An exploratory study of attractors and detractors in Black graduates' choice of an academic career in a South African Higher Education Institution

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the factors that relate to Black graduates' choice of an academic career in South Africa. Based on a total sample of 204 students comprising of both Black (including African, Coloured, Indians) and White students from a university in the Western Cape, the research findings indicate that for Black graduates, only teaching opportunities was shown to be a significant predictor of Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. There was also a significant difference in the application intention of Black graduates who have an influential role model and, Black graduates without an influential role model. For White graduates, teaching opportunities, research opportunities, meaningful work, salary, career advancement opportunities, and availability of positions were all found to be significant predictors of White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. There was a significant difference in the application intention of White graduates who have an influential role model and, White graduates without an influential role model. Implications for theory and practice are also discussed.

Keywords: South African Black graduates, Attraction, Intention to apply, Influential role model(s), Attractors, Detractors.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) rely on their capacity to attract, engage and retain competent academic staff in order to achieve their intellectual mission and also contribute to the human and economic development of the country (De Villiers & Steyn, 2006). Arguably, in the past universities found it easier to attract individuals to an academic career. Being able to offer a range of non-financial benefits has in the past allowed HEIs to attract prospective employees, sometimes even away from employment in the public or private sector.

In the past many individuals found the so-called academic lifestyle, typically characterised by substantial levels of autonomy, flexibility, work-life balance, developmental opportunities and meaning, appealing to them. The academic lifestyle and the desirable aspects thereof, were used as a counterbalance for the lower salaries that are offered to academics, particularly when compared to corporate salaries. Substantial disparity in pay is particularly found within the applied disciplines/professions, where individuals have the option to work in either an academic or corporate position.

South African employment equity legislation, including the Employment Equity Act of 1998, the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003, and the Skills Development Act of 1998 has further exacerbated the competition between HEIs, private and public sector organisations for highly educated and skilled individuals, often colloquially referred to as talent. For the purposes of the present study, talent refers to highly sought after skilled, qualified individuals that hold advanced degrees. The legislation referred to above, aims to implement affirmative action and bring about redress for previously disadvantaged or so-called designated groups, which include women, Black individuals (Africans, Coloureds, and Indians) and individuals with disabilities (Burger & Jafta, 2006; Horwitz, Jain, & Mbabane 2005). In this study, Black refers to a generic category of Africans, Coloureds, and Indians, as defined by the Employment Equity Act of 1998. Given the need to bring about transformation and redress in South African organisations, the attraction of talented Black graduates to jobs in all sectors of the economy is especially challenging, given the limited pool of Black talent available and the overwhelming demand brought about by the imperatives to transform organisations in South Africa.

Despite 20 years passing since the transition to democracy, concerns have been raised in South African HEIs over the paltry number of Black professors at the country's universities. The national protests experienced in 2015 across all South African universities put the lack of transformation in HEIs squarely under the spotlight. Statistics from the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (2013) show that only 18% of the country's 4073 Associate Professors are Black, while only 14% of Full Professors are Black. Given the current low levels of staff transformation in South African HEIs, there is no doubt that more needs to be done to bring about transformation in HEIs. Given the current funding models of HEIs, as well as the lack of resources, HEIs are unable to offer competitive salaries that would realistically compete with those offered by corporate and public sector organisations. HEIs therefore need to find alternative ways to attract the best graduate talent to choose academic careers, as well as to identify those that would be most likely to choose an academic career over those offered in public and private sector organisations.

The aim of the present study was to identify possible factors that might influence a Black graduates' career choice and to better understand how these factors impact the career choice/decision to specifically pursue a career in academia. In doing so, it should be noted that factors that may attract and retain individuals are not the same. Hopefully the results of this study will provide HEIs with empirically-based findings that can be used to increase the attraction of Black graduates or at least to identify those individuals that might make such a choice and so assist in bringing about the staff transformation much needed in South African HEIs. The next section will review literature in relation to South African HEIs, Black graduates' inclination to an academic career and the talent attraction process.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The South African Higher Education sector is faced with a number of issues in its effort to attract black graduates and achieve employment equity. This chapter presents some background to the South African HEI landscape in terms of its governance structures, funding issues, current Black demographic statistics within the sector, as well as reporting on current talent attraction efforts of South African HEIs. Additionally, based on various arguments and the findings of various previous studies, several hypotheses were formulated and are presented here.

South African Higher Education Institutions

The Employment Equity Act and the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) are the main drivers for workplace equity in HEIs. These policies are meant to promote affirmative action and facilitate transformation in the Higher Education sector. Several statutory and non-statutory bodies also serve additional regulatory purposes for HEIs, such as Universities South Africa, Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), and Council of Higher Education (CHE). Universities South Africa (formerly known as Higher Education South Africa) under the auspices of the DHET regulates the HEI sector by facilitating and ensuring the creation of an adequate Higher Education governance system based on principles of cooperative governance, institutional autonomy and academic freedom. The Council of Higher Education is tasked with monitoring and evaluation, quality assurance and regulation of policy implementation at all South African universities. It serves an advisory function to the Minister of Education on all higher education matters. Walwyn (2008), however, criticized the monitoring, evaluation and performance management system of CHE explaining that it places an over-emphasis on quantity (such as total number of qualifications or publications) rather than quality thereof. Walwyn (2008) argues that this leads to a dilution of the contribution of South African HEIs to key sectors of the economy.

In South African HEIs, academic posts typically have four key areas of responsibility, namely 1) teaching; 2) research; 3) leadership and/or administration; and 4) social responsiveness/professional service (Houston, Meyer & Paewai, 2006). Academic staff are expected to excel in all four these performance categories, however, concerns are beginning to

emerge with regards to these categories (Parsons & Frick, 2009). Over the last decade or so, academics have become highly critical of their ability to excel on all the criteria and as a result the paradigm of a so-called balanced academic has come under scrutiny. Other aspects of the academic job, especially the high levels of job stress and relatively low salaries due to insufficient funding in relation to those in private sector organisations, have further emerged as detractors for anyone considering a career in academia (Parsons & Frick, 2009).

Considering the expectation that HEIs need to contribute to the overall development of the South African economy, it is somewhat surprising that the problem of adequate funding still exists. For example, the joint total state allocations to universities and universities of technology, as a percentage of educational expenditure by the state decreased rapidly from 15 percent in 1987 to an all-time low of 12 percent in 1994. It later increased to 14 percent in 1999, but has since decreased to 13 percent (Department of Education, 2005). Given the limited sources of funding available, which is still largely derived from government subsidies, the National Research Fund (NRF) and tuition fees, HEIs are struggling to operate effectively (De Villiers & Steyn, 2006). The transformation imperative, which compels HEIs to attract and appoint meaningful numbers of Black talent to achieve transformation targets, comes on top of institutions that are struggling financially and that do not have the resources to effectively support such initiatives.

The dire financial position of HEIs stand in stark contrast to that found in private and public sector organisations. This whilst all of these various sectors of the economy are competing to attract much needed Black graduates from the same limited pool. HEIs do not have the resources to make equally attractive financial offers when they go into the so-called war for talent, specifically when targeting young Black graduate talent.

Black graduates in South African HEIs

In order to achieve the desired and much needed transformation of academic staff in HEIs, there needs to be more adequate representation of the various races in academe, especially Blacks (including Africans, Coloureds and Indians). Currently the staff composition of most HEIs have not changed in line with changes in the student composition (De Villiers & Steyn, 2006; Mkhwanazi & Baijnath, 2003). The National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE) notes that the possible reasons for the slow pace of staff transformation, include institutions not

setting specific race, gender and equity standards and not developing specific and effective strategies to achieve transformation targets.

Conversely, there are those that argue that academic staff transformation is taking place in some form, as more Black academics are attracted to academia to take up senior management positions in HEIs. The representation of Black individuals in senior management roles in HEIs has increased from 9 percent to over 16 percent (for example, Le Grange, 2011). Nontheless, it should be noted that the increase in the number of Black academics in senior management positions is still not sufficient transformation, as the racial profile of academic staff at faculty level and even senior management level still remains heavily skewed and dominated by Whites, especially at historically White institutions. HEIs therefore with the help of government, need to do more to attract Black talent into academia. It is encouraging to note how the number of Black graduates has increased considerably over the last few years.

As at 2010, undergraduate Black students' graduation rates stood at 16 percent, while of the 1423 PhD candidates that graduated in the same year, 63.3 percent of them were Black. However, the Black permanent staff composition at South African HEIs stood at an average of 45 percent. For some HEIs, the Black permanent staff cohort comprised only 18 percent of their total permanent staff (Department of Higher Education, 2013). It is therefore apparent that the majority of Black students who graduate do not choose academic careers.

One explanation, which is often provided as to why Black graduates do not choose to pursue academic careers is rooted in the difficulty many Black students and their families experience in financially supporting them through university. As a result, many of graduates cannot afford to settle for below-market salaries given that it is expected of them to not only repay their study debt, but also support several members of their family or in some instances even the communities that financially supported them during their studies. The seeming inability to settle for less pay is exacerbated by the fact that they often have a host of lucrative employment options in the private sector and in government, all vying for scarce Black talent. Potgieter (2002) explains that Black graduates leverage their employment equity positions to obtain better paying jobs and advance quicker in their careers. Hence, there is a tendency for Black graduates to job-hop, within a short space of time. This is usually done for ever increasing salary offers and so an individual's earnings can rapidly escalate. This makes it difficult for HEIs to attract Black graduates to academic careers. However, Burger, et al. (2006) argues that the inability of HEIs to attract Black graduates may also be linked to several other factors.

The factors include, firstly, the fact that Whites have always favoured a career in academe over Blacks. This notion has been promoted over time by the apartheid system of education which did not afford Blacks equal academic opportunities as to Whites. Some scholars further argue that it is difficult to attract a Black graduate to an academic career as many Black graduates are the first generation from their families to attend university and the idea of having academics in the family has not yet been established or even thought of. The lack of exposure to academics and the financial burdens often placed on Black graduates has arguably led many of them to rather choose careers in the private and public sector. Attracting Black talent to jobs in HEIs is arguably a special case of talent attraction.

Talent attraction

Talent attraction refers to the practices and processes an organisation engages in to identify prospective employees and create an Employee Value Proposition (EVP) that is attractive to them (Edwards, Bexley & Richardson, 2011). Due to the high demand and low supply of talented Black graduates, South African HEIs need to engage in talent attraction strategies, something they have not yet had to practice in the past to achieve the transformation targets that have been set. Also, the general decrease in the attractiveness of academic jobs, particularly amongst all graduates, means HEIs need to exert greater effort when attracting talented Black graduates. Therefore, in order to effectively attract Black talent, it is important for HEIs to understand the factors that attract Black graduates to pursue an academic career, as well as the factors that detract them from making this choice. The closest proxy to measure Black graduates' attraction to academic jobs, is their intention to apply for one. For the purposes of the present study intention to apply will be studied as it is believed to be the best predictor of choosing to pursue an academic career (in other words, the desired behaviour).

