



**Factors that influence the retention of B players in a South
African Professional Service Firm**

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ABSTRACT

Research in the field of retention has been dominated by studies focused on retention of highly talented employees or A players. Organisations for many years have overlooked, misunderstood and to a large degree ignored the contributions of the steady and capable performers, the B players.

Understanding the retention needs of B players has become critical in ensuring organisational success in the short and long term.

The purpose of the research aimed to identify the key factors influencing the retention of B players across generations and ethnic groups, and thereby develop a retention framework that will contribute towards the improved retention of B players. The study adopted a dual approach, incorporating a qualitative and quantitative methodology. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders to validate the questionnaire and gain insights regarding the key retention variables that influence B players. A questionnaire was then distributed to respondents to obtain their views. Data was gathered electronically and analysed against the research objectives defined.

The key findings indicated that B players are most influenced by Financial Reward & Recognition, Independence & Freedom and Leadership & Management factors. A Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework was developed to assist organisations to develop dynamic multi-dimensional strategies.

LIST OF KEYWORDS

A players: individuals regarded as the top talent or high performers within an organisation.

B players: individuals regarded as the capable and consistent performers, which make up a majority of the workforce.

Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework: a framework that assists organisations in developing a multi-dimensional dynamic retention strategy.

Professional Service Firms: organisations that provide services in the areas of auditing, tax, legal or advisory/ management consulting.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Mr. Keshava Naidu

Date: 10 November 2010

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1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Context of the research study

If the analogy of vehicle components has to be applied to the different type of performers within an organisation, it would be easy to describe the A players as the high performing engine. The engine can be described as the most critical component of a vehicle, as it creates the inertia to propel the vehicle in the direction chosen by the driver (Leadership). However, no matter how powerful the engine is, it remains the collective efforts of the engine and the tyres that ensure the vehicle arrives at the selected destination. Without the tyres the power of the engine will not translate into movement and vice versa. The tyres can thus be interpreted as the B players within the organisation. Those individuals that often get the work done seldom get the attention of leadership and are so often overlooked by management as key to the success of an organisation.

The objective of this research aims to assist organisations to identify the key retention factors that influence the retention of B players, and thereby improve organisational performance.

1.2 Problem formulation

Organisations around the world have spent a significant amount of money, time and effort in hiring and retaining top talent (A performers). This understandable fascination with top talent has lured organisations into a trap of underestimating the vital importance of the supporting actors, the B players (DeLong & Vijayaghavan, 2003). In a recent article published in the Financial Mail (2010) it was emphasised that by focusing exclusively on high fliers, companies often overlooked the normal performers who were critical in the change efforts identified by organisations (Makholwa, 2010, p.12).

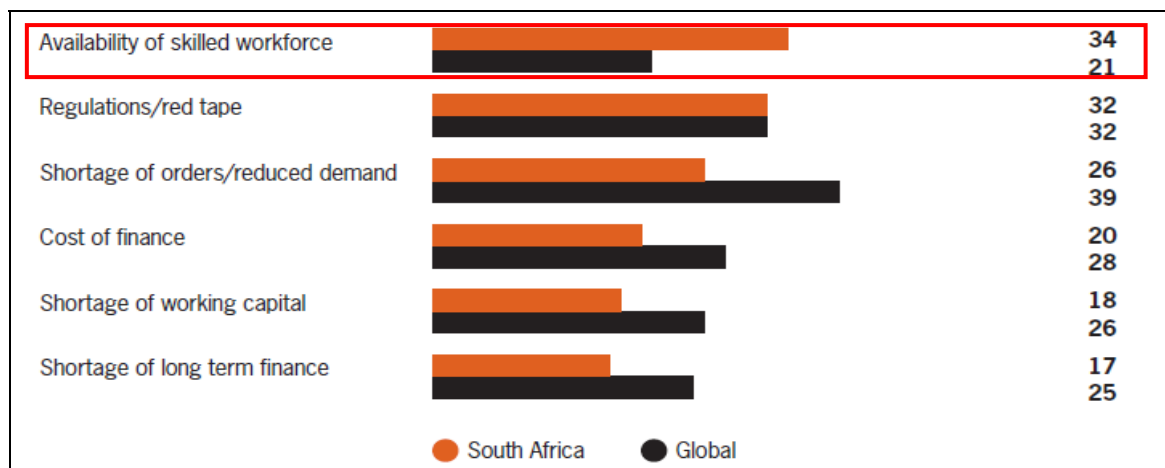
This study focused specifically on Professional Service Firms (PSF's). A professional service firm in context of this study has been defined as organisations providing audit, tax, legal or management consulting services. The competitive advantage of many professional services firms remains the intellectual property owned by these organisations. This intellectual capital is largely embedded within the knowledge workers of the organisation (A, B and C players). These organisations are significantly different from commercial firms as the sources of competitive advantage, performance metrics, management processes, differ significantly (Nanda, 2004).

In the professional services sector human capital constraints were seen as a significant barriers to entry and a key competitive advantage, based on the limited pool of knowledgeable and qualified resources (Nanda, 2004). Hence, an organisation's ability to retain knowledge workers is a critical component in

determining the present and future success of the firm (Sutherland & Jordaan, 2004).

The competitive environment experienced today means that a job is no longer for life and accordingly, individuals in the work place have developed a high sense of driving their own careers and career paths as they see fit (Baruch, 2006). The difficulty in retaining knowledge workers is further exacerbated by a significant skills shortage in South Africa (Kerr-Phillips & Thomas, 2009). This is further supported by the Grant Thornton International Business Report (2010). The report identified that the availability of skills was the number one constraint impeding business growth in South Africa.

Figure 1: Constraints on Expansion for the South African Economy (Grant Thornton, 2010)



These findings correlated with the Financial Accounting and Auditing Skills Shortage in South Africa report produced by The South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) in 2009. The authors estimated a skills shortage within the financial accounting and auditing profession of

approximately 22 000 additional professionals. This problem is further magnified by the fact that retention problems are experienced by employers, not only with regards to black employees but across all race groups (SAICA, 2009).

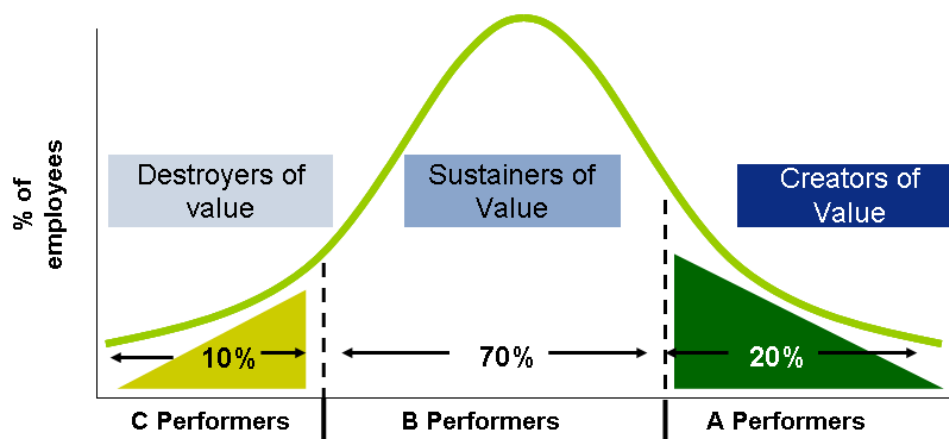
Applying an internal focus at a firm specific level, the inability to retain talent has been a key contributor to the skills shortage within organisations (Horwitz, 2007). In 2006, a McKinsey survey found that business leaders regarded finding and retaining talented people as the single most important managerial preoccupation for the rest of the decade. The McKinsey report also identified seven obstacles that have influenced the management of talent within organisations. A key factor highlighted was the unwillingness of line managers to differentiate employee performance between top, average and underperformers. Other key factors are highlighted in the table below.

Figure 2: Seven obstacles preventing good talent management (McKinsey, 2006)



In order for professional service firms to sustain their competitive advantage, attention must be placed not only on top talent (A players). Research conducted by DeLong and Vijayaghavan (2003) highlighted that the long term performance of an organisation was far more dependent on the commitment and contributions of B players. The diagram below illustrated the segmentation of A, B and C performers with an organisation.

Figure 3: Segmentation of performers within an organisation



Smart (2005), Huselid, Beatty & Becker (2005), DeLong and Vijayaraghavan (2003) and Handfield-Jones and Michaels (2002) segmented the performance of employees into three components. The authors agree that A players constituted 20%, B players 70% and C players the bottom 10% of an organisations workforce.

This research study challenged the status quo of focusing on the retention of A players (top talent) as advocated by Handfield-Jones and Beth (2001), Morgan (2008) and Smith (2005).

Retention strategies focused at different levels of performers has to a large degree been ignored, DeLong and Vijayaraghavan (2003) suggested that this was due to most leaders being highly motivated A players themselves, and thus tend to undervalue B players who have a different view on the world. It was for these reasons that the Harvard Management Update (2001) emphasised the need for organisations to understand what the different employee groups want in order to retain their services.

This study therefore aimed to address the challenges that organisations face with regards to talent retention by understanding what the key retention factors are for B players. These insights would assist professional service firms in sustaining their competitive advantage and reducing the impacting of the skills shortage crisis experienced in South Africa.

The rationale for this study was supported by the need for further academic research in the field of talent management as highlighted by various authors (Iles, Chuai & Preece, 2010; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Sutherland & Jordaan, 2004).

1.3 The relevance of this study to business in South Africa

As an emerging market economy, there are many skills that are in high demand in South Africa. These skills are also in short supply locally and globally,

A report by FASSET (2010), which is the Sector Education Training Authority (SETA) for South African companies in the accounting, finance, management consulting and other financial services industry confirmed the skills shortage in accounting profession. The report highlighted from April 2009 to March 2010 5000 accounting positions remained vacant due to a lack of skilled professionals, as highlighted in figure below.

Table 1: Financial occupations with the highest number of scarce skills (FASSET, 2010)

Rank	Code	Occupation	Need for Period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010
1	2211	Accountants	5076
2	5311	General Clerks	1028
3	1111	Chief Executives & Managing Directors (Enterprises/Organisations)	737
4	2247	Management and Organisation Analysts	460
5	5211	Personal Assistants	443
6	5512	Bookkeepers	434
7	2212	Auditors, Company Secretaries and Corporate Treasurers	414
8	2223	Financial Investment Advisers and Managers	201
9	5421	Receptionists	169
10	1322	Finance Managers	114

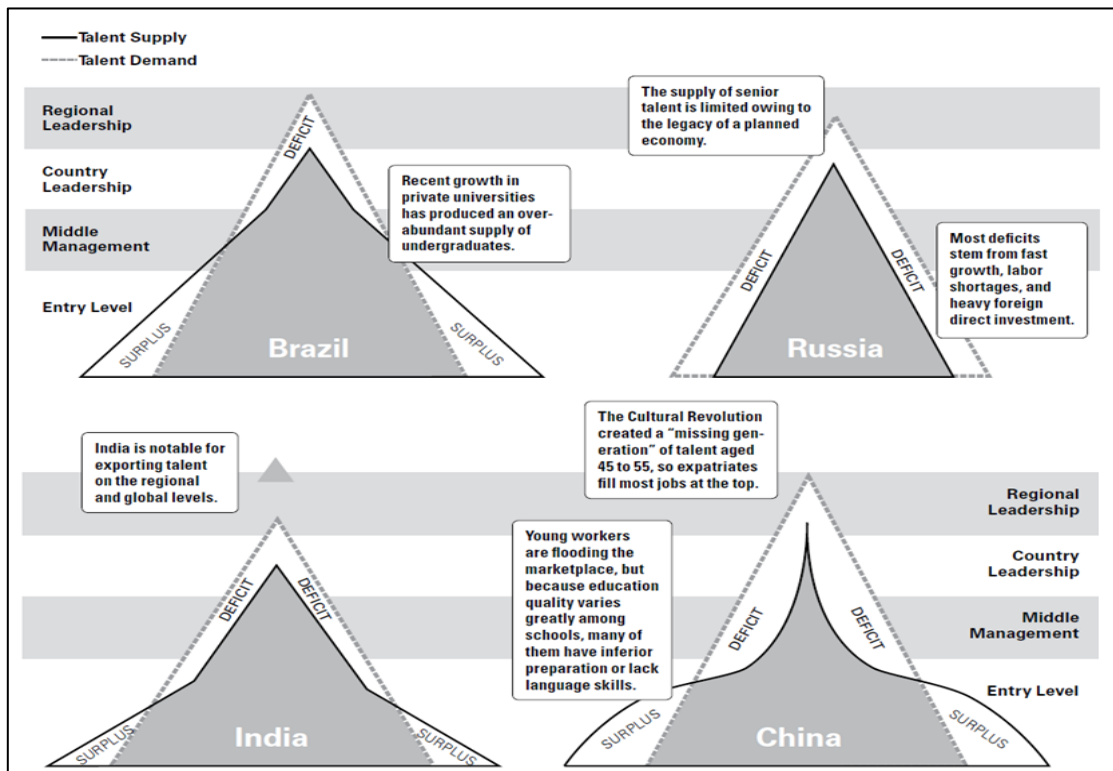
For South African firms to succeed locally and abroad the need to attract and retain highly skilled, independent, internationally marketable and mobile individuals is critical (Paul, 2000). A critical component that contributed towards country competitiveness was having the appropriate skills complement across a

range of occupations and professions as well as the skills to drive leadership in organisations (Kerr-Phillips & Thomas, 2009).

Kerr-Phillips and Thomas (2009) further stated that from a macro perspective the challenges for South African organisations remained the ability to retain talent within the country. Mitchell, Holtom and Lee (2001) identified the micro challenges for South Africa, other than the skills shortage, was the strong competition that existed in the country amongst companies to attract the best remaining talent.

Due to the growth experienced in emerging market economies the retention of skilled employees was highlighted as an extraordinarily challenge (Ready, Hill & Conger (2008). Many of the emerging market economies such as Brazil, China, Indian and Russia (BRIC) have experienced a high demand for specialised skills, as depicted in the figure below, thereby creating significant competition for globally available and portable skills.

Figure 4: Supply and Demand for talent in the BRIC Markets (Ready *et al.*, 2008)



The figure above highlighted that there was a key challenge for skills at a middle management level and upwards across all the BRIC countries. The supply and demand of skills within South African, specifically with regards to financial skills and knowledge, reflected similarities to Brazil and India with approximately 22 000 vacancies that will exist between 2010 to 2018 (SACIA, 2009).

By creating retention strategies for B players, and considering the high labour turnover of A and C players (Trevor, Gerhart, & Boudreau, 1997; Williams & Livingstone, 1994) companies will be able to enhance their competitive advantage.

1.4 Scope of the Research

1.4.1 Purpose of Study

The main objective of the study was to determine the key retention factors required to retain B players within professional service firms.

1.4.2 Scope

It must be noted that a single organisation was selected upon which this research has been conducted. This reason for this approach was to ensure a single rating scale was utilised thus creating a consistent definition or categorisation of A and B players across the firm researched.

The organisation that was the subject of this research study has requested to remain anonymous and therefore any in-depth information relating to the organisation has been deliberately excluded from this research report.

The research study was limited to a single professional services firm within South Africa. A professional service firm, in context of this study, was defined as an organisation that offers audit, tax, legal, advisory or management consulting services. The organisation researched employs approximately 3000 professionals and generates revenues that exceed R1 billion in South Africa, with a significant geographic footprint locally and globally.

From a performance management perspective the organisation utilises a five point rating scale that differentiates employee performance. The table defines the performance management scale of the organisation.

Table 2: Performance Rating Matrix

Rating	Description	Definition
EP	Exceptional Performer	Performance and values are both significantly better than expected at the level in most, if not all, respects
SP+	Strong Performer Plus	Performance and values are significantly better than expected at the level in many respects, and as expected for the rest.
SP	Strong Performer	Performance and values are balanced and as expected at the level in all material respects.
SP-	Strong Performer Negative	Performance and values are as expected in most respects, but are imbalanced, or are below the level expected in some respects.
NI	Needs Improvement	Performance and values are below the level expected in many, if not most respects, and need to be improved to meet the expectation of the level.

In context of the research objective, A players have been defined as Exceptional Performers (EP) employees only, and B players as Strong Performers (SP). Employees that fall within the Strong Performer plus (SP+) category have been excluded from the research sample, as these employees can be categorised as either A or B players depending on their level of performance. Though the main focus of the study related to B players, it was important to compare the retention needs of A and B players, thus the inclusion of A players in the study.

