining informed consent, and safeguarding the rights of the participants (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:35).

3.6.1 Participants benefit and risk

The possible benefits of participation in a research project should be explained to participants beforehand (Castillo, 2012:4). The research should be ethically acceptable. Therefore, for consent to be valid, the individuals must willingly give their consent, clearly understand the request, and be capable of making the decision. Participants in this study were adequately informed about the study, comprehended the information, and had the freedom of choice to participate or decline. The details were provided as a research study information leaflet (see Appendix B). Detailed explanations of the research process were given to participants before they agreed to participate in this study. All participants had the choice to consent, in writing, after receiving the necessary information. Participants were approached individually I

explained to them the purpose of the study and how data would be collected. The researcher promptly addressed their questions and concerns. Participants were assured that they could refrain from participating in the study without risking their reputation or identity since their involvement was voluntary. The biographical information did not reveal the actual names of the participants, but pseudo-names were used to protect their identity and confidentiality. The benefits of the participants' participation allowed them to see the implementation of the research outcome once it had been published.

Furniss et al. (2016:4) define *risk* as any procedure of research that could cause harm to the participants, i.e., raising concerns and anxiety levels of stress. This study did not subject participants to any risks. Participation was voluntary, and participants were told before the interviews that they could unconditionally withdraw from the research at any time, if they were not happy. There were no risks to be anticipated from the participants' side as the interviews were open-ended and designed for the participants to feel comfortable when answering questions. The researcher followed ethical steps to ensure the participants' dignity was respected. Additionally, there were no injuries or harm during the interview because the rules were clearly stated beforehand. Data that contained the participants' identities remained confidential within this research.

This study complied with good morals and ethics, adhering to ethical considerations.

3.6.2 Participants' informed consent

Individuals must be provided with all relevant information regarding the study to make an informed decision about participating in research (Manti & Licari, 2018:146). Participants completed consent forms before the research, and the researcher clarified the research procedures based on the information sheet (Cooper & Schindler, 2011:42). The research utilized a qualitative technique that required informed consent. The researcher presented a letter explaining the study's nature and an approval letter from the gatekeepers' offices of GHREC. The researcher distributed the consent forms to participants via email and the nGAP lecturer's unit manager (e.g. the mentor). After being approved and registered for the study, the researcher told the participants they

could withdraw without repercussions. Appendix B provides a consent form that was sent to the participants.

During the researcher's appointments with participants, timeslots were chosen that worked for each participant. This period was to assist with the recruitment of participants. While some nGAP coordinators assisted with recruiting nGAP lecturers, others provided contact information for nGAP lecturers and their mentors.

In order to conduct the study at specific universities, I submitted letters of request to the gatekeepers' offices (refer to Appendix C). The gatekeepers approved the request and allowed their ethical processes to take place (refer to Appendix D). Even though the researcher was taken from pillar to post in some instances, some universities had their due diligence to approve the ethical clearance. The researcher's experience with this process was frustrating and challenging.

The researcher ensured that the interviews were trustworthy and authentic by maintaining transparency.

3.6.3 Participants rights and protections

During this research, the information gathered was valid during the duration of the study. The data would be stored and secured on a hard drive in the researcher's home office computer. The information would only be used for future research purposes, with permission from the participants. The hard drive would constantly be updated so that various applications supported it. The researcher made sure to uphold both integrity and confidentiality during the entirety of the research project. Once the research was no longer needed, the information would be deleted. The researcher downloaded the research interviews from Ms Team into a secure folder. The participants were guaranteed that their identities would remain confidential and that the interviews were solely for academic purposes.

Furthermore, participants were informed of the benefits of participating in the study, which secured their participation. As part of the study, participants were informed of all aspects that might influence their readiness to participate. Moreover, they were guaranteed to keep their participation confidential, and their identities safeguarded to protect their rights. The participants were allowed to terminate their participation at any

time should they feel they were not protected. According to Grafton and Jones (2010:121), all researchers must follow an ethical procedure using a step-by-step process. Following ethical procedures establishes a relationship of mutual trust and respect with all study participants. This process allows for open and fair participation and allows each participant to contribute valuable information.

This study adhered to ethical principles such as informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the study. In line with the ethical considerations for this study, participants were treated with respect. The information acquired from them through interviews and documentary evidence was used strictly for research purposes. Only those who provided the same information had access to the raw data.

3.7 Scope and limitations of the study

Due to a lack of responses from the nGAP coordinators, arranging interviews with different universities proved difficult. The researcher was often sent to various places, causing a delay in the progress of the study. The study examined whether the development units within human resources departments of various universities integrate Talent Management (TM) into their New Generation of Academic Programmes (nGAP). Sometimes it took time to tell who coordinated the programme at these universities because, in other universities, Human Resources permitted the researcher to interview specific individuals, while in other institutions, nGAP coordinators were responsible for recruiting research participants. Due to the lack of availability of some coordinators, the interview process took time. Getting ethical approval from other universities proved challenging because amendments were required, whereas in other universities, it was quick and easy. Initially, the researcher planned to interview one nGAP lecturer and one mentor from each of the ten universities. Unfortunately, the unavailability of participants due to their coordinators not informing them of the interview posed some challenges. These shortcomings resulted in delayed research due to the rescheduling of interviews. Another challenge faced by the researcher was internet connectivity. As all interviews were conducted virtually, poor internet connections for some participants caused delays in some interviews. Moreover, the load-shedding rescheduled interview dates further

contributed to these shortcomings. In cases where participants shared information with some bias, verification was used to mitigate and limit unfairness.

3.8 SUMMARY

As stipulated in Chapter One, the study aimed to understand how university development units apply talent management to new cohorts of black women academics. This investigation sought to find ways to make the black women academics become more rounded in teaching, research, service, and leadership. The current chapter provided a detailed description of the research design and methodology. Data for the study were collected employing semi-structured interviews with participants. The interviews were conducted virtually following COVID-19 protocols. Data collected from participants were validated using interviews, recorded tapes, and research documents. Through validation, the data obtained from the participants were strengthened and authenticated. The participants were safeguarded morally and ethically in the pursuit of upholding human dignity and justice. The next chapter, Chapter Four, focuses on the study's results and the data analysis.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the qualitative research findings from the interviews with the nGAP lecturers and mentors from selected universities. The researcher is cognisant of the goal this chapter seeks to achieve. This chapter focuses on research topics already covered in the previous chapter. The research questions are set out clearly in this chapter, and the research themes are organised concerning questions about the nGAP lecturers and the mentors of the nGAP. This chapter addresses the main research questions.

In this chapter, the dominant themes will be presented separately for the nGAP lecturers and their mentors. This separation is because each group presented their themes in response to different questions. Although these themes were developed to investigate the first research question, the study is also concerned with prominent themes related to the principles of the talent management model in managing, mentoring, and advancing the career progression of black female academics who are newly appointed or early in their careers.

The essential aim of the study is to understand how university development units apply talent management to new cohorts of young Black female academics. The existing body of literature deals with the academic development of early-career academics concerning academic publishing (Aprile, Ellem & Lole, 2020:2), academic teaching (Dore & Richards, 2022:3), community engagement, as well as career progress and mobility (Tzanakou, 2020:1), equality in terms of navigating highly gendered and racialised institutional cultures (Lewin, 2019:3). Even though there is a steady introduction of literature of academic development of Black academics, more publications need to be produced to address the academic development and pleasant experiences of young Black academics in South African universities. The main tool for gathering information pertaining to nGAP lecturers and mentors was interviews. Data from information were subsequently analysed.

In this study, data analysis was informed by collected data, transcribing it, categorizing it and moving to explaining, interpreting, and understanding the phenomena examined (Taylor & Gibbs, 2010:1). In order to try and apply the mentioned procedure, the researcher used reflexive thematic analysis. The process or procedure is premised on correct and accurate transcription of data.

4.1.1 Preparing data for analysis

4.1.1.1 Data transcription

Transcribing qualitative data is the first step (Nieuwenhuis, 2016:116). Data accumulated through interviews with research participants were transcribed and verified against recorded tapes in preparation for other processes that flow from transcription. It was essential to transcribe the verbal data into written form in order to make it easier for the researcher to be able to work with it in the ensuing processes (Braun & Clarke, 2012:57). McMullin (2013:140) asserts that transcription of interviews provides a descriptive account of same but does not necessarily explain anything. It becomes imperative that the researcher familiarize himself with the data during the transcription process. Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3355) suggest that this phase is crucial because any qualitative analysis requires reading and re-reading the transcripts. They suggest that one should be familiar with the entire body of data before making any analysis, unlike data presented by someone else. Jotting down essential ideas is critical in this phase and prepares one for a more formal coding process. The researcher worked with verbal data in the form of interviews. Some interviews were conducted face-to-face, while others were conducted through video calling. It was essential to transcribe the verbal data into written form (Braun & Clarke, 2012:57). During the transcription, video interviews gave the researcher an added advantage. The visual data from the semi-structured interviews added to the overall information available for transcription. The video-calling interviews allowed the researcher to use his strengths in processing visual information alongside auditory information rather than relying solely on auditory information. As a researcher, it also made it easy to see the emotions that came with the interviews. This first playback of each interview recording required 'active listening', so I did not take any notes. Byrne (2021:1399) mentions 'active listening' as a crucial aspect of this phase. There was no transcription

software used in this study. The absence of software transcription offered the researcher the opportunity to immerse himself in the data and know it well. The transcript allowed the researcher to validate it alongside the video recordings to ensure that all information captured was aligned. During this process, the researcher noted initial ideas, highlighted quotes from the nGAP lecturers and their mentors, and linked each interview to the research questions (Byrne, 2021:1394). This practice allowed the researcher to begin to make sense of the data, which led to the coding process in phase two.

4.1.1.2 Generate initial codes

Throughout the coding process, the research question (as stated by Braun and Clarke, 2012:62) served as a guide for breaking down a vast amount of information into more manageable chunks. The researcher utilised line-by-line coding to analyse every data segment and chose simple yet effective tools like Microsoft Word to recognise patterns. There needed to be more advanced qualitative data analysis software. The semi-structured interviews for nGAP lecturers (see Appendix E) and mentors (see Appendix F) were dealt with first. The researcher began by highlighting sentences, line-by-line, from the participants' raw data for initial coding. The green colour indicated the positivity of the message, the yellow signified the neutrality of the message, and the red indicated that the message was negative.

Once the researcher became familiar with the data and had some initial thoughts, he began creating initial codes (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017:3356). This procedure helped the researcher to organise the data further and give meaning to the raw data (Braun & Clarke, 2021:331). In reflexive thematic analysis, the researcher gives equal attention to each transcript and generates codes with the same level of rigour throughout the entire data collection process (Braun & Clarke, 2021:332). It is worth noting that each interviewee had both positive and negative aspects.

The researcher did not intend to exclude a possible code even if it seemed more prevailing than the others. The process involved more than distinguishing the dominant code from the less dominant one. During this phase, the researcher utilised

a reflexive approach emphasising their active participation in comprehending the patterns of significance throughout the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2019:590).

4.1.1.3 Search for themes

When analysing data for research, a theme is a pattern that highlights something important or exciting about the information being studied. Braun and Clarke (2012:63) note that this pattern emerges as you move from identifying codes to recognising themes. A theme reveals a significant aspect of the data concerning the research question and reflects consistency or meaning within the data set. Therefore, Dawadi (2015:66) suggests that it is essential to conceptualise codes as the building blocks and combine similar or multiple codes to generate potential themes concerning the research questions. There are numerous ways in which data analysis procedures are broadly defined. The coded data is reviewed and analysed regarding how different codes may be combined according to shared meanings so that they may form themes or sub-themes. This will often involve collapsing multiple codes that share a similar underlying concept or feature of the data into one single code. Equally, one particular code may turn out to be representative of an over-arching narrative within the data and be promoted as a sub-theme or even a theme (Braun & Clarke, 2012). In order to ensure that the themes were accurately derived, the researcher read each transcription verbatim, underlining words, or short phrases that summarize what is being said in the text, after it has been transcribed verbatim. My aim was to give a summary of each element discussed in the transcript and convert them into themes.

4.2 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

The organisation of the study considered the adoption of thematic analysis because the intention was to analyse the participants' interviews by considering the analysis of their interactions and social practices (Sarantakos, 2013:323). Identifying themes or categories within a data body is the goal of thematic analysis (Fulcher, 2010:5). According to Howitt and Cramer (2010:211), a researcher's thematic analysis task is to choose a few themes that adequately reflect the textual data. Braun and Clarke (2012:2) define *thematic analysis* as a process of methodically recognising,

categorising and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) within a data set. They also state that the researcher can see and make sense of collective or shared meanings. It is a cluster of related categories that convey similar meanings and is usually the result of the inductive analytical process characteristic of qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2012:3). Thematic analysis requires familiarity with data. Coding can begin when the researcher has familiarised himself or herself with the data. The themes that will be discussed from sections 4.1.1.1 were obtained from interviews conducted with categories of interviewees explained in 4.3 and 4.3.1 below.

4.3 CATEGORIES OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

After each interview, the participants were given a document to sign and return to the researcher, which states the researcher’s ethical obligation to ensure that the participants would benefit directly or indirectly from implementing the research outcome.

In line with ethics requirements and the POPI act, minimum information on the categories of participants is provided in the table below based on gender, job title, province, years of experience, and assigned (on nGAP academic lecturers) or looking after (pertaining mentors). The nGAP lecturers are numbered according to the order of the interviews. Not all mentors were present; hence, those mentors who were absent are indicated as *not applicable*:

	Five nGAP academic lecturers			
Gender	Job title	Province	Years of experience	Assigned:
Female	nGAP lecturer (1)	Free State	3 years	Senior lecturer (1)
Female	nGAP lecturer (2)	KZN	2 years	Not applicable
Female	nGAP lecturer (3)	Gauteng	3 years	Associated Professor (2)

Female	nGAP lecturer (4)	Eastern Cape	2 years	Lecturer (3)
Female	nGAP lecturer (5)	Limpopo	2 years	Not applicable
Mentors of the nGAP lecturers				
Gender	Job title	Province	Years of experience	Looking after:
Female	Senior Lecturer (1)	Free State	6 years	nGAP academic (1)
Male	Associate Professor (2)	Gauteng	21 years	nGAP academic (3)
Female	Lecturer (3)	Eastern Cape	20 years	nGAP academic (4)

Table 4.1: Minimum information on the participants

The responses of research participants are presented separately. The participants were the nGAP lecturers and their mentors. The preparation of the interview considered a few factors which make the results of this research either successful or not. The other factor was that due administrative challenges, there would be some of cooperation. However, the research followed all necessary ethical procedures to gain access to the research participants (see 3.6). The purpose of the interviews was explained, and identification of groups needed for the study clearly stipulated. The confidentiality of information and anonymity of interviews as well as their right to withdraw their involvement, if need be, were also mentioned so that the respondents could be assured of feeling at ease when involved in responding to interviews (see 3.6). The collected data were grouped into themes and related categories which were interconnected to the research questions of this study (see 3.1.2). In this data presentation and analysis some of the comments and statements by the participants are quoted verbatim to illustrate and emphasise the themes and categories.

With the focus of this study being to determine how development units within selected universities use talent management as a developmental support mechanism in relation to new generations of black women academics, academic development as a paradigm started to become increasingly important whilst I was analysing the data. To understand their academic developmental stories and journeys, it became fundamentally important to me to fully immerse myself into their experiences without passing any kind of judgement about their experiences.

Sutherland and Petersen (2009:3) make clear observations about what success of early-career academics really means. Success in academia primarily centres on research, which encompasses the following: research output, quality, productivity, and competitive grant funding. Sutherland and Petersen further state that successful researchers need to have “strong, wide and well-established research networks, a growing reputation or profile in their discipline or community, and a solid record of winning competitive research grants.” They also argue that to be successful, the academics should have a strong sense of self-efficacy as opposed to low self-efficacy. Dore and Richards (2021:3) observe that low self-efficacy has been evidenced as having negative implications for aspects of job role performance. There are suggested interventions to increase early-career academics’ self-efficacy, such as timetabling to be re-thought by managers such that, where possible, new staff can teach in their specialist area of study and be provided with a stable physical environment in which to do so (Sadler, 2013:16). The other of form of intervention, according to Zhang et al. (2019:390) is that emotions and confidence may be boosted ‘by fostering and maintaining a fair reward system that recognizes good performance in a timely manner’. Lastly, according to Sutherland and Petersen (2009:8), successful academics aspire to holistic understanding of success that includes personal satisfaction and balance, alongside productivity and collegiality.

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews with the nGAP lecturers

This section consists of various experience narratives by the participants. In this study, I utilized semi-structured interviews with five young Black academics and three mentors. The initial plan was to interview one nGAP lecture from each of the 10 universities identified as well as their mentors. However, due to unavailability of some

participants and other reasons unknown to me, I ended up with eight participants in total. Questions that were posed to nGAP lecturers and mentors were not the same based, on the roles these participants play.

4.3.1.1 Research study question 1

One of the main objectives of this study was to determine how development units within selected universities use talent management as a developmental support mechanism in relation to new generations of black women academics, so that they become more rounded in teaching, research, service, and leadership. A total of five nGAP lecturers from five different universities were interviewed. They were asked questions which related to the nGAP's principles and goals that relate directly to their professional development. The researcher explained the format of the interview before it took place so that participants were fully aware of what was expected of them.

Question 1: Were the principles and goals of the nGAP clearly defined to you when you joined this programme?

(a) What are some of the nGAP's principles and goals that relate directly to your professional development?

(b) Are your professional needs met by this development programme?

The researcher was deliberate in selecting the participants, particularly the nGAP lecturers. Black female academics were recruited to understand their lived experiences together with those of their mentors as reflected in their conversation with the researcher. The participants were expected to stick to the question, but they were also encouraged to elaborate should they feel the need to do so. Below are the responses to question one from the nGAP lecturers. The researcher did not modify or correct any responses from the participants. The following section will be the analysis of responses regarding question one. The researcher in this section has combined all the matching themes and came up with one theme from all the nGAP participants who answered question one. He combined learning and development (nGAP lecturer 1), development goals (nGAP lecturer 2), induction process (nGAP lecturer 3), career responsibilities (nGAP lecturer 4), and quality of work (nGAP lecturer 5). These themes

were all combined into theme 1, entitled: *Training and development*. All sub-themes were all carefully selected to match the theme.

4.3.1.1 (i) Analysis of research study question 1 (Pertaining to nGAP lecturers)

Theme 1	Sub-themes
<p>Training and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices • Networking opportunities • Mentoring • Performance review • Induction pack • Teaching and research excellence • Organisational culture

The data presented by the participants showed some contradictions in terms of how the principles and goals of the nGAP were made known to each participant. Some were quite happy with the way the principles and goals were explained to them. nGAP lecturer 1 stated the following:

“The programme was fully explained, and we were given a context of what it seeks to achieve. The nGAP programme prepared me to align myself with its principles and goals that pertain to my professional development. Therefore, my personal and professional needs have been met so far”.

These contradictory opinions centred on a particular theme, which gave the researcher an insight into some topics within the same discourse. Understanding and developing the nGAP initiative has presented both opportunities and challenges because different universities have embraced this programme in different ways. The researcher got the sense that the principles and goals of the nGAP were understood differently by new

academic recruits. For example, the nGAP Lecturer 3 was quite clear about the way the principles and goals had been explained to her:

“This has been an interesting journey for me. Before I can answer your question, I was part of the group that went to Johannesburg for a small conference with all people from different universities who were in the nGAP. The conference was basically trying to show us that there were also other nGAP lecturers from other universities. One of the principles and goals is to groom me basically as a young academic, so that when the programme comes to an end, I will be a fully-fledged academic who has grown and learned because one of the goals was that when I have finished the nGAP I’ll be able to fill in the position of an academic who’s about to retire. My understanding of this programme is to fill in the gap of someone who is about to retire”.

The principles and goals of the nGAP were not only explained to new lecturers but presented as a vehicle to improve certain skills that were necessary in developing the new cohort of academics. This observation was shared by nGAP Lecturer 4, who was also happy with the way the principle and goals of the nGAP were explained to her, but she also added that added some aspects of what the programme was able to achieve as an objective:

“The nGAP principles and goals have been fully explained to me. I think in my case it was more about attending workshops that have been made available to us. Our nGAP coordinator from our institution alerts and sends us these different workshops whenever they come and then it is up to us to choose whichever we want to attend. In 2021 I attended one where they were dealing writing manuscript. I was at the process of writing my own manuscript at the time, so it came at the right time when I really needed the training, and it was quite productive”.

The researcher was of the opinion that the way the nGAP principles and goals were introduced to the nGAP lectures determined whether each trainee was getting all the developmental benefits and needs of the programme or not. Though the nGAP Lecturers 1, 3, and 4 showed some optimism in how the programme was explained to them, Lecturers 2 and 5 did not show the same kind of optimism. According to these lecturers, there was no proper induction, which may show that the university concerned was less informed about what the nGAP was all about. It emerged, from the interviews, that some nGAP lecturers were only handed documents to read about

the nGAP. nGAP Lecturer 2 was certain that the principles and goals were not discussed or explained in their first meeting:

“No, not really, because we were just given some documents to read and then we went through the induction, just like any other staff member. So, we didn't really get into the nGAP policies and all those things. If I remember correctly, there was a meeting for new staff members rather than the one pertaining to the nGAP. Nevertheless, we were a mixed group. Nothing was explained about the principles and goals of the nGAP. However, I will share with you what I read from their document. As a cohort, we were described as a new generation of academics, and they encouraged young people to continue their studies, and yeah, without having to worry about funding and all that, so I think they're just trying to encourage more young people to enter academia. Yes, I agree. That's basically what we were told. That's what I read in the documents. Yeah, I thought we only attended this programme to engage lecturers, but they just showed us the people whom we should contact if maybe we were having issues and all that and other previous nGAP lecturers were giving us their experiences that they had in this program and all that. So yeah, basically that is that.”

nGAP Lecturer 5 also added her voice about the lack of explanation of principles and goals to new recruits, concerning the nGAP:

“Initially, no, because I was given the SOP document when I first started out, which stated that my HOD would assign me a teaching load. I didn't know much about the nGAP; how it differs from a regular job and what type of development to expect. Previously, I worked for the department as a contract lecturer. To me it felt like I was just going to carry on doing what I did before.”

This information from the participants revealed that the technicality of documents, in some instances, lacked some clarity in terms of what the programme seeks to achieve. Based on this assumption, the researcher was inclined to conclude that universities, where nGAP Lecturers 1, 3, and 4 came from, have shown some interest in the learning and academic development of their new trainees/recruits. One other aspect of the information shared by the participant (nGAP Lecturer 3) was the lack of transparency when it comes to the distribution of funds from the programme. The funds could not reach everyone who is/was part of the programme. As a result this participant does not feel her professional needs have been met.