Black graduates' intention to apply for academic positions

Adams and de Kock (2015) defined applicant intention to apply as an individual's desire to submit an application, participate in the selection process, and stay in the applicant pool without necessarily committing to a job choice. Graduates are an important talent pool as they possess drive, new ideas, enthusiasm, and they are eager to learn, have higher flexibility, and a proven return on investment (Graduates for Growth, 2012).

Several factors have been suggested and found to influence graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. Reviewing the available literature, it would seem as if the factors that attract and/or detract Black graduates from applying for an academic job can be grouped in three categories, namely 1) individual level factors; 2) job level factors; and 3) organisational factors.

Individual level factors

Individual level factors, which are thought to influence graduates' intention to apply for an academic job, include teaching opportunities, research opportunities, and meaningful work. In several studies a significant positive relationship was found between the presence of teaching opportunities and the intention to apply for an academic job (for example, Feng & Ruzai-Shapiro, 2003; Simpson, Rediske, & Beecher, 2001; Sanders, Fulginiti & Witzke, 1992). Lee and Goldacre (2002) found that participants ranked the presence of teaching opportunities as the most important influence on their intention to apply to academia. Wood, Altmaier and Franken (1990) found that respondents valued their potential impact on training, stating that they enjoyed teaching because of its challenges and that by teaching they hoped they were making the world a better place.

Furthermore, a significant positive relationship has been found between research opportunities and the intention to apply for an academic job (see for example, Goldacre, Stear, Richards & Sidebottom, 1999; Matier, 1990; Sanders, Fulginiti, Witzke & Bangs, 1994). Lee and Goldacre (2002) found that 57 percent of participants viewed the challenge of research as an incentive to apply to academia. Edwards, Bexley, and Richardson (2011) found that participants rated a career with meaningful work as one of the most important factors that encouraged their intention to join academia. There is a general dearth of empirical studies on this relationship, nonetheless there seems to be convincing anecdotal evidence that making meaningful contribution would be related to an academic position. Individuals prefer to perform a job that is important to them and to society, as opposed to work that is not.

Based on the arguments presented above and supported by previous studies, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: Induvial level factors are related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H1a: Teaching opportunities are significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H1b: Research opportunities are significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H1c: Meaningful work opportunities are significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

Job level factors

Various factors related to the job and/or position specific factors have been found to be related to an individual's intention to apply for a job in academia. These job level factors include, intellectual stimulation, autonomy, independence, flexibility, work life balance, opportunity to develop new knowledge, challenging work, job satisfaction, travel opportunity, career advancement opportunities, collegiality, employee engagement, job security, work stress, work load, work group cohesion, recognition, and also salary.

Intellectual stimulation was ranked by participants in study as being most influential in their choice of an academic career (Markert, Part & Vetter's, 1998). A similar finding was previously reported by Rubeck, Donnelly and Jarecky (1995). One could argue that Black graduates would be more inclined to apply for an academic job due to the variety of tasks entailed in an academic job and the need to continuously stay abreast of new developments in their discipline. The university environment further provides high levels of intellectual stimulation due to the constant intellectual interactions with fellow academics and via the process of imparting knowledge to students. New research ideas stimulate academics and often require them to think into the future and thereby, predict future trends.

The prospect of performing challenging work was also found to attract research students to pursue an academic career (Edward, Bexley & Richardson, 2011). It could be postulated that graduates may perceive the demanding nature of an academic job as a positive aspect of the

job, rather than a negative one. Non-routine jobs where a well-defined set of procedures do not have to be followed allows the individual to deal with the demands of the job with creativity, expertise and personal discretion (Acemoglu & Autor, 2011; Cortes, Jaimovich, Nerkada & Siu, 2014).

According to Ahuja, McKnight, Chudoba, George and Kacmar (2007), job autonomy influences prospective employees' perceptions of the freedom to initiate, perform and complete tasks. Offering high levels of autonomy is believed to increase the attraction of a particular job and organisation. Matier (1990) also found that the prospect of autonomy contributed to talent attraction within an academic context, as academics tend to decide their area of interest and pursue research in this area and would like to do so unimpeded. Additionally, the freedom afforded to academics on how to deliver their lecture content and student assessment fosters a sense of autonomy. Arguably, academic jobs offer levels of autonomy which typically are not be available in many other jobs.

In several studies is was found that flexibility is positively related to job pursuit intentions, as well as young workers' attraction to an organisation (for example, Bourhis & Mekkaoui, 2010; Casper & Buffardi, 2004; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Individuals most often value work flexibility due to the opportunity it provides to engage in other activities outside of work. Technological developments have also enhanced the opportunities for more flexible work arrangements, such as working from home and flexible working hours, which has allowed for even greater levels of flexibility being possible than ever before (Russell, O'Connell & McGinnity, 2009).

Edwards, Bexley and Richardson (2011) found that the opportunity to develop new knowledge was found to be a key attractor to an academic career for research students, as it provided research students with an opportunity to pursue their research interests and develop novel ideas.

Research students (i.e. postgraduate students) perceived academic jobs to provide greater levels of job satisfaction than non-academic jobs, like those found in public or private sector organisations (Edwards, Bexley & Richardson, 2011). This may be due, at least partly, to the fact that many students who progress to the postgraduate levels possess an innate desire to teach and conduct research and are naturally inclined to believe that they will experience greater job satisfaction in a job that provides these kinds of opportunities. Bender and Heywood's (2006) study found empirical evidence for this notion and they reported that

academic scientists were found to have greater levels of job satisfaction than non-academic scientists.

Collegiality has also been found to be a key attractor to academia for graduates (Edwards, Bexley & Richardson, 2011; McAlpine & Amundsen, 2009). Graduates perceive a friendly relationship among academics to be an indication of a conducive working environment and this increases the attractiveness of an academic job. This perception may emanate from graduates' observation of academics in their interaction with one another.

There is a dearth of empirical evidence on graduates' perception of employee engagement in academia, however, Star (2004) states that engagement poses a dilemma for early career academics as they try to adapt to the requirements of the job. Macfarlane (2005) also highlights that more academics are becoming disengaged with the service role and adjustments need to be made to the reward and recognition structures to curtail this concerning trend. Markos and Sridevi (2010) also note that organisational records of high employee engagement could serve to attract young eager talent to an organisation as it is an indicator that there are adequate job resources being provided, and a low level of burnout is being experienced by employees.

Job security has in the past proven to be a key attractor for graduates to academia (Edwards, Bexley & Richardson, 2011; Adams, 2006). The prospect of securing tenure is an attractive proposition for postgraduate students, as this opportunity is not feasible in non-academic jobs such as corporate or government jobs. This is confirmed by Bender and Heywood's (2006) finding that academic scientists with tenure have substantially higher job satisfaction than non-academic scientists. Given the current high unemployment rate in South Africa most of which are Blacks, job positions that offer tenure will be highly attractive to Black graduates.

Houston, Meyer and Paewai (2006) suggested that work stress and the typical workload attached to an academic job is a detractor, discouraging graduates to apply for academic jobs. Growing institutional demands and the lack of resources has led to every more intensive workloads. For many universities a 50 or 60 hour-week has become the norm rather than the exception (Giao-Santos & Cabral-Cardoso, 2008). However, Edwards, Bexley and Richardson (2011) found that perceived work load was neither an attracting nor detracting factor in graduates' intention to pursue an academic career. This finding may be explained by the fresh, energetic nature of graduates, which allows them to take on a large workload and be able to cope with it. They may also have less commitments outside of work, which allows them to take on multiple job roles and therefore not view work load as a detractor.

With regards to perceived work group cohesion there is a dearth of research as to whether or not it attracts graduates to pursue an academic career or not. However, based on anecdotal evidence there may arguably be a link between graduates' perception of how academics work with one another (based on their own observation) and how attractive an academic job would be. The more academics are perceived to work together effectively, the more likely it may be for graduates to pursue an academic career.

Matier (1990) found that the opportunity to travel and attend conferences to be a key attractor to an academic career. However, the opportunity to travel and attend conferences may also pose a work-family conflict problem for individuals with family commitments (Giao-Santos & Cabral-Cardoso, 2008), which is something graduates might not think of at this stage of the career.

Graduates in Edwards, Bexley and Richardson's (2011) sample perceived there is not sufficient career advancement opportunities in academia, especially for females (Thanacoody, Bartram, Barker & Jacobs, 2006). Jones and Palmer (2011) suggested that fellow academics and superiors often assume that once women have children, work becomes their second priority. Such assumptions and stereotypes further embed the belief amongst women that there not sufficient career advancement opportunities for them in academia. D'Amico, Vermigli, and Canetto (2011) found that in psychology faculties in Italian universities, women constitute two-thirds of assistant professors but, only one third of full professors and department chairs. Nonetheless, women reported a readiness to compete for advancement opportunities with males and break the so-called glass ceiling. There is no conclusive evidence though to suggest that a lack of career advancement may detract female graduates from applying for an academic job.

Recognition was found to be an attracting factor in graduates choosing to pursue a career in academia (Bloch, 2002). This may be due to the fact that universities cannot afford to pay academics competitive salaries, therefore universities make up for this deficit by using non-financial rewards, such as recognition to reward good performance among academics.

Lastly, salary is considered by Edwards and his colleagues to be a detracting job factor that discourages graduates from pursuing an academic career as there is a general perception among graduates that they can earn more money in non-academic jobs (Edwards, Bexley & Richardson, 2011). Taylor (2007) found that most graduates from science and engineering

disciplines preferred to join academia over corporate and non-profit organisations, but they were not willing to settle for below-market salaries which many universities cannot afford.

Based on the arguments presented above and supported by previous studies, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H2: Job level factors are related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2a: Intellectual stimulation is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2b: Autonomy is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2c: Independence is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2d: Flexibility is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2e: Work life balance is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2f: Opportunity to develop new knowledge is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2g: Challenging work is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2h: Job satisfaction is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2i: Travel opportunities on the job are significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2j: Career development opportunities are significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2k: Collegiality is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2l: Employee engagement is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2m: Job security is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2n: Work stress is significantly negatively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2o: Workload is significantly negatively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2p: Work group cohesion is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2q: Recognition is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2r: Salary is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

Organisational level factors

Several organisational level factors have been found to be associated with the intention to apply for an academic job. These include, an inclusive climate, intellectually stimulating environment, organisational justice, inspiring leadership, availability of positions, and the prestige/status of the academic job and/or institution.

Carless and Imber (2007) found that an unfriendly and hostile organisational climate had both direct and indirect effects on applicant attraction and job choice intentions. Catanzaro, Moore and Marshall (2010) also found that organisational climate had a significant effect on attraction and applicants' intention to apply. Given the historical context of South Africa, it is likely that Black graduates will apply at a HEI that is perceived to have an inclusive organisational climate.

It was further found that the perceived intellectual environment of HEIs was a key attractor for graduates to apply for an academic job. Edward, Bexley and Richardson (2011) found that the

intellectual nature of the overall university environment (the presence and opportunity to work with smart people) was one of the most positive influences on the choice of an academic career.