It was the view of the author that by excluding the SP+ population from the research an accurate perception of A and B players would be obtained. The

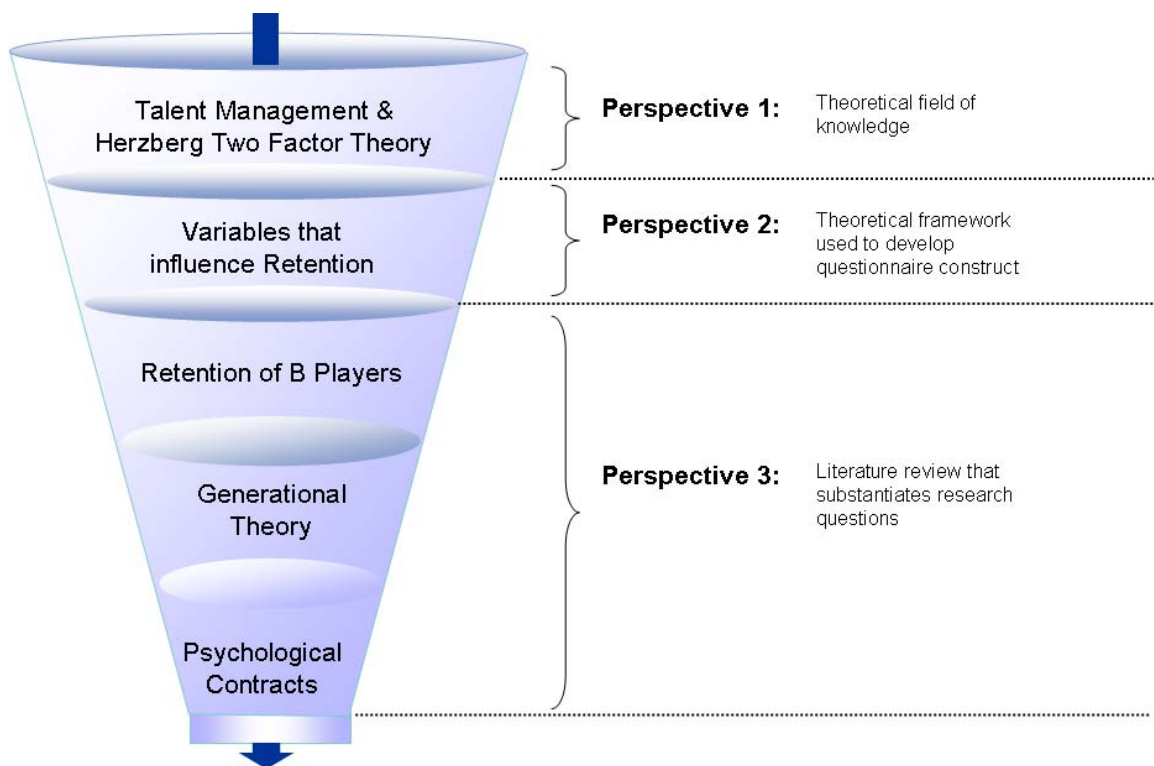
performance ratings of employees for the 2009/10 financial year were used to determine the population sample size.

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review conducted was based on three distinct perspectives, which related to the research objectives of this study. The figure below depicts these perspectives and the field of theory researched.

Figure 5: Literature review roadmap



The literature review focused on initially understanding what was meant by talent management by exploring the dominating schools of thought. This provided an overall context as differentiating levels of performance between A,

B and C players was defined as one of three schools of thought, in which talent management was applied.

Another theoretical base explored was Herzberg's Two Factor Theory (1959) which provided an understanding of what motivated individuals.

Secondly, the study explored the factors influencing retention. These insights were used to formulate the core design of the questionnaire construct.

The third perspective involved research that contributed to an:

- **In-depth understanding on the definition and need to retain B players.**
This section substantiated why organisations should consider proactively retaining B players through exploring the benefits they provide and risks that are mitigated by these individuals (refer to section 2.6.1 for definition),
- **Understanding the needs and wants of various generational cohorts** based on Generational Theory. Generational cohort theory is based on the segmentation of a population by age or experience with the intent of identifying experiences, attitudes and preferences that cohort members have in common due to their shared life experiences (Meredith, Schewe & Hiam, 2002), and;
- **Understanding the needs and wants of the major ethnic groups (African, White, Indian and Coloured)**, based on an assessment of psychological contract, within a South African context. Rousseau (2004)

The literature review firstly assessed talent management and retention from a broad perspective and then narrowed down to specific aspects of retention focusing on B players by applying generational theory and the concept of psychological contracts.

2.2 Talent Management

2.2.1 Definition of Talent

Talent, within a corporate organisation, can be defined as those employees who form a small percentage of the workforce and that represent the core competencies of the organisation (Berger & Berger, 2004). A similar view is provided by Hansen (2007), who defined talented employees as the core group that have the ability to take the organisation forward.

2.2.2 Definition of Talent Management

Cappelli (2008) defined talent management as the process through which employers anticipate and meet their needs for human capital.

McCauley and Wakefield (2006) defined talent management as processes that included workforce planning, talent gap analysis, recruiting, staffing, education

and development, retention, talent reviews, succession planning, and evaluation.

From the definitions provided, there is a lack clarity and consensus regarding the definition and context of talent management (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). The authors acknowledged that a review of the literature focused on the definition of talent management revealed a disturbing lack of clarity. Iles (2007) described that the field of talent management as a practice that has not been subject to a significant degree of critical scrutiny. Furthermore the author stated that little empirical research into the nature and application of talent and talent management strategies within organisations has been conducted.

2.2.3 Talent Management Schools of Thought

Though clarity regarding the definition of talent management is required, three distinct schools of thought have emerged.

Lewis and Heckman (2006) define the **first school** of thought as a collection of Human Resource (HR) functions. This involved the management of talent through the use of recruitment, selection, development and career and succession management (Byham, 2001; Hilton, 2000; Olsen, 2000). The foundation of this school of thought is embedded in the HR department's ability to become sophisticated and efficient in managing talent (Lewis & Heckman, 2006).

The **second school** of thought focused on the concept of talent pools. Rhodes and Brundrett (2008) stated that organisations should adopt succession management practices to enable those with actual or potential leadership talent to be systematically developed and enter an available pool of talent so that leadership vacancies can be addressed from within. Central to this approach was for employees or the organisation to project staffing needs and then proactively manage the progression of employees through various levels in the organisation (Lewis & Heckman, 2006).

The **third school** of thought, as described by Lewis and Heckman (2006), defines talent generically. Proponents utilising this school of thought, looked at talent from one of two general perspectives.

The *first perspective* differentiated talent into A, B and C categories, and was supported by advocates such as Guthridge, Komm and Lawson (2008), Huselid *et al.* (2005), Axelrod, Handfield-Jones and Michaels (2002) and Smart (2005).

The *second perspective* viewed all employees in an organisation as talented for humanistic or demographic reasons. It is the role of HR to manage all individuals to a level of high performance and is supported by advocates such as Buckingham and Vosburgh (2001) and Walker & Larocco (2002)

2.2.4 Conclusion

Koetser (2008) stated that the definition of talent management still remained ambiguous. Nonetheless, organisations have adopted practices to manage talent, as illustrated by Jack and Heckman (2006) and Iles *et al.* (2010).

This research report adopted the school of thought that supports a differentiated approach of talent management. Whereby, employee performance is segmented into A, B and C categories of performance.

2.3 Herzberg Two Factor Theory

2.3.1 Two-Factor theory

One of the key theories related to employee motivation is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959). Herzberg (1959) categorised job factors into two categories, described below:

- **Hygiene factors** – defined as factors that increase job dissatisfaction and can restrict job performance. These factors do not lead to higher levels of motivation, but without them there is dissatisfaction, and;
- **Motivators** – defined as factors that encourage employees to gain satisfaction and thus improve job performance, and;

Herzberg's theory (1959) stated that "motivators" would contribute to job satisfaction and the "hygiene factors" would contribute to dissatisfaction. The table below clarifies the difference between hygiene factors and motivators:

Table 3: An example of Hygiene factors and Motivators (Values based management, 2010).

Hygiene Factors	Motivators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary • Working conditions • Quality of supervision • Company policies • Interpersonal relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement Recognition of work done Responsibility Interest in a job Growth and Advancement

2.4 Factors that Influence Retention

There are a multitude of factors that influenced employee retention and this was evident when comparing research conducted by Bhatnager (2007), Sithole (2006) and Sutherland and Jordaan (2004). The research identified consistent factors across the studies in the areas of challenging work, remuneration, career enhancement and development opportunities and working relationships. The table below defines all the findings of the research studies conducted.

Table 4: Comparison of ranked retention factors

No.	Bhatnager (2007),	Sithole (2006)	Sutherland & Jordaan (2004)
1	Exciting work/ challenge	Better career prospects/ development	Lack of challenging work
2	Career growth/ learning	Better package/ remuneration	Level of trust in management
3	Relationship/ working with great people	Better working conditions	Lack of career development opportunities

No.	Bhatnager (2007),	Sithole (2006)	Sutherland & Jordaan (2004)
4	Fair pay	Work/Life balance	Incentive/ bonus/ variable pay
5	Supportive management/ great boss	Exposure to experiences to accelerate career progression	Base pay
6			Individual recognition & praise being given
7			Freedom to work independently
8			Career planning by the organisation
9			Relationship with your immediate boss
10			Issues you have raised being unattended

Furthermore, research conducted by Horwitz, Heng and Quazi (2003) reflected the effectiveness of various retention strategies used by organisations. Key strategies included the use of challenging work, high competitive packages, opportunities to develop in a specialist field and support from top management. The table below compares popular strategies with high effective and least effective strategies.

Table 5: Effectiveness of Retention Variables/ Strategies

Rank	Most Popular Strategies	Highly effective strategies	Least effective strategies
1	Performance incentives/ bonuses	Challenging work	Flexible work practices
2	Competitive pay packages	Highly Competitive pay packages	Have a critical mass of knowledge workers
3	Challenging work	Having Performance incentives/ bonuses	Transparent pay and benefit decisions
4	Freedom to plan and work independently	Opportunity to develop into a specialist field	Workplace fun and informal

Rank	Most Popular Strategies	Highly effective strategies	Least effective strategies
5	Top Management support	Top management support	Generous funding for conferences and studies

Insights provided by Kerr-Phillips and Thomas (2009) in a study of South African organisations reflected that the most common factors identified with talent retention in organisations included:

- Leadership development programmes,
- A high performance work culture that promotes development, and;
- A strong employer brand and a competitive remuneration package.

The authors further state that a major driver of top talent turnover was as a result of bureaucratic structures, a workplace culture that tolerates poor performers, the existence of an old boys' club, an exclusionary workplace culture and the impact of affirmative action on career prospects (the latter being raised as a problem primarily by white male interviewees).

Other key retention factors in emerging markets, related to an organisations brand and culture, as identified by Ready, Hill and Conger (2008). Research conducted by the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (2009) identified:

- Competitive salaries (used in 67% of organisations surveyed),
- Career planning (used in 40% of organisations surveyed), and;

- Training and development (used in 36% of organisations surveyed)

As the top three variables used to retain knowledge workers in financial services firms, the remaining variables are highlighted in table below.

Table 6: Strategies to retain employee in Financial Services

Ways to retain employees	n	%*
Competitive salaries and additional incentives (e.g. share schemes)	78	67.8
Career planning and succession planning and talent management	47	40.9
Training and development	42	36.5
Motivation and personal attention	20	17.4
Better working conditions	15	13.0
Binding employees contractually	8	7.0
Recruitment campaigns	3	2.6

From a theoretical stand point, research conducted by Sutherland and Jordaan (2004) classified the literature on retention into three main groups:

- 1 Retention devices for the whole organisation** which related to increased mobility, effective management of knowledge and involve restructuring the organisation in order to reduce employee attrition,
- 2 Changing human resource systems** which involves adjustment to recruitment practices, definition of roles and responsibilities, differentiating between good and poor performance and conducting exit interviews, and;
- 3 Retention devices** for individuals this includes performance related pay, fringe benefits, job sculpting, recognition of individual contributions, distributing work that can be executed independently and access to leading edge technologies.

2.4.1 Conclusion

The literature review reflected a variety of factors that impact employee retention. However a few key consistent factors such as leadership involvement, challenging work, competitive salaries, and employee development opportunities were consistently mentioned throughout the literature.

In summary, a number of key factors have been identified through a review of the literature, and have been incorporated in the development of the questionnaire construct. These factors are defined in the table below.

Table 7: Retention factors identified

No.	Focus Area	Explanation of focus Area
1	Company Brand	Working for a reputable organisation that has a great market presence
2	Company Culture	Working for an organisation that encourages diversity and promotes a happy and professional culture
3	Leadership and Management	Leaders and managers that are inspirational, knowledgeable and that instil trust in their employees
4	Training	Opportunities to enhance skills and knowledge
5	Reward and Recognition (Financial)	Being financially rewarded accordingly for individual performance and abilities
6	Reward and Recognition (Non-Financial)	Being recognised for individual efforts and contributions through praise and acknowledgement
7	Work/life Balance	Having adequate time to participate in social events but still deliver to clients
8	Independence and Freedom	Ability to make decisions and work independently

No.	Focus Area	Explanation of focus Area
9	Work Environment (Physical)	Having a comfortable, modern work environment that uses leading technologies
10	Work Environment (Other)	Working with friendly colleagues, in an organisation that has efficient internal processes and procedures
11	Career Development and Enhancement	Having the opportunity to further individual career aspirations and obtain exposure to global engagements

2.5 Understanding Knowledge Workers

The term “knowledge worker” was defined by Peter Drucker in 1974, and is now widely acknowledged. Drucker (1974) described knowledge workers as individuals who carry knowledge as a powerful source which they, rather than the organisation own. Tulgan (2001) defines knowledge workers as any employee that uses knowledge to add value to a business process should be viewed as a knowledge worker.

Knowledge workers are pivotal to professional services firms, as they form part of core the business model and generate more profit than other employees do (Guthridge *et al.*, 2008). It is important that organisations retain their knowledge workers. This view is supported by Kinnear and Sutherland (2000) who identified the mobility of knowledge workers in the modern economy means the loss of both tangible and intangible knowledge and potential competitive advantage.

A key finding from research conducted by Sutherland and Jordaan (2004) stated that high level employee commitment can be achieved but not long term

loyalty. This aspect needs to be taken into cognisance especially when dealing with knowledge workers from different generations.

2.6 *Understanding B players*

2.6.1 Definition of a B player

Guthridge *et al.* (2008) defined B players as capable, steady performers who make up a majority of the workforce. Smart (2005), Huselid *et al.* (2005), DeLong and Vijayaraghavan (2003) and Handfield-Jones and Michaels (2002) segment the performance of employees into three components. These are:

- **A players** which make up approximately the top 20% of an organisations workforce. Guthridge *et al.* (2008) stated that A players are twice as likely to improve productivity and sales within an organisation. These individuals are described by Groysberg, Nanda and Nohria (2004) as ambitious, brainy, dynamic and charismatic,
- **B players** constitute approximately 70% of an organisations workforce. DeLong and Vijayaraghavan (2003) viewed these individuals as consistent, strong performers who act as supporting actors and provide grounding to A players and ensure they perform as stars, and;
- **C players** which comprise of the bottom 10% of an organisations workforce. Huselid *et al.* (2005) recommended that organisations remove these individuals over time or outsource these roles as they have little strategic impact.

2.6.2 Types of B Players

In an article by DeLong and Vijayaraghavan (2003), the authors highlighted the existence of three types of B players defined in the table below:

Table 8: Types of B players

Type of B player	Description of Profile	Value Added
Ex-A players	These are individuals who can be defined as recovered A players that have rejected the pressures of an A life, for various reasons. Ex-A players constitute 20% of all B players.	<p>These individuals are as intelligent as A players and thus can solve a multitude of complex organisational challenges.</p> <p>These employees can be considered a steal, as long as they are managed correctly. These individuals can be regarded as A players when required, and come armed with a significant amount of knowledge and wisdom.</p>
Truth Tellers	These are individuals that value honesty and realism in their interaction with superiors. Truth Tellers are often functional experts who have created niche roles for themselves.	<p>These individuals do not fear asking in-depth reflective questions of themselves or others.</p> <p>A players do not find Truth Tellers threatening, as they are more interested in their work than their careers. Hence colleagues turn to these individuals for advice.</p>
Go-to people	Regarded as individuals with second rate functional skills but possess extraordinary feel for the organisations processes and norms.	These individuals make the internal connections and utilise their significant social networks to unlock value for tasks and other employees. These individuals often are fundamental in making the

Type of B player	Description of Profile	Value Added
		A players the stars they are.
Middling	Defined as individuals which are less competent than other B players but care deeply about the organisation's values. These individuals generally steer clear from risk and are not entrepreneurial in nature.	Act as the organisations apostles, as they are motivated by the service they can render for the good of the organisation. These individuals feel accomplished if the organisation is running like a well oiled machine, and place the organisations well-being before their individual careers.