“My professional needs may not have been fully met because of expenses that are not covered by the nGAP funds. However, the nGAP gave me all developmental tool and the course coordinator is supportive.”

Furthermore, senior lecturers in her department tend to delegate a lot of work to her. Even though a course coordinator plays a supporting role, she is not enjoying the same support from her department in terms of learning the ropes and what she needs to improve regarding her duties.

It was evident that nGAP Lecturer 4 praised the programme coordinator for sharing information related to upcoming workshops that were meant to further help the new recruits to develop their professional needs. Her mentor has been instrumental in ensuring that her academic development is a priority. Her department has been supportive to her developmental needs. nGAP Lecturer 5 brings a different twist to the whole equation because she initially did not know what the nGAP was all about until much later in the year when she insisted, she needed induction.

“When I decided to submit my application for the nGAP, I also applied for the other lecturing position, so they could consider me for either position. I was accepted in the nGAP training. When I started with the nGAP, my load started to pile up to the level of my regular lecturing position. So that’s when I started to enquire. What is the difference between being the nGAP and the normal lecturer? So, then I spoke to other nGAP lecturers from our cohort who were also new recruits and they told me what’s happening in their departments. This practice continued where I was given a load for the whole class and was also given honours students to supervise and the master student to co-supervise. It was when I was like, no, I feel like I was doing too. I also wanted to be treated like other new recruits. So that was the issue. And then we attended an induction much later in the year which I felt they should have done earlier, probably when I came in would have given me more clarity about the programme.”

The researcher came to the understanding that this lecturer was not enjoying all the benefits that should have come with the programme. A trainee does not have to wait for almost a year to be inducted. Even though this participant claimed that her previous contract lecturing position came through for her, the nGAP initiative was designed to fully benefit all trainees.

Question one presented a few key statements from participants, which determined whether they felt comfortable with the way the programme was introduced to them. The researcher noted contradictory responses from participants. It appeared that the nGAP principles and goals were explained to some participants, whereas others were only given documents to familiarize themselves with principles and goals of the initiative. This section presented themes according to the responses given by participants regarding question one. The researcher concludes by giving a summary of learning and development as a theme in connection to nGAP's principles and goals.

Summary of theme 1: *Teaching and development*

The literature on teaching and development of early-career academics mentions the importance of equipping ECAs so that they do not feel any sense of low confidence during the beginning of their careers (Dore & Richards, 2022:1). It became apparent, during the interviews with the nGAP lecturers, that some of them had more 'confidence' based on the programme's principles and goals that were adequately explained to them (Hemmings, 2012:171). According to Remmik et al. (2011:187) the early years of an academic career greatly impact a university lecturer's understanding of teaching and learning, their values, and their professional identity as a scholar. This understanding becomes meaningful when best practices of talent management in higher education have been incorporated in order to maximise the talent of individuals and institutions for personal, institutional, and economic goals and stakeholder benefit (Aina & Atan, 2020:2). Having reviewed different literature, the researcher got convinced that one effective talent management strategy to boost the credibility and confidence of ECAs is to offer more networking opportunities. This realisation came with an understanding that proper mentoring strategies are in place and implemented well. In order for the nGAP principles and goals to be realized in terms of career planning, interpersonal skills and leadership skill, there needs to be constructive performance review of these ECAs (Seeletse & Thabane, 2016:112). The nGAP was initiated with a purpose to equip early-career academics with growth opportunities, support and encouragement through an organised and well-planned induction process (Das & Baruah, 2013:11). Therefore, teaching and development are an essential part of talent management that can be applied in the nGAP to help new recruits transition

from being a leading academic to an academic leader through rigorous teaching and research mentoring. Preparing the ECAs in this manner opens an opportunity for them to fit in any university culture (Iversen, Eady & Wessely, 2014:308).

4.3.1.2 Research study question 2

All the nGAP lecturers interviewed revealed how they are evaluated or assessed. Data collected from these evaluation tools is used by the Department of Higher Education to determine how well the nGAP lecturers are progressing.

Question: How is your professional development evaluated in this programme?

The researcher was determined to find out how the progress of the nGAP is documented. The participants shared their views about their experiences concerning their assessment. The researcher felt that the theme that was appropriate for this section was *assessment report* because it emerged from most nGAP lecturers that a report was compiled twice a year and then forwarded to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

4.3.1.2 (ii) Analysis of research study question 2 (Pertaining to nGAP lecturers)

Theme 2	Sub-themes
Assessment report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective • Methodology • Report structure • Feedback report

The researcher enquired from the nGAP lecturers the method used to evaluate their progress. All participants shared similar information regarding the way their progress

is evaluated. The common practice was for the nGAP scholar and mentor to sit down to discuss their progress. The report is also shared with the programme coordinator. Eventually the report is sent to DHET. nGAP Lecturer 2 said the following:

“We just send the reports to DHET. It's not like there's somebody who comes from the department and meet up with us regarding the feedback from the report. The report is sent I twice a year to DHET, which lets the department know that this is what we have done in terms of our plans. However, we have never received any response from DHET which should indicate that they've checked all our reports, and probably provide some advice on how to improve the programme in our university”.

nGAP Lecturer 3 also mentioned that reports are gathered twice a year. These reports are prepared by both the mentor and the Head of the Department. According to her, the reports include various aspects of the programme, whether good or bad. nGAP Lecturer 4 mentioned the same thing, even though she sounded unsure about the method used:

“ Umm. Evaluation, I can't really say there is a specific way this is carried out. I'm not so sure, but what I know is that we send out reports to the Department of Higher Education twice a year. That report has different sections where you need to answer about your personal development, about programmes you attended or how you find the nGAP in your institution, and all of that. So, we do have those reports that we send out twice a year. It is signed by the mentor, my PhD supervisor, the HOD of the department, as well as the nGAP coordinator. However, my mentor and I go beyond than just addressing issues on the report, we even address other matters for improvement through emails.”

nGAP Lecturer 5 also concurs that there is a report that is submitted twice year to the Department of Higher Education and Training.

Summary of theme 2: Assessment Report

As an acceptable practice, Moosa (2020:82) states that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be built into the policy framework of the nGAP to inform the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of such an initiative. Therefore, documenting the progress of the nGAP academics is a vital exercise. However, Moosa

(2020:76) notes that the submission of progress reports from universities was a challenge. Moosa felt that the whole assessment process for nGAP academics still poses problems because these trainee academics did not seem to know the objective of their assessment. Barnes, Du Plessis and Frantz (2019:4) state that academic career development is a fundamental strategy for higher education institutions to achieve strategic objectives and, in turn, is critical for the achievement and sustainability of national priorities. They further suggest that any assessment related to early-career development should have objectives so that it becomes meaningful and relevant in the process. Regardless of the methodology used, the whole process should be fair and transparent. Most nGAP lecturers felt that the programme was done as a tick box exercise. They want to get feedback from the Department of Higher Education and Training regarding their progress in the nGAP. The whole reporting, according one nGAP lecturer, should be improved so that it is a credible and transparent process.

The next question deals with how mentorship contributes towards developing the nGAP lecturers.

4.3.1.3 Research study question 3

This question sought to find out if mentorship has benefitted the nGAP lecturers' aspirations to progress with their chosen academic careers. Recent studies have shown that effective mentorship is important for mentees to attain professional success, enhance their self-belief (Schriever & Grainger, 2019:720), and to develop the collective identity of a teaching community of practice (Simmonds & Dicks, 2018:283). The researcher attempted to consolidate all themes he gathered into one dominant one.

Question 3: How has mentorship supported your professional development journey to move forward with your academic career?

Theme 3	Sub-themes
Mentorship support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-solving • Decision making • Reflection • Constructive feedback • Increased self-awareness

The researcher was eager to see how mentors relate to their mentees with regard to their development trajectory. The issue of mentorship support has presented some opportunities and challenges to participants in relation to their development. nGAP Lecturer 1 agreed that the relationship with her mentor has been going well but there needs to be some structure in the nGAP in terms of career progression and how to reach specific targets. The participant felt that there should be different performance management systems. These targets should be aligned with the university's targets. The researcher got the sense that the nGAP lecturer had some misgivings in terms of professional relationship with her mentor:

“Well, initially the support was very smooth. You know, I relied on my mentor with a lot of things. I would contact him when I needed things and when I was in need. Maybe some assistance here and there, until we started not getting along at the personal level and that affected everything. Yeah, it affected everything. Now, I couldn't meet the guy, and that was that. So, we've not been meeting since 2020. The mentorship was initially helpful. The guy really helped me a lot, even with my proposal development, he helped me a lot with my research but in 2020 that was when things went south. Since then, we have not been talking from a mentor, mentee level. Yeah, I've been on my own from 2020, so the data collection, the analysis I have been doing on my own not with my promoters. My mentor is just relaxed and yeah, it's understandable because we we're not getting along on certain things”.

Even though the reason for the fallout between this lecturer and her mentor was never mentioned, it posed some challenges to her academic development. In the absence of a mentor, the researcher struggled to understand the progress of this lecturer in the nGAP. Though she mentioned that the development department is lending her some assistance, it is not helping her fully to for her develop. The researcher was curious to find out what it was like for her when she was unable to obtain help. Despite numerous invitations, no one from the development office agreed to participate in the interview. Since no one wanted to be accountable for this nGAP lecturer's development, it proved to be a serious challenge. Some nGAP lecturers face astonishing challenges. A case in point is the experience of nGAP Lecturer 3, who had this to say:

“I would say I had two mentors during the three years. With the first mentor we only met twice in 2019. We had never spoken after those meetings. I don't think she was well placed to mentor me as we were both in the same position in terms of studies and age. I guess our relationship was affected by those facts, hence I was referred to a more senior mentor. I feel more supported by my new mentor. I am also getting the development that I really need. Being mentored by an experienced academic expose one to more opportunities. This is because they are always willing to share information about various things like upcoming conferences and other meetings that are relevant to my development. A person with less experience may not be privy to that kind of information”.

Based on the researcher's observation, the participant's professional relationship with her newly assigned mentor was good.

nGAP Lecturer 4 has revealed that her relationship with the mentor yielded positive results because it prepared her to co-supervise honours students. This is the skill she acquired because of the professional partnership with her mentor.

While there are participants who have narrated some difficult encounters with their mentors, there are some who sang praises of their mentors, like nGAP Lecturer:

“My development has been greatly influenced by mentorship. I know there will always be someone holding my hand in this nGAP process, someone who will correct me if I am not doing well. Since I was thrown in the deep end at the beginning, there is guidance now. I have a very good relationship with my mentor. He is always interested to know whether I am coping or not. He always wants to double check anything that

needs to be submitted. He doesn't assume that I know everything. He always wants to know if I need help."

Mentorship to someone's academic development plays a vital, especially if the professional relationship has been established from the beginning. The table below, under summary of theme 3, shows some of the experiences shared by the participants regarding the relationship they have with their mentors.

Summary of theme 3: Mentorship support

Research indicates that mentors and mentees who develop and manage successful mentoring partnerships demonstrate several specific, identifiable skills that enable learning and change to take place (Eller et al., 2014:8). They assert that both mentors and mentees should apply the following core skills in their mentoring partnership:

Problem-solving	This is regarded as a necessary mentoring skill to equip mentees with active listening skills (Smith and Burton, 2013:2). This is an indication both from the mentor and mentee that their concerns have been heard and understood.
Decision-making	Successful mentorship processes are when mentors increase mentees' productivity by empowering them through encouraging creative ideas in decision-making (Mohammed, 2018:395).
Reflection	Mentoring is believed to facilitate collaboration and shared problem-solving by involving ECAs and mentors in a reciprocal exchange of ideas through reflection on information (Mgaiwa & Kapinga, 2021:117).
Constructive feedback	Lack of mentoring among ECAs may affect development, which led some nGAP academics complaining that it was as if they had been thrown into the deep end without having anyone to assess and provide constructive feedback that would help them to reach

	a higher level in their developmental training (Mgaiwa & Kapinga, 2021:123).
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It became evident in question 3 that a lack of professional relationship and support between a mentor and mentee may have ripple effects on the professional development of the mentee. The academic experience and maturity of the mentor may have a positive influence on the development of the nGAP lecturer. This came from the interview with nGAP Lecturer 3.

The next selection focuses on the question that sought to establish if Black female academic's aspirations and goals are achieved through mentorship as a way of addressing biases in terms of hiring the nGAP lecturers.

4.3.1.4 Research study question 4

It is deemed essential for early-career academics to receive mentoring, but it may be more beneficial for Black females who pursue academic careers at both White and Black universities in South Africa, in part because they face disparities in both their academic and personal experiences (Sadler, 2019:157).

Question: Is the mentorship process in this programme helping black female academics to thrive in their field by reducing biases?

Theme 4	Sub-themes
Mentorship reduces bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire cultural change • Boost black women's participation • Combat gender bias • Substitute for stereotypes

The researcher noticed a bit of scepticism from the participants' responses, but it was important to understand the mentorship role in relation to biases towards Black female academics. nGAP Lecturer 1 felt that there are no biases at her university:

"The programme is well placed for black female academics and more opportunities are afforded to them. So, I would say the issue of biases at my institution has not been flagged as a problem. The mentorship process in the nGAP is playing a big role in ensuring that black female academics thrive in their field".

nGAP Lecturer 2 felt that the issue of bias was not a problem for her because she mentioned that it had nothing to do with gender. The researcher was of the impression that the participant might have misunderstood the question because it sought to address the presence of men in the programme. In essence, the question was designed to understand if Black female academics were afforded the same opportunities as their male counterparts. For her it was a matter of competition as she revealed that she was progressing much when compared to her male colleagues. The question required much more than seeing which gender is doing better.

The researcher noticed that some participants were focusing on this gender battle as witnessed in the response of nGAP Lecturer 3:

"I wouldn't speak for the university because I'm I don't know what is happening with other peoples in the programme and their mentors, besides my close colleague who's also a friend. I can only speak on what I know. She has been mentored by a male person who has not been supportive. However, she is still with the same mentor. All in all, the mentorship process has not been helpful in some areas in giving support to the nGAP lecturers."

It would have been helpful to hear the participant sharing her experiences in relation to her development in the nGAP programme as a Black female academic instead of making this a gender battle. There were some participants who mentioned that the number of Black female academics has been increasing since nGAP started. nGAP Lecturer 4 made this observation. Generally, the response to this question was quite positive. nGAP Lecturer 5 said:

" Yes, I do think there are lots of opportunities available for black women academics. I was very grateful when I saw the criteria in the nGAP, because I initially thought that

the programme would give preference men. In my department there are more male PhD candidates than women. I was the only female from Agribusiness department but there is going to be another female joining us in 2023, so I am quite excited.”

Summary of theme 4: Mentorship reduces bias

Mentorship has been identified as a key intervention mechanism to assist early-career academics with career progression. In advanced countries, mentorship is widely used and is part of organisational culture (Iversen, Eady & Wessely, 2014:308). Further, Muschallik and Pull (2016:2010) state that mentorship programmes are increasingly widespread in academia, though little is known about their effects, especially when it comes to mentoring black female academics. Mentoring enables black female academics to excel in their careers (Mukhwana et al., 2020:11) through three key routes. First, mentoring empowers black female academics by raising their awareness of promotion requirements (Prozesky, 2006:88). Second, mentoring increases and supports their participation in academia through offering advice on work-life balance (Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2016:416) and management of priorities (Misra et al., 2011:3). Third, it creates a supportive and collegial academic environment for black female academics (Maddrell et al., 2019:7). Similarly, mentoring supports black female academics in making key career decisions (Caretta et al., 2018:265), such as applying for a position in a higher rank, or with better conditions of employment (Maddrell et al., 2019:10). Mentoring also supports black female academics in increasing their production of scholarly articles (Dobele et al., 2014; Obers, 2014). The enhancement of research production through mentoring occurs by firstly developing their research skills, of both a “soft” and technical nature (Schulze, 2010; Schmidt & Faber, 2016). Mentoring further provides access to wider networks from which useful collaborations can be forged or information and contacts can be obtained (Obers, 2014; Meschitti & Smith, 2017). Mentoring, in addition, improves their understanding on the critical role of conducting research and producing outputs in academic career progression.

There was a perception from most participants that more Black female academics are becoming part of the programme.

The next question sought to understand how the nGAP is implemented at selected universities. One may get the sense that the implementation process is aligned with

other universities but according to the nGAP lecturers, this programme is implemented differently.

4.3.1.5 Research study question 5

It is becoming increasingly critical to review, critique, and assess Academic Development programmes to inform ongoing and future programme design. It is necessary to have a deep understanding of the programme to be evaluated before you can evaluate it (Chalmers & Gardiner 2015:55). In this section, the nGAP lecturers were asked if the implementation of academic development programs at their institutions has been successful.

Question: How well has the nGAP developmental programme been implemented at this institution in your opinion?

(a) Is it preparing you for future senior positions in academia?

Theme	Sub-themes
<p>Implementation of a development programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support black female academics and career progression • Networking skills and strategies • Improve and enhance administrative capabilities • Career trajectory

While one may feel that the implementation of nGAP in different universities follows similar processes and procedures, this may be misleading. One nGAP lecturer is pleased with the implementation process of the nGAP at her university as she had this to say:

“I am happy with the implementation of the nGAP at my university, however, I feel like the programme needs more structure so that we all follow the same format in terms of

reporting and how reports are documented. All in all, the programme is managed well, and I am also getting opportunities to present at various conferences, which it is a good step in the right direction. My mentor is giving me all the support I truly need, and she wants the best for me.

The programme has already prepared me to aspire more for senior positions because of the opportunities I am currently exposed to.”

Some participants did not feel that the programme was properly implemented. nGAP Lecturer 2 felt that the programme was not properly implemented at her university, or people who were tasked to implement it, do not take it seriously. Support from the training department is not there. Lack of communication creates some frustration, so communication needs to be improved going forward. Bureaucracy has been shown to have weakened the nGAP programme at her university. She does not feel that the programme is preparing her for a senior position in academia due to a lack of direction in how the programme is implemented:

“It discourages one to see a better future in academia. I am sure the programme has good objectives and goals, but the administratively the programme seems to be lacking quite several things. I am not sure if those who have been working in the development department are trying to discourage the new cohorts of academics because they were never exposed to this kind of training”.

The researcher sees a need for new lecturers who be accepted to the nGAP programme to be properly inducted. Generally, participants were positive about the implementation of the programme in their universities. nGAP Lecturer 3 had the following to say about the implementation of the programme at her university:

“I think the nGAP is integrated nicely at the university because some of the nGAP colleagues from other universities do not even know their course coordinator of this programme, this gives me comfort that my university is on the right track. They (colleagues) do not even know how much funds have the DHET allocated to the institution for their own training. In my own opinion the programme needs to be improved in terms of documenting some of the nGAP lecturers’ complaints, so that there are steps taken to mitigate such complaints in future. Sometimes we are being told that we were afforded an opportunity we did not deserve, which really leaves bitter-sweet taste in my mouth. It sounds as if they are doing us a favour by including us in

the programme, which is so unfortunate. It seems like there is no value expected from you as a trainee, and as a black female academic trainee you have nothing to contribute to the programme.

I feel like the programme is not preparing me a senior position in academia as a result I am contemplating to utilize my skills in the private sector. I get the sense that they are always looking for mistakes instead of supporting me. The environment is not welcoming.

nGAP Lecturer 4 did not believe that all university employees know how the nGAP works. As a result, this creates a challenge about knowing its true objectives and goals:

“Only those who were inducted into this programme have a better understanding of what it is all about. The programme is not fully explained to everyone in the department because you still get colleagues who are given more workload than others. I don’t know how the nGAP coordinator or the HOD can make everyone in the university aware of the nGAP programme. It is quite evident that other employees do not know much about the programme when we have meetings. Having more people understanding the policies of the nGAP will be quite useful. Through this programme I was able to get into academia, which has been something that piqued my interest for a long time. I applied for various teaching positions, but I never got a call-up for the interview. However, through this programme I am gaining lecturing experience. I believe this should be able to open doors in terms of higher positions.”

Some participants believed that the programme looks good on the paper, but it lacks a bit on the implementation aspect. This sentiment was shared by the nGAP Lecturer 5. There are aspects of the programme which this participant likes. It involves community engagement as it prepares her for some demanding duties involved in academia. The issue of sharing information and heavy workload seemed to trouble this participant, as she revealed:

“Information should be shared to everyone so that they know what the programme is all about. The 20% workload should be addressed well because the workload seems to be a problem with how it has been explained to people who are part of this programme.

I do believe that the programme is preparing me for senior future position especially when it comes to reporting. I must be honest with you though; lecturing is quite demanding. It is not only about standing in front of students and talk but there is a lot involved. I am currently involved in the community engagement project and doing some administrative duties to prepare me for some demanding duties in academia. Focus on one aspect of your work will not broaden the scope for you. You will only be stuck in one thing. I would like to see myself being a senior lecturer one day, so that requires some preparation in terms of producing my teaching portfolio of evidence.”

Summary of theme 5: Implementation of a development programme

It is imperative to note that the nGAP is implemented uniformly across all South African universities. Those universities that have successfully implemented this programme can assist those that are still struggling. The training department of most universities should be appropriately trained to provide professional services to nGAP scholars/lecturers. As far as responsibilities are concerned, there should be a clear definition of each role. The researcher had difficulty recruiting participants for this study due to the lack of a central department in charge of the nGAP. At some universities, nGAP is a part of the HR department, while at others, it is a part of a different department. There was a lot of frustration and wasted time as a result. nGAP's goals should be clearly communicated so that there is no confusion. nGAP lecturers/scholars must be mentored by experienced scholars who will inspire them to strive for senior positions in academia.

The researcher observed that South African universities need fundamental changes to adapt to the transformational national and regional realities of the 21st century. In implementing academic development programmes for early career academics, universities should remember that participation in these programmes will help academics clarify career paths and goals. This will help academics build leadership skills and analyse individual priorities in the context of a broader strategic context.

Findings from mentors of nGAP lecturers are discussed in the next section. In accordance with the availability of lecturers, five nGAP lecturers were interviewed. Even though they indicated availability, mentors for nGAP lecturers 2 and 5 did not

take part in the interviews. Thus, the interviews documented will contain only the responses of mentors who participated in the interview.

The questions posed to the mentors were different from the ones which the nGAP lecturers were asked. The nGAP lecturers will not be referred to by their actual names. They will only be referred to as the nGAP Lecturer 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. There has been an evolution of transforming transcribed raw data to initial codes and finally the final themes. The diagram below shows all final themes that were created as a result of the semi-structured interviews pertaining to the nGAP lecturers. The diagrams in Appendix I and Appendix J show the structure of a thematic network, which is adapted from Stirling (2001). The first diagram shows the structure of a thematic network related to the final themes of the nGAP lecturers and the second diagram shows the structure of a thematic network related to the final themes of the mentors of the nGAP lecturers.