Additionally, Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin and Jones (2005) found that graduate applicants' perceptions of organisational justice positively related to organisational attractiveness and graduate applicants' job choice. In South Africa, this justice perceptions may be a key attracting or detracting factor, given South Africa's historical context of inequality and exploitation. Black graduates' perception of HEIs' distributive, interpersonal and procedural justice will either attract or detract them from applying.

There is a dearth of evidence on the relationship between inspiring leadership perceptions and graduates' intention to pursue a career in academia. However Ready, Hill, and Conger (2008) explain that a desirable brand affiliation in addition to inspirational leadership appeals to eager young graduates. This serves to challenge young graduates to develop themselves as leaders, and contribute to the development of the organisation. For HEIs, graduates' perceptions of inspiring leadership may make an academic career seem more attractive, and therefore encourage them to pursue an academic career. For example, a young graduate may be inclined to apply for an academic position at the University of South Africa, citing the inspirational leadership of Chancellor Thabo Mbeki as a reason.

Graduates in Edwards, Bexley and Richardson's (2011) study rated availability of positions as one of the organisational level factors that detract them from pursuing an academic career. This finding suggests that graduates do not perceive there to be a high number of employment opportunities in academia and may as a result opt for a career in non-academic sectors.

Prestige is considered a detracting organisational level factor. Although studies in other countries have found prestige to be a key attractor to graduates intention to pursue an academic career (for example, Edwards, Bexley & Richardson, 2011) the same seems not to be the case in South Africa. Portnoi (2009) found that graduates did not perceive an academic position to be a prestigious one. This may be due to the fact that during the apartheid era teaching was one of the few positions that was open to all racial groups. As a result, graduates may be more inclined to explore the full range of other career options that their parents and grandparents did not have access to. Therefore, prestige may not be an attracting factor for Black graduates in this study as well.

Based on the arguments presented above and supported by previous studies, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H3: Organisational level factors are related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

3a: Inclusive climate is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

3b: Intellectual environment is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

3c: Organisational justice is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

3d: Inspiring leadership is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

3e: Availability of positions in academia is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

3f: Black graduates' perceived prestige of the HEI is significantly positively related to their intention to apply for an academic job.

One factor that does not fit into the individual, job and organisational level categories is the influence of a role model. Role models' influence seems to play a major role in attracting graduates to a particular job or sector. Feng and Ruzai-Shapiro (2003) found that more academics claimed to be influenced by a role model, than those in private sector organisations. Neacy, Stern, Kim and Dronen (2000) also found that more academics emphasised the influence of a mentor/role model in their intention to join academia. Therefore, the following is proposed:

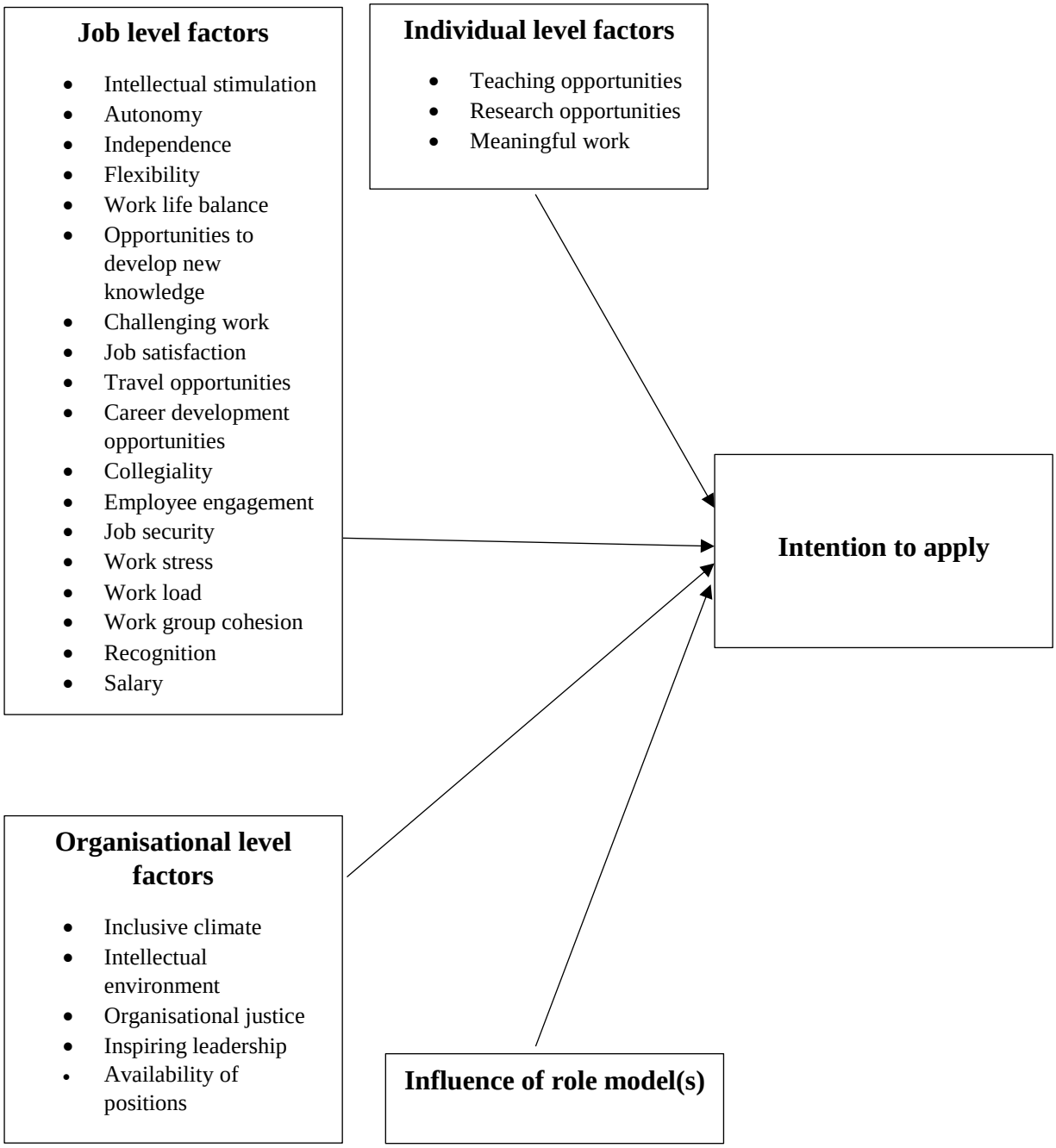
H4a: There is a significant difference between Black graduates with an influential role model(s) and Black graduates without an influential role model(s).

Conclusion

Based on the arguments presented above and supported by previous studies, an integrated conceptual or theoretical model is proposed and was investigated further.

Figure 1:

Conceptual/theoretical model under investigation



This Chapter has provided a brief overview of the South African Higher Education sector, and identified from literature, factors that either attract or detract graduates from an academic job. Lastly, hypotheses have been proposed based on both empirical and anecdotal evidence discussed in this chapter. The next section will outline the method to be utilised to conduct this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This chapter outlines the method used to conduct this study. A detailed description of both the qualitative and quantitative process followed, is further provided.

Research design

Given the dearth of previous literature to refer to, an exploratory research design was utilised. No previous empirical studies could be found that have specifically investigated factors that are associated with Black graduates' intention to apply to academic positions in South Africa. Furthermore, an exploratory design allows the researcher to describe the characteristics of the Black graduates' being studied.

A cross-sectional approach to data collection was used, which includes the observation of a sample, or cross-section of a population made at a particular point in time (Babbie, 2007). Due to time constraints associated with completing a Master's dissertation within the required timeframe, this research approach was chosen.

Primary data was collected by means of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Firstly, in terms of the qualitative data collection phase a focus group was used to possibly identify variables that were not identified in the literature (possible further attractors and detractors), which may be especially relevant in the context of South African HEIs and the Black graduates. Anecdotes, observations and examples of the narrative expressed by the participants were recorded. This was followed by an electronic field-survey, presented in English, to further assess the relationship between the identified attraction factors and the intention to apply to academia construct.

Participants

Qualitative research participants

A sample of eight Black (African, Coloured, and Indian) graduates participated in a focus group. Masters and PhD students were targeted as they are most likely to be considering an academic position, or at least be in the position to take one up. The aim of the focus group was

to identify the most important variables, specific for this group of Black South African graduates which they believe most are influence their intention to apply to positions in academia. Getting the participants to express their own thoughts in terms of what attracts and detracts them from potentially taking up an academic position, was used to validate the findings that were based on the literature and also to possible shorten and/or further adapt the proposed conceptual/theoretical model under investigation.

Quantitative research participants

Two hundred and four postgraduate students voluntarily participated in the quantitative phase of the study. Participants were sourced from a university in the Western Cape and convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling is a non-probability method used to recruit participants that are easily accessible (Gravetter & Forzano, 2015). This method was viewed as appropriate due to time constraints and more importantly, our direct access to the Department of Students Affairs at this university to assist with the dissemination of the questionnaire. Therefore, it was believed to be the most efficient way to obtain an appropriate sample. However, a limitation of this sampling strategy is that it is not representative of the population of postgraduate students in South Africa. For this reason, the sample cannot be considered to be a true reflection of the actual state of postgraduate students' perceptions of academia and their intention to apply for an academic job in South Africa and the findings need to be tempered accordingly. However, the findings of this study are still believed to be valuable as little to no research has been conducted into postgraduate students' perceptions of academic jobs and their intention to apply for one, especially amongst Black postgraduate students.

The realised sample (n=182) comprised of 115 females and 65 males (2 preferred not to indicate their gender), ranging in age from 18 to 53 (M = 25; SD = 7.50). The sample also included 63 Black participants (30.9%), 25 Coloured participants (12.3%), 9 Indian participants (4.4%), 81 White participants (39.7%) while 3 participants chose not to indicate their racial group membership or chose "Other". In terms of faculty affiliation, 31 participants were from the Health Sciences (15.2%), 43 participants were from Humanities (21.1%), 11 participants were from Law (5.4%), 30 participants from Engineering (14.7%), 41 participants from Commerce (20.1%), 24 participants from Sciences (11.8%), 1 participant from Education (0.5%), and 1 participant from the Graduate School of Business (0.5%). Twenty-two participants chose not to indicate their faculty affiliation. Forty-one participants are married

(20.1%), 138 participants are single (67.6%), 1 participant is divorced (0.5%), and 24 participants chose not to indicate their marital status. Forty-two percent of participants have previously applied for an academic job, while 46.1% have previously had an academic job (mostly tutor jobs).

Instruments

Qualitative research instruments

For the focus group, semi-structured questions were prepared, a spacious venue secured, participation confirmation letters and consent forms distributed, and a moderator and an assistant moderator were appointed. The role of the moderator was to facilitate the discussions using a semi-structured approach, while the assistant moderator took notes, recorded the discussion, and noted body language and other subtle, but often relevant cues.