2.7 Why retain B players?

2.7.1 Value Add of B players

The most publicised research linked to the management of talent relates to the article *"The war on talent"* by Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Beth (2001). The article highlighted the strong positive relationship between talent and performance and hence explained the need to retain top talent (A players).

Smith (2005) advocated that organisations should strive to fill all teams with high performers (A players), known as "topgrading". By definition when companies topgrade they do not accept any mixing of A, B and C players (Smith, 2005). This is further supported by Morgan (2008) and McCauley *et al.* (2006), who highlighted that talent management is all about focusing on your most highly valued employees. However, this approach is challenged by Walker

and Larocco (2002) who argued that most talent management approaches are elitist and alienates 80% of the organisations workforce. Furthermore, Guthridge *et al.* (2008), from McKinsey, where the “War on Talent” concept originated from, conceded that though the impact of top talent on corporate performance has not diminished, due to the expansion of knowledge based work, organisations cannot afford to ignore contributions of B players.

Huselid *et al.* (2005) proposed that organisations should distinguish between A, B and C positions and then resource these positions with the appropriate talent (A, B or C players). The authors went on to state that B players, though unlikely to create value are often important in maintaining value.

Guthridge *et al.* (2008) recommend that exclusive focus on top players can damage the morale of the rest of the organisation, and therefore impact on overall performance.

The value of B players can be summarised in research conducted by DeLong and Vijayaghavan (2003) who highlight that long term performance, and in some cases survival, of an organisation is dependent far more on the commitment and contributions of B players.

2.7.2 Costs of Employee Turnover

The costs associated with an employee leaving an organisation can equate to 150% or exceed a year’s salary (Branch, 1998 and Michaud, 2000). However, measuring the total direct and indirect financial costs associated with labour

turnover is difficult and complex, especially with regards to intellectual capital losses (Fitz-enz & Phillips, 1998). By implementing strategies to retain B players organisations can limit direct and indirect labour turnover costs, especially considering these B players comprise 70% of an organisations total workforce (DeLong & Vijayaghavan, 2003).

2.7.3 Loyalty and Retention

From a retention perspective, both high (A players) and low (C players) performers were identified as more likely to leave an organisation than were average performers (Trevor, Gerhart, & Boudreau, 1997; Williams & Livingstone, 1994).

DeLong and Vijayaghavan (2003) argued that since B players move less frequently they are the custodians of organisational memory, and know how to survive many difficult situations. Thus, by retaining these individuals (B players) organisations ensure operational sustainability and avoid significant turnover costs.

2.7.4 Benefits of Diversity

Groysberg *et al.* (2004) highlights when companies recruit stars (A players) they tend not to be able to deliver at the level expected. The author explains that these A players struggle to create the environment that supported them to achieve the results delivered in the past. Key reasons stated by Groysberg *et al.*

(2005) are that A players struggle to develop the social networks, relationships, an understanding of the sub-cultures and procedures of the organisation in the short period they have to prove themselves. Thus there is an implicit need to have a diverse base of A and B players.

B players offer a high degree of social capital and networking. The central proposition of social capital theory assumes that networks of relationships constitute a valuable resource for the conduct of social affairs, providing their members with credentials which entitle them to credit in terms of information or knowledge (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Researchers have found social capital encourages cooperative behaviour, thereby facilitating the development of new forms of association and innovation within an organisation (Nahapiet *et al.*, 1998).

DeLong and Vijayaghavan (2003) explained that B players supported A players in delivering the required results through utilising their social networks, knowledge of procedures and the culture of the organisation.

2.7.5 Conclusion

The literature review provided a multitude of reasons as to why B players should be proactively retained by organisations. It also highlighted the key role played by B players in ensuring A players perform to their true potential.

The aspects of diversity, social capital and organisational memory also need to be considered in the bigger context of organisational systems, when assessing the need to retain B players. Overall, it was identified that B players add significant value if organisations have what it takes to foster this brand of talent (DeLong & Vijayaghavan, 2003).

2.8 Generational Cohort Theory

Generational cohort theory is based on the segmentation of a population by age or experience with the intent of identifying experiences, attitudes and preferences that cohort members have in common due to their shared life experiences (Meredith *et al.* 2002). A cohort was defined as a group of people who have lived through similar experiences and time, causing them to develop similar values, perceptions, ideas and attitudes (Sayers, 2006).

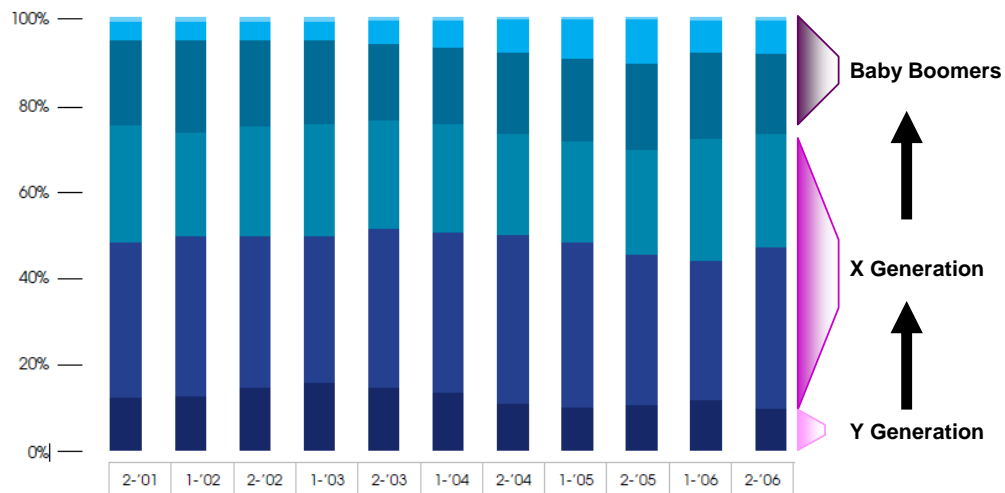
Cappelli (2008) stated that different employee age groupings desired different things at different stages of their working lives. The table below summarises the four generations identified in the workforce and gives examples of some of the generalised work values that have been attached to these generations.

Table 8: Working Styles of the Different Generations Adapted from (Meredith, Schewe & Hiam, 2002; Smith & Clurman, 1997; Zemke & Filipczak, 2000)

Generation	Year of birth	Entered Workforce	Work Values	Work is...
Matures	1920-1944	1940s-1950s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard working • Conservative • Organisational loyalty 	An inevitable obligation
Baby Boomers	1945-1963	1960s-1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life • Ambitious • Conforming • Organisational loyalty 	An exciting adventure
Generation X	1964-1977	1980s-1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility • Job satisfaction • Loyal to self, • Balanced work/life 	A difficult challenge
Generation Y	1978 - 1994	2000s-2010s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value diversity • Sociability • Global mindset • Technologically savvy 	A means to an ends – work to live!

A study conducted by Westernman and Yamamura (2007) revealed that generations X and Y are impatient and highly mobile, and will leave organisations that do not meet their needs or does not have a conducive working environment. The figure below highlighted the current segmentation of the various generational cohorts in the financial accounting and auditing profession in South Africa (SAICA, 2009).

Figure 6: Age segmentation of employees in the financial accounting and auditing profession (2009)



The figure above reflected the growing number of X and Y generations employees entering the employment sector. This generational cohort constituted 75% of total employment in the financial accounting and auditing profession in 2006 (SAICA, 2009).

2.9 The changing psychological contract

Rousseau (2004) described psychological contracts as defined promises that deal with exchanging agreements between employer and employee.

Psychological contracts defined by Flood, Turner, Ramomoorthy and Pearson (2001) stated that the understanding that if employees are key to sustainable competitive advantage, it would therefore follow that relationships between employers and employees are critical.

Research conducted by Flood *et al.* (2001) found that that the level of expectations met in a psychological contract has a direct effect on an employee's commitment to the organisation and their intention to stay.

Changes in legislation relating to the Employment Equity Act (1998), Skills Development Act (1998), Skills Levy Act (1999) and the introduction of the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment charters have impacted on the nature of the psychological contract in South Africa.

Booyesen (2004, 2005) identified that there were three social groups present in the South African workplace: White males, Africans and a 'middle group' consisting of white females, Coloureds and Indians. A study conducted by Wökce and Sutherland (2008) highlighted that the highest degree of loyalty can be expected from White males. The research also stated that the most significant differentiator between the groups was the labour legislation and historical social identities which accounted for the differences in the psychological contracts.

In context of this study, the literature review highlighted the added complexity of various race groups when developing retention strategies for B players.

2.10 Conclusion

Talent Management has attracted increased attention from academics and practitioners in recent years, but there are many gaps and omissions left for further theoretical and empirical development (Iles *et al.*, 2010).

The literature review reflected that there are significant benefits that can be unlocked if organisations understand and adopted retention strategies that meet the needs of B players. The research reflected that top performing employees (A players) are unable to perform at the required level without the support provided by B players (Groysberg *et al.*, 2004). This is largely due to the capabilities of B players to unlock social networks, relationships and based on a through understanding of organisational processes and procedures (DeLong & Vijayaghavan, 2003).

Through an analysis of various studies conducted key factors influencing retention were identified. These include Company Brand, Company Culture, Leadership and Management, Training, Reward and Recognition (Financial), Reward and Recognition (Non-Financial), Work/life Balance, Independence and Freedom, Work Environment (Physical), Work Environment (Other) and Career Development and Enhancement. These factors have been incorporated in the development of the questionnaire survey.

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1 Introduction

The main objective of this study was to identify key retention variables that influence B players, in order to develop a retention framework to assist companies in this regard. In order to develop these perspectives an understanding of how the needs of the X and Y generations and various ethnic groups within South African was required. The research questions proposed have thus been designed to provide insights to the objective of this study.

3.2 *Research Question 1: What are the key retention factors for B players overall?*

The key objective of the research report was to define what the key retention factors are in order to develop retention strategies to retain B players. Based on the literature review conducted a questionnaire construct has been developed to answer this question.

3.3 *Research Question 2: What are the key retention factor differences for B players, across X and Y generations?*

The Financial accounting and auditing skills shortage report (SAICA, 2009), identified that approximately 75% of employees entering financial related jobs comprise X and Y generations individuals. The values and work ethic across X and Y generation are significantly different. A study conducted by Westernman and Yamamura (2007) revealed that generations X and Y are impatient and

highly mobile, and will leave organisations that do not meet their needs or do not provide conducive working environments.

This research question has been selected to understand the differences in retention requirements of X and Y generation employees specifically within the B player performance level.

3.4 Research Question 3: What are the key retention factor differences for B players, across the major ethnic groups within South Africa?

Research conducted by Wöcke and Sutherland (2008) reflected that the psychological contract amongst knowledge workers in South Africa has changed, specifically across race groups. The major ethnic groups refer to Black, White, Indian and Coloured, all other ethnic groups have been categorised as “Other” and excluded from the analysis.

3.5 Research Question 4: What are the key retention factor differences across A and B players?

Understanding if the retention needs of A and B players are different is essential in achieving the research objective of this study. The need for this research was further emphasised by the Harvard Management Update (2001), where was stated that the need to explore the retention needs of different groups was key for organisational success.

4 CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 *Introduction*

This study explored four research perspectives. **Firstly**, to understand what the key retention factors are for B players. **Secondly**, to understand if X and Y generation employees differ in their retention needs within the B player performance group. **Thirdly**, to determine if the retention factors across the major ethnic groups in South Africa are differentiated, within the B player performance groups. The **fourth** perspective aimed to understand if the retention requirements of A and B players are differentiated or similar in nature.

An exploratory research approach was adopted, as there are a limited number of empirical studies that have investigated retention factors (Sutherland & Jordaan, 2004), for B players.

To achieve this objective, a two phase research methodology was adopted. The first phase involved a qualitative assessment, conducted through open ended interviews. This approach was designed to assist in the development of a questionnaire construct, used to collect quantitative data for the second phase.

The second phase was a quantitative study designed to address the research questions proposed in Chapter 3.

This technique is reflective of a triangulated research design (Leedy, 1997) that included both a qualitative and quantitative data measurement to allow the data to be explored from two perspectives thus increasing the construct validity. This research approach has also been adopted by Nyembe (2009) and Sutherland and Jordaan (2004) in a similar studies. Furthermore, the research method is supported by Zikmund (2003) who viewed exploratory research as a useful approach when there is a limited understanding of the problem.

4.2 Phase One: Qualitative Exploratory Research

4.2.1 Methodology

An exploratory research method was adopted to validate the questionnaire construct, but to also gain insights from interviewees regarding the key retention factors that influenced B players specifically. This was largely based on the limited research related to B players.

The selection of this approach was supported research conducted by Zikmund (2003) and Malterud (2001). A similar study conducted by Iles et al. (2010), adopted a qualitative approach due to the exploratory and qualitative nature of the questions that related to talent management.

Since the term talent management has been described as relatively new and undefined (Heckman & Lewis, 2006), a qualitative approach was best suited to explore the proposed research objectives and ensure the questionnaire construct remain valid and relevant to professional service firms.

4.2.2 Population

The scope of the research was limited to a single professional service firm. The organisation employs approximately 3 000 professionals across South Africa. There was a distinct segmentation in the services provided by this firm in the areas of auditing, taxation and advisory/ consulting services, which formed part of the sampling frame.

In order to obtain insights on how professional service firms managed and retained talent, face-to-face interviews were conducted with four partners responsible for people management across the firm, as well as two subject matter specialists responsible for Talent Management and the People and Change Management. Overall six open ended interviews were conducted.

4.2.3 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was defined as the perceptions of partners and associate directors, related to the performance of A and B players within the organisation. All feedback was limited to South Africa only and did not reflect any perceptions of other African associate firms.

4.2.4 Sampling Method

A non-probability judgement based sampling technique was used, due to the characteristics of the sample members (Zikmund, 2003). Specific Partners and Associate Directors responsible for people management were selected from total population of partners and associate directors from across the firm.

A similar sampling approach was utilised by Koester (2008), Nyembe (2009) and Sutherland and Jordaan (2004) in related research conducted in the field of Retention and Human Resources Management.

4.2.5 Data Collection Process

In-depth face-to face interviews were utilised as the primary tool for data collection during phase one. Zikmund (2003) described in-depth interviews as a relatively unstructured, extensive interview used in the primary stages of the research process.

In-depth interviews as defined by Pope and Mays (1995), are a face to face conversation with the purpose of exploring issues or topics in detail. The author stated that these types of interviews do not use pre-set questions, but discussions are shaped by a defined set of topics or issues.

The in-depth interview was an authoritative means of uncovering the experience of the respondent and is a powerful tool for increasing knowledge of researcher (Broom, 2005).

Interviews were conducted at the office of each interviewee. Each interview covered the same interview questions and sequence of questioning. Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes.

4.2.6 Data Analysis Process

Broom (2005) stated that data collection and analysis usually followed an iterative process. Key themes and insights formed during interviews were used to further define the research questionnaire.

Broom (2005) further stated that ongoing data collection was informed by data already collected, and the researcher uses knowledge already gained to try to fill gaps or to sort out potential contradictions as data collection continued.

A recording device was utilised during interviews, to ensure an accurate transcription of interview. Interviewees were informed of the usage of this instrument and approved its use during interviews, by signing a consent form.

A comparative analysis technique was adopted to compare the feedback from each interviewee. By comparing the feedback across interviews, the researcher was able to do what was necessary to develop a theory more or less

inductively, by categorising, coding, delineating categories and connecting them (Boeije, 2002).

The feedback provided during interviews was used to develop constructs to meet the objectives of the research study.

4.3 Phase Two: Quantitative Research

4.3.1 Methodology

The research approach selected for phase two was a quantitative descriptive approach. Zikmund (2003) stated that descriptive studies are conducted when there is some previous understanding of the research problem. This follows on from the foundation developed in phase one of the research design.

4.3.2 Population

The population of relevance was defined as all professional employees within the firm researched. The population sample was divided into two sub-sample populations, which include:

- 1 **A players:** defined as individuals with an annual rating of Exceptional Performance (EP) awarded during the 2009/10 financial year, and;
- 2 **B players:** defined as individuals with an annual rating of Strong Performance (SP) awarded during the 2009/10 financial year.