4.4.1 Semi-Structured interviews pertaining to the mentors of the nGAP lecturers

4.4.1.1 Research study question 1

It is stated, in the Standard Operating Procedures for the New Generation of Academic Programme document (2018:1), that the nGAP supports universities in recruiting new academics in accordance with their staffing and development plans. In this section, the researcher will explore the mechanisms selected universities use to mentor and manage the career advancement of nGAP black female academics. Furthermore, this section is directly responding to the research questions of this study.

Question: What are the models used by your university to manage, mentor and advancement of academic career progression of the nGAP black female academics underpinned by principles of TM model?

(a) Do you have policy decisions, management interventions, and process that guide your human resources to promote the principles of TM models during the nGAP's developmental programme?

(b) In the absence of such policies and management interventions, what guides your human resources to evaluate the career progression of the nGAP academics towards academic growth and development?

Themes	Sub-themes
Mentor-mentee meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill-related topics • Career story topics • Feedback topics • Situational active topics • Career path topics • Leadership topics • Long and short-term goal topics • University related topics

The researcher felt that Mentor 1's responses correlated with those of her mentee regarding the open approach taken by the university in terms of specific prescriptions that were given to them. They both agreed that there was no specific prescription given to them to follow. Mentor 1 explained what she meant by no specific prescription:

"I remember they stressed that we should meet every week for a few minutes. It is also an informal relationship where we aim to ensure that the mentees are developing in four areas. Therefore, they suggested that we take care of their learning and teaching needs. Including their research, their professional development, and their administration and leadership. So what I've been doing with my mentee (nGAP lecturer A) was just haphazard because we were not working with a specific programme from the university."

She revealed that there was a contract that they signed from nGAP and it provided the duties of the mentor. Among those duties is supporting the mentee in developing in these four areas: research, teaching and learning, professional development,

leadership and administration. The researcher noticed that the mentor took the initiative to make contacts with her mentee. She said:

"I would go into her office and find out how her PhD studies were progressing, and also find out if she needed any kind of support. We wrote quite a few articles together. That is the research part. Then, for her professional development, I advised her to join various professional bodies and to become affiliated with them. The pillars of academia were the ones that guided us.

I must say, all policies are outlined in the nGAP contract. There is a report that is supposed to be submitted every year. That particular report has different sections that we are supposed to discuss, the meetings you had with the mentee, and what was discussed in that particular meeting."

The mentor explained to the researcher that the report inquired if the mentee faced any challenges, and what solutions she provided as a mentor. In the report, there is a section asking if the mentor needs any support. Then the report states that are different workshops that both the mentor and the mentee are encouraged to attend together.

The mentor further explained that her meetings with her mentee extend beyond the stipulations of the contract. Even though the contract requires them to meet weekly, they also have short virtual meetings. Also, there are many things they should do together. In essence, the meetings are meant to encourage mentors to keep on supporting the mentees.

Mentor 2 revealed that she took over from somebody who was already mentoring his mentee (nGAP Lecturer 3). Their professional relationship has been ongoing for a few months. The first person that was assigned to the mentee was somebody who was also busy with PhD studies. The mentor stated that she felt that this could be why it did not work. The mentor suggested that the nGAP people should assign someone who has already worked in the field, maybe someone who has a PhD. This is because she is mentoring someone who is pursuing a PhD in that field. In the interview, it became apparent that the mentor was not sure whether there were rules and regulations in place. These regulations specified what kind of mentors would be needed for these mentees.

She felt that the right person to be assigned to a mentee should be an individual who is more experienced. According to the mentor's assessment, the person assigned to the mentee should have been in the field for several years. He or she should also have some form of experience to share with the mentee as it worked well with the participant's mentee. The mentor also revealed that she and the mentee come from similar departments, though not the same. She is from the African Languages department, while the person that was initially assigned to her was in Linguistics. They were basically colleagues and of the same age-group. The mentor mentioned that her experience was quite credible since she had been at her university for over 15 years. The mentor also explained that her work experience was not the only qualification for being assigned a mentee, but also her age. Her approach to the mentee was not only professional but nurturing as well. Her academic experience enabled her to impart a lot of knowledge to her mentee, empowering her in the process. She wanted to be helpful to her mentee by sharing both positive and negative experiences with her on how to make it in academia. Having a mentee made her look forward to guiding someone on their academic journey.

She stated that when she came in, she did not feel as if there were models that were in place. She was only told what she needed to do. She was excited about this opportunity because she remembers telling her mentee that they were in the same field. The mentor felt that her mentee was struggling a lot.

According to her, there are policies on how they should handle nGAP lecturers:

"The nGAP regulations have been fully explained to me. Based on policy and regularities, my mentee has fallen far behind in her PhD studies."

She revealed that they have someone who directs the nGAP at the university where she works. It is this person, according to the mentor, who requested her to mentor nGAP Lecture 3. The programme director gave some rules and regulations that stipulated how the nGAP operates. She said:

"In order to complete their training, the nGAP lecturer is contracted for six years. I was also informed that in the first four years the lecturer will need to have 20% workload, and in the last two years the lecturer can have a full load of work."

The mentor also stated that she was able to take over the mentorship of her mentee in her fourth year. According to her, the rules were that her mentee was far behind in her studies. She clarified that she was not part of the interview to discuss her mentee but to discuss her mentorship process. She said that there are rules and policies that they operate under. According to her, there are certainly things that need to be in place. However, they are not in place, which means that according to the rules and regulations, they are not there.

The researcher felt that the Mentor 3 did not want to answer most questions with certainty.

"Ideally this question should be directed to the director of the programme because we are just academics, we are just mentoring the nGAP lecturers. I am not in a position to talk about policy as this will require the expertise of relevant people. I am not the right person to talk about this. The HOD will be the right person to answer your questions about this."

In the researcher's opinion, Mentor 3 was not well-informed about the nGAP. He felt that his role did not require him to know about any policy or information around the nGAP. He viewed himself as a mentor only responsible for his mentee, nothing else. This is a newly launched programme and even the university at large needs to understand it. Even though he was certain he had been inducted into this programme, he was only concerned with his mentee's responsibilities. However, administrative matters need to be answered by the HOD or programme director.

Summary of theme 6: Mentor-mentee meeting

Oriol et al. (2015:1) explain the process or trajectory related to the development of early-career academics as a path that can move forward, backward, or remain static, depending on the amount of effort and planning that takes place along the way. Hobololo (2020:30) further expands this view by saying that career trajectory does not just happen, but it is deliberately built and established process. According to her, this implies that early-career academics should channel and construct their own careers. Organizations have taken it upon themselves to develop their employees which requires a paradigm shift even from the early career academics to take interest in their

academic career development. It became apparent from the literature that mentoring is an identifiable mechanism to assist early-career academics with career progression (Iversen, Eady & Wessley, 2014:308). It became apparent, during the interviews, that mentoring plays a significant role in shaping mentees' confidence in their early academic career. The mentors are not only placed to help but to display certain qualities of the role they play. The role that is being applied in modern mentoring model is that of developmental mentoring. Developmental mentoring emphasises the importance of mentees finding their own solutions to their challenges of career advancement rather than straight advice-giving or 'gifting' of opportunities that is common in support (Iversen, Eady & Wessley, 2014:309). This form of support equips and fosters self-sufficiency to the mentee to possess problem-solving skills, unlike support which offers 'a hand up' approach (Iversen, Eady & Wessley, 2014:310). The literature also emphasises the relationship that should exist between the mentor and mentee. Iversen et al. also confirm that the younger academics may benefit from coaching and mentoring by the older generation in the workplace. The older academics could also gain some valuable lessons from Generation Y's practical knowledge and understanding, particularly technology.

The next question sought to understand how selected universities manage the whole process of managing the nGAP lecturers.

4.4.1.2 Research study question 2

A growing amount of research has demonstrated that black female academics are marginalized in terms of development and mentorship, where most of them are concentrated at the bottom ranks of the profession (Briscoe-Palmer & Mattocks, 2020:43). As a way of mitigating this realisation, Bos and Schneider (2012:223) argue that mentoring programmes are useful to help black female academics progress with career development and professional integration. To keep in line with this thinking, Owusu-Agyeman (2022:66-78) addresses the following knowledge gaps which are summarized in the table below:

Question 2 - How does your university fairly manage, mentor and advance career progression of nGAP black female academics?

Theme 7	Sub-themes
<p>Workplace mentoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill and competency development • Overall professional development • Better relationship with colleagues • Active involvement in projects • Better utilising of skills • Development of leadership

Mentor 1: *"I mentioned in my previous response to you that the contract stipulates that I will be responsible for making sure my mentee is properly mentored and exposed to teaching, research, and social engagement. It is my responsibility as a mentor to impart as much knowledge as possible to ensure my mentee's success."*

Mentor 2: *"From my point of view, I think you should ask the person in charge of the program, but from what I've seen, the very reason there's someone like (programme director) is for her handling of the nGAP group. Occasionally, she holds retreats with them. According to the previous mentor, they have meetings with their mentors, but I haven't had the chance to attend."*

Mentor 2 showed some signs of concerns in relations to her mentor. These concerns included her not having enough history with her mentee because she was initially mentored by someone else. Even though the mentor did not know much about her mentee's developmental needs, she mentioned that she was about to assist where there was a problem. She felt that her relationship with her mentee should be based on trust. She raised the issue of trust because she felt that her mentee was holding

back. She seemed afraid to communicate about her development goals. This fear could have been engendered by lack of trust in her previous mentor.

She realised after, communicating with her mentee, that there were issues that they need to address and that she needed more than what she received previously from her mentor, in terms of support with her development. The mentor opined that the reason her mentee was lagging in her nGAP development could have been that she was not getting support from her mentor. According to Mentor 2, the nGAP lecturer that she was handed over to was not prepared enough to start with her nGAP training.

Her role, as a mentor, was to ensure that her mentee was equipped with all the support tools she could not get from her previous mentor. She felt it was her responsibility to give her as much support as she needed and help her adjust to changing university culture. As an experienced academic, she felt that an academic environment could come as a shock to new academics. The shock is experienced in academia in different ways. One of the things she noticed was that her mentee was not getting support from the department. She realised this when her mentee kept on saying, *“Oh, how I feel I belong in your department, where I would be understood.”* However, the mentee did not want to elaborate when asked by her mentor what was happening in her department.

Mentor 3: *“The usual thing we do is integrate them into the department's work. I made sure that my mentee was involved in departmental activities, had an office and was treated similarly to other employees. Although she is an nGAP lecturer, she does things that everyone can do. So, I think we should help her integrate into the system and navigate herself out, especially now that she's in her second or third year. Since then, she has gotten used to it because initially, she was in a state of transition shock. As a PhD student, she was brought in as a lecturer. Every nGAP lecturer, not just me, but everyone in the department, is treated as part of the team.”*

Summary of theme 7: Workplace mentoring

The South African university environment is experiencing a boom in academic development programmes (ADP). The practice is fundamental to addressing the challenges of educational and training diversity in South African higher education.

However, the nGAP, as mandated initiative by the Department of Higher Education and Training, aims to equip the budding cohort of new academics with necessary skills to thrive in the academic environment. Therefore, it is crucial that these new scholars benefit from the nGAP as much as possible. The programme was borne out of a need to recruit and develop new academic staff trainees. The South African government saw this initiative as a pillar to train new academics to become fully-fledged academics as this is a global practice. Furthermore, South African universities have challenges ranging from attraction and retention of new talent, which leaves the issue of capacity and sustainability among new academics in the balance (Callaghan, 2015:3). It is in this context that a systematic academic development programme cannot be neglected as it is a matter of national imperative. The literature also mentions the importance of competence, commitment, and motivation to everyone involved in the academic development programmes (Szelagowska-Rudzka, 2017:210). Any dissatisfaction, because of lack of commitment, competence, and motivation, influences how the university functions. It is of great importance that the nGAP lecturers benefit in all the levels of mentoring so as to prepare them for future academic duties.

Throughout this section, mentors expressed diverse viewpoints in relation to their encounter with their nGAP mentees. The researcher identified several themes as he was interviewing the mentors. Some mentors were not fulfilling some of their mentoring roles, though they were fully aware of their responsibilities in terms of managing, mentoring, and advancing the career progression of nGAP lecturers.

The role of a mentor is to provide guidance to inexperienced employees, such as nGAP lecturers, and to share knowledge about how to perform the tasks for which they are responsible (Rikard & Banville, 2010:249). Mentors have the responsibility of helping nGAP lecturers navigate an unfamiliar working culture. Furthermore, the role of mentors extends beyond counselling and setting protection boundaries: it also includes guiding and supporting mentees in practices that could impede their professional development. Although a great deal of literature has examined the benefits that mentoring can provide to early-career academics, ongoing research has shown that mentoring has numerous benefits for mentors as well. Mentors are not involved in the academic development of mentees not only to map the way forward but also to provide emotional and career support to their mentees (Merga & Mason, 2021:7). In the South African context, there seems to be little knowledge about how

ECAs and experienced academics go about applying the dynamics of mentoring to enhance the career development of early career academics.

The next question acknowledges that biases may pose challenges for black female academics, as South African universities still retain highly gendered and racialized institutional cultures (Lewin, 2019:3). The study sought to understand how gender and racial biases are addressed towards black female academics.

<p>(i) How do ECAs and established academics perceive the importance of mentoring?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This requires a deep understand of why mentoring process exist in the first place. - The ECAs should be familiarized with the strategic plans of the university - In the absence of mentoring structures, the university can provide training to the ECA through other established units within the university to develop their teaching and research skills. - It is also important to engage ECAs by advising them on career development, networking opportunities, applying for research funding, and accessing career development opportunities (Broughton et al., 2019:318)
<p>(ii) How could mentoring enhance the career development of ECAs at the university?</p>	<p>According to Mgaiwa and Kapinga (2021:115), mentoring plays a critical role in promoting professional skill development, professional confidence, scholarly productivity, career</p>

	<p>development, reduces stress and encourages professional job satisfaction. They also emphasize the importance of research support for ECAs as a way of enhancing sense of belonging for these new academics. It is during these engagements with ECAs that they should be encouraged to brainstorm their research intentions to address some of their knowledge and skills gaps (Owusu-Agyeman, 2022:73). Teaching and research are critical components which place ECAs at the academic level. Therefore, enhancing these professional skills requires the support provision of capable mentors. ECA's recognition on research ratings should be attributed on the support given by the mentor, hence their support is pivotal.</p>
<p>(iii) What are the institutional structures and policies necessary to promote mentoring at the university?</p>	<p>It is worth mentioning that ECAs should be acquainted with institutional structure, culture and policies of the university they are assigned to. The mentoring measures should ensure that they benefit all the ECAs/nGAP lecturers.</p>

The next question acknowledges that biases may pose challenges for Black female academics, as South African universities still retain highly gendered and racialized institutional cultures (Lewin, 2019:3). The study sought to understand how gender and racial biases are addressed towards black female academics.

4.4.1.3 Research study question 3

The gendered nature of institutions has a profound impact on academic lives and career trajectories, according to Lewin (2019:3). Furthermore, she claims that gendered institutions negatively affect academic women's everyday lives.

Question 3 - Are there any built-in mechanisms in the management models used in your university to reduce biases towards nGAP black female academics?

(a) What approaches have your university adopted to profile individuals required?

(b) How are such approaches aligned to the university business strategy to address gender bias?

Theme 8	Sub-themes
Overcoming gender bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn to recognise gender bias• Check your own interactions for bias• Understanding and use of privilege to influence• Representing black female role models• Share learning and speak up

Mentor A: *“There are a lot of activities that promote women within the university. There is an emphasis on having women as leaders within the department, so it is more like promoting women than biasing against them.*

(a) We had a need in our department. When my mentee (nGAP lecturer A) was identified, there were some male individuals that were interviewed but the

department needed a female academic, hence nGAP lecturer A was identified. It was not merely because she was a woman. As a result, I was identified as a mentor. It was because I was a senior staff member in the department. She was working on Positive Psychology, and I was also working in the same area. Therefore, it was based on our research interests. She wanted to register as an industrial psychologist, and I had just registered. The HOD believed that I could help her through her journey, but not necessarily for the sake of empowering women. It was more like the needs of the department were suited to the expertise that she had. When she came in, I was one of the senior members who was working on the research areas that she was also working on. So that is why the HOD approached me to mentor her.

(b) I must say the needs of the department are aligned with the university business strategy to address biases. The university has a transformation policy now, so one of the objectives is to identify local academics, particularly females. The needs of our department were aligned with the transformation policy of the university.”

Mentor B: “I am not sure if I should be the one answering this question because I was not equipped or trained to mentor in this programme. Nevertheless, the nGAP is quite a remarkable project since we have never experienced something like this before. I feel that the nGAP people do not realize how lucky they are to have this programme because it fully equips all those in training with the necessary tools to become fully-fledged lecturers. But I wish it could do what it is meant to do.

(a) We have what we call a revised lecturer’s programme. It is more like an orientation, so each new member of staff is oriented to the university. They are more about the university, the administration, and all the services that are found at the university. The nGAP coordinator does a lot of activities to equip the nGAP lecturers to be able to teach how to do research and writing retreats.

(b) Before I can make an informed decision about the university’s business strategy, I need to know how mentor and mentee are matched.”

Mentor C: “I think it is the other way around. The thing is that females are very dominant in our department. They are the ones calling the shots. When nGAP lecturer

D came, she felt at home. We have less than 30% males in our department because females dominate the department.

(a) I must mention that females are becoming more dominant in various universities throughout the world and males are becoming fewer. If there is a male and female applicant, the female candidate is usually preferred during the interview process.

(b) The university is clear about its strategy in terms of hiring female and disabled individuals.”

Summary of theme 8: Overcoming gender bias

The literature dealing with matters related to gender bias in academia have acknowledged the evidence of changes that most institutions are beginning to make when it comes to progress in improving the participation of black female academic (Llorens et. al., 2021:3). The early-career academics are also finding themselves being affected in identified patterns in their academic journey. Leadership roles in academia are still less encouraged to aspiring black female academics, thus leading them to feeling less supported and motivated. It is often perceived that some leadership roles are incompatible with black women's gender bias, which can be disadvantageous to assertive black women. Furthermore, it is said that early black female academics must provide more evidence of competence than their male counterparts to be seen as equally competent, especially when it comes to certain disciplines such as science environments and social presentation (Cheryan et al., 2017:10-11). Science-related disciplines are still perceived to be insistently manly. Chances to advance early career academics is still hampered by gender inequity, especially in South African higher education institutions. Obers (2014:1107) asserts that gender has a negative effect on black women's academic and professional identities. To corroborate this, Shand (2019:167) states that a lack of opportunities for black female academics and the fact that 'women's professional and academic capital are devalued and misrecognized in the knowledge economy' negatively affect these academics. This also makes young black female academics feel that they are undervalued because of the privileges afforded to their male counterpart, such as mentoring, networking, and building academic reputation (Obers, 2014:1107). The higher education institutions are facing challenges whereby low levels of research productivity by black female academics

have come to the spotlight, which need to be addressed as a matter of importance. It is, therefore, pertinent to have enabling measures such as mentoring to have an increased pool of role models, academically. The mentoring process has an imperative role it plays when it comes to developing talent and it is “supportive, nurturing, and protective, providing orchestrated or structured experiences to facilitate growth” (Subotnik et al., 2010:714).

The higher education institutions in South Africa have been making calls to emphasize the importance of addressing transformation, considering the history of gender and race issues associated with apartheid. It is, therefore, critical for higher education institutions, when addressing transformation and bias, to have standardized and established procedures to cater for the new crop of black female academics. However, the issue of under-representation of young black female academics in higher education’s institutions does not only exist in South Africa but is an ongoing global concern (van den Brink & Benschop, 2012:71). Even though that is the case, there is more that needs to be done to address deficit bias in the higher education institutions in South Africa. According to Sadiq et al., (2019:426), there is a suspicion that bias exists in other universities because the criteria favour some groups in terms of gender and race. Until such criteria are scrapped, the Black female nGAP lecturers will feel equal to their male counterparts.

4.4.1.4 Research study question 4

South African universities face enormous pressure to align strategies and achieve the goals outlined in the National Development Plan (2030) (Republic of South Africa [RSA], National Planning Commission [NPC], 2013:319). According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (2019), the sector is experiencing severe challenges concerning the size, composition, and capacity of its academic staff.

Question 4 - What are your views on the management of career progression system used?

Theme 9	Sub-themes
<p>Academic career progression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting network • Self-drive • Self-consciousness • Building collaboration • Self-advocacy and negotiation skills • Statistical membership • Work ethic • Self-efficacy • Resilience and persistence • Skills and knowledge • Capable mentorship

Mentor A: *“There should be a section here that outlines the promotional criteria for the university. When you look at the promotion criteria, they place a lot of emphasis on research. However, in the department, there's also quite a lot of teaching expected. As well as that, academics are expected to engage in a lot of professional development and community service. Progress is extremely difficult in this situation, especially for someone like nGAP lecturer A, who is currently pursuing her PhD. The first article she wrote has already been published. In other words, as soon as she completes her PhD, she will be able to pursue promotion or career advancement. She was appointed as a lecturer, but because she is in the nGAP, she cannot move. In my opinion, that holds her back since she could have progressed in her career as fast as she could if she*

wasn't under the nGAP. Her nGAP allows her to wait for over five years before getting promoted. As a result, the university's career progression is well balanced between research, teaching, and professional development, but the external environment (government) has somewhat rigid nGAP policies. Their policies don't allow flexibility. The university makes it easy for anyone who joins as a lecturer to advance through publications, teaching and learning, and PhD completion. You need to publish five articles to move from lecturer to senior lecturer, which is considered very strict. It is also imperative to be active in professional organizations. Then you need to have a PhD that you supervise. The list is endless. Some people find that very difficult to achieve because you must balance quite a lot of things. Career progression is biased towards research than teaching and learning.

“A dialogue between external bodies and the university would be beneficial, especially when it comes to those nGAP programmes. I think the people who designed those programmes should be aware of the promotional criteria that are used by the university. This is before they can even draft a contract for somebody. For a late bloomer or somebody who does not adapt easily, five years is fine. However, somebody who is very fast in developing, like my mentee, it is discouraging because next year she should be done with her PhD. Her articles are already ready. She is ready to be a senior lecturer, but she must wait for three more years. So, there should be a dialogue between a university and DHET or whoever is designing the nGAP. This will ensure that there is a relationship between promotional criteria and the policies that are designed by the nGAP. That way there is a compliment between the two and they don't frustrate the nGAP candidates.”