Quantitative research materials

An online questionnaire was developed in which graduates' perception of relevance and preference for the attraction factors were assessed. The first section of the scale required respondents to rank their perception of the relevant for each attraction factor according to provided career options namely, a lecturer position, a government position and a corporate position. The second section measured the perceived importance of each attraction factor to participants on a 5-point scale ranging from "Not at all important" (indicated by 1) to "Very important" (indicated by 5). The third section required participants to provide a ranking of the top three factors that would attract them to an academic job, as well as the top three factors that will detract them from one. The fourth section measured participants' intention to apply for an academic job based on job attractiveness on a 5-point scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" (indicated by 1) to "Strongly agree" (indicated by 5). This five-item scale was adapted from Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar (2003).

Highhouse *et al.* (2003) reported a Cronbach alpha of .88, indicating acceptable reliability for this sub-scale. Additionally the scale consists of relatively few items. For the purposes of the present study, the scale was adapted by replacing the word "company" with "lecturer job". An example item of the original scale is "I would not be interested in this company except as a last resort". This was adapted to "I would not be interested in a lecturer job except as a last resort". Lastly, this section measured the influence of a role model(s) on participants' intention to

apply, as well as participants' affiliation with relatives, family members, or friends of family who are/were academics.

Procedure

Qualitative procedure (Pilot phase)

As mentioned earlier, Black (African, Coloured, and Indian) Masters or PhD graduates currently studying in these programmes were requested to volunteer to participate in this study. Once they agreed to participate, they were sent a confirmation e-mail. The e-mail contained venue details and an overview of the study. On the day of the focus group, the moderator and assistant moderator welcomed participants, assisted them in completing the consent forms and demographic questions, and then proceeded to begin the session (90 minutes in total). The moderator reiterated the ground rules and confirmed the anonymity of participants in the discussion so they could speak freely. The focus group session was then divided into two components. In the first component, participants were split into two groups. Each group was presented with cards (n = 27) with an attraction factor (n = 25) or detraction factor (n = 2) written on each card. Members of each group then had to sort each card (factor) according to the career option they perceived the factor to be most prevalent in.

In the second component, the same twenty-seven attraction/detraction factor cards were placed on a board and each participant was provided with five green and five red stickers. Participants were then asked to focus on the lecturer positon career option and use green stickers to vote for their top five attractors to a lecturer position by placing a green sticker on each attractor. Participants were also asked to vote for their top five detractors to a lecturer position by placing a red sticker on each detractor. It is important to note that what may be an attraction factor for one participant may be a detraction factor for another participant. The most common top five attractors and detractors were then used to shorten the attraction factors in Section A of the questionnaire. The assistant moderator also recorded participants' verbal responses and noted body language cues and general observations. At the end of the session, participants were thanked for their participation and offered light refreshments.

Quantitative procedure

The survey items were contained in an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was embedded via a hyperlink in an e-mail and distributed to the universities' communication department to

disseminate to final year students who are graduating during the year that the study was being conducted (2016). Details of the study's aim were also included in the e-mail. Instructions for completion were included in the body of the questionnaire and respondents directed to click on an embedded hyperlink (URL) in the e-mail. By clicking on the hyperlink, the webpage containing the electronic questionnaire opened. Once a response was entered it was saved automatically, although respondents were able to navigate back to previous questions and adjust their answers.

A submit button was included at the end of the questionnaire and respondents were required to click on this in order to register their responses. If this step was not followed the participant's survey was counted as incomplete and the data discarded. Confidentiality was maintained by ensuring that the respondent's e-mail address was not linked to the response data. After the closing date of the questionnaire, the data was downloaded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.

Ethical considerations

In order to ensure the research was conducted in an ethical manner, approval was first sought from the Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Committee, at the University of Cape Town to conduct the research. Secondly, participation in the research was voluntary and anonymous, therefore participants decided if they wanted to participate or not, and no identifiable information which can be linked back to them was collected. To ensure confidentiality, the completed and downloaded surveys were only handled and stored by the researcher and supervisor themselves.

Conclusion

In this chapter a detailed description of the research design, participants, data collection procedure, instruments, and analysis method are provided. The next chapter presents some of the qualitative and quantitative results obtained in this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter the statistical findings of the present study is provided. The chapter is split into two sections, namely qualitative and quantitative findings. Outcomes are used to present the qualitative findings, while descriptive statistics, correlation, regression and t-test are used to analyse the quantitative data.

Qualitative results (focus group)

A focus group discussion was held with eight postgraduate students from a university in the Western Cape. Participants provided information through individual activities, group activities and group discussion. The table (see Table 1 below) represents the demographic information of all participants.

Table 1:

Demographic information for focus group participants

Participants	***Gender***	***Age***	***Race***	***Postgraduate level***	***Faculty***
Participant 1	Female	23	Black	Masters	Humanities
Participant 2	Male	23	Black	Masters	Engineering
Participant 3	Male	26	Black	Doctoral	Commerce
Participant 4	Female	26	Black	Doctoral	Law
Participant 5	Male	27	Coloured	Masters	Humanities
Participant 6	Female	24	Coloured	Masters	Humanities
Participant 7	Male	27	Coloured	Masters	Science
Participant 8	Male	24	Indian	Masters	Commerce

As mentioned in the methods section above, the purpose of the focus group was to examine which of the identified attraction factors are relevant to the South African context. Therefore, two outcomes were established, namely:

- To understand if postgraduates perceive the attraction factors identified in the literature review to be most present/represented in an academic position than in a corporate, or government position (Outcome 1).
- Secondly, to identify the top five factors that will attract and detract postgraduate students to and from an academic position (Outcome 2).

These outcomes enabled the researcher to ultimately narrow down the twenty-seven attraction factors to only twelve for the questionnaire, based on their relevance and appropriateness for the South African context.

Outcome 1: To understand postgraduates' perception of the presence of attraction factors in academia, corporate and government positions.

For this activity/outcome, participants were split into two groups of four members each. Each group was given small stick-ons with an attraction or detraction factor written on each stick-on. Each group had to discuss and place each factor according to the career option they perceive the factor to be most prevalent in.

Table 2:

Group 1's distribution of attraction and detraction factors amongst lecturer, corporate, and government positions

Lecturer position	***Corporate position***	***Government position***
Job satisfaction	Challenging work	Work life balance
Flexibility	Employee engagement	Job security
Autonomy	Career advancement opportunities	Availability of positions
Intellectual stimulation	Travel opportunities	
Collegiality	Recognition	
Opportunities to develop new knowledge	Inclusive climate	
Independence	Meaningful work	

Intellectual environment	Inspiring leadership
Research opportunities	Organisational justice
Teaching opportunities	Work group cohesion
Work stress	Salary
Work load	Prestige

Members of Group 1 perceived job satisfaction, flexibility, autonomy, intellectual stimulation, collegiality, opportunities to develop new knowledge, independence, intellectual environment, research opportunities, and teaching opportunities to be most present in an academic position, rather than in a corporate or government position. However, they also perceived the academic position to have higher work stress and work load than the other two positions. One participant stated, "I look at my lecturers and they seem busy and tired most of the time". Participants also perceived the corporate position to be characterised by challenging work, employee engagement, career advancement opportunities, travel opportunities, recognition, inclusive climate, meaningful work, inspiring leadership, organisational justice, work group cohesion, higher salary and, prestige. One participant stated, "Honestly at my age money is very important and I do not think lecturers make enough. Well, at least not as much their corporate counterparts. But then again it depends on the discipline in which the lecturer works in". Lastly, participants perceived a government position to be most attractive in terms of work life balance, job security and availability of positions. Group 1's distribution of the attraction/detraction factors is further represented in the table above (see Table 2).

Members of Group 2 perceived the lecturer position to be most attractive in terms of meaningful work, inclusive climate, collegiality, work group cohesion, independence, flexibility, autonomy, opportunities to develop new knowledge, intellectual stimulation, intellectual environment, travel opportunities, research opportunities and, teaching opportunities. One participant stated, "Both my parents are professors so I have grown to love both the teaching and research aspects of academia because of their influence. I also want to be an academic". Corporate position was perceived to be most attractive in terms of salary, employee engagement, organisational justice, availability of positions, recognition, work life balance, job satisfaction, prestige and, career advancement opportunities. They however perceived a corporate position to be most characterised by work stress and work load than the other two. The government position was perceived as attractive in terms of inspiring leadership,

challenging work, and job security. One participant stated, "It is relatively difficult for a public servant to lose his or her job as compared to a corporate or academic job". Group 2's distribution of the attraction/detraction factors is further represented in the table below.

Table 3:

Group 2's distribution of attraction and detraction factors amongst lecturer, corporate, and government positions.

Lecturer position	***Corporate position***	***Government position***
Meaningful work	Salary	Inspiring leadership
Inclusive climate	Employee engagement	Challenging work
Collegiality	Organisational justice	Job security
Work group cohesion	Availability of positions	
Independence	Recognition	
Flexibility	Work life balance	
Autonomy	Job satisfaction	
Opportunities to develop new knowledge	Prestige	
Intellectual stimulation	Career advancement opportunities	
Intellectual environment	Work stress	
Travel opportunities	Work load	
Research opportunities		
Teaching opportunities		

Outcome 2: To understand the top five factors that attract and detract postgraduate students to, and from a career in academia.

This was an individual activity to allow for the expression of personalised opinions. Frequencies of participants' attraction and detraction factors to an academic job are as follows:

Table 4:

Frequencies for attraction and detraction factors

Factor	**Number of votes for this factor as a top five attraction factor**	**Number of votes for this factor as a top five detraction factor**
Meaningful work	10	0
Opportunities to develop new knowledge	7	0
Autonomy	6	0
Flexibility	4	0
Intellectual stimulation	3	0
Independence	1	0
Teaching opportunities	2	0
Research opportunities	2	0
Work life balance	2	0
Job satisfaction	1	0
Intellectual environment	1	0
Travel opportunities	1	0
Challenging work	0	0
Collegiality	0	0
Recognition	0	0
Employee engagement	0	0
Job security	0	0
Work stress	0	6
Work load	0	5
Salary	0	5
Career advancement opportunities	0	4
Availability of positions	0	3
Inclusive climate	0	1
Work group cohesion	0	0
Prestige	0	0

Organisational justice	0	0
Inspiring leadership	0	0

The table (see Table 4 above) seems to indicate that participants perceive academia to provide meaningful work, opportunity to develop new knowledge, autonomy, flexibility, and intellectual stimulation. On the other hand, most participants perceive academia to possess a high level of work stress, work load, low career advancement opportunities, lack of available positions, and as expected, low salary.

Table 5:

Top five attraction and detraction factors

Top attraction factors	***Top detraction factors***
Meaningful work	Work stress
Opportunities to develop new knowledge	Work load
Autonomy	Salary
Flexibility	Career advancement opportunities
Intellectual stimulation	Availability of positions

Quantitative results

The results presented in this study are based on total participants' (n = 204) perceptions of an academic career in relation to careers in other sectors, as well as their intention to apply for an academic job.

Unidimensionality

Principal component analysis (PCA) was used to assess the uni-dimensionality of the intention to apply scale.