Individuals that were rated as Stronger Performer plus (SP+) during 2009/10 were excluded from the sample population, based on the feedback from interviews conducted in phase 1. The reasoning for this was based on the fact that individuals rated SP+ could be classified as either EP (A players) or SP (B players) performers, and if included their responses would have reduced the accuracy and consistency of responses provided by the selected sample population.

All the information relating to the sample population was provided by the HR department of the firm researched. A defined protocol was agreed to between the researcher and the organisation researched to protect the confidentiality of employee ratings.

4.3.3 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was defined as the responses received from A and B players, based on the sample population defined above.

4.3.4 Sampling Method and Size

A random sampling technique was used to select respondents that were classified as either A or B players, based on the ratings of the population target during the 2009/10 financial year. Respondents were firstly identified based on them being rated as EP (A players) or SP (B players). All employees categorised as A players were requested to complete the questionnaire, due to

the small number of individuals in the population. Participants categorised as B players were randomly selected by the HR department of the organisation researched.

4.3.5 Research Questionnaire Design

The initial design of the research questionnaire was based on the literature review conducted in Chapter 2. Through a review of the literature in the areas of talent management, retention, research related to B players, knowledge workers, generational theory and psychological contracts, a structured questionnaire was designed.

The initial design and structure were then verified and validated for applicability to professional service firms through the qualitative approach defined in the research methodology. Insights and feedback obtained through the interviews conducted, ensured a robust and comprehensive questionnaire construct was developed.

The questionnaire was designed in two parts. The first part identified 11 factors that linked to the second part, which consisted of 57 variables. Respondents were requested to allocate 100 points to the 11 factors, based on a constant sum scale, while a five point Likert scale was used to gain insights on the 57 variables defined. The table below provides an understanding of how factors and variables were mapped.

Table 9: Questionnaire mapping of factors and variables

Focus Area	No.	Questions
Company Brand	1	Working for a reputable brand
	2	Working for a global brand
	3	Working for a brand that is regarded as one of the best amongst competitors
Company Culture	4	Culture where employees can challenge leaders
	5	Culture that recognises performance
	6	Culture that embraces diversity
Leadership and Management	7	Leaders that deliver on promises
	8	Leaders that are knowledgeable
	9	Leaders that are caring and understanding
	10	Leaders that are inspirational
	11	Having a good relationship with the leaders of the business
	12	Managers that deliver on promises
	13	Managers that are knowledgeable
	14	Managers that are caring and understanding
	15	Managers that are inspirational
16	Having a good relationship with the managers within the business	
Training	17	Receiving open and honest feedback, in order to improve my skills and knowledge
	18	Attending internal training courses to improve both my technical and soft skills
	19	Attending external course and/or training programs (conferences, short course, business school programmes etc)
Recognition and Reward (Financial)	20	Receiving a market related package i.e. industry norm
	21	Receiving a package that exceeds market related pay i.e. being paid in the top 25% percentile for my role and ability
	22	Receiving a performance bonus based on my own performance
	23	How important would it be to you to have the ability to reduce your basic salary if the upside of your bonus is significantly higher than what you would currently expect
	24	Financial support for further studies/ sabbaticals
	25	Having medical aid benefits
	26	Having retirement fund benefits
Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	27	Sufficient time for maternity and paternity leave
	28	Generous leave conditions
	29	Receiving public praise for outstanding achievements
	30	Receiving a personal thank you/ praise from my manager or person I report to
	31	Receiving a personal thank you/ praise from members in the leadership of my business unit
Independence and Freedom	32	Freedom to work independently
	33	Option to work from home
	34	Ability to make my own decisions e.g. individually selecting training courses to attend, rating individuals in my team, generating my own solutions first etc
	35	Ability to enhance my skills by moving around the organisation
Work Environment (Physical)	36	Living close to where I work
	37	Working in modern offices
	38	Working in good working conditions
	39	Using leading technologies
Work Life	40	Having flexible working hours

Focus Area	No.	Questions
Balance	41	Having sufficient time to conduct/ participate in social activities and events (this includes time with family and friends)
	42	Friendly work colleagues
Work Environment (Other)	43	Working with colleagues in a team
	44	Effective internal processes and procedures
	45	Issues raised are dealt with in an effective manner
Career Development & Enhancement	46	Opportunities exist to advance my career in the short term
	47	Being involved in work that is challenging
	48	Being involved in work that is complex
	49	Being involved in non-repetitive and varied work assignments
	50	Being involved in work that requires creativity
	51	Work that allows me to interact with senior management and executives at clients
	52	Getting exposure to methodologies, tools, better practices and benchmarks
	53	Opportunity to work on global projects and teams i.e. global projects that take place in South Africa
	54	Opportunity to work in other countries through secondments or projects
	55	Opportunities to develop into a specialist field
	56	Having a career plan that realistically maps the next 3 - 5 years of my career
	57	Doing work that makes best use of my skills

The five point Likert scale (ordinal) was primarily used to determine respondent attitudes. Zikmund (2003) stated that a Likert scale was a measure of attitudes designed to allow respondents to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with carefully constructed statements.

The following categories were defined: Extremely Important, Moderately Important, Indifferent (Neutral), Slightly Important, Not Important at All. The survey tool encompassed a balanced scale utilising a forced choice approach. A forced choice design option was used to ensure respondents provided a response based on the fixed alternatives (Zikmund, 2003). Refer to Appendix one for the detailed questionnaire.

4.3.5.1 Pre-Testing

The questionnaire was pre-tested with a group of five respondents based on convenience sampling techniques. Respondents were requested to provide feedback regarding the clarity and understanding of the questionnaire and questions posed. Additional feedback regarding the time taken to complete the questionnaire was also obtained. Changes were made based on the feedback received. This group of individuals were not utilised as part of the research sample again.

4.3.6 Data Gathering Process

An electronic questionnaire was sent out to respondents based on the sampling approach. Respondents were provided completion guidelines and a completion deadline of one week from the time of distribution.

Due to the confidentiality of the data required to conduct this research, the following approach was adopted:

- The researcher informed the Human Resource (HR) department of the demographics (age, race, ratings) of the sample population to be surveyed,
- The HR department constructed the information required and provided the corresponding e-mail addresses of the required individuals with a control number linked to each individual based on a randomised selection process. This control number allowed only the HR department to know the performance rating of the individuals responding to the questionnaire,

- The researcher was responsible for distributing and collating the results of the questionnaire. A consolidated master data set was sent to HR department for decoding, and;
- The HR Department decoded the spreadsheet and allocated individual ratings to each questionnaire completed. All information was then sent back to the researcher for analysis and formulation of findings, without participant names.

4.3.7 Data Analysis Approach

The data analysis involved understanding the Cronbach Alpha to determine reliability for each key factor. A KMO and Bartlett's test was also used as part of the factor analysis, to confirm data validity. A Convergent Validity test was conducted to ensure variables map to the pre-defined factors independently, as well.

A multiple ANOVA test was used to determine significance levels across the various research questions. A multiple comparisons for Friedman Test was used to determine which factors are most influential, and thus provide insights into the priority of each factor for the sample population.

4.4 Limitations of research

The following research limitations existed:

- The sample was restricted to one professional service firm and thus findings cannot be used outside of the sample population,

- The sampling techniques utilised a convenience sample and thus no inferences can be made further than the population of analysis, and;
- The sampling method utilised performance results of individuals in 2009/10, changes to these results in prior years would have changed the sample population size and potential categorisation of responses.

5 CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

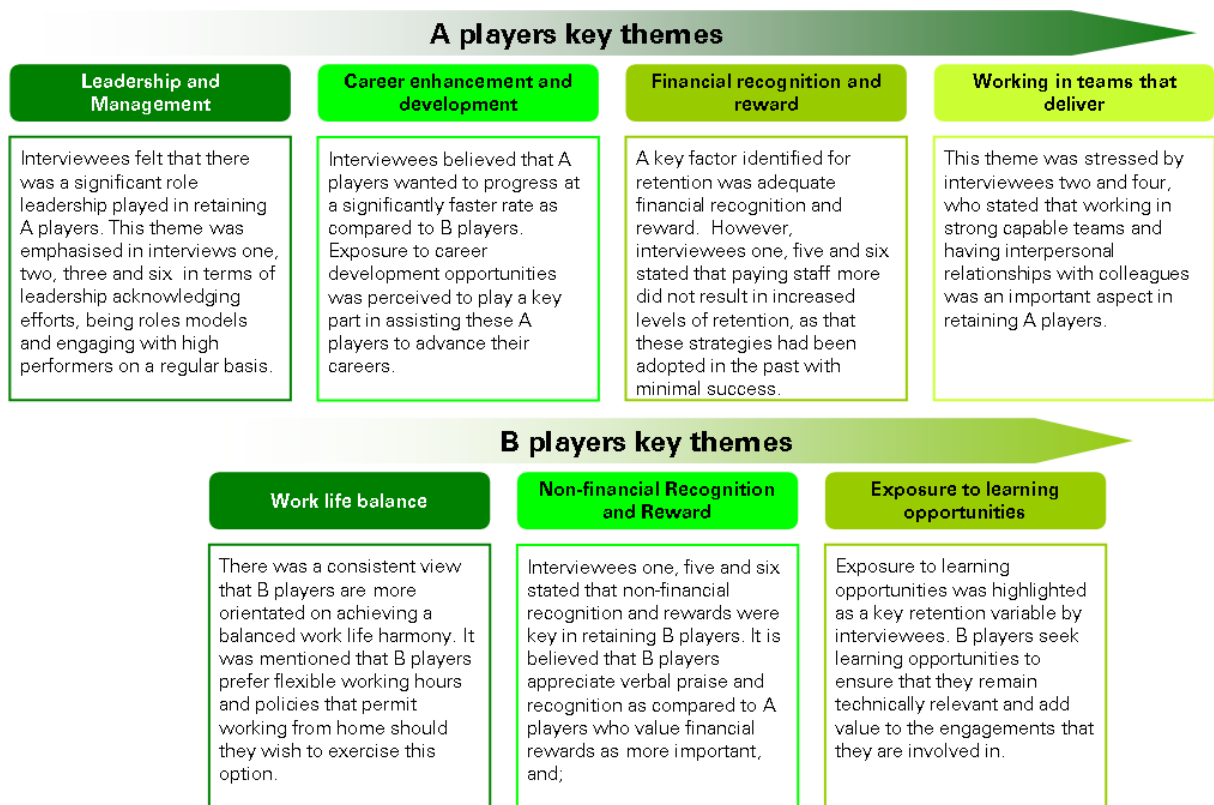
This chapter discusses the results of the research conducted. The research was conducted in two phases, Phase 1 - a qualitative phase which involved interviews and phase 2 a quantitative phase, based on a questionnaire survey.

5.2 Phase 1: Qualitative Analysis

The first phase of the research methodology consisted of six open-ended interviews with partners and associate directors responsible for the management of talent across the various business units of the firm researched.

An open ended questionnaire approach was adopted, which sought to understand what the key retention factors for B players were, as compared to A players within the firm researched. The interviews were also used to validate and align the questionnaire designed. The key themes identified across the interviews are highlighted in figure 7, below, refer to Appendix two for further detail.

Figure 7: Key Themes of A and B players (Interviews)



5.3 Phase 2: Quantitative Analysis

Phase two of the research methodology involved the electronic distribution of 636 e-mailed questionnaire surveys, of which 260 responses were received, representing a 40.88% response rate.

The overall questionnaire approach required respondents to allocate 100 points across 11 defined factors. The factors were developed based on literature researched. No restrictions were placed as to how respondents could allocate the 100 points. Secondly, respondents were required to rate 57 variables, based on a Likert scale from Extremely important to Not important at all.

It is important to note that the analysis was conducted in two phases as per the design of the questionnaire construct.

The first phase involved ranking the 11 factors to identify those factors that most influenced retention, based on the research questions proposed, the factors are highlighted in the table below.

Table 10: Selected Retention Factors

ID	Retention Factor
1	Company Brand
2	Company Culture
3	Leadership and Management
4	Training
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)
7	Independence and Freedom
8	Work Environment (Physical)
9	Work Environment (Other)
10	Work Life Balance
11	Career Development & Enhancement

Phase two involved unpacking which **variables** (from the 57 defined) were of significant importance, based on the output of Phase one. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse and interpret the data gathered. The Likert scale utilised in the questionnaire was converted to the following numeric values for analysis:

Table 11: Numeric conversion of Likert scale descriptors table

Description	Rating
Extremely Important	5
Moderately Important	4
Slightly Important	3
Indifferent (Neutral)	2
Not Important at All	1

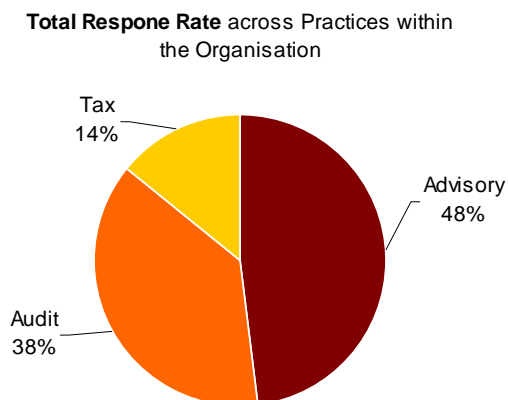
A description of the results across the various research questions are described in the sections to follow.

5.4 Demographic Analysis

5.4.1 Practice Level

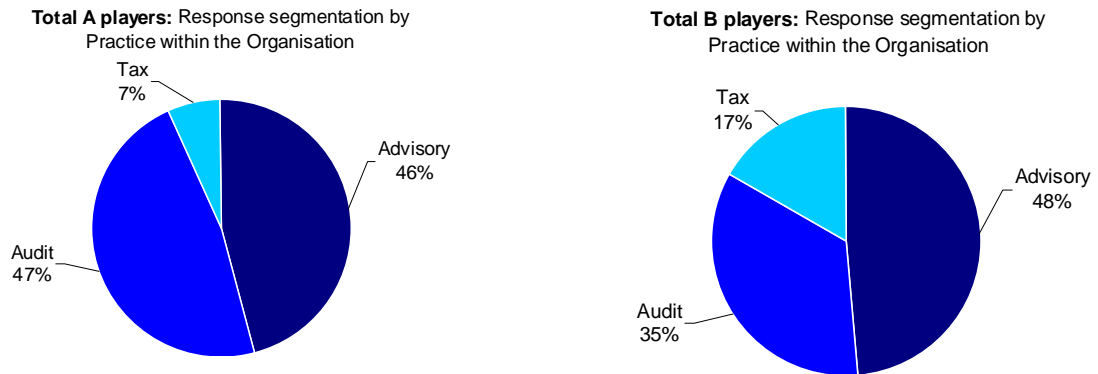
The firm analysed was structured into three distinct practices which are Audit, Tax and Advisory. A majority of the responses emanated from the Advisory (48%) and Audit (38%) practices, as compared to the Tax (17%) practice.

Figure 8: Response rates across practices



Segmentation of A and B players across the various practices reflected a similar profile of responses, highlighted in the figure below.

Figure 9: Response rates of A and B players across practices



A majority of responses from both A (46%) and B (48%) players were received from the Advisory practice.

In total, 23% of respondents were A players compared to 77% of B player respondents. The table below highlights the response rates of A and B players per practice.