Mentor B: *“This is a well-managed programme but as I was saying it depends on who is the person that has been mentored. Who is the mentor? What department has this person been placed in? We are expected to be meeting with the mentee. In those meetings I am expected to write a report which should be submitted at the end of the year. Nevertheless, the mentor before me must write his report since I was not there in the first semester. The report is about our progress with the mentee (nGAP lecturer D) in the second semester. Mentor and mentee become more accountable in this process. Having this kind of structure in place is very critical. This gives us an opportunity to show how we have been progressing, how we have reached certain milestones. Are we following the programme's expectations? The challenges we face*

and how we are addressing them. Those are the things I would like to report on. I also want to assess if my mentee is being trained in management in terms of managing tutors. I also want to ensure that she has been allocated sufficient workload.”

Mentor C: *“If you ask me, what is lacking is a plan for how to evaluate the nGAP lecturer. According to what kind of criteria do we decide whether the nGAP lecturer is progressing? One thing we need to do is put in place that structural programme. In addition, we need a mandate, so we know what the nGAP lecturer’s role and responsibilities are, what kind of role the nGAP lecturer can play. There is a lack of information regarding how the nGAP lecturer has been evaluated. There are no clear criteria. What is happening now is that the nGAP lecturer is on his or her own. There is no integration into the department whereby they stipulate their goals in terms of what they want to do after completing their PhD. What is the next step? There should be a way of integrating them into the department. There should be flexibility in the workload of the nGAP lecturer. The 20% workload can be increased to 40% or 50% if the lecturer is not that busy with her laboratory or PhD work. So, the workload is not customised to bring out the optimum performance and flexibility of the nGAP lecturer.*

“We have issues. There are no policies in place to ensure nGAP lecturers remain and grow in their careers. This means that whether they are motivated by their mentor or not does not matter much in this department. If the nGAP is doing ‘1,2,3’ and you perform according to the specifications of the department then you have a chance of being integrated into the department after he or she has completed the nGAP training. The role of the mentor is to stand with his or her mentee and give the support that is needed to help them succeed in the programme.”

Summary of theme 9: Academic career progression

All mentors seem to agree that they prepare reports to the DHET as a way of showing how the nGAP lecturers are progressing in their training programme. The researcher did not get any sense of how evaluative these reports really are. Literature on academic career development programmes suggests that an assessment tool should be used in collaboration between the mentor and mentees. This is as a way of assessing the mentees’ readiness for an academic career (Clement et al., 2020:2). Clement et al. also suggest the Academic Career Readiness Assessment (ACRA)

rubric which may address the following factors to improve the evaluation of the nGAP lecturers:

A) To provide transparency to aspiring faculty around faculty candidate evaluation criteria

Timmerman et al. (2011:533) state that a well-designed rubric allows mentors to identify the skills mentees are acquiring and skills that remain challenging. It is critical for this information if development is to be responsive to mentees' needs. Furthermore, the rubric highlights identified gaps and areas of improvement over time and provides better recommendations for the faculty or department.

B) To allow trainees to identify and prioritize training opportunities that will help them reach their career goals

The use of rubrics can assist the nGAP lecturers to identify some of their potential learning development. This will provide them with the opportunity to map out their academic career goals (Clement et al., 2020:2).

C) To provide trainees with the structure to receive formative feedback

A rubric can be used as a self-assessment instrument to identify skill gaps and the kind of training required to address them.

D) To standardize the evaluation process of faculty candidates

The use of rubric in higher education, according to Timmerman et al. (2011:534), is not an uncommon thing. Therefore, it is a recommended tool when the mentors evaluate mentees.

E) To aid in evaluation of training programmes

The rubric assists to evaluate the effectiveness aimed at improving the preparedness of trainees' faculty positions (Bakken, 2002:162).

Various mentors interviewed pointed to the fact that a report is presented to the Department of Higher Education and Training every year. However, they did not mention what sections of the report help as a guide to evaluate their mentees. The rubric suggested by Clement et al. seems to be an appropriate evaluation tool, which may be used in the nGAP.

The next question sought to find out the mentors' personal views about the management of career progression system used by their respective universities.

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has offered the responses of the participants as gathered by the researcher during the interviews. The way in which responses from participants have been arranged in this chapter allowed the researcher to firstly arrange together all responses from the nGAP lecturers and then create themes from their responses. The researcher followed the same format with the responses from the mentors.

The researcher initially had to come up with an appropriate coding method for this study. Data created from the semi-structured interviews included the nGAP lecturers and their mentors' views on their lived experiences regarding the implementation of the nGAP in their respective universities.

This chapter also endeavoured to answer the research questions by linking the relevant data to each of the research questions for significant analysis.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 presents the findings from Chapter 4. It concludes these findings and presents recommendations to round off the study. The data presented and analysed and the findings have yielded several recommendations. The recommendations are discussed in the following subsections. The purpose is to promote the integration of talent management in South African universities in order to train and mentor Black female academic lecturers in the New Generation of Academic Program (nGAP).

5.2 RECAP OF THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The most important conclusions of this study are discussed in relation to the research question in chapter one. The study aimed to examine how talent management concepts can be integrated into the development of nGAP black female academics. Below are the specific objectives:

- To find out how universities manage the developmental process of nGAP black female lecturers.
- To evaluate mechanism used to address biases in the management and mentoring of nGAP black female academics.
- To find out the views of Heads of developmental units and nGAP black female academics on the management of career progression.

The researcher aimed to answer the following research questions as stated in Chapter One:

- How are the development mechanisms to nurture the new generation academics programme black female academics into leadership positions managed?

- How do universities manage, mentor and advance career progression of nGAP black female academics?
- Are there built-in mechanisms in the management models used, to reduce biases towards nGAP black female academics?
- What are the views of nGAP academics and Heads of developmental units on the management of career progression system used?

5.3 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This section briefly discusses what other previous chapters have done.

Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the topic of this thesis. The chapter is divided into nine sections. Section 1.1 is the introduction of this chapter. The next section 1.2 introduces the background to the research accompanied by subsection 1.2.1 which gives the history of SA's higher education. Subsection 1.2.2 provides information on the implementation of development programme in SA's higher education. Then subsection 1.2.3 gives light on nGAP as a government development mechanism. Section 1.3. discussed the study's problem statement, followed by research questions in subsection 1.3.1, aim of the study in subsection 1.3.2 and then the objectives of the study are discussed in 1.3.3. The literature review is extensively discussed in 1.4, which includes the subsection on theoretical framework in 1.4.1, the exploration of literature in 1.4.2. Research design and methodology is discussed in section 1.5 with various concept. Data interpretation and analysis is presented in section 1.6. In section 1.7 the researcher presented adopted writing style of this study. A short discussion on findings, conclusions and recommendations is presented in section 1.8. Finally, the last section provides an information about the value of the study.

Chapter 2 provides an introduction to the theoretical framework and literature review. The chapter has five sections. Section 2.1 provides an introduction as a way of gaining understanding of talent management and identify potential lessons that can be applied to manage nGAP effectively. Then section 2.2 provides the significant role of literature review and relevant theories that underpin talent management. The researcher came up with a subsection on the importance of theoretical framework in 2.2.1. The give a clear perspective on the meaning of talent, the researcher discusses the historical

roots of talent in 2.2.2 and then gave synopsis of the literature on facets linked to talent management in subsection 1.2.3, which are followed by key aspects of linked to talent management in 2.2.4. The researcher was obliged to give a thorough account on the global view on talent management in universities, which is discussed in subsection 2.2.5. Academic development programme underpinned by talent management is extensively discussed in subsection 2.2.6. A discussion on talent management theoretical framework is presented in 2.2.7. Section 2.3 presents talent management as a best practice. Talent management in the South African university is discussed in section 2.4, which incorporates developing young female academics in subsection 2.4.1. The impact of the talent management mechanism is addressed in 2.4.2, and a proposed policy to develop black female academics is discussed in 2.4.3 with its various suggestions. Finally, section 4.5, which is the last part of this chapter, concludes by giving a summary.

Chapter 3 provides information about the research design and methodology of this study. The chapter consists of eight sections. Section 3.1 is the introduction, which is followed by section 3.2, and it looks at the research philosophy and research paradigm adopted in this study. The research design in section 3.3 discusses recruitment of research participants, an overview of the participants' profile, and data collection method. Section 3.4 addresses sources of qualitative data such as primary data (3.4.1) and secondary data (3.4.2). The selection of research participant, which is a sampling of the study, is discussed in section 3.5. This section addresses all aspects of population and sampling. The ethical considerations (section 3.6) with benefits and risks pertaining to participants that includes informed consent, rights and protections of participants' identity is examined. The scope and limitations of the study is examined in section 3.7 and then this chapter concludes by section 3.8, which summarises the chapter.

The data analysis and presentation are discussed in chapter 4. There are five sections in this chapter. Section 4.1 is the introduction of the chapter, followed by preparing data for analysis (4.1.1), which consists of data transcription (4.1.1.1), to generate initial codes (4.1.1.2), and search for themes (4.1.1.3). Section 4.2 discusses thematic analysis. The categories of research participants were addressed in section 4.3 that included semi-structured interviews with the nGAP lecturers (4.3.1). Five research study questions have been extensively dealt with. Section 4.4.1 deals with semi-

structured interviews pertaining to the mentors of the nGAP lecturers. Four research study questions have been discussed. Then section 4.5 summarizes the chapter.

5.4 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Inducting the nGAP lecturers with principles and goals of a development programme as a way of empowering

Findings

I concluded that it is pertinent to “explain” the concept or a document to nGAP lecturers before the actual training commences. This is believed to give confidence and comfort to trainees who are part of the development programme. Important information, which forms part of the development programme, should be shared to all new nGAP lecturers so that such information is not withheld from them. Most participants were left feeling uncared for when the information was not timeously shared with them. Those nGAP lecturers that were inducted well felt “empowered.” (refer to 4.3.1.1). The literature on talent management provided some suggestions that bring about a sense of comfort to new recruits during the development programme. These suggestions are extensively stated in Joubert’s best practices (2017:17).

Recommendations

Departments within universities that are involved in running the nGAP should devise systematic and appropriate interventions to properly induct early-career academics by thoroughly explaining the principles and goals of the nGAP document. It is crucial for all nGAP academics to fully know what is expected of them way before the development programme commences. It became apparent, from some nGAP academics, that the information must be shared equally with everyone involved in the programme to align in performing duties. It became evident in Joubert’s work (2017:17) that new talent must be taken care of by providing all necessary resources to make them feel comfortable. By so doing, the nGAP academics will feel comfortable and empowered (refer to 4.3.1.1).

The Department of Higher Education and Training, as a custodian of the nGAP, should ensure that the early career academics in this programme are highly engaged because of the support and inspiration they get. Having all the necessary skills is crucial for early-career academics to be competent and deliver on their tasks. Ananiadou and Claro (2009:9) define *competence* as the capability to handle intricate tasks by utilizing psychosocial resources, such as skills and attitudes, in a specific situation. Therefore, the focus of the induction process of the nGAP academics should consider integrating the nGAP induction checklist to cover items for each nGAP academic regarding their conditions of employment and clarity of training document. It is essential to ensure that the nGAP academics understand the objectives of the training document and what they are signing up for in order for them to be accepted into the development programme.

5.4.2 Evaluation of professional development is documented

Findings

The interview findings indicated that most nGAP participants shared similar information regarding their professional development. This process allows both the nGAP lecturers and their mentors to sit down and discuss the achievements and challenges experienced during the nGAP training. The report compiled by the mentor is shared with the Department of Higher Education and Training as a way of showing the nGAP lecturer has been progressing (refer to 4.3.1.2).

Participants mentioned that the progress of their development programme was documented. However, they never specified how much comprehensive the evaluation is. They neither emphasised what kind of information was documented nor what was rejected. It did not come through from the interviews the main purpose of evaluation was not given in the interviews. The researcher was not sure whether the evaluation is to check whether the nGAP, as a development programme, works or it seeks areas of improvement.

Recommendation

Stufflebean and Coryn (2014:309-312) introduce a comprehensive framework for conducting formative and summative evaluations of programmes, projects, personnel, products, organisations, policies, and evaluation systems. The model is called the Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) as adapted and shown in Table 10 (Appendix L). The CIPP model prioritises guiding the planning and implementation of development efforts. Furthermore, the model seeks ways of understanding how the programme and what needs to be done to improve it. The model asks the following formative questions: (a) What needs to be done? (b) How should it be done? (c) Is it being done? (e) Is it succeeding?

The summative questions include the following introspective questions: (a) Was the programme keyed to clear goals based on the assessed needs of beneficiaries? Was the effort guided by a defensible procedural design; a functional staffing plan; an effective and appropriate process of stakeholder involvement; and a sufficient, appropriate budget? Were the plans executed competently and efficiently and modified as needed? Did the effort succeed, in what ways and to what extent, and why or why not? (Stufflebean & Coryn, 2014:14). These questions help assess the quality and competitiveness of programmes which might be used. The evaluation process in the nGAP needs similar professional and comprehensive models such as CIPP. The evaluation process should continuously show how the nGAP academic is improving over time. The evaluation process should not only determine whether the nGAP academic will be funded the following year, but rigorous mentoring must guarantee that participants in this programme are equipped with the necessary skills.

5.4.3 Understanding mentorship support as a valuable mechanism

Findings

The responses related to mentorship support presented mixed feelings from participants (refer to 4.3.1.3). One participant believes that her mentor has been supportive (refer to 4.3.1.3). but a professional performance management system must be implemented to align with the university targets.

One participant felt that there was no mentorship support at all (refer to 4.3.1.3). She has been getting some assistance from the development department, but only partially. However, the literature presented some valuable core skills that can benefit the nGAP lecturers and their mentors (Senge, 2012:139-170).

Recommendations

The need for high mentorship support for budding young black female academics is critical and worthy. It has been highlighted, in interviews, that establishing a professional relationship between the mentor and mentee should not just become a ticking box exercise for DHET but an authentic professional learning experience. This requires structure with clear career progression for the nGAP academics, where every effort during the mentoring phase is directed towards reaching specific targets. Such targets should align with the university's target in reaching specific goals and milestones. The mentoring phase should remain a professional exercise instead of a personal one. Professional relationships between a mentor and mentee should remain professional and be guided by the principles and requirements designed by DHET in partnership with the university. The researcher sensed that some participants in this development programme did not get adequate mentorship support. This must have been the case because real mentorship support was insufficient due to not assigning experienced mentors. Experienced mentors in the development programme show some fruitful results in imparting helpful knowledge and experience to mentees in assigning essential academic duties fairly (refer to 4.3.1.3). Imparting skills to recruits can only occur when a structure is in place to help mentees progress in the programme. It became evident, during the interviews, that relationships between mentors and mentees that seemed healthy and progressive were built on professional grounds.

The literature also confirmed that developing successful professional relationships between mentors and mentees can yield positive results in the development process. There are core skills that can be applied to ensure that professional relationship between mentors and mentees is achieved (Hadi & Rudiyanto, 2017:1). These effects of such core skills appeared to have worked in relationships that were built purely on the premise of learning and development during the nGAP training. The reason for

mentees thriving during the development programme is when specific tools of competencies are given to them. Giving specific tools to recruits is a deliberate exercise to ensure that this relationship partnership between the mentor and mentee benefits both parties in acquiring critical skills.

Therefore, a practical professional framework is recommended to establish a relationship between the mentor and mentee based on the goals set by DHET. Such relationships should be evaluated over time to ensure that they are aligned with goals to have grounded nGAP academics in all spheres of their development.

5.4.4 Using mentorship as a mechanism to reduce gender and racial biases

Findings

Mentorship has been identified as a critical intervention mechanism to reduce biases. However, it became clear from the nGAP participants that mentorship must still be utilised to the fullest. This realisation has been noted as a grey area that needs improvement in mentor-mentee relationships. The literature has also revealed some essential suggestions, as discussed in section 5.2.1.4.

Recommendations

This study focuses on how black female academics should develop during the nGAP process. It is also imperative to see that every mentoring support is afforded to them as they seemingly have academic and personal challenges in their development trajectory. The interview findings revealed that the nGAP academics had varied experiences when answering the question about the mentorship process concerning its effect in reducing bias towards black female academic recruits. It was clear from the responses given by nGAP academics that the development programme is well-positioned for new black female recruits in this programme. Also, some participants made this sound like a gender battle whereby a male mentor got on the wrong side of a particular participant because he pushed an unprofessional agenda (refer to 4.3.1.4). The general feeling among participants was that the number of “*black female nGAP*

academics have been increasing since the nGAP started.” Therefore, this question has been generally given positive feedback by participants. It has been revealed that bias is not a significant problem for black female nGAP academics. However, a recommendation is required on the issue of mentorship. Mentoring young female academics, especially Black females, is still a grey area that needs reinforcement. The literature shows that young black female academics can benefit significantly from mentorship in academic growth and development is concerned. It is, therefore, essential to make mentorship part of organizational culture, as is the case in advanced economies (Iversen et al., 2014:308). Once it is entrenched in the organizational culture of a university, more changes in the inclusion of young black female academics in transformational developments will be inevitable.

5.4.5 Strategies that bring about success on nGAP at selected universities

Findings

Notably, the new nGAP lecturers need to be properly trained during the developmental programme. The research noted that most participants were pleased with the introduction of the nGAP in their universities. While others were convinced that the nGAP looked good on paper, the literature stated that universities should consider academic development programmes' role in clarifying career paths and goals for early career academics when implementing development programmes.

Recommendations

Any solid development programme is envisaged to give a strong foundation to those who are being skilled, as envisaged through the nGAP. However, to assume that the processes and procedures of the nGAP are followed the same way in different universities may be deluding. While nGAP academics are pleased with the nGAP implementation at their universities, others expressed dissatisfaction with how the training department has been handling their training needs (refer to 4.3.1.5). Some participants felt that the nGAP was only good on paper, but elements of

implementation still need to be added. The recommendation is that the nGAP training department should be adequately equipped to provide professional development skills to nGAP academics. Anyone involved in the training office should be professionally trained to provide needed professional assistance to nGAP academics and those who require information for research purposes. The researcher also needed better service when gathering data. He was taken from one place to another without any help. Therefore, each staff member in the development programme unit should be clear about their responsibility regarding the personnel responsible for the information. On the mentoring side, it is recommended that universities assign experienced mentors to nGAP academics to inspire them to thrive in the academic trajectory.

5.4.6 Utilising guiding models and policies of the mentoring process

Findings

There were instances when the researcher was informed about the absence of a policy that acted as a guiding document for the nGAP lecturer and mentor. One mentor mentioned that they were only given a signed contract which only emphasised the importance of meeting times among nGAP lecturers and mentors. The absence of a policy led to some loopholes where someone still pursuing a PhD programme was assigned as a mentor to a PhD nGAP lecturer. The absence of a clear policy led to conflicts between the nGAP lecturer and the PhD candidate mentor, which were eventually resolved with the appointment of a more experienced mentor. However, it was noted by some participants that there were already existing rules and policies in place. The researcher got the impression that participants who were guided by a policy operated well under the nGAP compared to those with no reference point, like a policy.

The literature emphasised the importance of the development programme as a deliberate and established process, which should have a structure (Hobololo, 2020:23). A policy in the development programme can equip participants with self-sufficiency among nGAP black female lecturers. The structured mentoring process has to go through phases, as alluded to and explained by Zachary (2000:49-145).

Recommendations

This part of the section pertained to mentors of the nGAP academics. One mentor mentioned that there was no specific prescription given to her in terms of conducting her mentoring sessions, whereas another mentor declared that they were guided by nGAP contract. The contract instructed this mentor to focus on developing research, teaching and learning to her mentee (refer to 4.4.1.1). The last mentor was not well-informed about the nGAP. He did not think that the programme required him to do much about any policy or information around the nGAP (refer to 4.4.1.1). The responses from these mentors were quite intriguing because there was no uniform mechanism guiding them to carry out their duties. It appeared as if it was not an established and deliberate process to guide the nGAP academics towards the desired goal to be fully fledged academics. According to Hobololo (2020:30), the mentoring process should be a well-planned journey whereby nGAP academics should be guided to channel their own career. The recommendation is to have strong collaboration between mentor and mentee where various phases are adopted as illustrated by Zachary (2000:49-145).

5.4.7 Management, mentoring, and advancement of the black female nGAP lecturers' career progression

Findings

The interview findings revealed that efforts to properly equip the nGAP lecturers with the necessary skills to excel in teaching, research, and social engagement, are achieved during the development programme process. The mentor must know precisely the tools to use in the mentoring process. It became evident, from the interviews, that some mentors go beyond the call of duty by integrating the nGAP lecturers into the departmental activities. According to the literature, it is crucial to provide nGAP lecturers with the essential skills and knowledge to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Owusu-Agyeman (2022:66-78) shares suggestions that the nGAP lecturers can significantly benefit from to enhance their training experience.

Recommendations

The findings show that the mentor should know the tools to use in the mentoring process. Some mentors mentioned how they guide their mentees to become good academics in teaching, research, and social engagement. Some mentors said that a programme coordinator should handle the management of nGAP academics (refer to 4.4.1.2). The views about the mentoring roles presented mixed responses from mentors in their relationship with nGAP academics. The literature was clear about the mentor's role in performing the tasks for which they are responsible (Rikard & Banville, 2010:249). The researcher got the impression that the role of mentoring must be clearly defined so that applying the dynamics of mentoring can be meaningful in the development programme. The recommendation is for development units to precisely know the knowledge gaps mentors should impart during the nGAP development.

5.4.8 Built-in mechanism to reduce biases towards black female nGAP academics

Findings

The research findings were that most universities are making in-routes giving black female academics more opportunities to participate in universities. Participants mentioned that there were more activities that promoted black women in their universities. Mentor 3 revealed that the black female nGAP academics are dominant in their department. This trend seems to be a topic of interest in various literatures. Most institutions of higher education abroad are beginning to make in-routes when it comes to progress in improving the participation of black female academics (Llorens et al., 2021:3). However, South African institutions of higher education still need to make in-routes in improving the participation of female academics, especially black female recruits who are part of academic development programme.

Recommendations

This section presented some insightful thoughts from mentors regarding how the issue of integrating black female academic recruits in the university is handled. It became evident, from the interviews, that some Black female recruits are well-received in some departments and are given more opportunities to thrive. This is aligned with policies which the university is trying to advance. One mentor was not in a position to answer this question because he felt that it was the responsibility of the programme coordinator to see to it that the nGAP academics are well equipped through programmes like lecture programmes where academics are equipped to teach how to do research and writing (refer to 4.4.1.3).

South African universities are still said to be hampered by gender inequities, and the recommendation is that both male and female academics should be afforded equal opportunities in terms of teaching, research, and social engagement so that the gender issue is no longer considered a big problem.