Intention to apply: PCA was considered appropriate for the Intention to apply scale as the following assumptions were met. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure showed the sample was adequate to conduct PCA (0.87 i.e. > .50). Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant indicating that all the items were correlated (10 = 502.538; $p < .001$). Based on Kaiser's (1970) criterion, only components with eigenvalues > 1 were considered relevant. Only one factor was retained

(eigenvalue = 3.46, explained variance = 69.13%). All items loaded on this factor which was labelled intention to apply (.71 - .90).

Reliability

Internal consistency for each scale was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. According to Nunnally (1978) scales with alpha values greater than .70 should be considered reliable.

Intention to apply scale: The 5-item intention to apply scale achieved a Cronbach alpha of .88 (corrected item-total correlations: .58 < *r* > .82; *n* = 182).

Participants were required to rank each of the factors according to the career option (lecturer, corporate, and government) they believe the factors to be most present in (1st, 2nd and 3rd). Table 6 (below) summarises how all participants ranked each factor, in percentages.

Table 6:

Ranking of factors for all participants (n=204)

			Ranking (%)		
	N	***Rank***	***Lecturer position***	***Corporate position***	***Government position***
Teaching opportunities	152	1st	**72.4**	21.1	6.6
		2nd	19.1	31.6	49.3
		3rd	8.6	**47.4**	44.1
Research opportunities	126	1st	**80.2**	13.5	6.3
		2nd	13.5	29.4	57.1
		3rd	6.3	**57.1**	36.5
Meaningful work	163	1st	**50.9**	27.6	21.5
		2nd	37.4	16.6	46.0
		3rd	11.7	**55.8**	32.5
Autonomy	130	1st	44.6	**45.4**	10.0

		2nd	41.5	28.5	30.0
		3rd	13.8	26.2	**60.0**
Flexibility	131	1st	**58.8**	26.0	15.3
		2nd	36.6	22.1	41.2
		3rd	4.6	**51.9**	43.5
Intellectual stimulation	105	1st	**62.9**	35.2	1.9
		2nd	32.4	34.3	33.3
		3rd	2.9	32.4	**64.8**
Development of new knowledge	102	1st	**65.7**	32.4	2.0
		2nd	23.5	27.5	49.0
		3rd	10.8	40.2	**49.0**
Salary	185	1st	1.6	**88.1**	10.3
		2nd	35.1	9.2	55.7
		3rd	**63.2**	2.7	34.1
Career advancement opportunities	179	1st	6.7	**84.4**	8.9
		2nd	36.3	10.1	53.6
		3rd	**57.0**	5.6	37.4
Work stress	173	1st	11.6	**69.4**	19.1
		2nd	42.8	17.9	39.3
		3rd	**45.7**	12.7	41.6
Work load	156	1st	13.5	**72.4**	14.1
		2nd	58.3	13.5	28.2
		3rd	28.2	14.1	**57.7**
Availability of positions	179	1st	8.9	**73.2**	17.9
		2nd	27.4	17.9	54.7
		3rd	**63.7**	8.9	27.4

In total, 50 percent of the factors were perceived to be most prevalent in a lecturer position (namely teaching opportunities, research opportunities, meaningful work, flexibility, intellectual stimulation, and development of new knowledge). Participants also perceived a corporate position to represent the most autonomy, work stress and workload than a lecturer position. Lastly, participants perceived a lecturer position to be the least representative in terms of salary, career advancement opportunities, and availability of positions.

Additionally, participants were required to indicate how important the attraction factors are to them when considering what job to apply for. The table below (see Table 7) displays the means, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values for this scale. This response scale was measured on a Likert-type 5-point scale, with a midpoint of 3. Therefore Table 7 below indicates that on average, respondents perceived all attraction factors to be important to them when considering what job to apply for. From the table below it can be seen that meaningful work, intellectual stimulation, development of new knowledge, career advancement opportunities, and flexibility are highly important factors (*Mean* > 4).

Table 7:

Descriptive statistics for importance of attraction/detraction factors for all participants (n=204)

	N	***M***	***SD***
Meaningful work	186	4.53	.61
Intellectual stimulation	187	4.51	.65
Development of new knowledge	186	4.22	.81
Career advancement opportunities	186	4.22	.87
Flexibility	186	4.07	.84
Salary	187	3.95	.95
Autonomy	184	3.90	.84
Availability of positions	187	3.75	.99
Work stress	187	3.66	.98

Research opportunities	186	3.49	1.19
Work load	186	3.46	.90
Teaching opportunities	185	3.10	1.22

**Based on a 5-point Likert-type scale*.

Furthermore, participants were asked to choose their top three attraction factors and top three detraction factors that would influence their decision to pursue an academic career. On average, participants chose meaningful work as the top attraction factor that will influence their decision to pursue an academic career. On average, intellectual stimulation was chosen as the second factor, and the third attraction factor was flexibility.

On average, participants chose work stress as the top detraction factor that may discourage them from pursuing a career in academia, work load was chosen as the second on average and lastly, availability of positions was chosen as the third detraction factor.

Table 8:

Top three attraction and detraction factors for all participants (n=204)

Top three attraction factors	***Percentage of participants who chose this factor (%)***	***Top three detraction factors***	***Percentage of participants who chose this factor (%)***
Meaningful work	23.8	Work load	29.0
Flexibility	16.2	Work stress	28.6
Intellectual stimulation	15.1	Availability of positions	26.9

Table 9:

Descriptive statistics for intention to apply sub-scale for all participants (n=204)

	N	***M***	***SD***	***Min***	***Max***
Mean intention to apply	184	3.69	.94	1.00	5.00

Table 10 below also shows that most graduates have considered becoming an university lecturer because of an influential role model, however, most graduates do not have a relative, family member or friend of the family who is or was an academic.

Table 10:

Descriptive statistics for influence of a role model on graduates' intention to pursue an academic career for all participants (n=204)

Items	***N***	***Yes (%)***	***No (%)***
Have you seriously considered becoming a university lecturer because of an influential role model?	178	57.9	42.1
Do you have any relative, family member or friend of family who is an academic?	179	45.3	54.7
Do you have any relative, family member or friend of family who was an academic?	176	39.2	60.8

Results of Hypothesis testing for general sample (all participants)

In order to explore the data further, the table below presents the bivariate correlations between the independent and dependent variables. Based on Cohen's law (1998) there was a strong significant positive correlation between teaching opportunities and graduates' intention to apply for an academic job, as well as a medium significant positive correlation between research opportunities and graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

Table 11:

Inter-correlation Matrix for all participants (n=204)

		Intention to apply
Teaching opportunities	Pearson correlation	.516**
	Sig (2 tailed)	.000
	N	182
Research opportunities	Pearson correlation	.355**
	Sig (2 tailed)	.000
	N	183
Meaningful work	Pearson correlation	.136
	Sig (2 tailed)	.066
	N	183
Autonomy	Pearson correlation	.002
	Sig (2 tailed)	.977
	N	181
Flexibility	Pearson correlation	.065
	Sig (2 tailed)	.379
	N	183
Intellectual stimulation	Pearson correlation	.182*
	Sig (2 tailed)	.013
	N	184
Development of new knowledge	Pearson correlation	.028
	Sig (2 tailed)	.711
	N	183
Salary	Pearson correlation	-.095
	Sig (2 tailed)	.198
	N	184
Career advancement	Pearson correlation	-.141
opportunities	Sig (2 tailed)	.057
	N	183
Work stress	Pearson correlation	-.049
	Sig (2 tailed)	.507
	N	184

Work load	Pearson correlation	-.054
	Sig (2 tailed)	.465
	N	183
Availability of positions	Pearson correlation	.088
	Sig (2 tailed)	.233
	N	184

Multiple regression for all participants (n=204)

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict graduates' intention to apply for an academic job based on their perceptions of twelve attraction and detraction factors. In order for multiple regression to be conducted it is important for certain assumptions to be met. The multiple regression was conducted as all assumptions were met. Refer to Appendix A.

The regression model, consisting of teaching opportunities, research opportunities, career advancement opportunities, and availability of positions was found to be significant ($F_{12, 165}$ = 7.44, $p < .001$) and able to predict 35.1% of the variance in graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. Teaching opportunities ($\beta = .45$, $t_{178} = 6.24$, $p < .05$), research opportunities ($\beta = .18$, $t_{178} = 2.38$, $p < .05$), career advancement opportunities ($\beta = -.22$, $t_{178} = -2.43$, $p < .05$) and availability of positions ($\beta = .17$, $t_{178} = 2.36$, $p < .05$) was shown to be significant predictors of unique variance of graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. On the other hand, meaningful work ($\beta = .06$, $t_{178} = .85$, $p = .40$), autonomy ($\beta = -.09$, $t_{178} = -1.10$, $p = .27$), flexibility ($\beta = .05$, $t_{178} = .63$, $p = .53$), intellectual stimulation ($\beta = .09$, $t_{178} = 1.00$, $p = .32$), development of new knowledge ($\beta = -.11$, $t_{178} = -1.30$, $p = .20$), salary ($\beta = .13$, $t_{178} = 1.40$, $p = .16$), work stress ($\beta = .07$, $t_{178} = .71$, $p = .48$), and work load ($\beta = -.13$, $t_{178} = -1.37$, $p = .17$) were found to be non-significant predictors of unique variance.

T-test for all participants (n=204)

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the intention to apply of graduates with an influential role model and graduates without an influential role model. A significant difference was found in the scores for graduates with an influential role model ($M = 4.04$, $SD = .73$) and graduates without an influential role model ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.02$); $t_{176} = 6.02$, $p < .001$.

Sub-sample 1: Black participants

The following section displays the results of Black participants (Blacks, Coloureds, and Indians) in the sample.

On the ranking scale, Black participants reported that a lecturer's position offers the most teaching and research opportunities, meaningful work, autonomy, flexibility, intellectual stimulation, and opportunity to develop new knowledge above corporate and government positions. On the other hand, Black participants perceive corporate organisations to offer more salary, career advancement opportunities, work stress, work load, and available positions than both lecturer and government positions. In fact, the lecturer position was found to be the least attractive to Black participants in terms of salary, career advancement opportunities, and available positions. Table 12 below presents these findings in more detail.