Table 12: Cross tabulation of A and B player's response rates per practice

Practice	A players	B players	Total
Advisory	22.40 %	77.60 %	100 %
Audit	29.59 %	70.41 %	100 %
Tax	10.81 %	89.19 %	100 %
Total	23.46 %	76.54 %	100 %

5.4.2 X and Y Generations

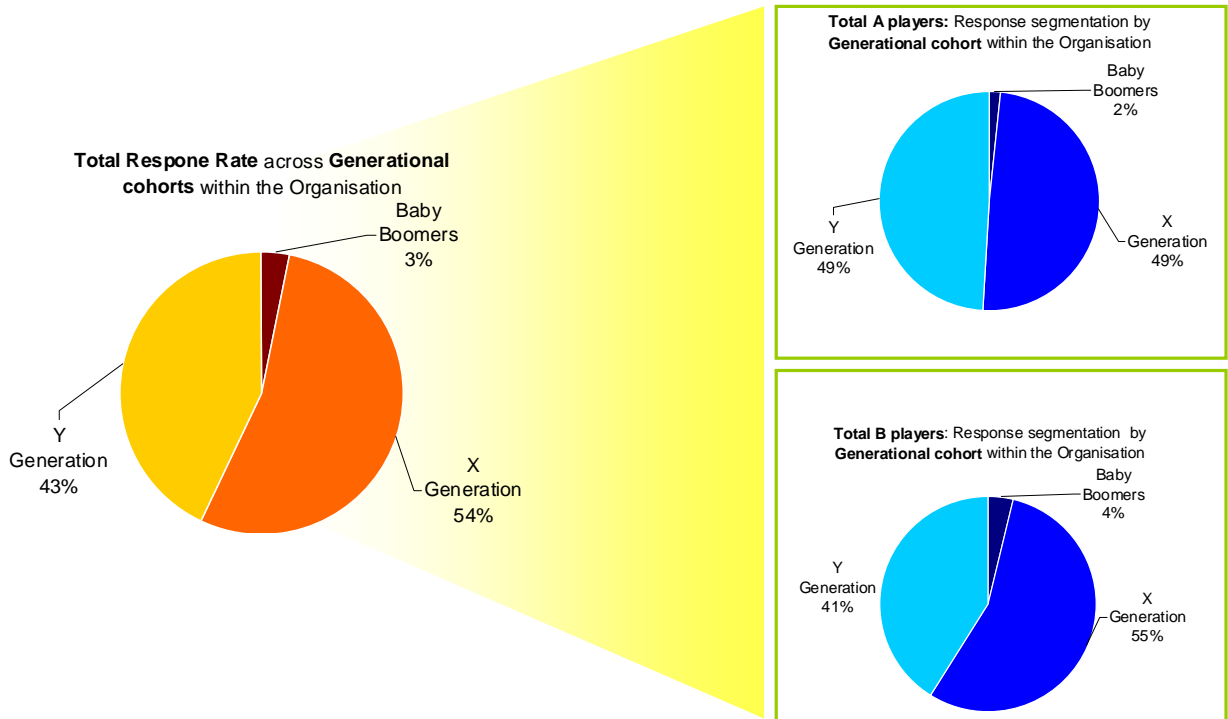
The data analysed was segmented into X and Y generational cohorts based on the following definitions:

- Y Generation defined as respondents younger than 28 years old;
- X Generation defined as respondents between the age of 29 and 49 years old, and;
- Baby Boomers have been defined as respondents older than 49 years.

Based on the responses received, 54% of respondents were categorised as Generation X employees compared to the 43% of Generation Y and 3% of Baby Boomers that responded.

An in-depth analysis of A player respondents revealed both X (49%) and Y (49%) generation employees constituted 98% of total responses, with Baby Boomers comprising 2% of the total respondents. This compared to B players which consisted of 55% X and 41% Y Generations, with Baby Boomers comprising 4% of the total respondents.

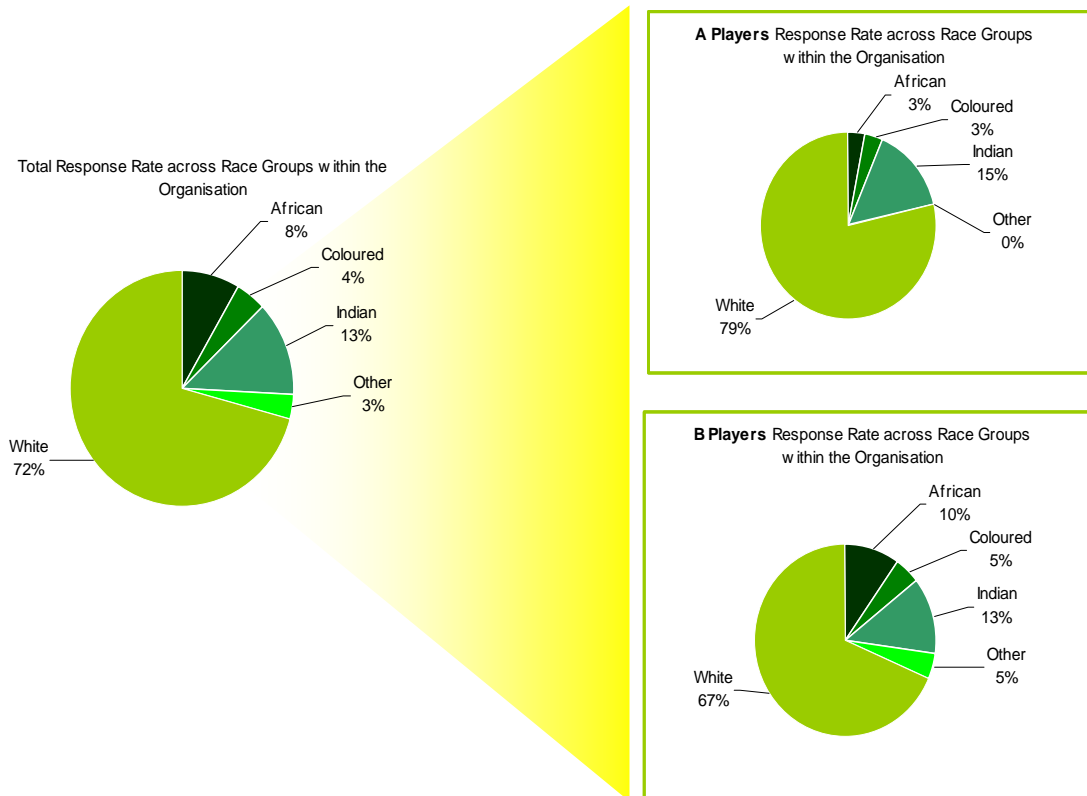
Figure 10: Response rates by Generations



5.4.3 Ethnic Groups

The questionnaire design accommodated African, Indian, Coloured, White and Other (any other nationality) ethnic groups. A majority of the responses were received from White (72%) respondents, as compared to Indian (13%), African (8%), Coloured (4%) and Other (3%) respondents. This trend was also reflected across A and B player respondents.

Figure 11: Response rates of ethnic groups



5.4.4 Retention Responses

Respondents were requested to indicate the intended length of stay from the following options:

Table 13: Length of stay options

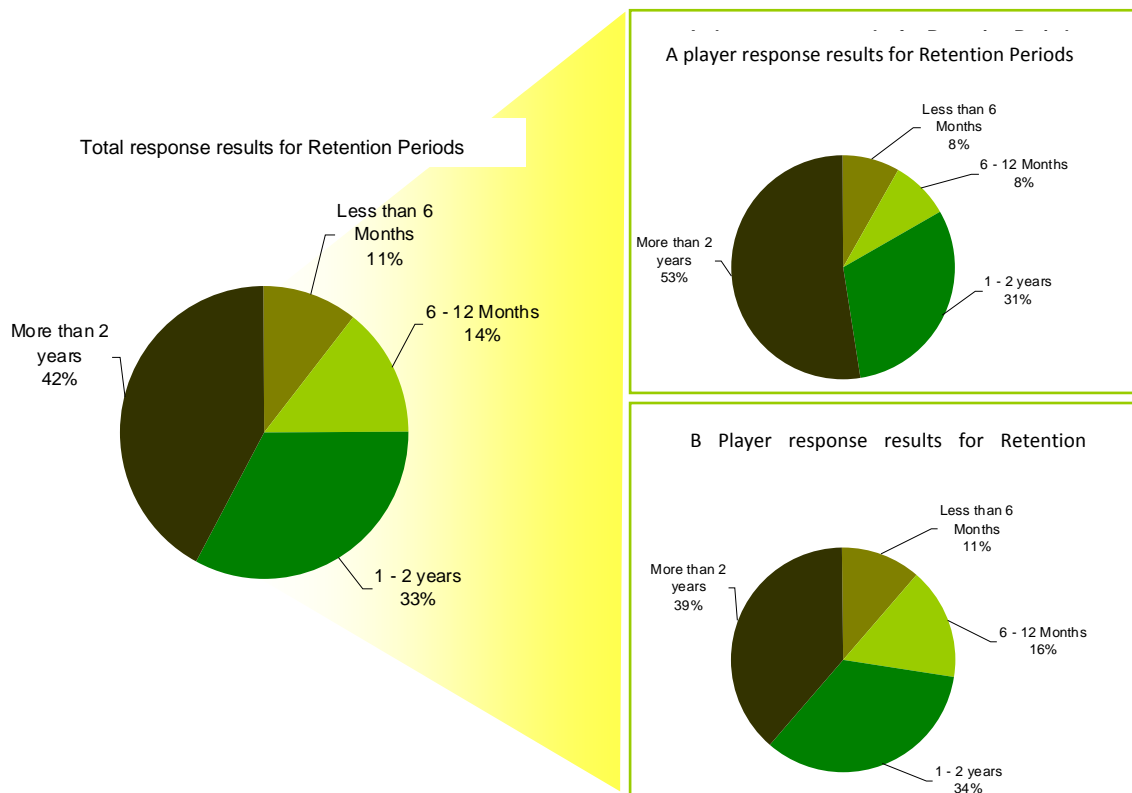
Less than 6 months	6 -12 months	1 - 2 years	More than 2 years
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The data reflected that 75% of the respondents planned to stay more than one year, which comprised of, 42% of respondents stating that they would consider staying for more than two years, and 33% between one to two years.

Overall the result reflected that 53% of A players would consider staying more than two years, while only 39% of B players would consider staying for two years or more.

Collectively 27% of B players were considering leaving within the next 12 months, as compared to only 16% of A players that shared this view.

Figure 12: Response rates of retention periods



The data reflected that A players displayed stronger intentions to stay with the firm as compared to B players.

5.5 Construct Reliability

5.5.1 Factor Reliability and Validity

In order to ensure the predefined factors were reliable and valid, a factor analysis was conducted. A Cronbach Alpha analysis, as conducted to assess factor reliability, which measured the internal consistency, which is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. Furthermore, the data set was tested for validity by using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The table below defines the outcomes of the tested conducted.

The results showed Company Culture (Cronbach Alpha = 0.409) and Work Life Balance (Cronbach Alpha = 0.365) have been identified as factors with poor internal consistency and cannot be relied upon for the inference of analysis and findings. The reason for the low level of consistency can be explained by the low number of questions that link to these variables.

Table 14: Data Validity and Reliability Results

ID	Factor	Cronbach Alpha	KMO	Bartlett's Chi-Squared (df)	Significance
1	Company Brand	0.7568	0.696	200.978 (3)	p-value <0.001
2	Company Culture	0.4090	0.577	51.807 (3)	p-value <0.001
3	Leadership and Management	0.8377	0.747	1071.329 (45)	p-value <0.001
4	Training	0.6115	0.572	108.485 (3)	p-value <0.001
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	0.6123	0.605	314.552 (21)	p-value <0.001

ID	Factor	Cronbach Alpha	KMO	Bartlett's Chi-Squared (df)	Significance
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	0.6554	0.596	368.273 (10)	p-value <0.001
7	Independence and Freedom	0.5927	0.645	140.304 (6)	p-value <0.001
8	Work Environment (Physical)	0.6398	0.689	150.055 (6)	p-value <0.001
9	Work Life Balance	0.3650	0.590	192.811 (6)	p-value <0.001
10	Work Environment (Other)	0.6455	0.500	13.014 (1)	p-value <0.001
11	Career Development & Enhancement	0.8231	0.832	982.984 (66)	p-value <0.001

5.5.2 Factor Loading

A Convergent Validity approach was adopted as part of the factor analysis conducted. This approach tested if variables mapped to each factor independently. The factor loading results reflected that only two statements (variable question 20 and 23) embedded within factor five (Financial Reward and Recognition) had factor loading levels of less than 0.35. Variables 20 and 23 were still retained as they were close to the cut off point and loaded higher to five factor than any of other factors. The Eigen Values derived from the factor analysis were all greater than one, suggesting that all 11 factors were valid. The table below reflected the results of the factor analysis.

Table 15: Factor Analysis results

ID	Factor	No. of Original Statements	No. of Significant Factor Loadings	Eigen-values
1	Company Brand	3	3	2.053
2	Company Culture	3	3	1.516
3	Leadership and Management	10	10	4.247
4	Training	3	3	1.711
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	7	5	2.217
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	5	5	2.261
7	Independence and Freedom	4	4	1.924
8	Work Environment (Physical)	4	4	1.988
9	Work Environment (Other)	4	4	1.997
10	Work Life Balance	2	2	1.223
11	Career Development & Enhancement	12	12	4.353

5.6 Research Question 1: What are the key retention variables for B players?

This section explored what the key retention variables for B players were. A total of 199 responses (representing 73% of the total response sample) were received from B players. A majority of responses were received from the Advisory (48.7%) followed by Audit (34.7%) and then the Tax practice (16.6%).

Table 16: Response rate per practice

Practice	B players	Percentage Split	Accumulated Percentage
Advisory	97	48.7%	48.7%
Audit	69	34.7%	83.4%
Tax	33	16.6%	100.0%
Total	199	100%	

Factors Influencing Retention

A multiple comparisons for Friedman Test reflected that Recognition & Reward (Financial) and Independence & Freedom were significant factors that influenced retention. Leadership & Management reflected as a secondary factor. These three variables accounted for 38.31% of the accumulated score allocation.

The lowest ranked factors identified included:

- Company Brand (mean score = 7.05),
- Work Life Balance (mean score = 6.59), and;
- Environment Other (mean score = 5.59).

These three variables accounted for only 19.23% of the accumulated score allocation.

Table 17: Ranked Retention Factors for B players by practice

Mean Scores of B players by Practice					
Rank	Retention Factor	Overall	Advisory	Audit	Tax
1	Company Brand	7.05	7.58	7.07	5.89
2	Company Culture	7.70	7.79	7.54	7.73
3	Leadership and Management	9.81	9.36	9.62	11.55
4	Training	8.30	8.27	8.45	7.82
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	17.54	18.53	16.00	17.64
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	9.03	8.42	10.10	8.55
7	Independence and Freedom	10.96	10.13	11.72	11.18
8	Work Environment (Physical)	8.95	9.25	8.87	8.88
9	Work Environment (Other)	5.59	5.26	6.07	5.70
10	Work Life Balance	6.59	6.30	6.65	7.39
11	Career Development & Enhancement	8.56	9.11	8.03	7.85

Each of the top three factors had a Cronbach Alpha score greater than 0.5, which indicated that the statements contained within each factor are closely related and are reliable.

Significant Differences between Practices

An analysis of differences, using ANOVA (Ducans) analysis, between B player's requirements revealed no statistically significant differences between the various practices of the firm researched. All 11 factors reflected a significant level greater than 5%, thus confirming that B players within the Advisory, Audit and Tax practices overall did not differ significantly in their views regarding the importance of each retention factor.

As there were no statistical differences across practices, the overall B player mean score, which was an aggregation of the individual practices mean score, was utilised as a basis for further comparative analysis.

Variables Influencing Retention

The table below provides an in-depth view of which variables drive the retention of B players.

Table 18: Top ranked retention factors and variables for B players overall

Factor Rank	Factor Mapping	Variable Statements	Variable Mean
1	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	Receiving a performance bonus based on my own performance	4.74
		Receiving a market related package i.e. industry norm	4.64
		Receiving a package that exceeds market related pay i.e. being paid in the top 25 th percentile for my role and ability	4.27
		Having retirement fund benefits	4.21
		Having medical aid benefits	4.12

Factor Rank	Factor Mapping	Variable Statements	Variable Mean
		Financial support for further studies/ sabbaticals	3.72
		How important would it be to you to have the ability to reduce your basic salary if the upside of your bonus is significantly higher than what you would currently expect	2.66
2	Independence and Freedom	Freedom to work independently	4.62
		Ability to make my own decisions e.g. individually selecting training courses to attend, rating individuals in my team, generating my own solutions first etc	4.36
		Option to work from home	4.17
		Ability to enhance my skills by moving around the organisation	4.15
3	Leadership and Management	Leaders that deliver on promises	4.89
		Managers that deliver on promises	4.80
		Leaders that are knowledgeable	4.77
		Managers that are knowledgeable	4.72
		Leaders that are inspirational	4.66
		Having a good relationship with the managers within the business	4.62
		Leaders that are caring and understanding	4.59
		Having a good relationship with the leaders of the business	4.58
		Managers that are caring and understanding	4.55
		Managers that are inspirational	4.53

The following points highlight the top factors identified:

- **Reward & Recognition (Financial)** – the data reflected that question 22 (Receiving a performance bonus based on my own performance) and question 20 (Receiving a market related package i.e. industry norm) were regarded as factors that significantly influenced what respondents wanted in terms of focus when ranking reward & recognition (Financial),

- It must be noted that though respondents rated question 21 (Receiving a package that exceeds market related pay i.e. being paid in the top 25 percentile for my role and ability) with a mean = 4.27, as moderately important, the comparative analysis to question 20 thus suggested that B players viewed being paid the industry norm (4.64) as more important compared to being paid in the top percentiles of their roles. Note this is not a significant difference,
- B players rated question 26 (How important would it be to you to have the ability to reduce your basic salary if the upside of your bonus is significantly higher than what you would currently expect?) as slightly important to indifferent (neutral), with a mean score of 2.66. This reflected the limited desire of B players to place their salaries at risk,
- **Independence and Freedom** – B players rated question 32 (Freedom to work independently) and question 34 (Ability to make my own decisions e.g. individually selecting training courses to attend, rating individuals in my team, generating my own solutions first etc) as moderately to extremely important higher, as compared to questions 33 (Option to work from home) and 35 (Ability to enhance my skills by moving around the organisation), which suggested focus should be placed on creating autonomy for B players within their current environments, and;
- **Leadership and Management** – all variables (question seven to 16) within the Leadership and Management factor were rated moderately to extremely important. This reflected that respondents viewed leadership and management activities on all perspectives as important to their retention, for this specific factor. Key variables ranked as extremely important were:

- Leaders that deliver on promises,
- Managers that deliver on promises,
- Leaders that are knowledgeable, and;
- Managers that are knowledgeable,

All the factors above scored means score of 4.70 or greater.