5.4.9 Management of career progression system used

Findings

It emerged, from the findings, that reports were compiled and presented to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) to report the progress of the nGAP lecturers. The reports should have revealed how they are used as evaluation tools. The literature introduced evaluation tools such as Academic Career Readiness Assessment (ACRA) which is extensively discussed by Clement et al. (2020:2).

Recommendations

Tracking career progression among nGAP lecturers is essential to map the way forward. It becomes easier to map the way forward with a tracking mechanism. The form tool used by most mentors for evaluating the nGAP academics is the form of reports. The researcher was not informed of the report format, unlike the ones recommended in the academic career development programmes, such as the

Academic Career Readiness Assessment (ACRA) (Clement et al., 2020:2) – Appendix M shows a typical example of how ACRA was developed (from the University of California). This evaluative tool addresses several issues, which may be helpful for the nGAP academics. It is recommended that a credible evaluative tool, such as ACRA, be used to evaluate the nGAP academics as a reporting tool. ACRA was explicitly designed for career and professional development, and it is a computer-based tool which allows evaluators to grade the trainees or mentees. The ACRA rubric can be adapted according to the levels and needs stipulated by the Department of Education and Training.

Conclusion

The recommendation for induction was that universities should take an initiative-taking approach to induct early career academics to know about the principles and goals of the nGAP document.

Concerning the evaluation of professional development, the interview findings concluded that nGAP lecturers and their mentors need to discuss the learnings and challenges experienced in the nGAP training.

The findings related to mentorship support presented various views from research participants. Some were well-pleased with the support, whereas others felt that improvement was needed regarding mentorship support.

Recognising the difficulties that black female academics face, it is crucial to establish a supportive work environment that allows them to carry out their responsibilities without experiencing prejudice.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND FURTHER AREAS OF RESEARCH

Limitations of the study

This study provides an insight in finding out how talent management can be implemented in South African universities to train and mentor black female academic lecturers in the New Generation of Academic Program (nGAP). The sample from this study was drawn from the black female nGAP academics, their mentors on selected

universities around South Africa. The study selected only a few participants from chosen universities (two participants from each university; one nGAP academic and one mentor). It is not representative of the entire cohort of the nGAP academic from all faculties. The ethics approval phase is quite a robust one, therefore not getting response when requesting participants is discouraging. As a result, the researcher selected specific universities from different provinces, two participants from each but only eight participants were part of the interviews. The nGAP coordinators from the universities were not cooperative despite follow-up emails and calls. This study, therefore, does not claim to be a comprehensive and final investigation on how talent management can be implemented in South African universities to train and mentor black female academics in the nGAP.

Recommendation for further research

Suggest quantitative study of the phenomenon. The assumption is that more participants might be willing to participate since they can respond to questionnaires at their own time, provided institutions are willing to give permission for their employees to take part in the study.

The researcher should familiarise himself with more advanced analytic software tools for mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative). This will make automated reporting quite simple and straightforward instead of manual laborious process of data analysis.

Summary of main contributions of the study

This study is unique because it followed the assertion that to produce high-quality outcomes, a study should be original and practical (2014:1278). Thus, this study offers the following significant contributions: knowledge and policy.

In terms of knowledge, the study has offered a value-add to the field of talent management for black women in higher education. Furthermore, this study has provided logical evidence of the effects of talent management when incorporated into the nGAP process during the mentoring phase of black female academics. Such an endeavour would assist researchers in developing programmes to provide a deeper

understanding and underpin future studies with a deeper theoretical foundation. In addition, this study has demonstrated an adequate understanding of relevant literature by providing a critical review of incorporating talent management in the nGAP process. Furthermore, this study has clearly and comprehensively outlined the extant scholarly research of talent management concerning its incorporation into the nGAP process. Various literature has provided an opportunity to learn about the experiences of incorporating talent management in South Africa's higher education development programme, primarily in the mentoring process for black female academics. The knowledge learned from various literature contributes to the growing interest in seeing talent management as a mechanism to help black female academics become fully equipped during their mentoring phase.

The qualitative findings of this study were limited because the sampling size of participants was small.

From the policy point of view, this research has provided more debate around adding new ideas to the South African higher education strategic plans to incorporate talent management in the development programme. If South African educational institutions incorporate talent management into development programmes, they should gain a competitive advantage. Besides being prevalent in the private sector, talent management can also enable universities to set themselves apart from other universities in terms of development programmes. Significant contributions are made to the body of knowledge by the theoretical results of this study.

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Appendix A – Ethics Approval (UFS)



GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

30-Mar-2022

Dear Mr Zola Zuzani

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT MECHANISM TO NURTURE THE nGAP FEMALE ACADEMICS INTO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2021/1891/22

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

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Appendix B – Research Study Information Leaflet and Consent Form



RESEARCH STUDY INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

Pertains to the nGAP academics

DATE

08/09/2022

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The management of developmental support mechanisms to nurture the nGAP female academics into leadership positions

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR / RESEARCHER(S) NAME(S) AND CONTACT NUMBER(S):

Zola Zuzani 20219463419 0792898681

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT:

Faculty of Education
Education Management and Leadership

STUDY LEADER(S) NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER:

Dr Jonas Goniwe
0837693977

WHAT IS THE AIM / PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The primary objective of the study is to determine whether the developmental units within the human resources departments in various universities includes Talent Management (TM) in their New Generation of Academic (nGAP). It is my objective to study how universities manage the development of female academics through the use of the nGAP in their mentoring phase. Furthermore, the study evaluates efforts made to address biases in management and mentoring of female academics. As part of the study, the nGAP academics will be asked to share their perspective on how the nGAP is benefiting them. The permission to conduct this research to the nGAP academics would have been granted by their mentors or line managers. Sample questions that address certain themes will be asked but additional questions that lead from the initial questions might be asked.

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa
P.O. Box 330, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)61 401 9111, www.ufs.ac.za



WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

My name is Zola Zuzani. I currently work for the Henley Business School in Johannesburg as an MBA Manager. I have always had an interest to study how early career academics are developed and mentored in various higher institutions in South African universities to aspire for leadership position in their chosen fields. I want to utilize the findings of this research to benefit various developmental units within the human resources departments in South African universities. I also want to specialize in Education Management and Leadership as an academic and researcher.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICAL APPROVAL?

Yes, the study has been approved for ethics clearance by the Research Ethics Committee of UFS.

WHY ARE YOU INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT?

Based on my research, I identified ten institutions in South Africa and decided to interview one mentor (line manager) for the nGAP academic and one nGAP academic from each university within the same faculty. Therefore, a total of 20 participants in all universities will take part in this study. You as the nGAP academic you are invited to take part in this study to share your experience about this nGAP.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

The study involves semi-structured interviews. The sort of questions that will be asked are separately directed to the designated mentor for nGAP academic lecturer and the nGAP academic lecturer. expected duration of these interviews will be 30 to 40 minutes. Time allocated for these interviews will be informed by the participants' availability.

CAN THE PARTICIPANT WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

No participants will be forced to participate if he or she is not prepared to take part in the interview process. No penalty will be imposed to anyone who will decide not to participate. The study is voluntary and employs an open-ended interview approach to make participants feel comfortable when answering questions. All those who will be willing to participate will be informed beforehand about the purpose of the study and what it seeks to achieve. Pseudo names will be used to protect participants' confidentiality. It is important to mention that participants who decide to withdraw from the interview will not be persuaded to continue. As a researcher I have ethical responsibility to ensure that a participant benefit directly or indirectly by the practical implementation of the research outcome.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

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The biographical information will not reveal the actual names of the participants, but pseudo names will be used to protect their identity and confidentiality. The benefits of the participants to participate give them an opportunity to see the implementation of the research outcome.

WHAT IS THE ANTICIPATED INCONVENIENCE OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The possible risks in study may involve insufficient time for those participants who normally have hectic schedule. However, the researcher understands that time is always an issue so as guided by Covid 19 protocols, interviews will be conducted via telephone or virtually. The interview will take 40 minutes, and it will not interfere with the participants working hours. The researcher will find out convenient time for participants to participate in the interview.

WILL WHAT I SAY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

The participants' identity and that of their institutions will be protected by using pseudo names. The researcher cannot mislead the participant by making false promises. It will be between the researcher and participants to reach a consensus as to which reference should be used to address the participant. My research supervisor will be the only individual to know about the proceedings of the interview. However, he will have to consent to protect the participant confidential information. Permission will not be given to anyone who is not part of the study. The participants will be guaranteed that their information will only be used for research related purposes. It will not be shared to anyone outside the research conducted.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED AND ULTIMATELY DESTROYED?

The information will be valid during the duration of the study. It will be safely kept in a hard drive in my home office. The information will only be used for future research purposes, with the permission from the participant. The hard drive will always be updated so that it is supported by various applications. The information will be deleted once the research is no longer used. There are no risks to be anticipated from the participants' side as this will be an open-ended interview that will be designed for the participants to feel comfortable when answering questions. No injury or harm will be experienced as rules of the interview would have been clearly stipulated before the commencement of the interview.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

No payment will be offered in this study. Participants will not be required to travel but the researcher will make sure that he incurs costs of making sure that the interview takes place. No harm is anticipated in this study.

HOW WILL THE PARTICIPANT BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS / RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

It is important to mention that as a researcher I have ethical responsibility to ensure that you benefit directly or indirectly by the practical implementation of the research outcome. Prior to starting with

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa
P.O. Box 330, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)61 401 9111, www.ufs.ac.za



the interview, I like the participant to tell me about him or herself or their current experience within the academic development unit. A recorded information about them will be used to appropriately contextualize their information. This information will be used to send the participants the outcomes of the study. It can be sent to their email addresses or share a link where the study outcomes can be located.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Park West, Bloemfontein 9301, South Africa
P.O. Box 330, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa, T: +27(0)61 401 9111, www.ufs.ac.za



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, the undersigned,

(participant's full names to be included), (the "Participant")

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

_____ (the "Study") in relation to

and which Study is being conducted by

(insert the name of the researcher), (the "Researcher").

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that—

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the interview.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____



Full Name(s) of Researcher(s):

Signature of Researcher:

Date:



Appendix C – A letter requesting to conduct educational research

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
PO BOX 339
BLOEMFONTEIN
9300
06 December 2021

The Registrar
Name of the University
Address

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

This serves to request permission to conduct educational research in your faculty. The research is about how talent management is implemented in South African universities, not only to train the nGAP female academic lecturers, but also to mentor them to aspire for senior faculty positions. This study is done through the University of Free State. The topic of the research is: THE MANAGEMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SUPPORT MECHANISMS TO NURTURE THE nGAP Female ACADEMICS INTO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS. The study will be coordinated by me, Zola Zuzani.

I am prepared to observe all ethical stipulations of conducting research such as among others the following: making prior arrangements to obtain consent from possible participants in the study, informing participants that their participation in the study will be voluntary and that they may withdraw at any given moment if they feel that conditions for participation have changed, and that all data collected will be treated confidentially and will be used for the purpose of this study only.

My contact details for more information in this regard are the following:

1. Cell: 079 289 8681
2. e-mail: zzuzani@gmail.com

Thanking you in advance.

Yours in education



Zuzani Z

Appendix D – Approvals from responded universities

Rhodes University



Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee
PO Box 94, Makhanda, 6140, South Africa
t: +27 (0) 46 603 7727
f: +27 (0) 46 603 8822
e: ethics-committee@ru.ac.za
NHREC Registration number: RC-241114-045

<https://www.ru.ac.za/researchgateway/ethics/>

4th April 2022

Mr Zola Zuzani
Faculty of Education
University of the Free State
Mangaung

Dear Mr Zuzani

University of the Free State Ethical Clearance Number: UFS-HSD-2021

Research Project: "The management of developmental support mechanisms to nurture the nGAP female academics into leadership positions"

This letter confirms that the above research proposal has been reviewed and **APPROVED** by the Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee subject to the following request:

- 1) Proof that the research is compliant with the POPIA legislation
- 2) A letter advising the Director of Human Resources and the Heads of Department or Divisions you intend interviewing at Rhodes University of the ethics approval for this research.

Please ensure that the RUHREC is notified should any substantive change(s) be made, for whatever reason, during the research process.

Sincerely,



Prof. Arthur Webb

Chair: Rhodes University Human Research Ethics Committee, RU-HREC

8 April 2022

Mr Z Zuzani
Faculty of Education
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
zzuzani@gmail.com

Dear Mr Zuzani

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH WITH RHODES UNIVERSITY STAFF ONLY

This letter is to confirm that your request to conduct research on *"The management of developmental support mechanisms to nurture the nGAP female academics into leadership positions."* topic has been approved by the Ethics Committee. In my capacity as Acting HR Director, I do not have any objection should you wish to follow a coordinated approach by surveying and/or interviewing staff.

Kindly note that this approval is for research with staff members only. For student-related research, approval must be sought with the office of the Registrar.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S Robertson
Acting HR Director



12 April 2022

Mr Zola Zuzani
University of the Free State
Email: zzuzani@gmail.com

Dear Mr Zuzani

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

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

"The Management of Developmental Support Mechanisms to Nurture the nGAP Female Academics into Leadership Positions."

It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by conducting interviews with female academic staff members at UKZN (ZOOM, Skype or telephone interviews recommended).

Please ensure that the following appears on your notice/questionnaire:

- Ethical clearance number;
- Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor;
- Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire;
- gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

You are not authorized to contact staff and students using the 'Microsoft Outlook' address book. Identity numbers and email addresses of individuals are not a matter of public record and are protected according to Section 14 of the South African Constitution, as well as the PAIA and POPI Act. For the release of such information over to yourself for research purposes, the University of KwaZulu-Natal will need express consent from the relevant data subjects. Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely

Dr KE Cleland
Registrar

Office of the Registrar

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 7971 Email: registrar@ukzn.ac.za Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Date: 02nd August 2022

Mr Z Zuzani
26 Sparrows Crest
Mooikloof Ridge
Pretoria
0081

Email: zzuzani@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Zuzani

Permission to conduct Research at the University of Venda

You are hereby granted permission to conduct research at the University of Venda.

The research will be based on your research title: ***"The management of developmental support mechanisms to nurture the nGAP female academics into leadership positions."*** registered at the University of the Free State.

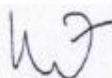
Co - Investigators: Dr. JS Kabi

Approval period: August 2022 – August 2023

The conditions are that all the data pertaining to University of Venda will be treated in accordance with the Ethical Principles and that will be shared with the University upon completion of the project. In addition, consent should be sought by you as a researcher from participants.

Attached is our policy on ethics.

Thank you



.....
Prof VO Netshandama

Chairperson: UREC

Cc: Prof N Feza (DVC Research and Postgraduate Studies)

Cc: Senior Prof GE Ekosse (Director Research and Innovation)

Cc: Prof MS Mashau (Chairperson RESSC)





**UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

DEAR Zola Zuzani

This serves as acknowledgement that you have obtained and presented the necessary ethical clearance and your institutional permission required to proceed with the project referenced below:

RESEARCH TOPIC

The management of developmental support mechanisms to nurture the nGAP female academics into leadership positions

Name of researcher : Zola Zuzani
Permission valid till : 30 March 2023
Institution : University of the Free State
Ethics reference : UFS-HSD2021/1891/22
Permission reference : UWCRP521696

You are required to engage this office (researchperm@uwc.ac.za) in advance if there is a need to continue with research outside of the stipulated period. The manner in which you conduct your research must be guided by the conditions set out in the annexed agreement: Conditions to guide research conducted at the University of the Western Cape.

Please be at liberty to contact this office should you require any assistance to conduct your research or require access to either staff or student contact information.

Regards
Dr Ahmed Shaikjee
Deputy Registrar Academic Administration

Approval status: APPROVED 14 April 2022

To verify or confirm the authenticity of this document please contact the University at researchperm@uwc.ac.za.





DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND RESEARCH
DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Nelson Mandela Drive
Mthatha Campus
Private Bag X1
MTHATHA 5117
Tel: + 27 47 502 2137/2044
Fax: +27 47 502 2185

wakpan@wsu.ac.za

Buffalo City
Potsdam Campus
EAST LONDON
Tel: + 43 708 5444
Fax: + 43 708 5458

20 April 2022

Mr Zola Zuzani
University of Free State
Faculty of Education
Room 26, Winkie Direko Building
Nelson Mandela Drive
Bloemfontein
9300

Dear Mr Zuzani

Gatekeepers Permission Letter to conduct research at Walter Sisulu University

Ethics Clearance number: UFS-HSD2021/1891/22

Institution: Walter Sisulu University

A Gatekeeper Letter is hereby granted for the study "**The management of developmental support mechanisms to nurture the nGAP female academics into leadership positions.**" provided that copies of your completed study will be submitted to the Campus Rector of the campus in which the study will be conducted and the Directorate of the Research & Innovation.

All data pertaining to Walter Sisulu University will be treated confidentially and you are required to abide by ethical principles at all times. It is your responsibility to seek consent from participants.

Kind regards

Prof W Akpan

Senior Director: Research & Innovation





**VAAL UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY**

Inspiring thought. Shaping talent.

Faculty of Human Sciences
Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Vanderbijlpark Campus
Andries Potgieter Blvd
Vanderbijlpark, 1900, South Africa
Private Bag X021
Vanderbijlpark, 1911, South Africa
www.vut.ac.za
cleodp@vut.ac.za

03 October 2022

RESEARCHER: Mr. Zola Zuzani
PROJECT TITLE: The management of developmental support mechanisms to nurture the nGAP female academics into leadership positions.
Department: Education
QUALIFICATION: Ph.D. in Education Management and Leadership

Decision: Full Approval

Ethics Reference Number: FREC/HS/29/04/2022/ 6.1.2 Student Number: 2019463419

Dear Mr. Zuzani

Thank you for submitting the above-mentioned research proposal for research ethical consideration and approval. After due consideration, the application has been fully approved.

The approval received was for the re-submission after the reviewer's and committee's input.

<p><i>In all correspondence concerning this research project please use the Ethics Reference Number provided above.</i></p> <p><i>Any revisions to the research documents, as shared in this letter, must reach the FREC by the Closing dates which we will make available to the researcher on request.</i></p> <p><i>As the primary researcher you undertake:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>To follow only those procedures for which the approval has been given;</i>• <i>To inform the committee should there be significant deviations from that which has been approved;</i>• <i>To report any Adverse Events that might occur, within 14 days of the event (following the Guidelines procedure);</i>• <i>To submit to the committee annual progress reports, where your reporting date is 1 June 2023; and</i>• <i>To inform the committee on the completion of the project, when the findings have entered the public domain.</i>
--

Lastly, we would like to take this opportunity in wishing you well with your research endeavors.

Sincerely,

Dr A De Klerk

annekel@vut.ac.za
Chairperson Faculty Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Human Sciences
Vaal University of Technology

University of Johannesburg



25 April 2022

Zola Zuzani
University of the Free State (UFS)

Dear Zola Zuzani

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

The request for the project titled *The management of developmental support mechanism to Nurture the ngap female academics into leadership positions* refers. Permission is granted to conduct this study at the University of Johannesburg (UJ).

Please note that the granting of permission does not make it mandatory for UJ students and/or staff to participate in the study. As the researcher/applicant, you will need to engage with potential participants to obtain their consent to participate in the study.

Should you require assistance in distributing the survey to UJ students and/or staff, kindly send us a brief description of your study together with the link to the site where the survey must be completed.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Ndivhuwo Luruli".

Dr Ndivhuwo Luruli
Executive Director: Research and Innovation
Email: nmluruli@uj.ac.za



UNIVERSITY OF
ZULULAND

University of Zululand, Private Bag X1001, KwaDlangezwa, 3886

W: www.unizulu.ac.za

T: +27 35 902 6434

E: MothilalD@unizulu.ac.za

Office of the Registrar

Our ref: Permit: 34/2022 12 September 2022
Your ref:

PERMIT TO COLLECT DATA

The University of Zululand hereby permits Zola Zuzani to conduct research and collect data in accordance with his Ethics Clearance Certificate UFS-HSD2021/1891/22 issued by the University of the Free State dated 30 March 2022, and UNIZULU's POPI Declaration and Indemnity form dated 6 June 2022.

The Researcher may commence with data collection from the date of this Permit. This permit is valid for 12 months from the date of issue.

UNIZULU retains the right to withdraw or amend this permit if:

- Any unethical conduct is revealed or suspected.
- Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented.
- Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require.
- The conditions contained in the Declaration have not been adhered to.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Mothilall'.

**D MOTHILALL
REGISTRAR**



RESEARCH PERMISSION SUB-COMMITTEE (RPSC) OF THE SENATE
RESEARCH, INNOVATION, POSTGRADUATE DEGREES AND
COMMERCIALISATION COMMITTEE (SRIPCC)

17 November 2022

Decision: Permission approval 11
November 2022 to 30 March 2023
(aligned with ethics approval)

Ref #: 2022_RPSC_077
Mr. Zola Noble Zuzani
Student #/ Employee #:
2019463419

Principal Investigator:

Mr Zola Noble Zuzani
Department of Education
University of the Free State
zzuzani@gmail.com; 079 289 8681

Supervisor: Dr Dr Jonas Kabi, kabijs@ufs.ac.za; 083 769 3977

The Management of Developmental Support Mechanisms to Nurture the nGAP Female Academics into Leadership Positions

Your application regarding permission to involve Unisa staff, students and data in respect of the above study has been received and was considered by the Research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC) of the UNISA Senate, Research, Innovation, Postgraduate Degrees and Commercialisation Committee (SRIPCC) on 11 November 2022.

It is my pleasure to inform you that permission has been granted for the study. You may invite one (1) nGAP lecturer and one (1) nGAP mentor to voluntary semi-structured interviews. The nGAP coordinator at Unisa will act as a gatekeeper for the study.

Adherence to the National Statement on Ethical Research and Publication practices, principle 7 referring to Social awareness, must be promoted: " Researchers and institutions must be sensitive to the potential impact of their research on society, marginal groups or individuals, and must consider these when weighing the benefits of the research against any harmful effects, with a view to minimising or avoiding the latter where possible."



The personal information made available to the researcher(s)/gatekeeper(s) will only be used for the advancement of this research project as indicated and for the purpose as described in this permission letter. The researcher(s)/gatekeeper(s) must take all appropriate precautionary measures to protect the personal information given to him/her/them in good faith and it must not be passed on to third parties. The dissemination of research instruments through the use of electronic mail should strictly be through blind copying, so as to protect the participants' right of privacy. The researcher hereby indemnifies UNISA from any claim or action arising from or due to the researcher's breach of his/her information protection obligations.

You are requested to submit a report of the study to the Research Permission Subcommittee (RPSC@unisa.ac.za) within 3 months of completion of the study.

Note: The reference number 2022_RPC_077 should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants and the Research Permission Subcommittee.