Table 12:

Descriptive statistics for Black participants on the ranking scale (n = 97)

			Ranking (%)		
	N	***Rank***	***Lecturer position***	***Corporate position***	***Government position***
Teaching opportunities	69	1st	**65.2**	24.6	10.1
		2nd	20.3	29.0	50.7
		3rd	14.5	**46.4**	39.1
Research opportunities	61	1st	**82.0**	13.1	4.9
		2nd	11.5	37.7	50.8
		3rd	6.6	**49.2**	44.3
Meaningful work	76	1st	**38.2**	31.6	30.3
		2nd	50.0	15.8	34.2
		3rd	11.8	**52.6**	35.5
Autonomy	64	1st	**51.6**	42.2	6.3
		2nd	35.9	28.1	35.9
		3rd	12.5	29.7	**57.8**
Flexibility	68	1st	**63.2**	20.6	16.2

		2nd	32.4	20.6	47.1
		3rd	4.4	**58.8**	36.8
Intellectual stimulation	48	1st	**60.4**	39.6	0.0
		2nd	37.5	41.7	20.8
		3rd	2.1	18.8	**79.2**
Development of new knowledge	48	1st	**70.8**	27.1	2.1
		2nd	18.8	37.5	43.8
		3rd	10.4	35.4	**54.2**
Salary	87	1st	0.0	**90.8**	9.2
		2nd	35.6	6.9	57.5
		3rd	**64.4**	2.3	33.3
Career advancement opportunities	86	1st	5.8	**86.0**	8.1
		2nd	41.9	8.1	50.0
		3rd	**52.3**	5.8	41.9
Work stress	86	1st	9.3	**68.6**	**22.1**
		2nd	51.2	17.4	31.4
		3rd	39.5	14.0	**46.5**
Work load	78	1st	14.1	**70.5**	15.4
		2nd	62.8	14.1	23.1
		3rd	23.1	15.4	**61.5**
Availability of positions	81	1st	7.4	**71.6**	21.0
		2nd	33.3	14.8	51.9
		3rd	**59.3**	13.6	27.2

Table 13 below displays the means and standard deviations for the importance of attraction/detraction factors scale for Black participants. The scale was measured on a Likert-type 5-point scale, with a midpoint of 3. Therefore Table 13 below indicates that on average, Black respondents perceived all attraction factors to be important to them when considering what job to apply for ($M > 3$). From the table below it can also be seen that meaningful work,

intellectual stimulation, career advancement opportunities, opportunities to develop new knowledge, salary, and flexibility are important factors for Black graduates in their career choice ($M > 4$).

Table 13:

Descriptive statistics for importance of attraction/detraction factors to Black participants (n = 97)

	N	***M***	***SD***
Meaningful work	95	4.46	.65
Intellectual stimulation	97	4.46	.66
Career advancement opportunities	97	4.44	.74
Development of new knowledge	97	4.29	.85
Salary	97	4.22	.81
Flexibility	97	4.19	.78
Autonomy	95	3.95	.79
Availability of positions	97	3.95	.95
Work stress	97	3.76	.99
Work load	96	3.59	.90
Research opportunities	96	3.42	1.29
Teaching opportunities	95	3.02	1.19

Black participants further selected meaningful work, salary, and flexibility, in that order, as the top three factors that will attract them to an academic job. Interestingly, they also selected salary, lack of available positions, and work load, in that order, as the top three factors that will detract them from an academic job. See Table 14 below.

Table 14:

Top three attraction and detraction factors for Black participants (n = 97)

Top three attraction factors	***Percentage of participants who chose this factor (%)***	***Top three detraction factors***	***Percentage of participants who chose this factor (%)***
Meaningful work	21.6	Salary	33.0
Salary	16.5	Availability of positions	33.0
Flexibility	15.5	Work load	32.0

From Table 15 below, it can be seen that Black graduates possessed a moderate to high intention to apply for an academic job. However the Black graduates (M = 3.64) have a slightly lower mean to that of the general sample (M = 3.69).

Table 15:

Descriptive statistics for Black respondents' intention to apply sub-scale (n = 97)

	N	***M***	***SD***	***Min***	***Max***
Mean intention to apply	97	3.64	.94	1.00	5.00

Similar to the general sample, most Black graduates have considered becoming a university lecturer because of an influential role model. However, most Black graduates do not have (and have never had) a relative, family member or friend of the family who was an academic. See Table 16 below.

Table 16:

Descriptive statistics for influence of a role model on Black graduates' intention to pursue an academic career (n = 97)

Items	***Yes (%)***	***No (%)***
Have you seriously considered becoming a university lecturer because of an influential role model?	57.6	42.4
Do you have any relative, family member or friend of family who is an academic?	46.2	53.8
Do you have any relative, family member or friend of family who was an academic?	42.2	57.8

Results of Hypothesis testing for Black sample

In order to explore the data further, the table below presents the bivariate correlations between the independent and dependent variables for Black graduates. Based on Cohen's law (1998) and Table 17 below there was a significant strong positive correlation between teaching opportunities and Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job, as well as a medium significant positive correlation between research opportunities and Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. This is similar to the finding of the general sample.

Table 17:

Inter-correlation Matrix for Black participants (n = 97)

		Intention to apply
Teaching opportunities	Pearson correlation	.54**
	Sig (2 tailed)	.000
	N	93
Research opportunities	Pearson correlation	.33**
	Sig (2 tailed)	.001
	N	93

Meaningful work	Pearson correlation	-.04
	Sig (2 tailed)	.35
	N	93
Autonomy	Pearson correlation	-.02
	Sig (2 tailed)	.43
	N	93
Flexibility	Pearson correlation	.02
	Sig (2 tailed)	.43
	N	93
Intellectual stimulation	Pearson correlation	.11
	Sig (2 tailed)	.16
	N	93
Development of new knowledge	Pearson correlation	.11
	Sig (2 tailed)	.16
	N	93
Salary	Pearson correlation	-.04
	Sig (2 tailed)	.34
	N	93
Career advancement	Pearson correlation	-.09
opportunities	Sig (2 tailed)	.22
	N	93
Work stress	Pearson correlation	.01
	Sig (2 tailed)	.47
	N	93
Work load	Pearson correlation	.03
	Sig (2 tailed)	.40
	N	93
Availability of positions	Pearson correlation	.1.32
	Sig (2 tailed)	.10
	N	93

Multiple regression for Black participants

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job based on their perceptions of twelve attraction and detraction factors. In order for multiple regression to be conducted it is important for certain assumptions to be met. The multiple regression was conducted as all assumptions were met. Refer to Appendix A.

H1a: Teaching opportunities is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H1b: Research opportunities is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H1c: Meaningful work is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2a: Intellectual stimulation is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2b: Autonomy is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2d: Flexibility is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2f: Opportunity to develop new knowledge is positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2j: Career development opportunities is significantly positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2n: Work stress is negatively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2o: Work load is negatively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H2r: Salary is positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

H3e: Availability of positions in academia is positively related to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job.

Only teaching opportunities (β = .55, t_{93} = 4.70, p < .05) was shown to be a significant predictor of unique variance in Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job, therefore hypothesis 1a is supported and the null hypothesis is rejected. On the other hand, hypothesis 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2d, 2f, 2j, 2n,2o, 2r, 3e were not supported and the null hypothesis is accepted as; research opportunities (β = .05, t_{93} = .35, p = .73), meaningful work (β = -.04, t_{93} = -.34, p = .74), intellectual stimulation (β = .04, t_{93} = .30, p = .77), autonomy (β = -.13, t_{93} = -1.17, p = .25), flexibility (β = .00, t_{93} = .01, p = .99), development of new knowledge (β = .03, t_{93} = .23, p = .82), career advancement opportunities (β = -.08, t_{93} = -.66, p = .51) work stress (β = .08, t_{93} = .55, p = .58), work load (β = -.11, t_{93} = -.72, p = .47), salary (β = .07, t_{93} = .62, p = .54), and availability of positions (β = .15, t_{93} = 1.52, p = .13) were found to be non-significant predictors. It was also shown that teaching opportunities predict 34.4% of the variance in Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. The regression model was found to be significant ($F_{12, 80}$ = 3.49, p < .001) therefore the model was retained.

T-test for Black participants

H4a: There is a significant difference in intention to apply between Black graduates with an influential role model(s) and Black graduates without an influential role model(s).

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the intention to apply of Black graduates with an influential role model and Black graduates without an influential role model. A significant difference was found in the scores for Black graduates with an influential role model (*M* = 4.01, *SD* = .77) and Black graduates without an influential role model (*M* = 3.17, *SD* = .98); t_{90} = 4.60, p < .001. The hypothesis was supported and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Sub-sample 2: White participants in the present study

The following section displays the results obtained from White participants in the sample.

On the ranking scale, White participants reported that the lecturer position offers the most teaching and research opportunities, meaningful work, flexibility, intellectual stimulation, and opportunities to develop new knowledge. Unlike Black participants who reported autonomy to be most prevalent in a lecturer position, White participants reported a corporate position to offer the most autonomy. However White participants shared the same opinion with Black

participants that a corporate position has the most work load. Government positions, on the other hand, are perceived by White participants to offer the most salary, career advancement opportunities, work stress, and available positions, above lecturer and corporate positions. See Table 18 (below).

Table 18:

Descriptive statistics for White participants on the ranking scale (n = 81)

			Ranking (%)		
	N	***Rank***	***Lecturer position***	***Corporate position***	***Government position***
Teaching opportunities	62	1st	**80.6**	14.5	4.8
		2nd	14.5	33.9	51.6
		3rd	4.8	**51.6**	43.5
Research opportunities	52	1st	**82.7**	13.5	3.8
		2nd	11.5	17.3	71.2
		3rd	5.8	**69.2**	25.0
Meaningful work	71	1st	**64.8**	23.9	11.3
		2nd	21.1	15.5	63.4
		3rd	14.1	**60.6**	25.4
Autonomy	52	1st	38.5	**44.2**	17.3
		2nd	48.1	26.9	25.0
		3rd	13.5	28.8	**57.7**
Flexibility	50	1st	**56.0**	38.0	6.0
		2nd	34.0	26.0	40.0
		3rd	10.0	36.0	**54.0**
Intellectual stimulation	46	1st	**63.0**	34.8	2.2
		2nd	32.6	23.9	43.5
		3rd	4.3	41.3	**54.3**
Development of new knowledge	45	1st	**62.2**	28.9	8.9

		2nd	35.6	17.8	46.7
		3rd	2.2	**53.3**	44.4
Salary	79	1st	2.5	31.6	**65.8**
		2nd	88.6	8.9	2.5
		3rd	8.9	**59.5**	31.6
Career advancement opportunities	73	1st	5.5	30.1	**64.4**
		2nd	83.6	11.0	5.5
		3rd	11.0	**58.9**	30.1
Work stress	70	1st	12.9	34.3	**52.9**
		2nd	71.4	21.4	7.1
		3rd	15.7	**44.3**	40.0
Work load	60	1st	10.0	**56.7**	33.3
		2nd	76.7	10.0	13.3
		3rd	13.3	33.3	**53.3**
Availability of positions	79	1st	10.1	22.8	**67.1**
		2nd	73.4	21.5	5.1
		3rd	16.5	55.7	**27.8**

Table 19 (see below) displays the means and standard deviations for the importance of attraction/detraction factors scale for White participants. This scale was measured on a Likert-type 5 point scale, with a midpoint of 3. Similar to Black respondents, Table 19 below indicates that on average, White respondents perceived all attraction factors to be important to them when considering what job to apply for ($M > 3$). It can also be seen from the table that meaningful work, intellectual stimulation, and opportunities to develop new knowledge were important factors for Black graduates in their career choice ($M > 4$).