5.7 Research Question 2: What are the retention variable differences of B players across X and Y generations

A total of 109 X Generation and 82 Y Generation B player responses were recorded. *It must be noted that three cases were removed from the X generation sample due to missing data. Due to the limited sample size (4%) of Baby Boomer respondents, the group was excluded from the data analysed.

Table 19: Response rate per Ethnic group

Race	B players	Percentage Split	Accumulated Percentage
Baby Boomers	8	4%	4%
X Generation	*109	55%	54%
Y Generation	82	41%	100%
Total	199	100%	

Factors Influencing Retention

A multiple ANOVA test was conducted (refer to Appendix four for detail) to determine if there were any differences between X and Y generation B players. The results reflected that there were no significant differences.

In order to determine which factors influenced the retention of X and Y generation B players, a Multiple Comparisons for Friedman test were conducted. This test assessed each factor to determine if there were any significant differences across all other factors.

A ranking of the various factors in order of importance, based on the Friedman test, between the two generational cohorts revealed that both X and Y generation B players ranked **Recognition & Reward (Financial)** and **Independence and Freedom** as the most important retention factors. Generation X ranks **Leadership and Management** as the third most important factor compared to **Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)**, as ranked by Generation Y, B players. The table below describes the differences between X and Y, B players.

Table 20: Mean scores ranked of X and Y Generation (B players)

X Generation		Y Generation	
Retention Factor	X Gen - Mean	Retention Factor	Y Gen - Mean
Recognition and Reward (Financial)	17.70	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	17.32
Independence and Freedom	11.46	Independence and Freedom	10.30
Leadership and Management	10.39	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	10.01
Work Environment (Physical)	9.25	Career Development & Enhancement	9.16
Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	8.29	Leadership and Management	9.03
Career Development & Enhancement	8.10	Training	8.71
Company Culture	8.04	Work Environment (Physical)	8.55
Training	7.98	Company Brand	7.30
Company Brand	6.87	Company Culture	7.26
Work Life Balance	6.61	Work Life Balance	6.55
Work Environment (Other)	5.44	Work Environment (Other)	5.79

Variable analysis of key factors

The analysis reflected no significant differences in the rankings of retention variables between X and Y generation B players and was directly comparable to the profile B players overall.

5.8 Research Question 3: What are the retention variable differences of B players across ethnic groups (African and White)

A total of 199 responses were received across all ethnic groups relating to B players. In order to conduct a meaningful analysis and due to the small response sample size of African, Coloured and Indian ethnic groups, the groups were incorporated into a single ethnic group labelled African. This definition conforms to the definition defined within the Black Economic Empowerment Act. The ethnic groups labelled Other were excluded from the analysis due to the small response rate and lack of alignment into the definition of African. The White ethnic group remained unchanged and represented 68.3% of responses, as compared to the new African ethnic group (African, Coloured and Indian) which represented 27.2% of all responses. The table below defines the response rates per ethnic group.

Table 21: Response rate per Ethnic group

Race	B players	Percentage Split	Accumulated Percentage
White	136	68.3%	68.3%
Indian	25	12.6%	80.9%
African	20	10.1%	91.0%
Coloured	9	4.5%	95.5%
Other	9	4.5%	100%
Total	199	100%	

Factors Influencing Retention

A multiple ANOVA test was conducted (refer to Appendix four for detail) to determine if there were any differences between African and White generation B players. The results reflected that there were no significant differences.

In order to determine which factors most influenced the retention for African and White B players a Multiple Comparisons for Friedman tests was conducted. This test assessed each factor against one another to determine if there were any significant differences across all factors.

An analysis of the various factors in order of importance, based on the mean scores, between African and White B players, ranked **Recognition & Reward (Financial), Independence & Freedom and Leadership and Management** as the three most important retention factors, across both African and White B players.

The table below ranks the mean scores across the various retention factors between African and White B players.

Table 22: Mean scores ranked of African and White B players

African B Players		White B Players	
Retention Factor	Mean Score	Retention Factor	Mean Score
Recognition and Reward	17.58	Recognition and Reward	17.52

African B Players		White B Players	
Retention Factor	Mean Score	Retention Factor	Mean Score
(Financial)		(Financial)	
Independence and Freedom	9.83	Independence and Freedom	11.52
Leadership and Management	9.61	Leadership and Management	9.91
Career Development & Enhancement	9.42	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	9.74
Training	9.12	Work Environment (Physical)	9.04
Company Culture	8.95	Career Development & Enhancement	8.13
Work Environment (Physical)	8.76	Training	7.89
Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	7.58	Company Culture	7.09
Company Brand	7.33	Company Brand	6.92
Work Life Balance	6.34	Work Life Balance	6.71
Work Environment (Other)	5.57	Work Environment (Other)	5.60

Variables Influencing Retention

An analysis of African and White B players reflected no significant differences in retention variables between ethnic groups and was directly comparable to the profile of B players overall.

It must be noted that African B players ranked question 20 (Receiving a performance bonus based on my own performance) and question 21 (Receiving a market related package i.e. industry norm) marginally higher than White B players, though there is no significant difference.

5.9 Summary analysis of B players

The responses analysed reflected that all B players overall, across X & Y generations as well as African and White ethnic groups had no significant statistical differences and are consistent in their rankings of all retention factors and variables, as shown in the table below.

Table 23: Comparative analysis of the statistically significant retention factors across B players overall, X & Y Generations and African & White Ethnic Groups

B players Overall	Generational Comparatives		Racial Comparatives	
	X Generation	Y Generation	African	White
Recognition and Reward (Financial)	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	Recognition and Reward (Financial)
Independence and Freedom	Independence and Freedom	Independence and Freedom	Independence and Freedom	Independence and Freedom
Leadership and Management	Leadership and Management	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	Leadership and Management	Leadership and Management

In summary, Recognition and Reward (Financial), Independence and Freedom and Leadership and Management (except for Y Generation B players) are clearly the retention factors that significantly influence the retention of B players.

5.10 Research Question 4: What are the key retention factor differences across A and B players?

5.10.1 Overall analysis of A and B players

By ranking the factors rated by A and B players it is evident that Financial Recognition and Reward, Independence and Freedom as well as Leadership and Management have been rated high with mean scores of more than nine. This analysis is confirmed by the Multiple Comparisons for Friedman tests.

Key Factor differences between A and B players

A players ranked the importance of a good physical work environment and the need for Career Development & Enhancement, higher compared to the mean score of B players, though these factors are not significantly different.

While, B players ranked the need for non-financial reward & recognition higher, as compared to A players. The table below ranks all retention factors based on mean scores for both A and B players.

Table 24: Retention factors for A and B players

Number	Retention Factor	A players Mean	B players Mean
1	Company Brand	7.01	7.05
2	Company Culture	7.14	7.70
3	Leadership and Management	⁴ 9.73	³ 9.81

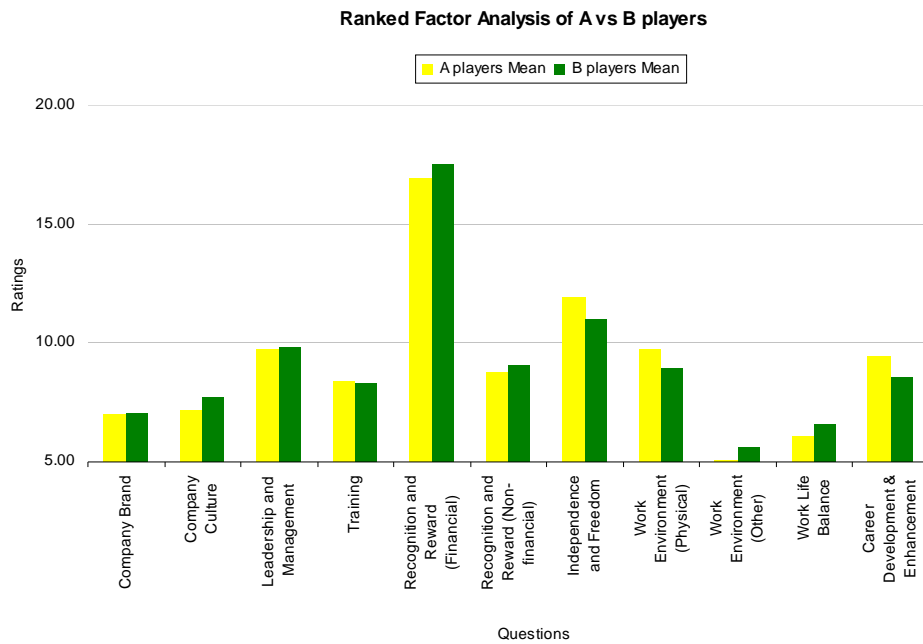
Number	Retention Factor	A players Mean	B players Mean
4	Training	8.38	8.30
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	¹ 16.94	¹ 17.54
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	8.78	⁴ 9.03
7	Independence and Freedom	² 11.91	² 10.96
8	Work Environment (Physical)	³ 9.75	⁵ 8.95
9	Work Environment (Other)	5.04	5.59
10	Work Life Balance	6.06	6.59
11	Career Development & Enhancement	⁵ 9.43	8.56

*Superscripts indicate the rank of the factor within the various categories.

A multiple ANOVA test was conducted (refer to Appendix four for detail) to determine if there were any differences between A and B players. The results reflected that there were no significant differences. However, though no significant differences were identified, it must be noted that:

- B players ranked Recognition and Reward (Financial) higher compared to A players,
- Career Development & Enhancement was ranked as more important by A players as when compared to B player ratings, and;
- Company Brand, Work life balance and Work Environment (Other) were ranked as the factors with the lowest mean scores across A and B players.

Figure 13: Mean scores of A and B players



Factors with Statistical Differences

Based on the ANOVA analysis conducted no significant differences between factors were identified.

5.10.2 Generational Differences

A comparative analysis of A and B players across generations X and Y revealed a large degree of consistency and limited areas of significant differences.

Recognition and Reward (Financial) and Independence & Freedom were consistently the highest ranked factors for both A and B players across the generational divide.

Leadership & Management and Work Environment (Physical) remained as the secondary factors that played a key influencing role amongst X *generation A and B players*, whilst Recognition and Reward (Non-financial) and Career Development & Enhancement remained the other key retention drivers *for Y Generation A and B players*.

The table below highlighted the ranking of each retention factor across X and Y generation A and B players.

Table 25: Mean scored of A and B players for X & Y generations

Number	Label	A Players		B Players	
		X Gen Mean	Y Gen Mean	X Gen Mean	Y Gen Mean
1	Company Brand	6.12	7.90	6.87	7.30
2	Company Culture	7.55	6.73	8.04	7.26

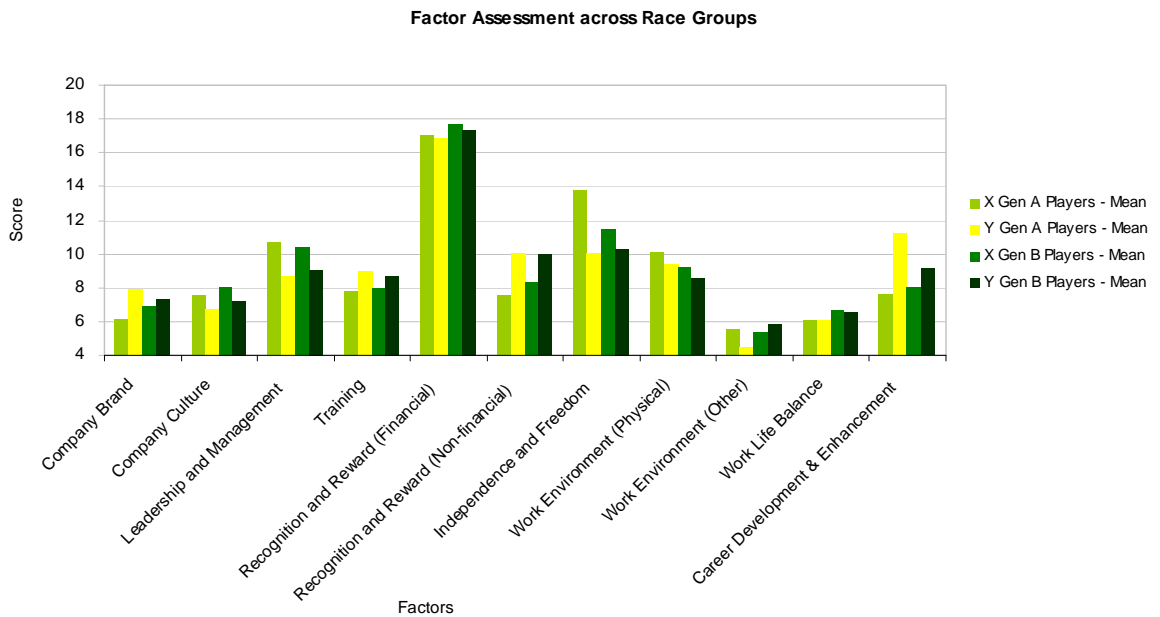
Number	Label	A Players		B Players	
		X Gen Mean	Y Gen Mean	X Gen Mean	Y Gen Mean
3	Leadership and Management	³ 10.72	8.73	³ 10.39	⁵ 9.03
4	Training	⁵ 7.83	8.93	7.98	8.71
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	¹ 17.03	¹ 16.85	¹ 17.70	¹ 17.32
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	7.55	⁴ 10.02	⁵ 8.29	³ 10.01
7	Independence and Freedom	² 13.78	³ 10.03	² 11.46	² 10.30
8	Work Environment (Physical)	⁴ 10.13	⁵ 9.37	⁴ 9.25	8.55
9	Work Environment (Other)	5.58	4.50	5.44	5.79
10	Work Life Balance	6.05	6.07	6.61	6.55
11	Career Development & Enhancement	7.65	² 11.20	8.10	⁴ 9.16

*Superscripts indicate the rank of the factor within the various categories

Though significant differences across factors were not identified, it must be noted that:

- Y generation B players rated Recognition and Reward (Non-financial) Career Development & Enhancement consistently higher as compared to X generation A players,
- X generation A players scored Recognition & Reward (Financial) and Independence & Freedom consistently higher as compared to the Y generation B players, and;
- Across A and B players Company Brand, Work Environment (Other) and Work life balance scored as the lowest ranked factors.

Figure 14: Mean scores of A and B players across X & Y Generations



Factors with Statistical Differences

Significant differences were identified based on ANOVA analysis across multiple variables within the X and Y generations. However all the differences were identified at a group level (generations) and not between A and B players with the group, and thus were not considered as pertinent to this study and therefore have not been commented on.

5.10.3 Ethnic differences

A Multiple Comparisons for Friedman Test was conducted to determine which factors most influence retention of A and B players within African and White ethnic groups (refer to Appendix X for detailed results). Recognition and Reward (Financial) and Independence and Freedom were identified as factors that are significantly different with a significance level of less than 5%.

The analysis reflected both African A and B players ranked Career Development & Enhancements higher than their White counterparts.

A and B White respondents ranked Leadership and Management, Recognition and Reward (Non-financial) and Work Environment (Physical) as the other key factors that influenced retention in their minds.