Kind regards,



Dr Retha Visagie – Deputy Chairperson

Email: visagr@unisa.ac.za, Tel: (012) 429-2478

Prof Lessing Labuschagne – Chairperson

Email: llabus@unisa.ac.za, Tel: (012) 429-6368



University of South Africa
Pretter Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA, 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150
www.unisa.ac.za

Appendix E – Initial coding in the semi-structured interviews with the nGAP lecturers

<p>Principles and goals of the nGAP clearly defined?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are those principles and goals related to your professional development? - Are your professional needs being met through the nGAP 	
<p>Transcription</p>	<p>Initial coding</p>
<p>nGAP Lecturer 1: “The programme was fully explained and we were given a context of what it seeks to achieve. The nGAP programme prepared me to align myself with its principles and goals that pertain to my professional development. Therefore, my personal and professional needs have been met so far”.</p> <p>“This has been an interesting journey for me. Before I can answer your question, I was part of the group that went to Johannesburg for a small conference with all people from different universities who were in the nGAP. The conference was basically trying to show us that there were also other nGAP lecturers from other universities. One of the principles and goals is to groom me basically as a young academic, so that when the programme comes to an end, I will be a fully-fledged academic who has grown and learned because one of the goals was that when I have finished the nGAP I’ll be able to fill in the position of an academic who’s about to retire. My understanding of this programme is to fill in the gap of someone who is about to retire”.</p> <p>nGAP lecturer 2: “The nGAP principles and goals have been fully explained to</p>	<p>The nGAP was explained</p> <p>Alignment with principles and goals</p> <p>Professional needs met</p> <p>Prepare for professional growth</p>

<p>me. I think in my case it was more about attending workshops that have been made available to us. Our nGAP coordinator from our institution alerts and sends us these different workshops whenever they come and then it is up to us to choose whichever we want to attend. In 2021 I attended one where they were dealing writing manuscript. I was at the process of writing my own manuscript at the time, so it came at the right time when I really needed the training, and it was quite productive”.</p>	<p>Replacement for retiring staff</p> <p>The nGAP was explained</p> <p>Sharing of information</p>
<p>nGAP lecturer 3: “No, not really, because we were just given some documents to read and then we went through the induction, just like any other staff member. So, we didn't really get into the nGAP policies and all those things. If I remember correctly, there was a meeting for new staff members rather than the one pertaining to the nGAP. Nevertheless, we were a mixed group. Nothing was explained about the principles and goals of the nGAP. However, I will share with you what I read from their document. As a cohort, we were described as a new generation of academics, and they encouraged young people to continue their studies, and yeah, without having to worry about funding and all that, so I think they're just trying to encourage more young people to enter academia. Yes, I agree. That's basically what we were told. That's what I read in the documents. Yeah, I thought we only attended this programme to engage lecturers, but they just showed us the people whom we should contact if maybe we were having issues and all that and other</p>	<p>Transfer of skill</p> <p>Review of documents</p> <p>No priorities given</p> <p>nGAP goals not explained</p>

<p>previous nGAP lecturers were giving us their experiences that they had in this programme and all that. So yeah, basically that is that.”</p> <p>nGAP lecturer 4: “ Initially, no, because I was given the SOP document when I first started out, which stated that my HOD would assign me a teaching load. I didn't know much about the nGAP; how it differs from a regular job and what type of development to expect. Previously, I worked for the department as a contract lecturer. To me it felt like I was just going to carry on doing what I did before.”</p> <p>My professional needs may not have been fully met because of expenses that are not covered by the nGAP funds. However, the nGAP gave me all developmental tool and the course coordinator is supportive.”.</p> <p>nGAP lecturer 5: When I decided to submit my application for the nGAP, I also applied for the other lecturing position, so they could consider me for either position. I was accepted in the nGAP training. When I started with the nGAP, my load started to pile up to the level of my regular lecturing position. So that's when I started to enquire. What is the difference between being the nGAP and the normal lecturer? So, then I spoke to other nGAP lecturers from our cohort who were also new recruits and they told me what's happening in their departments. This practice continued where I was given a load for the whole class and was also given honours students to supervise and the master</p>	<p>Opportunities for academic development</p> <p>Point of reference</p> <p>Review of documents</p> <p>nGAP not explained</p> <p>Professional needs partially met</p>
--	--

<p>student to co-supervise. It was when I was like, no, I feel like I was doing too. I also wanted to be treated like other new recruits. So that was the issue. And then we attended an induction much later in the year which I felt they should have done earlier, probably when I came in would have given me more clarity about the programme.”.</p>	<p>Development opportunities</p> <p>Hiring process not clearly defined</p> <p>Roles not clearly defined</p> <p>No alignment across departments</p> <p>Heavy workload</p> <p>Unfair treatment</p> <p>Lack of prioritization</p>
<p>Evaluation of professional development?</p>	
<p><i>nGAP lecturer 2: “We just send the reports to DHET. It’s not like there’s somebody who comes from the</i></p>	<p>Evaluation through reports</p>

<p><i>department and meet up with us regarding the feedback from the report. The report is sent twice a year to DHET, which lets the department know that this is what we have done in terms of our plans. However, we have never received any response from DHET which should indicate that they've checked all our reports, and probably provide some advice on how to improve the programme in our university”.</i></p> <p>nGAP lecturer 5: <i>“ Umm. Evaluation, I can't really say there is a specific way this is carried out. I'm not so sure, but what I know is that we send out reports to the Department of Higher Education twice a year. That report has different sections where you need to answer about your personal development, about programmes you attended or how you find the nGAP in your institution, and all of that. So we do have those reports that we send out twice a year. It is signed by the mentor, my PhD supervisor, the HOD of the department, as well as the nGAP coordinator. However, my mentor and I go beyond than just addressing issues on the report, we even address other matters for improvement through emails”.</i></p>	<p>Evaluated twice a year</p> <p>No feedback from DHET</p> <p>Reports sent to DHET twice a year</p> <p>Tracking of personal developmental goal</p> <p>Various signatures needed in the report</p> <p>Go beyond the scope of the report</p>
<p>Has mentorship supported your professional development?</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 2: <i>“Well, initially the support was very smooth. You know, I</i></p>	<p>Support was available</p>

relied on my mentor with a lot of things. I would contact him when I needed things and when I was in need. Maybe some assistance here and there, until we started not getting along at the personal level and that affected everything. Yeah, it affected everything. Now, I couldn't meet the guy, and that was that. So, we've not been meeting since 2020. The mentorship was initially helpful. The guy really helped me a lot, even with my proposal development, he helped me a lot with my research but in 2020 that was when things went south. Since then, we have not been talking from a mentor, mentee level. Yeah, I've been on my own from 2020, so the data collection, the analysis I have been doing on my own not with my promoters. My mentor is just relaxed and yeah, it's understandable because we we're not getting along on certain things”.

nGAP lecturer 3: *“I would say I had two mentors during the three years. With the first mentor we only met twice in 2019. We had never spoken after those meetings. I don't think she was well placed to mentor me as we were both in the same position in terms of studies and age. I guess our relationship was affected by those facts, hence I was referred to a more senior mentor. I feel more supported by my new mentor. I am also getting the development that I really need. Being mentored by an experienced academic expose one to more opportunities. This is because they are always willing to share information about various things like upcoming conferences and other meetings that are relevant to my development. A person*

Relied on her mentor

Clash of personalities

No mentorship support

Breaking down of professional relationship

Mentorship is non-existent

Breaking down of professional relationship

Inexperienced mentor

Experienced mentor

<p><i>with less experience may not be privy to that kind of information”.</i></p> <p>nGAP lecturer 4 <i>” My development has been greatly influenced by mentorship. I know there will always be someone holding my hand in this nGAP process, someone who will correct me if I am not doing well. Since I was thrown in the deep end at the beginning, there is guidance now. I have a very good relationship with my mentor. He is always interested to know whether I am coping or not. He always wants to double check anything that needs to be submitted. He doesn’t assume that I know everything. He always wants to know if I need help.”</i></p>	<p>Supported under new mentor</p> <p>Exposed to opportunities</p> <p>Willingness to share information</p> <p>Lack of exposure</p> <p>Supported by mentor</p> <p>Sense of trust</p> <p>Guidance is available</p> <p>Professional relationship</p> <p>Supportive structure</p> <p>Not assuming</p>
<p>Does mentorship process reduce biases?</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 2:<i>”The programme is well placed for black female academics and more opportunities are afforded to them. So, I would say the issue of</i></p>	<p>Mentorship is helping</p>

<p><i>biases at my institution has not been flagged as a problem. The mentorship process in the nGAP is playing a big role in ensuring that black female academics thrive in their field”.</i></p> <p>nGAP lecturer 3: <i>“ I wouldn't speak for the university because I'm I don't know what is happening with other peoples in the programme and their mentors, besides my close colleague who's also a friend. I can only speak on what I know. She has been mentored by a male person who has not been supportive. However, she is still with the same mentor. All in all, the mentorship process has not been helpful in some areas in giving support to the nGAP lecturers”.</i></p> <p>nGAP lecturer 4: <i>“ Yes, I do think there are lots of opportunities available for black women academics. I was very grateful when I saw the criteria in the nGAP, because I initially thought that the programme would give preference men. In my department there are more male PhD candidates than women. I was the only female from Agribusiness department but there is going to be another female joining us in 2023, so I am quite excited”.</i></p>	<p>nGAP black academics benefiting through mentorship</p> <p>Lack of mentorship support</p> <p>No alternative</p> <p>Does not have impact</p> <p>Mentorship is working</p> <p>Female academics are catered for</p> <p>Female academics are given more opportunities</p> <p>Acquisition of more female academics</p>
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<p>How well has the nGAP been implemented?</p> <p>- Prospects for future academic career?</p>	
<p><i>nGAP lecturer 1: "I am happy with the implementation of the nGAP at my university, however, I feel like the programme needs more structure so that we all follow the same format in terms of reporting and how reports are documented. All in all, the programme is managed well, and I am also getting opportunities to present at various conferences, which it is a good step in the right direction. My mentor is giving me all the support I truly need, and she wants the best for me.</i></p> <p><i>The programme has already prepared me to aspire more for senior positions because of the opportunities I am currently exposed to".</i></p> <p><i>nGAP lecturer 2:"It discourages one to see a better future in academia. I am sure the programme has good objectives and goals, but the administratively the programme seems to be lacking quite several things. I am not sure if those who have been working in the development department are trying to discourage the new cohorts of academics because they were never exposed to this kind of training".</i></p>	<p>Happy with implementation</p> <p>nGAP is well managed</p> <p>Mentor is supportive</p> <p>Positive attitude through the nGAP</p> <p>Negative outlook</p> <p>No confidence in administration</p> <p>A sense of subotage</p>

nGAP lecturer 3: *"I think the nGAP is integrated nicely at the university because some of the nGAP colleagues from other universities do not even know their course coordinator of this programme, this gives me comfort that my university is on the right track. They (colleagues) do not even know how much funds have the DHET allocated to the institution for their own training. In my own opinion the programme needs to be improved in terms of documenting some of the nGAP lecturers' complaints, so that there are steps taken to mitigate such complaints in future. Sometimes we are being told that we were afforded an opportunity we did not deserve, which really leaves bitter-sweet taste in my mouth. It sounds as if they are doing us a favour by including us in the programme, which is so unfortunate. It seems like there is no value expected from you as a trainee, and as a black female academic trainee you have nothing to contribute to the programme.*

I feel like the programme is not preparing me for a senior position in academia as a result I am contemplating to utilize my skills in the private sector. I get the sense that they are always looking for mistakes instead of supporting me. The environment is not welcoming.

nGAP lecturer 4: *"Only those who were inducted into this programme have a better understanding of what it is all about. The programme is not fully explained to everyone in the department because you still get colleagues who are given more workload than others. I don't know how the nGAP coordinator or the*

Happy with the implementation

More information is needed

Reporting structures need defined

Sense of resentment

Lack of trust towards the nGAP academics

Lack of confidence towards the nGAP

HOD can make everyone in the university aware of the nGAP programme. It is quite evident that other employees do not know much about the programme when we have meetings. Having more people understanding the policies of the nGAP will be quite useful. Through this programme I was able to get into academia, which has been something that piqued my interest for a long time. I applied for various teaching positions, but I never got a call-up for the interview. However, through this programme I am gaining lecturing experience. I believe this should be able to open doors in terms of higher positions.

nGAP lecturer 5: *“ Information should be shared to everyone so that they know what the programme is all about. The 20% workload should be addressed well because the workload seems to be a problem with how it has been explained to people who are part of this programme.*

I do believe that the programme is preparing me for senior future position especially when it comes to reporting. I must be honest with you though; lecturing is quite demanding. It is not only about standing in front of students and talk but there is a lot involved. I am currently involved in the community engagement project and doing some administrative duties to prepare me for some demanding duties in academia. Focus on one aspect of your work will not broaden the scope for you. You will only be stuck in one thing. I would like to see myself being a senior lecturer one day, so that requires some preparation

Hostile environment

Unequal benefits of induction

Unequal sharing of workload

Knowledge of the nGAP across the board

Thorough knowledge of the programme

nGAP open opportunities

Skill acquisition

Information should be shared

Roles should be explained

in terms of producing my teaching portfolio of evidence”.

The programme is imparting some skills

Too much workload

The scope is not enough for growth

Teaching opportunities should be more

Aspire for senior position

Appendix F – Initial coding in the semi-structured interviews pertaining to the nGAP mentors

<p>Models used to manage, mentor and advancement of academic career progression of the nGAP female academics underpinned by principles of talent management model</p> <p>(a) Do you have policy decisions, management interventions, and process that guide your human resources to promote the principles of TM models during the nGAP’s developmental programme?</p> <p>(b) In the absence of such policies and management interventions, what guides your human resources to evaluate the career progression of the nGAP academics towards academic growth and development?</p>	
Transcription	Initial coding
<p><i>Mentor 1 (for nGAP lecturer -1): “I remember they stressed that we should meet every week for a few minutes. It is also an informal relationship where we aim to ensure that the mentees are developing in four areas. Therefore, they suggested that we take care of their learning and teaching needs, including their research, their professional development, and their administration and leadership. So what I’ve been doing with my mentee was just haphazard because we were not working with a specific programme from the university.”</i></p> <p><i>“I would go into her office and find out how her PhD studies were progressing, and also find out if she needed any kind of support. We wrote quite a few articles together. That is the research part. Then, for her professional development,</i></p>	<p>Schedule</p> <p>Developing relationships</p> <p>Meeting needs</p> <p>Improvise some of the duties</p> <p>Proactive mentorship</p>

<p><i>I advised her to join various professional bodies and to become affiliated with them. The pillars of academia were the ones that guided us.</i></p> <p><i>I must say, all policies are outlined in the nGAP contract. There is a report that is supposed to be submitted every year. That particular report has different sections that we are supposed to discuss, the meetings you had with the mentee, and what was discussed in that particular meeting."</i></p>	<p>Academic collaboration</p> <p>Professional advice</p> <p>Code of ethics</p> <p>Policies available</p> <p>Submission of report</p> <p>Discussion points</p>
<p>Mentor 2 (for nGAP lecturer - 3):<i>"The nGAP regulations have been fully explained to me. Based on policy and regularities, my mentee has fallen far behind in her PhD studies".</i></p> <p><i>"In order to complete their training, the nGAP lecturer is contracted for six years. I was also informed that in the first four years the lecturer will need to have 20% workload, and in the last two years the lecturer can have a full load of work".</i></p>	<p>Information shared</p> <p>Lagging behind</p>
<p>Mentor 3 (for nGAP lecturer – 5): <i>"Ideally this question should be directed to the director of the programme because we are just academics, we are just mentoring the nGAP lecturers. I am not in a position to talk about policy as this will require the expertise of relevant people. I am not the right person to talk about this. The HOD will be the right person to answer your questions about this."</i></p>	<p>Informed</p> <p>Limited information</p>

	<p>No knowledge</p> <p>Have no idea</p>
<p>How does your university fairly manage, mentor and advance career progression of nGAP female academics?</p>	
<p>Mentor 1, <i>"I mentioned in my previous response to you that the contract stipulates that I will be responsible for making sure my mentee is properly mentored and exposed to teaching, research, and social engagement. It is my responsibility as a mentor to impart as much knowledge as possible to ensure my mentee's success."</i></p> <p>Mentor 2, <i>"From my point of view, I think you should ask the person in charge of the programme, but from what I've seen, the very reason there's someone like (programme director) is for her handling of the nGAP group. Occasionally, she holds retreats with them. According to the previous mentor, they have meetings with their mentees, but I haven't had the chance to attend. Given that I have just started, I'm concerned I won't be able to provide you with everything you need. Being a mentor, I have not had the opportunity to explore other options. Having assisted where there was a problem, I feel that there are some issues I may have overlooked because of your questions. After communicating with my mentee, I realized there are issues that need to be addressed and that she needs more than what she received previously. The reason she is behind might be that something was missing</i></p>	<p>Assist with teaching, research, and social engagement</p> <p>Impart knowledge</p> <p>Does not know</p> <p>Shift of responsibility</p> <p>Not proactive</p> <p>New</p> <p>No initiative</p> <p>Acknowledge limitations</p>

that she did not receive. Her entry into the field was a plunge into the deep end. In a figurative sense, she was not given the tools to stay afloat. When I first came here, I faced the same experience. It is my responsibility to hold her hand and help her adjust to the changing university culture. She is experiencing a totally different culture here. Also, I felt something was happening in her department since she kept saying 'oh, how I feel I belong in your department, where I would be understood'. However, she does not want to elaborate when I ask her what is happening in her department.

Mentor 3, *" The usual thing we do is integrate them into the department's work. I made sure that my mentee was involved in departmental activities, had an office and was treated similarly to other employees. Although she is an nGAP lecturer, she does things that everyone can do. So, I think we should help her integrate into the system and navigate herself out, especially now that she's in her second or third year. Since then, she has gotten used to it because initially, she was in a state of transition shock. As a PhD student, she was brought in as a lecturer. Every nGAP lecturer, not just me, but everyone in the department, is treated as part of the team.*

Resolving issues

Realisation

Organisational culture

Integration

Involvement

Help to navigate

	<p>Assimilation</p> <p>Equality</p>
<p>Are there any built-in mechanisms in the management models used in your university to reduce biases towards nGAP female academics?</p> <p><i>(c) What approaches have your university adopted to profile individuals required?</i></p> <p><i>(d) How are such approaches aligned to the university business strategy to address gender bias?</i></p>	
<p><i>Mentor 1, “There are a lot of activities that promote women within the university. There is an emphasis on having women as leaders within the department, so it is more like promoting women than biasing against them.</i></p> <p><i>(c) We had a need in our department. When my mentee (nGAP lecturer A) was identified, there were some male individuals that were interviewed but the department needed a female academic, hence nGAP lecturer A was identified. It was not merely because she was a woman. As a result, I was identified as a mentor. It was because I was a senior staff member in the department. She was working on Positive Psychology, and I was also working in the same area. Therefore, it was based on our research interests. She wanted to register as an industrial</i></p>	<p>Opportunities</p> <p>Growth</p> <p>Gender-balanced</p> <p>Match</p>

<p><i>psychologist, and I had just registered. The HOD believed that I could help her through her journey, but not necessarily for the sake of empowering women. It was more like the needs of the department were suited to the expertise that she had. When she came in, I was one of the senior members who was working on the research areas that she was also working on. So that is why the HOD approached me to mentor her.</i></p>	<p>Research interests</p> <p>Confidence</p> <p>Departmental needs</p> <p>Research needs met</p>
<p><i>(d) I must say the needs of the department are aligned with the university business strategy to address biases. The university has a transformation policy now, so one of the objectives is to identify local academics, particularly females. The needs of our department were aligned with the transformation policy of the university.</i></p>	<p>Match</p> <p>Aligned</p> <p>Transformation</p>
<p>Mentor 2, <i>“I am not sure if I should be the one answering this question because I was not equipped or trained to mentor in this programme. Nevertheless, the nGAP is quite a remarkable project since we have never experienced something like this before. I feel that the nGAP people do not realize how lucky they are to have this programme because it fully equips all those in training with the necessary tools to become fully-fledged lecturers. But I wish it could do what it is meant to do.</i></p>	<p>Aligned</p> <p>Not equipped</p> <p>Acknowledgement</p>

<p><i>(a) We have what we call a revised lecturer's programme. It is more like an orientation, so each new member of staff is oriented to the university. They are more about the university, the administration, and all the services that are found at the university. The nGAP coordinator does a lot of activities to equip the nGAP lecturers to be able to teach how to do research and writing retreats.</i></p>	<p>Useful programme</p> <p>Anticipation</p>
<p><i>(b) Before I can make an informed decision about the university's business strategy, I need to know how mentor and mentee are matched.</i></p>	<p>Orientation programme</p> <p>Administration</p>
<p>Mentor 3, <i>"I think it is the other way around. The thing is that females are very dominant in our department. They are the ones calling the shots. When nGAP lecturer E came, she felt at home. We have less than 30% males in our department because females dominate the department.</i></p>	<p>Support</p>
<p><i>(a) I must mention that females are becoming more dominant in various universities throughout the world and males are becoming fewer. If there is a male and female applicant, the female candidate is usually preferred during the interview process.</i></p>	<p>Alignment</p>
<p><i>(b) The university is clear about its strategy in terms of hiring female and disabled individuals.</i></p>	<p>More females</p> <p>Adjusting</p> <p>Female dominance</p>
	<p>Females in demand</p>

	<p>Females preferred</p> <p>University strategy</p>
<p>What are your views on the management of career progression system used?</p>	
<p>Mentor A, <i>“There should be a section here that outlines the promotional criteria for the university. When you look at the promotion criteria, they place a lot of emphasis on research. However, in the department, there’s also quite a lot of teaching expected. As well as that, academics are expected to engage in a lot of professional development and community service. Progress is extremely difficult in this situation, especially for someone like nGAP lecturer A, who is currently pursuing her PhD. The first article she wrote has already been published. In other words, as soon as she completes her PhD, she will be able to pursue promotion or career advancement. She was appointed as a lecturer, but because she is in the nGAP, she cannot move. In my opinion, that holds her back since she could have progressed in her career as fast as she could if she wasn’t under the nGAP. Her nGAP allows her to wait for over five years before getting promoted. As a result, the university’s career progression is well balanced between research, teaching, and professional development, but the</i></p>	<p>Promotional criteria</p> <p>Emphasis on research</p> <p>Promotion of teaching</p> <p>Professional development</p> <p>Publishing articles</p> <p>Career advancement</p> <p>Exposed to lecturing</p> <p>nGAP delay</p>