Table 19:

Descriptive statistics for importance of attraction/detraction factors to White participants (n = 81)

	N	***M***	***SD***
Meaningful work	81	4.62	.56
Intellectual stimulation	81	4.57	.63
Development of new knowledge	81	4.11	.76
Career advancement opportunities	81	3.98	.94
Flexibility	80	3.94	.91
Autonomy	81	3.84	.92
Salary	81	3.67	1.00
Research opportunities	81	3.56	1.05
Work stress	81	3.49	.98
Availability of positions	81	3.48	.99
Work load	81	3.32	.86
Teaching opportunities	81	3.19	1.22

Table 20 below also depicts the top three attraction factors as well as the top three detraction factors for White participants. Meaningful work, flexibility and intellectual stimulation, in that order, were found to be the top three factors that will attract White graduates to an academic job, while a lack of available positions, work load and salary were found to detract White graduates from an academic job.

Table 20:

Top three attraction and detraction factors for White participants (n = 81)

Top three attraction factors	***Percentage of participants who chose this factor (%)***	***Top three detraction factors***	***Percentage of participants who chose this factor (%)***
Meaningful work	27.2	Availability of positions	25.9
Flexibility	18.5	Work load	25.3
Intellectual stimulation	17.3	Salary	21.8

White graduates possessed a moderate to high intention to apply for an academic job. However, when compared to the general sample (M = 3.69), White graduates had a slightly higher intention to apply mean (M = 3.74).

Table 21:

Descriptive statistics for White respondents' intention to apply sub-scale (n = 81)

	N	***M***	***SD***	***Min***	***Max***
Mean intention to apply	81	3.74	.93	1.00	5.00

Similar to the general sample, most White graduates have considered becoming a university lecturer because of an influential role model. However, less than fifty percent of White graduates have a relative, family member or friend of the family who is or was an academic. See Table 22 below.

Table 22:

Descriptive statistics for influence of a role model on White graduates' intention to pursue an academic career.

Items	***Yes (%)***	***No (%)***
Have you seriously considered becoming a university lecturer because of an influential role model?	58.0	42.0
Do you have any relative, family member or friend of family who is an academic?	44.4	55.6
Do you have any relative, family member or friend of family who was an academic?	34.6	65.4

Results of Hypothesis testing for White sample

In order to explore the White sub-sample further, the table below presents the bivariate correlations between the independent and dependent variables for White graduates. Based on Cohen (1998) and Table 23 below, there was a significant strong positive correlation between teaching opportunities and White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job, as well as a medium significant positive correlation between research opportunities and White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. This is similar to the finding of the general sample.

Table 23:

Inter-correlation Matrix for White sub-sample (n = 81)

		Intention to apply
Teaching opportunities	Pearson correlation	.49**
	Sig (2 tailed)	.000
	N	80
Research opportunities	Pearson correlation	.33**
	Sig (2 tailed)	.001
	N	80

Meaningful work	Pearson correlation	.32
	Sig (2 tailed)	.002
	N	80
Autonomy	Pearson correlation	.03
	Sig (2 tailed)	.41
	N	80
Flexibility	Pearson correlation	.08
	Sig (2 tailed)	.25
	N	80
Intellectual stimulation	Pearson correlation	.20
	Sig (2 tailed)	.04
	N	80
Development of new knowledge	Pearson correlation	-.11
	Sig (2 tailed)	.16
	N	80
Salary	Pearson correlation	-.09
	Sig (2 tailed)	.21
	N	80
Career advancement	Pearson correlation	-.17
opportunities	Sig (2 tailed)	.06
	N	80
Work stress	Pearson correlation	-.10
	Sig (2 tailed)	.19
	N	80
Work load	Pearson correlation	-.09
	Sig (2 tailed)	.20
	N	80
Availability of positions	Pearson correlation	.10
	Sig (2 tailed)	.18
	N	80

Multiple regression for White participants

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job based on their perceptions of twelve attraction and detraction factors. In order for multiple regression to be conducted it is important for certain assumptions to be met. The multiple regression was conducted as all assumptions were met. Refer to Appendix A.

Teaching opportunities ($\beta = .44$, $t_{80} = 4.39$, $p < .05$), research opportunities ($\beta = .21$, $t80 = 2.11$, $p < .05$), meaningful work ($\beta = .22$, $t_{80} = 2.07$, $p < .05$), salary ($\beta = .31$, $t_{80} = 2.22$, $p < .05$), career advancement opportunities ($\beta = -.40$, $t_{80} = -2.59$, $p < .05$), and availability of positions ($\beta = .28$, $t_{80} = 2.56$, $p < .05$) was shown to be a significant predictor of uniquevariance in White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. On the other hand, autonomy ($\beta = .00$, $t_{80} = .00$, $p = 1.00$), flexibility ($\beta = .07$, $t_{80} = .53$, $p = .60$), intellectual stimulation ($\beta = .10$, $t_{80} = .75$, $p = .46$), development of new knowledge ($\beta = -.19$, $t_{80} = -1.79$, $p = .08$), work stress ($\beta = .11$, $t_{80} = .73$, $p = .47$), and work load ($\beta = -.18$, $t_{93} = -1.21$, $p = .23$) were found to be non-significant predictors of unique variance. It was also shown that teaching opportunities, research opportunities, meaningful work, salary, career advancement opportunities, and availability of positions predict 47.3% of the variance in White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. The regression model was found to be significant ($F_{12, 67} = 5.02$, $p < .001$) therefore the model was retained.

T-test for White participants

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the intention to apply of White graduates with an influential role model and White graduates without an influential role model. A significant difference was found in the scores for White graduates with an influential role model ($M = 4.07$, $SD = .67$) and White graduates without an influential role model ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 1.05$); $t_{79} = 4.13$, $p < .001$.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter presented the results of this study, with the ultimate aim of accepting or rejecting the null hypotheses. The findings showed that some factors predict variance in Black and White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. A detailed discussion of these findings in relation to literature is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter a discussion of the results presented in chapter 4 is provided. Thereafter the limitations of this study are presented such as, sampling procedure, language barrier, and time constraints. Lastly, the study provides direction for future research and the practical implication of this study for all stakeholders involved.

Summary of results

The primary aim of this study was to examine factors that are related to Black graduates' choice of an academic career within the context of South African HEIs. As data was collected from White respondents for comparison purposes, the discussion will include findings on both Black and White race groups.

For Black participants, a significant strong positive correlation between teaching opportunities and Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job was found, as well as a medium significant positive correlation between research opportunities and Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. Of all the factors, only teaching opportunities was shown to be a significant predictor of Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. There was also a significant difference in the application intention of the Black graduates who have an influential role model and White graduates without an influential role model.

With regards to White participants, a significant strong positive correlation between teaching opportunities and their intention to apply for an academic job, as well as a medium significant positive correlation between research opportunities and White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job, were found. Teaching opportunities, research opportunities, meaningful work, salary, career advancement opportunities, and availability of positions were all found to be significant predictors of White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. Lastly, there was a significant difference in the application intention of White graduates who have an influential role model and, Black graduates without an influential role model.

Discussion of results

The results seem to indicate that the Black graduates who participated in the study perceived the lecturer position to offer the most teaching opportunities, research opportunities, meaningful work, flexibility, autonomy, intellectual stimulation, and opportunity to develop new knowledge. The Black graduates who participated in the study also perceived the lecturer position to offer less salary, career advancement opportunities, available positions, but also less work stress, work load than corporate or government positions. This arguably implies that Black graduates perceive a trade-off to exist in academia. They understand that the pay is not attractive, as compared to a corporate position. They also believe that there is relatively little available positions, as well as little opportunity for advancement in academia. Nonetheless, they believe they will make more meaningful impact in a lecturer job, work flexible hours, control what work they do and how they do it, be intellectually stimulated, and have a greater opportunity to add to the body of knowledge. They also believe they will experience less work stress and work load in a lecturer position than in a corporate or government position.

The Black graduates who participated in the study were also found to consider all attraction and detraction factors to be important in their choice of a job (*Mean* > 3), however meaningful work, intellectual stimulation, career advancement opportunities, opportunities to develop new knowledge, salary, and flexibility were considered to be relatively most important, in that order (*Mean* > 4). Interestingly, salary was not the most important factor, in order of hierarchy. This result contradicts the views of Potgeiter (2002) who purports that the difficulty many Black students experience in financially supporting themselves through university prevents them from choosing jobs in sectors with below-market salaries upon graduation. Not only do they have to repay study debts, they may also have to support family members or the community that supported them during their studies. This tends to make salary the most important factor for most Black graduates. However, the current study findings show otherwise. Black students consider how meaningful the work is, how intellectually stimulating it is, the opportunities for career advancement, opportunity to develop knowledge, before considering the salary. This is an interesting finding as it points to the notion that non-financial incentives can equally be used to attract Black graduates. This finding further does not serve to downplay the importance of a good salary as Black graduates, when required to choose the top three factors that will attract and detract them from an academic job they chose on average, meaningful work, salary, and flexibility as their top three attraction factors in that order. They also chose salary, lack of available positions, and work load as their top three detraction factors. An explanation for why

salary is considered as both an attraction factor and detraction factor may be based on the discipline/profession they are from. Some of the Black graduates may come from disciplines such as actuarial science and engineering where the salary as an academic in these disciplines may not be much less than a corporate position, and is certainly higher than many other disciplines on average. Therefore, for these graduates, salary may be an attractor to academia. For other Black graduates in disciplines where the academic salary is much less than a corporate position, salary constitutes a detractor from an academic job.

Nonetheless, all Black graduates who participated in the study were found to possess a moderate to high intention to apply for an academic job (*Mean* = 3.69). This moderate to high level of intention to apply for an academic job may be related to the recent calls for further transformation in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) over the past couple of years. Black graduates may have developed a greater interest in academic jobs and the role they have to play in achieving transformation. Another explanation may be that a large percentage of the Black sample in this study possess high teaching and research interests and have intentions to actualise these interests.

Conversely, their intentions may be linked to the influence of a role model. This study found that most Black graduates have considered becoming a university lecturer because of the influence of a role model. This finding is supported by Feng and Ruzai-Shapiro (2003) and Neacy, *et al.* (2000) who both found that more academics emphasised the influence of a role model in their intention to join academia. Such influential role models tend to be people who are currently academics. However, most Black graduates in the current study reported not to have a relative, family member who was, or is, an academic. The reason for this finding may be related to Burger et al., (2006) view that Whites have always favoured a career in academe over Blacks. This was promoted over time by the apartheid system of education which did not afford Blacks equal academic opportunities as Whites.

Additionally, it was found that of all the attraction and detraction factors included in this study, only teaching opportunities was shown to be a significant predictor of Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. Teaching opportunities predicted 34.4% of the variance in Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. None of the other factors were found to be significant. A reason for this finding may be that, in as much as Black graduates consider meaningful work, salary and flexibility to be their top three factors that will attract them to an academic career these factors are not enough to positively influence their choice of

an academic job, over a corporate or government position. Teaching opportunities may have been found to be a significant predictor because most of the Black participants in this sample want to teach, and possess and inherent desire to make a difference, hence their choice of an academic career. A number of studies have reported findings that support this (for example, Feng & Ruzai-Shapiro, 2003; Simpson, Rediske, & Beecher, 2001; Sanders, Fulginiti, & Witzke, 1992). Lee and Goldacre (2002) found that participants ranked the presence of teaching opportunities as the most important influence on their intention to apply to academia. Wood, Altmaier and Franken (1990) found that respondents valued their potential impact on training, stating that they enjoyed teaching because of its challenges, and that by teaching they hoped they were making the world a better place.