Table 26: Mean scored of A and B players for African and White Ethnic groups

Number	Label	A Players		B Players	
		African Mean	White Mean	African Mean	White Mean
1	Company Brand	7.00	7.01	7.33	6.92
2	Company Culture	7.54	7.03	8.95	7.09
3	Leadership and Management	⁴ 9.46	⁴ 9.80	³ 9.61	³ 9.91
4	Training	³ 9.62	8.04	⁵ 9.12	7.89
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	¹ 19.23	¹ 16.31	¹ 17.58	¹ 17.52
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	7.85	⁵ 9.04	7.58	⁴ 9.74

Number	Label	A Players		B Players	
		African Mean	White Mean	African Mean	White Mean
7	Independence and Freedom	⁵ 9.46	² 12.59	² 9.83	² 11.52
8	Work Environment (Physical)	8.38	³ 10.13	8.76	⁵ 9.04
9	Work Environment (Other)	5.08	5.03	5.57	5.60
10	Work Life Balance	5.92	6.10	6.34	6.71
11	Career Development & Enhancement	² 11.23	8.93	⁴ 9.42	8.13

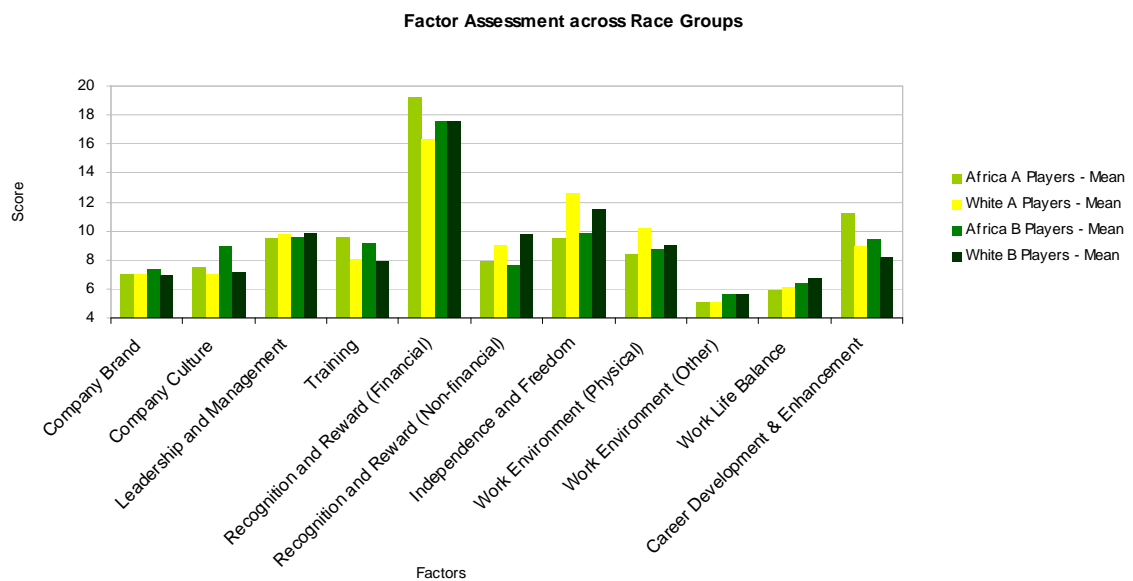
*Superscripts indicate the rank of the factor within the various categories

Though significant differences across factors were not identified, it must be noted that:

- African A players ranked Recognition and Reward (Financial) the highest (mean = 19.23) from any factor across ethnic groups and generations,
- A and B players across African and White ethnic groups ranked Recognition and Reward (Financial) as the single most significant factor,
- African A and B players ranked Career Development & Enhancement higher than their white counterparts,
- African A and B players ranked Career Development & Enhancement higher than their white counterparts,
- Work Environment (Physical) reflected as more important to White A and B players as compared to their African counterparts,

- Company Brand, Work life Balance and Work Environment (Other) are consistently ranked lowest across A and B players in African and White ethnic groups.

Figure 15: Mean Score of factors across Race groups



Factors with Statistical Differences

Based on the ANOVA analysis conducted differences were identified at a group level (African or White) and not between A and B players within the group, and thus were not considered as pertinent to this study and therefore have not been commented on.

5.11 Conclusion

The research objective of this study aimed to answer four distinct questions.

The answers to these questions have been summarised in the table below:

Table 27: Summary of results per research question

Research Question	Response
1. What are the key retention variables for B players?	<p>At a consolidated level the following three variables influence retention of B players:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward & Recognition (Financial) • Independence and Freedom • Leadership and Management
2. What are the differences between the retention factors of B players within the X and Y generational cohort?	<p>There are no significant differences between X and Y generation B players. These individuals reflected the same ranking profile as B players overall (as stated above).</p>
3. What are the differences in retention factors of B players within the major ethnic groups of South Africa?	<p>There are no significant differences between African and White generation B players. These individuals reflected the same ranking profile as B players overall (as stated above).</p>
4. What are the differences in retention factors between the A and B players?	<p>A and B players jointly ranked Reward & Recognition (Financial) and Independence & Freedom as the most significant variables influencing retention. This was consistently ranked across both A and B players.</p> <p>Secondary variables that influenced A players included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Development & Enhancement, • Work Environment (Physical), • Leadership and Management, and;

Research Question	Response
	<p>Secondary variables that influenced B players included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management, • Career Development & Enhancement, and; Work Environment (Physical

The **lowest ranked factors** across A and B players in X & Y generations as well as African and White ethnic groups were:

- Company Brand,
- Work Life Balance, and;
- Work Environment (Other).

Overall the analysis of all responses across the 11 retention factors revealed a **golden thread** across A and B players. The two factors that statistically most influence retention at a macro level are **Recognition and Reward (Financial)** and **Independence & Freedom**.

6 CHAPTER 6: INTERPRETTION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an understanding as to how the research problem, literature review and research objectives are linked. The literature review highlighted the need for organisations to understand the different retention requirements of the various performance levels of employees (DeLong & Vijayaghavan, 2003; Sutherland & Jordaan, 2004; and Kerr-Phillips & Thomas, 2009).

A significant amount of research has been focused on highly talented employees and is reflected in research conducted by Nyembe (2009), Koetser (2008), Morgan (2008) and Smith (2005). However the amount of academic research conducted on B players, remains limited (DeLong & Vijayaghavan, 2003; and Iles *et al.*, 2010).

It has been stated that the long term performance of an organisation is dependent far more on the commitment and contributions of B players (DeLong and Vijayaghavan, 2003). Thus understanding of the retention needs relating to this group of performers becomes imperative for an organisation's long term success.

6.2 Interpretation of Retention Perceptions

The intention to leave is seen by many academics and research institutions (Corporate Leadership Council, 1999; Maertz & Campion, 2001) as a good predictor of employee turnover, though the link has weakened over time (Cappelli, 2000; Milkovich & Boudreau, 1997).

The results from the questionnaire reflected that 27% of B players considered leaving within the next 12 months, as compared to only 16% of A players. These results are contradictory to research conducted by DeLong & Vijayaghavan (2003), Trevor *et al.* (1997) and Williams & Livingstone (1994). which suggested that the attrition A players and C players are significantly higher when compared to B players. This deviation can be explained through the efforts of the firm researched.

These results are indicative of the findings of this study. Organisations spend a significant time and effort focusing on efforts to retain A players (Morgan, 2008; Smith, 2005; and Handfield-Jones & Beth, 2001), while overlooking the needs of their B players (DeLong & Vijayaghavan, 2003). This result speaks to the direct intention of this research study, which aimed to increase the retention levels of B players.

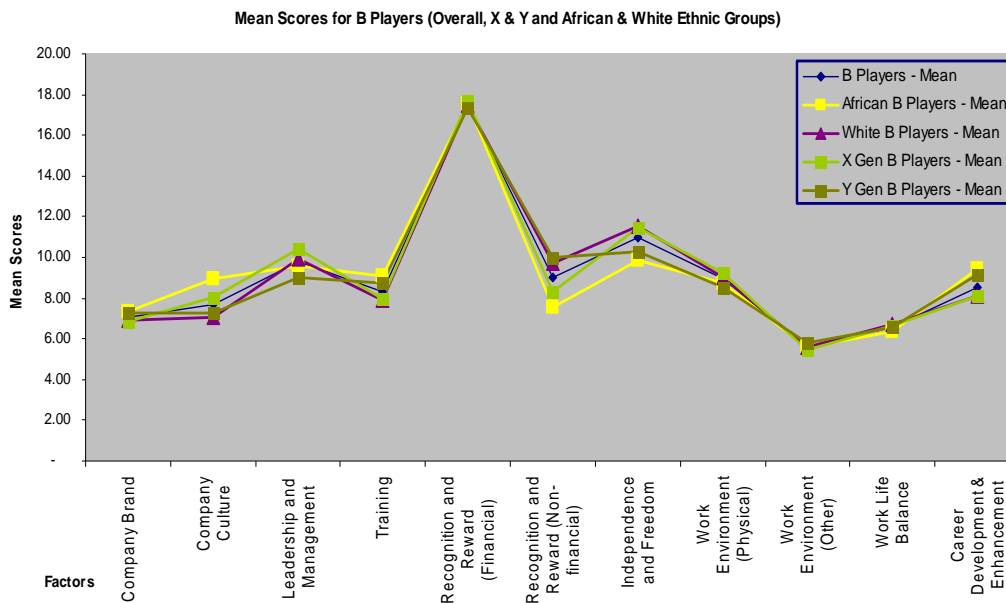
6.3 Research Question 1 – 3: Findings

The analysis described in Chapter 5 reflected clear and consistent results across research questions one to three. The objective of research questions

one to three aimed to understand if there were any differences in the retention factors that influenced B players overall and across practices (question 1), between X & Y generations (question 2) and between the African and White ethnic groups (question 3).

To determine if any differences existed, multiple ANOVA (MANOVA) tests were conducted across the three research questions. The results of these tests reflected no significant differences, as per the figure below.

Figure 16: Means Scores for B players



Thus the layout of this section consolidated the findings of research questions one to three.

6.3.1 Understanding the most significant factors influencing retention of B players

The findings reflected that B players across Practices, X & Y generations and African and White ethnic groups viewed the following retention factors as most significant:

Table 28: Most significant retention factors for B players

Rank	Factor
1	Reward and Recognition (Financial)
2	Independence and Freedom
3	Leadership and Management

A comparative assessment of research conducted by Sutherland & Jordaan (2004) on factors affecting retention of knowledge workers, reflected some level of consistency with the present study, the results of which are reflected in the table below.

Table 29: Comparable study of ranked retention factors

Rank	Sutherland & Jordaan (2004)	Present Study
1	Independence	Recognition and Reward (Financial)
2	Career development support by organisation	Independence and Freedom
3	Egocentricity and challenge within the organisation	Leadership and Management

Rank	Sutherland & Jordaan (2004)	Present Study
4	Organisational setting	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)
5	Performance related rewards	Work Environment (Physical)
6	Desire for a career change	Career Development & Enhancement
7	Personal comfort	Training
8		Company Culture
9		Company Brand
10		Work Life Balance
11		Work Environment (Other)

Furthermore, research conducted by Horwitz *et al.* (2003) reflected that the following strategies had the most significant impact on employee retention:

- Challenging work,
- Highly competitive pay packages,
- Having Performance incentives/ bonuses,
- Opportunity to develop into a specialist field, and;
- Top management support.

These findings were aligned to the results of this study.

6.3.2 Understanding the least significant factors influencing retention of B players

The results of lowest ranked factors were also consistent across the three research questions posed. The lowest ranked factors are defined in the table below

Table 30: Least significant retention factors for B players

Rank	Factor
11	Work Environment (Other
10	Work life Balance
9	Company Brand

An analysis of the qualitative interviews conducted suggested that B players would be largely influenced by factors such as work life balance, non-financial recognition & reward and exposure to learning opportunities, this view is also supported by DeLong and Vijayaghavan (2003).

The results of the research conducted reflected that work life balance was ranked amongst the three least influential factors for B players across all three research questions consistently. This did not mean that work life balance was not important to B players, the finding merely highlighted that work life balance was not as important to B players when compared to the remaining factors. This perspective was supported by the fact that the mean score for B players across all variables equated to 4.29, which suggested that all variables were considered between moderately to extremely

important. An alternate explanation may have resided in the impact that the global recession has had on local economic conditions. Respondents may have felt that financial reward and recognition and other hygiene factors were more important when compared to work life balance, resulting in the low score for this factor.

The literature review highlighted that key factors that attract talent and influenced retention were company brand and culture (Ready *et al.*, 2008). However the results of the research reflected that A and B players ranked these factors amongst the lowest in the research study conducted. This contradiction would require further research to determine if the premise of the argument proposed by Ready *et al.* (2008) holds true for multinational corporations based in African emerging markets or for well established globally leading professional service firms based in emerging markets.

6.4 Research Question 4: Differences between A and B players

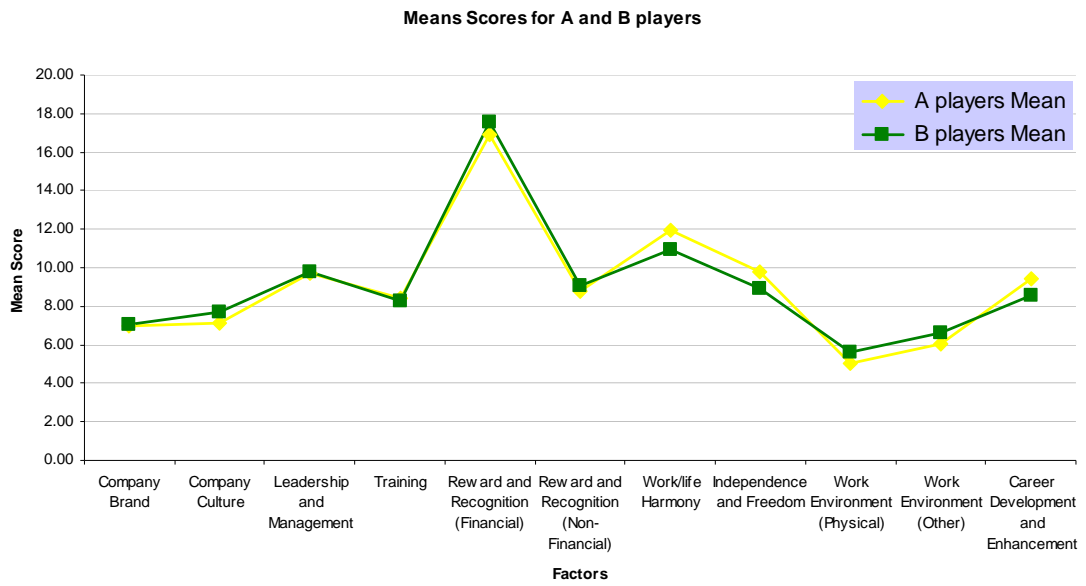
A multiple ANOVA test was conducted to determine the differences between A and B players.

DeLong and Vijayaghavan (2003) suggested B players were different from A players specifically relating to their views on career progression, work life balance and leadership desires, this is further supported by the qualitative interviews conducted. The interviews highlighted that B players would be

influenced by factors such as work life balance, non-financial reward & recognition and exposure to learning opportunities. However, these factors were not identified as having a significant influence across A and B players. A potential explanation for this deviation can be explained from the point of view of the respondents, who may have felt that they already had a good work life balance, received fair non-financial recognition and reward through the organisations programmes and have adequate training plans and exposure to learning opportunities. The maturity of an organisational HR practices, incentive programmes and policies could have a direct impact as to what respondents have rated these factors differently. Furthermore, the difference between the literature and the results may be specific to professional service firms.

The findings of this research study reflected that there were no significant differences between A and B players across all factors, as reflected in the figure below.

Figure 17: Means Scores for A and B players



6.5 Retention Framework for B players

A key outcome of this research study was to develop a retention framework to allow professional service firms to manage the retention of B players. The literature review conducted revealed a host of retention strategies and factors proposed by Bhatnager (2007), Sithole (2006), Sutherland & Jordaan (2004) and Horwitz *et al.*, (2003).