<p><i>external environment (government) has somewhat rigid nGAP policies. Their policies don't allow flexibility. The university makes it easy for anyone who joins as a lecturer to advance through publications, teaching and learning, and PhD completion. You need to publish five articles to move from lecturer to senior lecturer, which is considered very strict. It is also imperative to be active in professional organizations. Then you need to have a PhD that you supervise. The list is endless. Some people find that very difficult to achieve because you must balance quite a lot of things. Career progression is biased towards research than teaching and learning.</i></p> <p><i>A dialogue between external bodies and the university would be beneficial, especially when it comes to those nGAP programmes. I think the people who designed those programmes should be aware of the promotional criteria that are used by the university. This is before they can even draft a contract for somebody. For a late bloomer or somebody who does not adapt easily, five years is fine. However, somebody who is very fast in developing, like my mentee, it is discouraging because next year she should be done with her PhD. Her articles are already ready. She is ready to be a senior lecturer, but she must wait for three more years. So, there should be a dialogue between a university and DHET or whoever is designing the nGAP. This will ensure that there is a relationship between promotional criteria and the policies that are designed by the nGAP. That way there is a compliment between the two</i></p>	<p>Waiting too long for promotion</p> <p>nGAP policies strict</p> <p>Policies not flexibility</p> <p>Academic opportunities</p> <p>PhD supervision</p> <p>Biased career progression</p>
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<p>and they don't frustrate the nGAP candidates.</p>	
<p>Mentor 2, <i>"This is a well-managed programme but as I was saying it depends on who is the person that has been mentored. Who is the mentor? What department has this person been placed in? We are expected to be meeting with the mentee. In those meetings I am expected to write a report which should be submitted at the end of the year. Nevertheless, the mentor before me must write his report since I was not there in the first semester. The report is about our progress with the mentee (nGAP lecturer D) in the second semester. Mentor and mentee become more accountable in this process. Having this kind of structure in place is very critical. This gives us an opportunity to show how we have been progressing, how we have reached certain milestones. Are we following the programme's expectations? The challenges we face and how we are addressing them. Those are the things I would like to report on. I also want to assess if my mentee is being trained in management in terms of managing tutors. I also want to ensure that she has been allocated sufficient workload.</i></p>	<p>Delay</p> <p>Alignment between promotional criteria and policies</p> <p>Calibre of mentees</p> <p>Calibre of mentor</p> <p>Department</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>Report completion</p> <p>Progress report</p>
<p>Mentor 3, <i>"If you ask me, what is lacking is a plan for how to evaluate the nGAP lecturer. According to what kind of criteria do we decide whether the nGAP lecturer is progressing? One thing we need to do is put in place that structural programme. In addition, we need a mandate, so we know what the</i></p>	<p>Accountability</p> <p>Structure</p> <p>Reached milestone</p>

<p><i>nGAP lecturer's role and responsibilities are, what kind of role the nGAP lecturer can play. There is a lack of information regarding how the nGAP lecturer has been evaluated. There are no clear criteria. What is happening now is that the nGAP lecturer is on his or her own. There is no integration into the department whereby they stipulate their goals in terms of what they want to do after completing their PhD. What is the next step? There should be a way of integrating them into the department. There should be flexibility in the workload of the nGAP lecturer. The 20% workload can be increased to 40% or 50% if the lecturer is not that busy with her laboratory or PhD work. So the workload is not customised to bring out the optimum performance and flexibility of the nGAP lecturer.</i></p> <p><i>We have issues. There are no policies in place to ensure nGAP lecturers remain and grow in their careers. This means that whether they are motivated by their mentor or not does not matter much in this department. If the nGAP is doing '1,2,3' and you perform according to the specifications of the department then you have a chance of being integrated into the department after he or she has completed the nGAP training. The role of the mentor is to stand with his or her mentee and give the support that is needed to help them succeed in the programme.</i></p>	<p>Problem solving</p> <p>Mentees' training needs</p> <p>Workload assessment</p> <p>Structural programme</p> <p>Mandate</p> <p>Information on evaluation</p> <p>No clear criteria</p> <p>No integration into department</p> <p>Workload flexibility</p>
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	<p>Schedule monitoring</p> <p>Workload not customised</p> <p>No policies for career growth</p> <p>Mentor support</p>
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Appendix G – reviewing and developing in the semi-structured interviews with the nGAP lecturers

Principles and goals of the nGAP clearly defined?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are those principles and goals related to your professional development? - Are your professional needs being met through the nGAP 	
Transcribed data	Themes (bold) and sub-themes (<i>italic</i>)
<p>nGAP lecturer 1: “The programme was fully explained and we were given a context of what it seeks to achieve. The nGAP programme prepared me to align myself with its principles and goals that pertain to my professional development. Therefore, my personal and professional needs have been met so far”.</p> <p>“This has been an interesting journey for me. Before I can answer your question, I was part of the group that went to Johannesburg for a small conference with all people from different universities who were in the nGAP. The conference was basically trying to show us that there were also other nGAP lecturers from other universities.</p> <p>One of the principles and goals is to groom me basically as a young academic, so that when the programme comes to an end, I will be a fully-fledged academic who has grown and learned because one of the goals was that when I have finished the nGAP I’ll be able to fill in the position of an academic who’s about to retire. My understanding of this</p>	<p>Learning and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Needs assessment</i> - <i>Development goals</i> - <i>Growth opportunities</i> - <i>Engagement with the programme</i> - <i>Support</i> - <i>Encouragement</i> - <i>Positive reinforcement</i> - <i>Adjustment according to needs</i> <p>Development opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Best practices</i> - <i>Networking opportunities</i> - <i>Conference and seminar opportunities</i> - <i>Self-awareness evaluations</i> - <i>Coaching</i> - <i>Mentorship</i> - <i>Performance review</i>

<p>programme is to fill in the gap of someone who is about to retire”.</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 2: “The nGAP principles and goals have been fully explained to me. I think in my case it was more about attending workshops that have been made available to us. Our nGAP coordinator from our institution alerts and sends us these different workshops whenever they come and then it is up to us to choose whichever we want to attend. In 2021 I attended one where they were dealing writing manuscript. I was at the process of writing my own manuscript at the time, so it came at the right time when I really needed the training, and it was quite productive”.</p>	<p>Development goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Performance metrics</i> - <i>Networking skills</i> - <i>Team-player</i> - <i>Learn new technology</i> - <i>Share information</i> - <i>Learn new skill</i> - <i>SMART goals</i>
<p>nGAP lecturer 3: “No, not really, because we were just given some documents to read and then we went through the induction, just like any other staff member. So, we didn't really get into the nGAP policies and all those things. If I remember correctly, there was a meeting for new staff members rather than the one pertaining to the nGAP. Nevertheless, we were a mixed group. Nothing was explained about the principles and goals of the nGAP. However, I will share with you what I read from their document. As a cohort, we were described as a new generation of academics, and they encouraged young people to continue their studies, and yeah, without having to worry about funding and all that, so I think they're</p>	<p>Induction process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Introduction to the vision of the programme</i> - <i>Introduction to the policies of the programme</i> - <i>Introduction to all departmental heads</i> - <i>Induction pack</i>

<p>just trying to encourage more young people to enter academia. Yes, I agree. That's basically what we were told. That's what I read in the documents. Yeah, I thought we only attended this programme to engage lecturers, but they just showed us the people whom we should contact if maybe we were having issues and all that and other previous nGAP lecturers were giving us their experiences that they had in this programme and all that. So yeah, basically that is that.”</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 4: “ Initially, no, because I was given the SOP document when I first started out, which stated that my HOD would assign me a teaching load. I didn't know much about the nGAP; how it differs from a regular job and what type of development to expect. Previously, I worked for the department as a contract lecturer. To me it felt like I was just going to carry on doing what I did before.”</p> <p>My professional needs may not have been fully met because of expenses that are not covered by the nGAP funds. However, the nGAP gave me all developmental tool and the course coordinator is supportive.”.</p>	<p>Career responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Teaching and learning</i> - <i>Improving research skills</i> - <i>Supportive with other duties</i>
<p>nGAP lecturer 5: When I decided to submit my application for the nGAP, I also applied for the other lecturing position, so they could consider me for either position. I was accepted in the nGAP training. When I started with the</p>	<p>Quality of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Research excellence</i> - <i>teaching quality</i> - <i>Work environment</i>

<p>nGAP, my load started to pile up to the level of my regular lecturing position. So that's when I started to enquire. What is the difference between being the nGAP and the normal lecturer? So, then I spoke to other nGAP lecturers from our cohort who were also new recruits and they told me what's happening in their departments. This practice continued where I was given a load for the whole class and was also given honours students to supervise and the master student to co-supervise. It was when I was like, no, I feel like I was doing too. I also wanted to be treated like other new recruits. So that was the issue. And then we attended an induction much later in the year which I felt they should have done earlier, probably when I came in would have given me more clarity about the programme.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Career perception</i> - <i>Wellbeing</i>
<p>Evaluation of professional development?</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 2: “We just send the reports to DHET. It's not like there's somebody who comes from the department and meet up with us regarding the feedback from the report. The report is sent twice a year to DHET, which lets the department know that this is what we have done in terms of our plans. However, we have never received any response from DHET which should indicate that they've checked all our reports, and probably provide some advice on how to improve the programme in our university”.</p>	<p>Evaluation tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mentoring evaluation</i> - <i>Coaching evaluation</i> - <i>Automated tool</i> - <i>Reporting protocols</i>

<p>nGAP lecturer 5: “ Umm. Evaluation, I can't really say there is a specific way this is carried out. I'm not so sure, but what I know is that we send out reports to the Department of Higher Education twice a year. That report has different sections where you need to answer about your personal development, about programmes you attended or how you find the nGAP in your institution, and all of that. So we do have those reports that we send out twice a year. It is signed by the mentor, my PhD supervisor, the HOD of the department, as well as the nGAP coordinator. However, my mentor and I go beyond than just addressing issues on the report, we even address other matters for improvement through emails”.</p>	<p>Assessment report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Objective</i> - <i>Methodology</i> - <i>Report structure</i> - <i>Summary</i> - <i>Recommendations</i>
<p>Has mentorship supported your professional development?</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 2: “Well, initially the support was very smooth. You know, I relied on my mentor with a lot of things. I would contact him when I needed things and when I was in need. Maybe some assistance here and there, until we started not getting along at the</p>	<p>Mentorship support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Problem-solving</i> - <i>Decision making</i> - <i>Testing out new strategies</i> - <i>Reflection</i> - <i>Constructive feedback</i>

<p>personal level and that affected everything. Yeah, it affected everything. Now, I couldn't meet the guy, and that was that. So, we've not been meeting since 2020. The mentorship was initially helpful. The guy really helped me a lot, even with my proposal development, he helped me a lot with my research but in 2020 that was when things went south. Since then, we have not been talking from a mentor, mentee level. Yeah, I've been on my own from 2020, so the data collection, the analysis I have been doing on my own not with my promoters. My mentor is just relaxed and yeah, it's understandable because we we're not getting along on certain things”.</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 3: “I would say I had two mentors during the three years. With the first mentor we only met twice in 2019. We had never spoken after those meetings. I don't think she was well placed to mentor me as we were both in the same position in terms of studies and age. I guess our relationship was affected by those facts, hence I was referred to a more senior mentor. I feel more supported by my new mentor. I am also getting the development that I really need. Being mentored by an experienced academic expose one to more opportunities. This is because they are always willing to share information about various things like upcoming conferences and other meetings that are relevant to my development. A person with less</p>	<p>Mentoring relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Encouraging and empowering</i> - <i>Identify and achieve career goals</i> - <i>Identify and correct gaps</i> - <i>Increasing confidence</i> - <i>Developing career options and opportunities</i> - <i>Having access to a senior role model</i> - <i>Insight into the university culture</i> - <i>Developing mentoring/coaching skills</i>

<p>experience may not be privy to that kind of information”.</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 4: “ My development has been greatly influenced by mentorship. I know there will always be someone holding my hand in this nGAP process, someone who will correct me if I am not doing well. Since I was thrown in the deep end at the beginning, there is guidance now. I have a very good relationship with my mentor. He is always interested to know whether I am coping or not. He always wants to double check anything that needs to be submitted. He doesn’t assume that I know everything. He always wants to know if I need help.”</p>	<p>Mentoring to the mentee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased self-confidence - Increased self-awareness - Improved communication skills - Better personal network - Exposure to new and different perspectives - Increased capacity to self-reflect - Improved goal-setting skill - Learning from other's experiences - Learning to ask good questions - Supported by someone - Being advocated for - Increased chance of promotion - Increased job satisfaction
<p>Does mentorship process reduce biases?</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 2: “The programme is well placed for black female academics and more opportunities are afforded to them. So, I would say the issue of biases at my institution has not been flagged as a problem. The mentorship process in the nGAP is playing a big</p>	<p>Mentorship reduces biases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspire cultural change - Recognition of untapped abilities - Dispel restrictive notions - Boost women's participation

<p>role in ensuring that black female academics thrive in their field”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Combat gender bias</i> - <i>Substitute for stereotypes</i>
<p>nGAP lecturer 3: “I wouldn't speak for the university because I'm I don't know what is happening with other peoples in the programme and their mentors, besides my close colleague who's also a friend. I can only speak on what I know. She has been mentored by a male person who has not been supportive. However, she is still with the same mentor. All in all, the mentorship process has not been helpful in some areas in giving support to the nGAP lecturers”.</p>	<p>Gendered Idea of Mentorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>More women mentors</i> - <i>gender-balanced mentorship</i> - <i>Strong mentors</i>
<p>nGAP lecturer 4: “Yes, I do think there are lots of opportunities available for black women academics. I was very grateful when I saw the criteria in the nGAP, because I initially thought that the programme would give preference men. In my department there are more male PhD candidates than women. I was the only female from Agribusiness department but there is going to be another female joining us in 2023, so I am quite excited”.</p>	<p>Mentee-mentor gender relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Be a good role model</i> - <i>Help mentees reach goals</i> - <i>coaching techniques</i> - <i>Push the mentees</i> - <i>Be attentive</i>
<p>How well has the nGAP been implemented?</p>	

- Prospects for future academic career?	
<p>nGAP lecturer 1: <i>"I am happy with the implementation of the nGAP at my university, however, I feel like the programme needs more structure so that we all follow the same format in terms of reporting and how reports are documented. All in all, the programme is managed well, and I am also getting opportunities to present at various conferences, which it is a good step in the right direction. My mentor is giving me all the support I truly need, and she wants the best for me.</i></p> <p><i>The programme has already prepared me to aspire more for senior positions because of the opportunities I am currently exposed to".</i></p>	<p>Implementation of a development programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic direction - Understanding expectations - Having good performance conversation - Supporting academic women and career progression - Networking skills and strategies
<p>nGAP lecturer 2: <i>"It discourages one to see a better future in academia. I am sure the programme has good objectives and goals, but the administratively the programme seems to be lacking quite several things. I am not sure if those who have been working in the development department are trying to discourage the new cohorts of academics because they were never exposed to this kind of training".</i></p>	<p>Administration role of development programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving and enhancing administrative capabilities - Help achieve developmental goals - Remain professional
<p>nGAP lecturer 3: <i>"I think the nGAP is integrated nicely at the university because some of the nGAP colleagues</i></p>	<p>Attitudes during development programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting structures

<p>from other universities do not even know their course coordinator of this programme, this gives me comfort that my university is on the right track. They (colleagues) do not even know how much funds have the DHET allocated to the institution for their own training. In my own opinion the programme needs to be improved in terms of documenting some of the nGAP lecturers' complaints, so that there are steps taken to mitigate such complaints in future. Sometimes we are being told that we were afforded an opportunity we did not deserve, which really leaves bitter-sweet taste in my mouth. It sounds as if they are doing us a favour by including us in the programme, which is so unfortunate. It seems like there is no value expected from you as a trainee, and as a black female academic trainee you have nothing to contribute to the programme.</p> <p>I feel like the programme is not preparing me for a senior position in academia as a result I am contemplating to utilize my skills in the private sector. I get the sense that they are always looking for mistakes instead of supporting me. The environment is not welcoming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grievance register - Trainees should be treated with respect - Career trajectory
<p>nGAP lecturer 4: "Only those who were inducted into this programme have a better understanding of what it is all about. The programme is not fully explained to everyone in the department because you still get colleagues who are given more workload than others. I don't know how the nGAP coordinator</p>	<p>Induction Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Structured induction policies</i> - <i>Capacity-building activities</i> - <i>Critical mentoring strategies</i>

<p>or the HOD can make everyone in the university aware of the nGAP programme. It is quite evident that other employees do not know much about the programme when we have meetings. Having more people understanding the policies of the nGAP will be quite useful. Through this programme I was able to get into academia, which has been something that piqued my interest for a long time. I applied for various teaching positions, but I never got a call-up for the interview. However, through this programme I am gaining lecturing experience. I believe this should be able to open doors in terms of higher positions.</p>	
<p>nGAP lecturer 5: Information should be shared to everyone so that they know what the programme is all about. The 20% workload should be addressed well because the workload seems to be a problem with how it has been explained to people who are part of this programme.</p> <p>I do believe that the programme is preparing me for senior future position especially when it comes to reporting. I must be honest with you though; lecturing is quite demanding. It is not only about standing in front of students and talk but there is a lot involved. I am currently involved in the community engagement project and doing some administrative duties to prepare me for some demanding duties in academia. Focus on one aspect of your work will not broaden the scope for you. You will</p>	<p>nGAP as an enabler</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Career planning</i> - <i>Reflective skills</i> - <i>Interpersonal skills</i> - <i>Leadership skills</i> -

<p>only be stuck in one thing. I would like to see myself being a senior lecturer one day, so that requires some preparation in terms of producing my teaching portfolio of evidence”.</p>	
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Appendix H – reviewing and developing in the semi-structured interviews pertaining to the nGAP mentors

<p>Models used to manage, mentor and advancement of academic career progression of the nGAP female academics underpinned by principles of talent management model</p> <p><i>(e) Do you have policy decisions, management interventions, and process that guide your human resources to promote the principles of TM models during the nGAP’s developmental programme?</i></p> <p><i>(f) In the absence of such policies and management interventions, what guides your human resources to evaluate the career progression of the nGAP academics towards academic growth and development?</i></p>	
<p>Transcribed data</p>	<p>Themes (bold) and sub-themes (<i>italic</i>)</p>
<p>Mentor 1 (for nGAP lecturer -1): <i>“I remember they stressed that we should meet every week for a few minutes. It is also an informal relationship where we aim to ensure that the mentees are developing in four areas. Therefore, they suggested that we take care of their learning and teaching needs, including their research, their</i></p>	<p>Mentor-mentee meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Skill-related topics</i> - <i>Career story topics</i> - <i>Feedback topics</i> - <i>Situational advice topics</i> - <i>Career path topics</i>

<p><i>professional development, and their administration and leadership. So what I've been doing with my mentee was just haphazard because we were not working with a specific programme from the university."</i></p> <p><i>"I would go into her office and find out how her PhD studies were progressing, and also find out if she needed any kind of support. We wrote quite a few articles together. That is the research part. Then, for her professional development, I advised her to join various professional bodies and to become affiliated with them. The pillars of academia were the ones that guided us.</i></p> <p><i>I must say, all policies are outlined in the nGAP contract. There is a report that is supposed to be submitted every year. That particular report has different sections that we are supposed to discuss, the meetings you had with the mentee, and what was discussed in that particular meeting."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership topics - Long and short-term goal topics - University related topics
<p>Mentor 2 (for nGAP lecturer - 3):<i>"The nGAP regulations have been fully explained to me. Based on policy and regularities, my mentee has fallen far behind in her PhD studies".</i></p> <p><i>"In order to complete their training, the nGAP lecturer is contracted for six years. I was also informed that in the first four years the lecturer will need to have 20% workload, and in the last two years the lecturer can have a full load of work"</i></p>	<p>Development areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching - Learning - Research - Professional development - Administration - Leadership

<p>Mentor 3 (for nGAP lecturer – 5): <i>"Ideally this question should be directed to the director of the programme because we are just academics, we are just mentoring the nGAP lecturers. I am not in a position to talk about policy as this will require the expertise of relevant people. I am not the right person to talk about this. The HOD will be the right person to answer your questions about this."</i></p>	<p>Mentoring models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One-on-one mentoring - Group mentoring - Peer mentoring - Reverse mentoring - Flash mentoring
<p>How does your university fairly manage, mentor and advance career progression of nGAP female academics?</p>	
<p>Mentor 1, <i>"I mentioned in my previous response to you that the contract stipulates that I will be responsible for making sure my mentee is properly mentored and exposed to teaching, research, and social engagement. It is my responsibility as a mentor to impart as much knowledge as possible to ensure my mentee's success."</i></p>	<p>Success in mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good communication skills - Willingness to participate - Genuine interest in the mentee
<p>Mentor 2, <i>"From my point of view, I think you should ask the person in charge of the programme, but from what I've seen, the very reason there's someone like (programme director) is for her handling of the nGAP group. Occasionally, she holds retreats with them. According to the previous mentor, they have meetings with their mentees, but I haven't had the chance to attend. Given that I have just started, I'm</i></p>	<p>Mentoring on university culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve quality of life - Economic benefits - Transition of culture - Knowledge creation - Dissemination of knowledge - Critical reflection

<p>concerned I won't be able to provide you with everything you need. Being a mentor, I have not had the opportunity to explore other options. Having assisted where there was a problem, I feel that there are some issues I may have overlooked because of your questions. After communicating with my mentee, I realized there are issues that need to be addressed and that she needs more than what she received previously. The reason she is behind might be that something was missing that she did not receive. Her entry into the field was a plunge into the deep end. In a figurative sense, she was not given the tools to stay afloat. When I first came here, I faced the same experience. It is my responsibility to hold her hand and help her adjust to the changing university culture. She is experiencing a totally different culture here. Also, I felt something was happening in her department since she kept saying 'oh, how I feel I belong in your department, where I would be understood'. However, she does not want to elaborate when I ask her what is happening in her department.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity of thought - Problem solving - Social responsibility - Inclusiveness - Change
<p>Mentor 3, “ The usual thing we do is integrate them into the department's work. I made sure that my mentee was involved in departmental activities, had an office and was treated similarly to other employees. Although she is an nGAP lecturer, she does things that everyone can do. So, I think we should help her integrate into the system and navigate herself out, especially now that she's in her second or third year. Since</p>	<p>Workplace mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skill and competency development - Overall professional development - Better relationship with colleagues - Active involvement in projects - Better utilizing of skills