The results of the present study also indicated that there was a significant difference between the application intention of Black graduates with an influential role model and, Black graduates without an influential role model. As explained earlier in this discussion, the influence of a role model is supported and emphasised by other studies (Feng & Ruzai-Shapiro, 2003; Neacy, *et al.,* 2000). Black graduates with influential role models who are academically inclined will possess a higher intention to apply for an academic job than Black graduates without role models. Such influential role models promote the benefits of working in academia, the difference an individual can make in such an environment, and the lasting legacy that can be left behind on students and the body of knowledge in general. An influential role model may or may not currently be an academic, but the desire of the Black graduate to follow in their footsteps may be sufficient conviction to apply for an academic job.

In terms of White graduates who participated in the study, the results showed that White participants perceived the lecturer position to offer the most teaching opportunities, research opportunities, meaningful work, flexibility, intellectual stimulation, and opportunity to develop new knowledge. Unlike Black graduates who reported the lecturer position to offer the most autonomy, White graduates reported autonomy to be most prevalent in a corporate position. Nonetheless, White graduates share the same opinion with Black participants that a corporate position offers the most work load. This perception may emanate from the fact that most of the family members, relatives, and friends of participants in this sample are not academics (54.7%). So, one would argue that they are most likely in corporate or in government positions. Therefore, their perception that corporate positions offer the most autonomy may be based on their knowledge of the experiences of family members, relatives and friends. Government positions, on the other hand, are perceived by White graduates to offer the most salary, career

advancement opportunities, work stress, and available positions, above lecturer and corporate positions.

White graduates who participated in the study were also found to consider all attraction and detraction factors to be important in their choice of a job (*Mean* > 3), however meaningful work, intellectual stimulation, and opportunities to develop new knowledge were considered to be relatively most important, in that order (*Mean* > 4). When compared to the most important factors for Black graduates, this finding represents a greater inclination of White graduates to become academics, as an academic environment is very intellectually stimulating and provides the best opportunity, amongst the three sectors, to develop new and valuable knowledge.

When required to choose the top three factors that will attract them to, and the top three factors that will detract them from an academic position, White graduates chose meaningful work, flexibility, and intellectual stimulation as their top three attractors. While a lack of available positions, work load and salary were chosen as detractors. The attractors for both White and Black graduates seem to be quite similar except for flexibility for White participants, and salary for Black participants. Salary may not be as important an attractor to White graduates as it is to Black graduates, as over time, due to the injustices of the apartheid era, Whites have received preferences for jobs, have been exposed to better education and opportunities, and have therefore grown to occupy a financially advantageous position that Blacks do not have. Therefore, White graduates may be said to come from a position of relative financial security compared to Blacks, and therefore may not spontaneously consider salary as one of the top three most important attractors to a job. The detractors, on the other hand, are the same for both White and Black graduates. The only difference is in the order of priority. Where Black graduates consider their top three detractors in the order of salary, lack of available positions, and work load; White graduates consider lack of available positions, work load, and salary in that order.

White graduates who participated in the study also recorded a moderate to high intention to apply for an academic job (*Mean* = 3.74), which was slightly higher than the general sample's mean intention (*Mean* = 3.69). This emphasises the point made above about White graduates' important attraction factors (Mean > 4) indicating a greater inclination towards an academic career than Black graduates. This supports Burger et al., (2006) view that Whites have always favoured a career in academe over Blacks. This was promoted over time by the apartheid system of education which did not afford Blacks equal academic opportunities as Whites. It

was also found that most White graduates have considered becoming a university lecturer because of the influence of a role model. As discussed earlier, this finding is supported by other studies (Feng & Ruzai-Shapiro, 2003; Neacy, *et al.*, 2000). However, most White graduates reported to not have a relative, family member who was, or is, an academic.

Moreover, the results seem to indicate that teaching opportunities, research opportunities, meaningful work, salary, career advancement opportunities, and availability of positions are significant predictors of White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. With regards to why teaching opportunities is a significant predictor of Whites' intention to apply for an academic job, the same explanation provided for Black graduates applies here. There is support in literature that meaningful work predicts intention to apply for an academic job. Edwards *et al.* (2011) found that participants rated a career with meaningful work as one of the most important factors that encouraged their intention to join academia. Individuals prefer to prefer a job that is important to them and to society, as opposed to work that is not. Intellectual stimulation was also ranked by participants in Markert *et al.* (1998) and Rubeck *et al*. (1995) studies as being influential in their choice of an academic career. This infers that White graduates will be more inclined to apply for an academic job due to the variety of tasks entailed in an academic job and the need to continuously develop new ideas. Edwards and his colleagues' study found that salary was a detracting factor that discourage graduates from pursing an academic career as there is the general perception among graduates that they can earn more money in non-academic jobs. However, this study found that salary predicts White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. As mentioned earlier, this finding may be related to the South African context where Whites hold a position of financial security and so, salary may not necessarily be a detractor. Thanacoody et al. (2006) study supports the finding that career advancement opportunities predicts White graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. Even though participants in Thanacoody and colleagues' study perceived that there is not sufficient career advancement prospects in academia especially for females, it was not found to be a detractor.

Lastly, the results show that there is a significant difference between the application intention of White graduates with an influential role model and, White graduates without an influential role model. As explained earlier in this discussion, the influence of a role model is supported and emphasised by other studies (Feng & Ruzai-Shapiro, 2003; Neacy, *et al.*, 2000). An influential role model may or may not currently be an academic, but the desire of the White graduate to follow in their footsteps may be sufficient conviction to apply for an academic job.

Limitations

This present study, as is often the case with studies of this nature was plagued by several limitations, which are discussed below.

Sampling procedure. A major limitation of this study was the use of convenience sampling to obtain participants. Convenience sampling is a non-probabilistic sampling method which utilises a sample that is easy to reach (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2013). This sampling procedure limits the ability of the researcher to generalise the findings from this sample to the general population as the sample obtained from only one university in the Western Cape is unlikely to be representative of the graduate student population in South Africa. Also, the sample size of 204 participants does not represent an adequate proportion of the general population. There are more than nine hundred and sixty-eight thousand, eight hundred and ninety enrolled higher education students in South Africa (Centre for Higher Education Trust, 2015). However, due to the novelty of this research, this limitation does not render this study redundant as little to no research has been done on the factors that relate to graduates' choice of an academic career, especially in South Africa. The study's aim was thus exploratory in nature and served to assess whether (a) the attraction and detraction factors under investigation were relevant for South African Black graduates and (b) how these factors relate to Black graduates' intention to apply for an academic job, given the urgent need in South Africa to attract more Black graduates to academia.

Language barrier. Language could have been a limitation as the questionnaire was only available in English. However, it is unlikely that this would have had large influence on the data obtained as the study was conducted in an academic environment where the primary language of communication is English.

Time constraints. Due to the limited time available to collect data, there was inadequate time to obtain a sample that was representative of South African student population. This limitation could not have been avoided as the researcher was preoccupied with lectures and

academic commitments during the semester that made it almost impossible to start the data collection earlier.

Future research and practical implications

The limitations of this research provide directions for future research. A possible improvement to the study could have been interviewing the graduates. Through interviews, qualitative data may be obtained and probing questions can be asked to uncover deep-rooted perceptions about attraction factors and academia, which may not readily be accessible through questionnaires. To also improve the sampling procedure, data can be collected from more universities within the Western Cape to obtain a greater spread of participants.

This study contributes to literature on factors relating to graduates' choice of an academic career in the South African context. This study is especially relevant and beneficial as limited research has been conducted on this topic in South Africa, and around the world. The study also has practical implications for a diverse range of groups including university management, students, and government, to mention a few.

The findings of this study contributes to the transformation efforts of university management teams in South Africa, as it provides a certain level of clarity as to the attraction factors that are relevant in the South African context, and those that are significant predictors of graduates' intention to apply for an academic job. Based on the findings of this study, surveys can be conducted with final year postgraduate students to identify students that are attracted to academia and mostly likely to apply for an academic job. This study also contributes to the understanding of the student populace as to what attracts them to a job, and how attractive they find academia. The findings of this study may also motivate government to increase its funding of HEIs and provide HEIs with the means to compete with corporate organisations in terms of salary offered.

In conclusion, this chapter has provided explanations for the results presented in chapter 4. Transformation is at the centre of the HEI landscape in South Africa at the moment, and this study provides empirical evidence as to the factors that are related to attracting black graduates to achieve the much needed transformation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Multiple regression assumptions for all Hypotheses

Assumptions	*Result*	*Conclusion*
No influential cases	Cook's distance showed that all residuals in the dataset were between .000 - .071 for the total sample; .000 - .112 for black sample; .000 - .166 for White sample and thus smaller than 1, which indicates influential cases were unlikely.	Assumption met
No outliers	Total sample: In the data set there were no more than 9 cases for which the residuals lay more than 2 standard deviations from the mean, which indicated that outliers were unlikely because not more than 5% (9/178 = 5%) of all cases lay beyond 2 standard deviations. Black sample: No more than 4 cases for which the residuals lay more than 2 standard deviations from the mean, which indicated that outliers were unlikely because not more than 5% (4/93 = < 5%) of all cases lay beyond 2 standard deviations.	Assumption met

	White sample: In the data set there were no more than 3 cases for which the residuals lay more than 2 standard deviations from the mean, which indicated that outliers were unlikely because not more than 5% (3/80 = < 5%) of all cases lay beyond 2 standard deviations.	
Additivity and linearity	The assumption of linearity was met as the dots were found to be in a linear line in the matrix.	Assumption met
Normally distributed errors	The P-P plot shows the difference between the expected probability and observed probability (residuals). Therefore when the residuals are close to the line it shows there was relatively no difference. For the total sample and sub-samples, P-P plot showed that the points stayed close to the line, while the histogram showed a bell-shaped curve.	Assumption met
Independent errors	The Dublin-Watson test shows evidence for independent errors as it had a value of 2.194, 2.196, 2.196 respectively, indicating that the errors are not correlated.	Assumption met
Multicollinearity	All VIFs were < 10. All tolerance levels were > .10 Total sample: VIFs = 1.30 – 2.40 Tolerance = .42 - .77 Black sample: VIFs = 1.23 – 2.60 Tolerance = .39 - .81 White sample: VIFs = 1.26 – 3.02 Tolerance = .33 - .80	Assumption met

Predictor and outcome variables	All predictors and outcome variables consisted of interval data.	Assumption met
Sample size	The sample size was assumed to be adequate as according to Field (2012) if there are more than 15 cases (participants) per predictor variable, the sample is adequate. In this case the total sample size is 178 and there are approximately 15 cases per predictor variable.	Assumption met
Homoscedasticity	The scatterplot displayed no pattern regarding the distribution of the values, which indicated that the assumption of homoscedasticity was met.	Assumption met