<p><i>then, she has gotten used to it because initially, she was in a state of transition shock. As a PhD student, she was brought in as a lecturer. Every nGAP lecturer, not just me, but everyone in the department, is treated as part of the team.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Development of leadership skills</i> -
<p>Are there any built-in mechanisms in the management models used in your university to reduce biases towards nGAP female academics?</p> <p><i>(a) What approaches have your university adopted to profile individuals required?</i></p> <p><i>(b) How are such approaches aligned to the university business strategy to address gender bias?</i></p>	
<p>Mentor 1, <i>“There are a lot of activities that promote women within the university. There is an emphasis on having women as leaders within the department, so it is more like promoting women than biasing against them.</i></p> <p>(a) <i>We had a need in our department. When my mentee (nGAP lecturer A) was identified, there were some male individuals that were interviewed but the department needed a female academic, hence nGAP lecturer A was identified. It was not merely because she was a woman. As a result, I was identified as a mentor. It was because I was a senior staff member in the department. She was working on Positive Psychology, and I was also working in the same area. Therefore, it was based on our research interests. She wanted to register as an industrial psychologist, and I had just registered. The HOD</i></p>	<p>Overcoming gender bias</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Learn to recognise gender bias</i> - <i>Check you own interactions for bias</i> - <i>Understanding and use of privilege to influence</i> - <i>Representing female role models</i> - <i>Share learning and speak up</i>

<p><i>believed that I could help her through her journey, but not necessarily for the sake of empowering women. It was more like the needs of the department were suited to the expertise that she had. When she came in, I was one of the senior members who was working on the research areas that she was also working on. So that is why the HOD approached me to mentor her.</i></p> <p><i>(b) I must say the needs of the department are aligned with the university business strategy to address biases. The university has a transformation policy now, so one of the objectives is to identify local academics, particularly females. The needs of our department were aligned with the transformation policy of the university.</i></p>	
<p>Mentor 2, <i>“I am not sure if I should be the one answering this question because I was not equipped or trained to mentor in this programme. Nevertheless, the nGAP is quite a remarkable project since we have never experienced something like this before. I feel that the nGAP people do not realize how lucky they are to have this programme because it fully equips all those in training with the necessary tools to become fully-fledged lecturers. But I wish it could do what it is meant to do.</i></p> <p><i>(a) We have what we call a revised lecturer’s programme. It is more like an orientation, so each new member of staff is oriented to the university. They are more about the university, the administration, and all the services that</i></p>	<p>Mentor training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Training aligns expectations</i> - <i>Training prevents unnecessary conflicts</i> - <i>Training gets mentors in the right mindset</i> - <i>It gives mentors confidence</i> - <i>It shows mentors the organisations is there to support them</i>

<p>are found at the university. The nGAP coordinator does a lot of activities to equip the nGAP lecturers to be able to teach how to do research and writing retreats.</p> <p>(b) Before I can make an informed decision about the university's business strategy, I need to know how mentor and mentee are matched.</p>	
<p>Mentor 3, "I think it is the other way around. The thing is that females are very dominant in our department. They are the ones calling the shots. When nGAP lecturer E came, she felt at home. We have less than 30% males in our department because females dominate the department.</p> <p>(a) I must mention that females are becoming more dominant in various universities throughout the world and males are becoming fewer. If there is a male and female applicant, the female candidate is usually preferred during the interview process.</p> <p>(b) The university is clear about its strategy in terms of hiring female and disabled individuals.</p>	<p>Gender equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender stereotypes and sexism - Violence against women - Equal access of women to justice - Balanced participation in decision-making - Gender mainstreaming
<p>What are your views on the management of career progression system used?</p>	
<p>Mentor A, "There should be a section here that outlines the promotional criteria for the university. When you look at the promotion criteria, they place a lot</p>	<p>Academic career progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting network

of emphasis on research. However, in the department, there's also quite a lot of teaching expected. As well as that, academics are expected to engage in a lot of professional development and community service. Progress is extremely difficult in this situation, especially for someone like nGAP lecturer A, who is currently pursuing her PhD. The first article she wrote has already been published. In other words, as soon as she completes her PhD, she will be able to pursue promotion or career advancement. She was appointed as a lecturer, but because she is in the nGAP, she cannot move. In my opinion, that holds her back since she could have progressed in her career as fast as she could if she wasn't under the nGAP. Her nGAP allows her to wait for over five years before getting promoted. As a result, the university's career progression is well balanced between research, teaching, and professional development, but the external environment (government) has somewhat rigid nGAP policies. Their policies don't allow flexibility. The university makes it easy for anyone who joins as a lecturer to advance through publications, teaching and learning, and PhD completion. You need to publish five articles to move from lecturer to senior lecturer, which is considered very strict. It is also imperative to be active in professional organizations. Then you need to have a PhD that you supervise. The list is endless. Some people find that very difficult to achieve because you must balance quite a lot of things. Career progression is biased towards research than teaching and learning.

- Self-drive
- Self-consciousness
- Building collaboration
- Self-advocacy and negotiation skills
- Statistical mentorship
- Work ethic
- Self-efficacy
- Resilience and persistence
- Skills and knowledge
- Capable mentorship

A dialogue between external bodies and the university would be beneficial, especially when it comes to those nGAP programmes. I think the people who designed those programmes should be aware of the promotional criteria that are used by the university. This is before they can even draft a contract for somebody. For a late bloomer or somebody who does not adapt easily, five years is fine. However, somebody who is very fast in developing, like my mentee, it is discouraging because next year she should be done with her PhD. Her articles are already ready. She is ready to be a senior lecturer, but she must wait for three more years. So, there should be a dialogue between a university and DHET or whoever is designing the nGAP. This will ensure that there is a relationship between promotional criteria and the policies that are designed by the nGAP. That way there is a compliment between the two and they don't frustrate the nGAP candidates.

Mentor 2, *“This is a well-managed programme but as I was saying it depends on who is the person that has been mentored. Who is the mentor? What department has this person been placed in? We are expected to be meeting with the mentee. In those meetings I am expected to write a report which should be submitted at the end of the year. Nevertheless, the mentor before me must write his report since I*

Mentor-mentee accountability

- *Establish rules and expectations*
- *Check in and evaluate one another regularly*
- *Work with agendas and feedback*

was not there in the first semester. The report is about our progress with the mentee (nGAP lecturer D) in the second semester. Mentor and mentee become more accountable in this process. Having this kind of structure in place is very critical. This gives us an opportunity to show how we have been progressing, how we have reached certain milestones. Are we following the programme's expectations? The challenges we face and how we are addressing them. Those are the things I would like to report on. I also want to assess if my mentee is being trained in management in terms of managing tutors. I also want to ensure that she has been allocated sufficient workload.

Mentor 3, *"If you ask me, what is lacking is a plan for how to evaluate the nGAP lecturer. According to what kind of criteria do we decide whether the nGAP lecturer is progressing? One thing we need to do is put in place that structural programme. In addition, we need a mandate, so we know what the nGAP lecturer's role and responsibilities are, what kind of role the nGAP lecturer can play. There is a lack of information regarding how the nGAP lecturer has been evaluated. There are no clear criteria. What is happening now is that the nGAP lecturer is on his or her own. There is no integration into the department whereby they stipulate their goals in terms of what they want to do after completing their PhD. What is the next step? There should be a way of integrating them into the department. There should be flexibility in the workload of the nGAP lecturer. The*

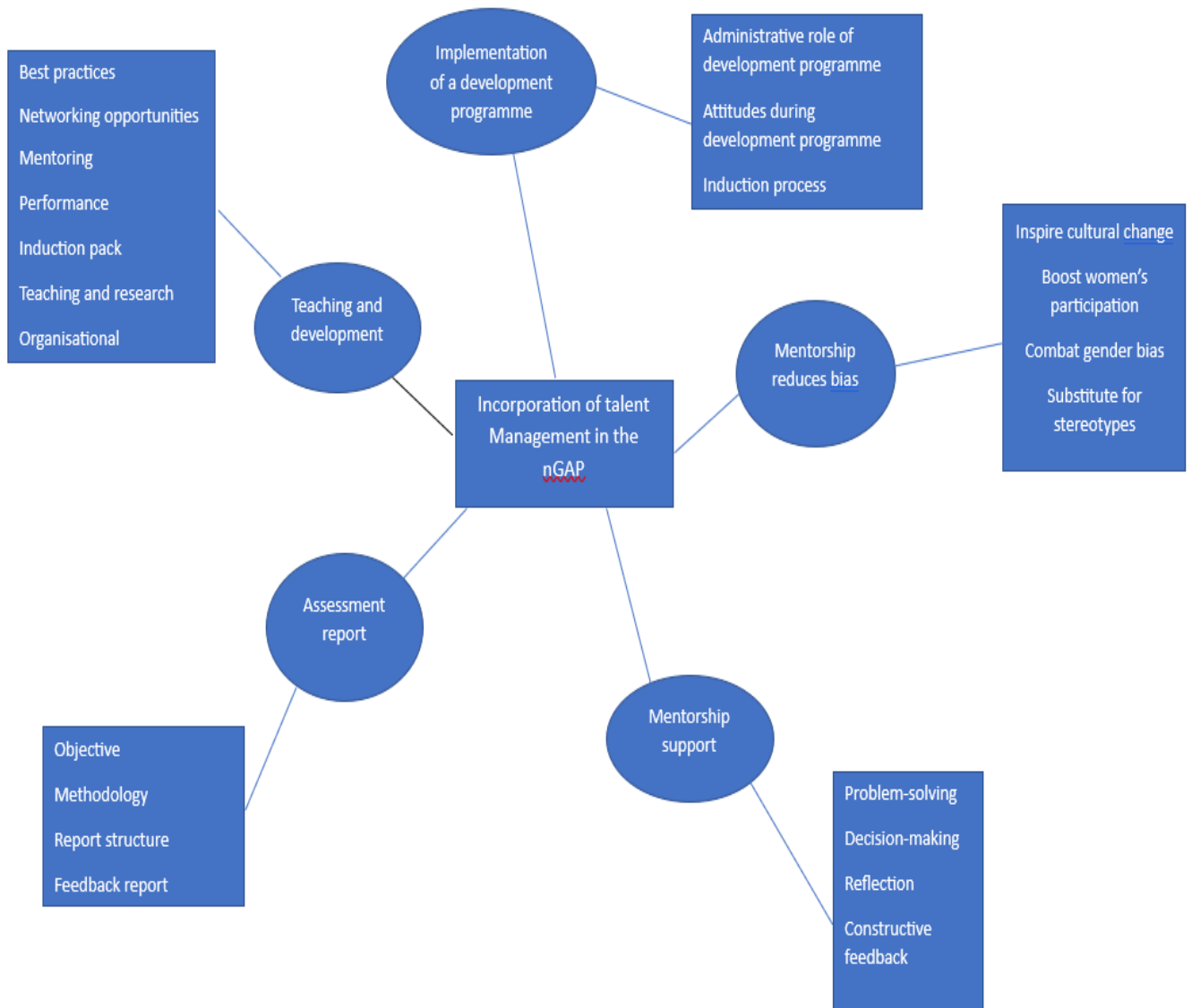
Workload flexibility

- *Job autonomy*
- *Flex time*
- *Deadline flexibility*

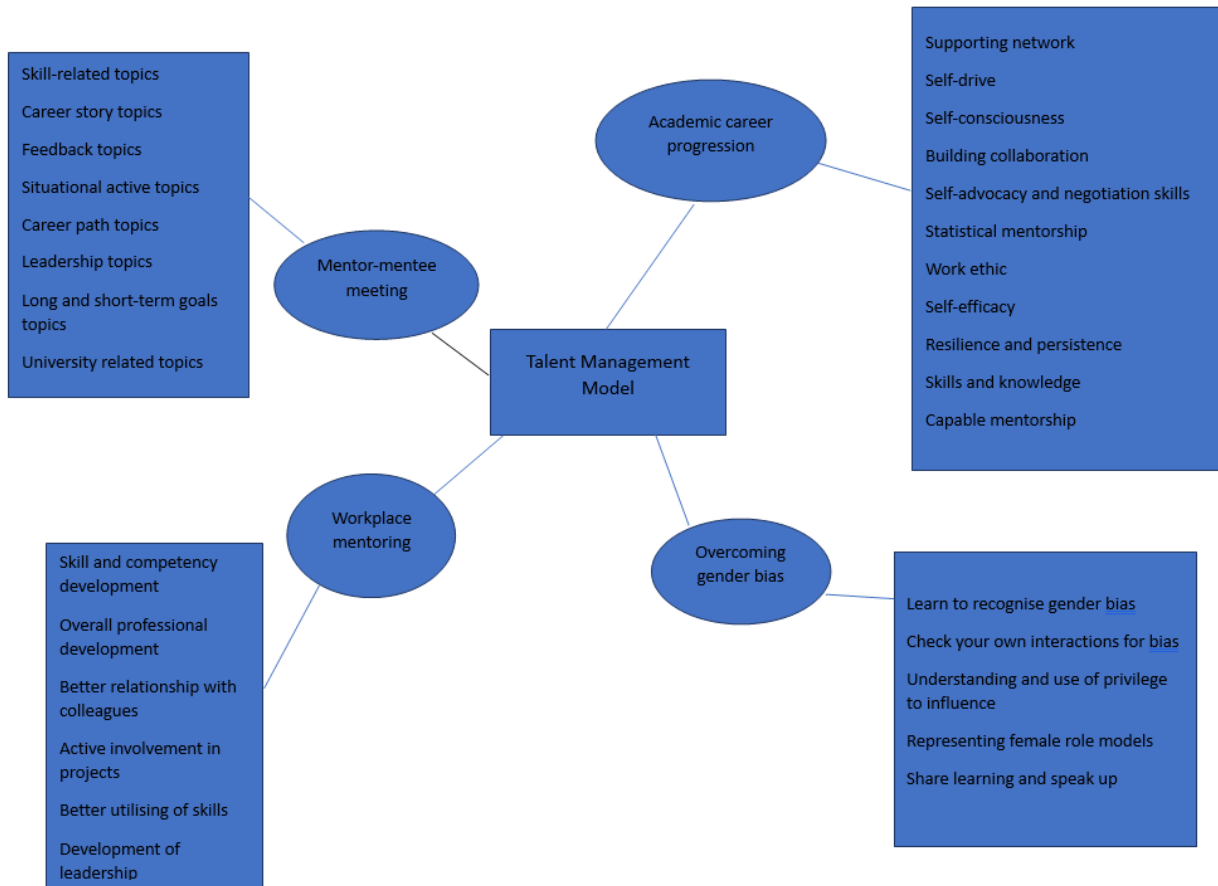
20% workload can be increased to 40% or 50% if the lecturer is not that busy with her laboratory or PhD work. So the workload is not customised to bring out the optimum performance and flexibility of the nGAP lecturer.

We have issues. There are no policies in place to ensure nGAP lecturers remain and grow in their careers. This means that whether they are motivated by their mentor or not does not matter much in this department. If the nGAP is doing '1,2,3' and you perform according to the specifications of the department then you have a chance of being integrated into the department after he or she has completed the nGAP training. The role of the mentor is to stand with his or her mentee and give the support that is needed to help them succeed in the programme

Appendix I – Final themes and sub-themes pertaining to nGAP lecturers



Appendix J – Final themes and sub-themes pertaining to nGAP mentors



Appendix K – CIPP model of evaluation

nGAP track evaluation model (adapted from Stufflebean and Coryn (2014:315))		
CIPP model of evaluation		
Type of evaluation	Questions asked	Methods
Context	<p>What educational and training need are being met?</p> <p>What goals should be pursued to meet the needs?</p>	<p>Literature review</p> <p>Meeting with key stakeholder</p> <p>Online survey of undergraduate students</p>
Input	<p>What are the most promising approaches to meeting the educational and training need?</p> <p>What might some of the barriers to successful implementation of the programme?</p>	<p>Literature review</p> <p>nGAP document review</p> <p>nGAP coordinator from relevant university and DHET</p>
Process	<p>To what extent was the nGAP carried out as planned?</p>	<p>Review of recruitment to process: post uptake and attrition</p> <p>Survey of existing nGAP academics seeking feedback on the programme</p>
Product	<p>To what extent did the programme effectively address the original objective of the nGAP?</p>	<p>Review of lived experience of previous participants in the programme</p> <p>Feedback from existing nGAP academics</p> <p>Monitoring of career and promotion trajectory of nGAP academics in South Africa</p>

Table 10

Appendix L – ACRA

The Academic Career Readiness Assessment (ACRA)

Qualification		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	
Teaching Practices		Candidate shows awareness of their limited teaching abilities and is interested in developing teaching skills.	Level 1 & Candidate is familiar with the evidence supporting the use of active learning strategies in the classroom.	Level 2 & Candidate demonstrates that they can use active learning strategies effectively in the classroom.	Level 3 & Candidate reflects on own teaching effectiveness and uses an iterative process to teaching to improve curriculum (1).	
	T	100% Required		67%	33%	
	RT	100% Required	9%	45%	36%	9%
	R	33%	33%			
Teaching Experience		Candidate has had significant responsibilities (2) as a teaching assistant.	Candidate has been fully responsible for organizing (3) and teaching a course.	Candidate has been fully responsible for organizing (3) and teaching a course with a comparable student population (4).	Candidate has been fully responsible for organizing (3) and teaching a variety of courses (5) with a comparable student population (4).	
	T	100% Required		33%	67%	
	RT	91% Required	27%	45%	9%	9%
	R	0%				
Commitment and Ability to Serve a Diverse Student Population		Candidate demonstrates the sensitivity, respect for individuals of all backgrounds, and the interpersonal skills to interact with them.	Level 1 & Candidate has immersed self in a diverse community, or has mentored, advised or taught diverse populations of students.	Level 2 & Candidate has used strategies to support learning of diverse populations of students.	Level 3 & Candidate can articulate a personal experience with equity or social justice that inspires them to improve learning experiences of diverse populations of students. (6)	
	T	67% Required			33%	33%
	RT	82% Required	64%	18%		
	R	0%				
Inclusion of Undergraduate Research Experiences in Research Plan		Candidate demonstrates a clear understanding that they will be working with undergraduate and/or Master's students.	Level 1 & Candidate understands the implications of doing research with non-PhD students on scope of project.	Level 2 & Research plan is specifically tailored to the institution's undergraduate and/or Master's population.	Level 3 & Candidate is able to propose projects of different calibers for different student populations. (7)	
	T	0%				
	RT	100% Required	18%		73%	9%
	R	0%				
Experience Conducting Research with Students		Candidate can articulate a scientific mentoring philosophy that meets the needs of the non-PhD student population served by this institution.	Level 1 & Candidate has experience conducting research with non-PhD students	Level 2 & Research conducted with non-PhD students produced preliminary data.	Level 3 & Data produced by non-PhD students was included in a scientific poster or paper.	
	T	0%				
	RT	82% Required	36%	45%		
	R	0%				

T: Teaching-Only institutions

RT: Research- and Teaching-Focused institutions

R: Research-Intensive institutions

RT

Research Feasibility with Available Resources

		Candidate demonstrates ability to develop a research program within the limitations of the start-up funds. (8)	Level 1 & Candidate demonstrates the ability to independently manage and run the equipment required for their research program. (9)	Level 2 & Research program is feasible in the institution's research and geographic environment, which includes some minor constraints. (10)	Level 3 & Research plan is tailored to the non-R1 institution's highly limited resources. (11)
T	0%				
RT	100% Required	18%	9%	36%	36%
R	67% Required	67%		33%	

Verbal Communication of Research

		Can present research clearly and effectively to labmates.	Can present science clearly to scientists in the same sub-discipline (for example, to other microbiologists).	Can present science clearly and effectively to scientists outside of subfield.	Can present science clearly and effectively and can spark the interest of scientists outside of subfield and non-PhD students.
T	0%				
RT	73% Required				73%
R	100% Required			67%	33%

Publications

		Candidate has produced a few papers, regardless of authorship or impact.	Candidate has produced first author papers during postdoc and (12) PhD (regardless of impact) (13).	Candidate has produced first author papers during postdoc and (12) PhD, with at least one paper contributing significantly to the field (14).	Candidate has produced first author papers during postdoc and (12) PhD, at least one of which was published in Cell, Nature, or Science (15).
T	0%				
RT	91% Required	9%	73%	9%	
R	100% Required			100%	

Research Vision & Strategy

		Research program is exciting (16) with a clear direction and includes explicit, feasible steps to attain this direction over the first couple of years.	Level 1 & There is an interesting, broad, research question that fills important gaps in the field and provides direction for the next 5 to 10 years.	Level 2 & The research question is broken down into smaller, feasible projects that use appropriate methods to answer the question.	Level 3 & The candidate has demonstrated experience successfully implementing this or a similar vision independently. (17)
T	0%				
RT	100% Required	36%	27%	36%	
R	67% Required			67%	

Funding Plan

		Candidate can suggest specific funding agencies and program names to fund proposed research program. (18)	Level 1 & Proposed research program is ambitious and impactful enough to be funded by an R01 grant. (19)	Level 2 & Candidate has developed specific aims that can be realistically achieved with a first R01 grant. (20)	Level 3 & Candidate has developed a funding plan beyond the first R01 grant. (21)
T	0%				
RT	64% Required	64%			
R	67% Required		33%	33%	

Research Independence

		Candidate has the technical expertise to run their proposed research program independently. (22)	Level 1 & Candidate shows ability to lead a research program, by developing own ideas and new collaborations independently. (23)	Level 2 & Candidate's proposed research program does not appear to be in competition with their current advisor's. (24)	Level 3 & Candidate can provide evidence of independence through advisor's recommendation letter.
T	0%				
RT	64% Required	27%	27%		9%
R	100% Required		33%	67%	

R

T	Recommendations				
		Enthusiastic and personalized recommendations from both PD and PhD advisors. (25)	Level 1 & letters from other respected scientists who are well known by the search committee AND who know the candidate well. (26)	Level 2 & letters emphasize candidate's ability to be successful as a principal investigator.	Level 3 & letters emphasize that the candidate shows the potential to become a leader in the field.
	T	67% Required	33%	33%	
	RT	64% Required	55%		
	R	100% Required	67%	33%	
RT	Collegiality				
		Candidate demonstrates the ability to interact with colleagues in a professional manner.	Levels 1 & Candidate demonstrates the interpersonal skills well-suited for the department's culture. (27)	Level 2 & Candidate demonstrates willingness to share ideas and resources with colleagues. (28)	Level 3 & Candidate demonstrates the ability to develop collaborative projects with colleagues. (29)
	T	67% Required		33%	33%
	RT	64% Required	9%	27%	27%
	R	67% Required	67%		
R	Fit				
		Candidate has sought experiences that align with the institution's teaching/ research mission. (30)	Level 1 & Research or teaching disciplines meet the needs of the department. (31)	Level 2 & Candidate has the ability and determination to handle the high workload. (32)	Level 3 & Candidate highlights potential synergies with others in department or institution.
	T	67% Required	67%		
	RT	100% Required	50%	27%	18%
	R	100% Required	33%	33%	33%

T: Teaching-Only institutions

RT: Research- and Teaching-Focused institutions

R: Research-Intensive institutions