The findings of this study clearly identify **Recognition & Reward (Financial), Independence & Freedom and Leadership & Management** as most significant factors that influence retention. The key variables linked to these factors were then used to develop a retention framework, highlighted in the table below:

Table 31: Single dimension retention framework for B players

Retention Factor Focus	Key Strategies
Recognition and Reward (Financial)	Pay performance bonuses based on performance
	Pay market related packages
	Incorporate retirement fund and medical aid benefits into employee packages
Independence and Freedom	Create environments for employees to work independently
	Create an environment to allow employees to make independent decisions
	Create work policies that facilitate options to work from home
	Create efficient policies to all for employee mobility across practices and business units
Leadership and Management	Create an environment that measures and monitors if leaders and managers deliver of promises

Retention Factor Focus	Key Strategies
	Provide a framework that ensures leaders and managers are knowledgeable in their field of expertise and business management
	Provide coaching to leaders and managers to grow and develop their leadership capabilities in the areas of inspiration, relationship management with staff and being caring and understanding

By focusing on these three factors organisations can potentially improve the retention of their B players.

The above strategy reflected an accurate representation of the retention factors by which B players are influenced. However, this view could be considered as static or as a view based at a single point in time. The author has therefore sought to create a retention framework that would assist organisations and HR practitioners in developing dynamic retention strategy, which is discussed in Chapter Seven.

6.6 Conclusion

The findings of the research study reflected that there are **no significant differences** with A and B players across practices, generations and ethnic groups.

The multiple ANOVA tests conducted reflected significant differences between generations and ethnic groups at a high level, but were not investigated as this detracted from the objectives of this research study.

Three key factors were identified as the most significant factors that influenced retention for B players, these were:

- Reward & Recognition (Financial),
- Freedom & Independence, and;
- Leadership & Management.

The findings are aligned to research conducted by Horwitz *et al.* (2003) and Sutherland & Jordaan (2004). The study also contradicts views by DeLong & Vijayaghavan (2003) who stated that B players prefer work life harmony, are not focussed on career progression and leadership aspirations. Further views stated by Dogulas *et al.* (2008) suggested that company brand and culture are key aspects to retention in emerging markets. However, the resulted highlighted that company brand, company culture and work life balance are amongst the lowest scored factors for A and B players alike.

Given the results discussed in chapter six, the author has spent time thinking through a new model which could assist HR and talent practitioners in thinking through how to interpret the factors and variables that would encourage organisational development and retention of B players. A new model (**Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework**) was thus created and is discussed in detail in Chapter seven.

7 CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The key findings of the research are highlighted in this chapter. Recommendations based on the research conducted are presented and discussed in context of the implications to relevant stakeholders and finally recommendations are proposed for future areas of research.

7.2 New Retention Model: The Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework

7.2.1 Rationale and Conceptual Design

The foundational thinking used to formulate the Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework was based on addressing two questions encountered during the data analysis.

The first question was developed from the results analysed in Chapter Five. The results reflected that all respondents (A and B players) ranked a majority of the variables between moderately important to extremely important, with mean scores of 4.30 for A and 4.29 for B players. This suggested respondents felt that all variables should be considered when developing a retention framework. The key question was therefore, *“How do organisations develop retention strategies if all key variables are important?”*. The following example has been used to explain the concept above.

Example: A research study consisting of six factors, (to which various variables were mapped), identified that factors two and four were ranked as first and second with factor five ranked in third position in terms of significance, across all respondents.

The findings of this report would focus on factors two and four first, and thus recommend strategies be developed around these factors. However, some of the variables within the top factors may have been rated as moderately to low importance versus factor five (though ranked third) in which all variables rated as highly important. Factor five could potentially be overlooked resulting in non-optimal results being achieved.

By weighting the variable score with the factor score, a multi-dimensional retention framework can be designed.

The second question is based on the premise that not all strategies can be pursued as there are costs associated with the implementation of various strategies. Though the retention frameworks highlighted in the literature review identified key strategies, there is a limited amount of guidance around the cost of sustaining or implementing these strategies. Hence, the question posed, was “Which strategies would deliver the optimal value (factor significant x variable importance) based on the cost of sustaining or implementing the strategy?”.

The final attribute that contributed to the conceptual design was based on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959). The definition of hygiene and motivators were used to label each variable. By understanding if a variable is a hygiene factor or motivator, organisations would be able to weigh various options of implementation in context of their current environment. The following example highlighted the value of the two factor theory when developing a strategic framework for retention.

Example: The variable "Ability to enhance my skills by moving around the organisation" was ranked as extremely important and is linked to a factor that was ranked third in terms of importance. How would an organisation know whether this should be implemented in the short, medium or long term? By labelling the variable as either a hygiene factor or motivator the organisation is able to make a more informed strategic decision. In this scenario the variable would be labelled as a motivator, based on the Two Factor theory definition. If the organisation was in financial difficulties they would focus on ensuring all the hygiene factors would be implemented first and then potentially look at implementing a mobility strategy in the medium term.

7.2.2 Explanation of the Model

The **Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework** incorporates four distinct dimensions which are explained below:

- **Dimension 1: Factor Significance** is defined as the degree of influence a factor has on retention. Therefore, Factors with high mean scores can be regarded as having a significant amount of influence. It must be noted that the mean scores have been derived from the 11 factors proposed in the questionnaire construct in section C. This approach adopted a constant sum scale that created rankings of each factor based on their mean score,
- **Dimension 2: Variable Importance** is defined as the level of importance of certain statements. These results were obtained from the questionnaire construct distributed. A Likert scale was used and produced mean scores for all variables which was used as input into the retention strategic framework, and;
- **Dimension 3: Cost of Sustaining or Implementing** was defined based on the ratings defined below. Costs were allocated to each variable based on expert judgement, and are defined in the table below.

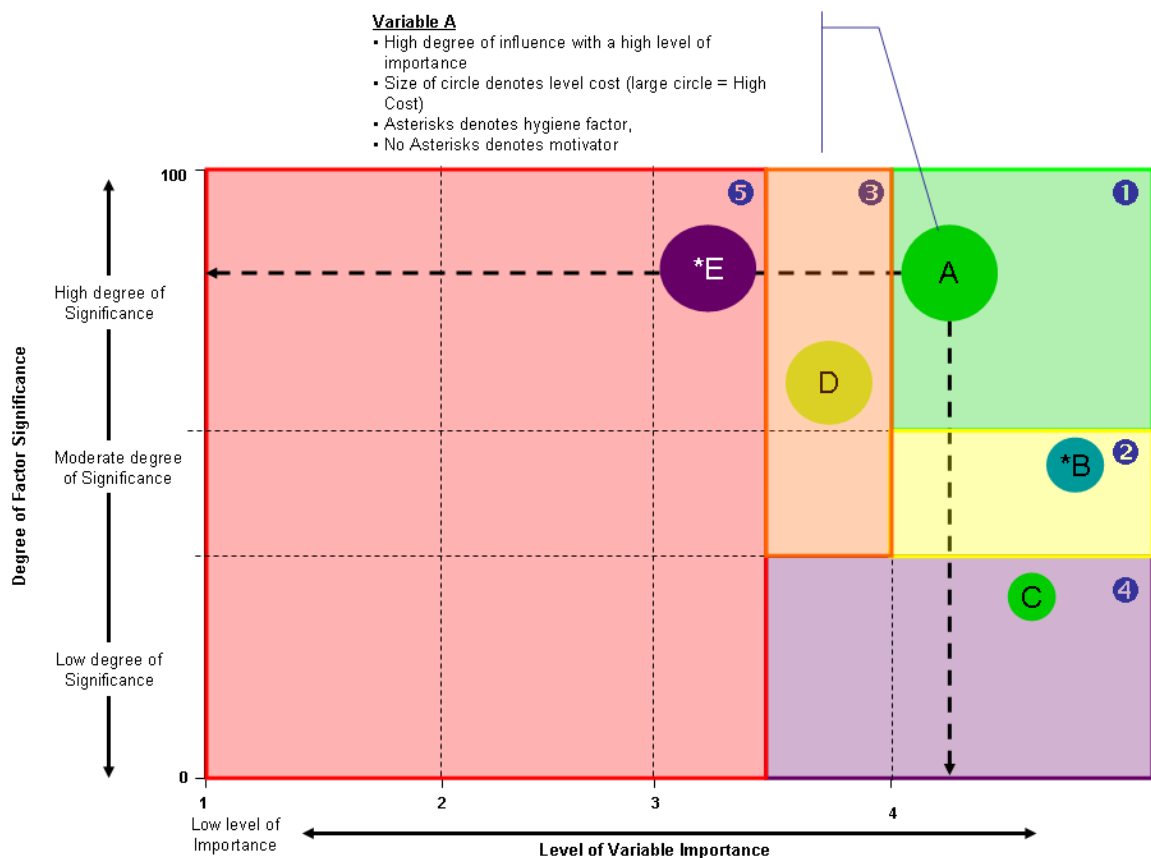
Table 32: Cost to sustain or implement conversion table

Cost Description	Score Allocation
Very Costly	4
Highly Costly	3
Moderately Costly	2
Low Cost to No cost	1

- **Dimension 4: Herzberg's Two-factor Theory** was used to categorise variables as hygiene factors or motivators. These definitions were based on the outcomes of the literature review conducted in Chapter Two.

The figure below depicts a graphical representation of The Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework.

Figure 18: Conceptual representation of The Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework



The framework designed allows organisations to interpret the results of such research, in an efficient and effective manner. Five key zones have been created to help develop a more defined strategy and are explained in the table below:

Table 33: Strategic Retention Framework – 5 key zones

Zone Number	Name	Description	Interpretation of Variable in the Zoned Areas
1	Green Zone	<p>This zone caters for all variables with high degrees of significance and importance.</p> <p>Organisations should target these variables for implementation as they will tend to deliver the optimal value.</p>	<p>Variable A is located within the green zone. This variable is ranked as having a high level of significant and importance. The size of the circle denotes that the cost of addressing this variable is high. The variable has been labelled as a motivator.</p> <p>Thus if an organisation chose to address this variable it would have a significant impact on retention but could be expensive to implement. If not implemented, it would not result in dissatisfaction.</p>
2	Yellow Zone	<p>This zone caters for all variables with moderate degrees of significance and high levels of importance.</p> <p>It is important that organisations still consider these variables as moderate to low cost strategies may exist within this zone and employees still consider these variables as highly important</p>	<p>Variable B is located within this zone. This variable is ranked as having a moderate level of significant and high level of Importance. The size of the circle denotes that the cost of addressing this variable is moderate. The variable has been labelled as a Hygiene Factor.</p> <p>Thus if an organisation chose to address this variable it would have to consider that the variable is a hygiene factor, and if not present creates a level of dissatisfaction. It is considered as highly important but comparatively</p>

Zone Number	Name	Description	Interpretation of Variable in the Zoned Areas
			ranked lower than A. This variable should be considered for implementation in the medium term.
3	Orange Zone	<p>This zone caters for all variables with High to moderate degrees of significance and moderate levels of importance.</p> <p>It is important that organisations still consider these variables as moderate to low cost strategies may exist within this zone.</p>	<p>Variable C is located within this zone. This variable is ranked as having a moderate to high level of significance and a moderate level of Importance. The size of the circle denotes that the cost of addressing this variable is small. The variable has been labelled as a Motivator Factor.</p> <p>The low cost to implement can be regarded as a quick win and should be considered for implementation in the short term.</p>
4	Purple Zone	<p>This zone caters for all variables with low degrees of significance and high levels of importance.</p> <p>Organisations may want to consider variables in this zone only if they are low cost and possibly a hygiene factor</p>	<p>Variable D is located within this zone. This variable is ranked as having a moderate to high level of significant and a moderate level of Importance. The size of the circle denotes that the cost of addressing this variable is small. The variable has been labelled as a Motivator Factor.</p> <p>The low cost to implement can be regarded as a quick win and should be considered for implementation in the short term.</p>
5	Red Zone	Any variables falling within this zone should not be addressed in an organisations retention strategy as the value gained for the cost and effort is minimal.	<p>Variable E is located in this zone. This variable is ranked as having a high level of significant and a moderate level of Importance. The size of the circle denotes that the cost of addressing this variable is very expensive. The variable has been</p>

Zone Number	Name	Description	Interpretation of Variable in the Zoned Areas
			<p>labelled as a Motivator Factor.</p> <p>Though this variable is ranked high in terms of significance, employees it is of low importance to respondents and thus the variable would have limited impact on retention.</p>

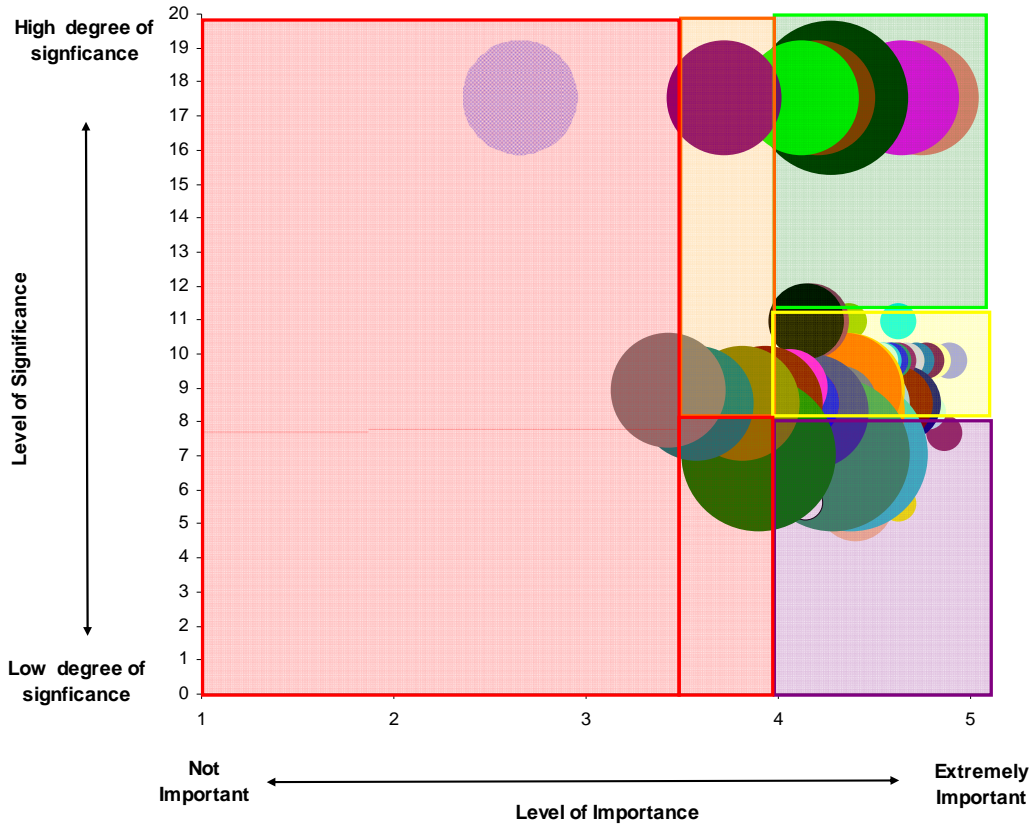
7.3 Recommendations to Stakeholders

This section focused on applying the Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework to the organisation researched. Thereafter key recommendations were provided regarding the areas upon which focus should be applied.

7.3.1 Application of the Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework

The Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework was based on the results reflected in Chapter 5. The output achieved was based on the conceptual design principles explained in The figure below depicts the output of the proposed retention framework.

Figure 19: Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework for B players



The information supporting the framework can be referenced in Appendix 6. The table below defines the retention strategy derived for B players utilising the Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework.

7.3.2 Value Add of the Model

The Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework will allow organisations to obtain an in-depth view of the retention factors and

variables that impact their organisations. By utilising this approach it is envisaged that organisations will optimise their retention strategies.

Table 34: Retention Framework for B players for the firm researched

Retention Framework for B players			
Retentions Rankings	High Cost	Moderate Cost	Low Cost
High Significance/ High Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay bonuses based on performance • Pay market related packages • Incorporate retirement fund and medical aid benefits into employee packages 		
Moderate Significance/ High Importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt leading edge technologies • Provision of internal training courses focusing on technical and soft skills • Creation of programmes for employee to attend external courses and/or training programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create environments for employees to work independently • Create work policies that facilitate options to work from home • Provide a framework that ensures Leaders and Managers are knowledgeable in their field of expertise and business management • Provide coaching to Leaders and Managers to grow and develop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an environment to allow employees to make independent decisions • Create policies to allow for efficient employee mobility across practices and business units • Create an environment that measures and monitors if Leaders and Managers deliver of promises

Retention Framework for B players			
Retentions Rankings	High Cost	Moderate Cost	Low Cost
		<p>their leadership capabilities in the areas of inspiration, relationship management with staff and being caring and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create policies that offer generous leave options, as well as maternity and paternity conditions • Create development opportunities that allow employees to be involved in complex, non-repetitive and challenging work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed a culture that ensures leadership and management offer gratitude/praise from employee performance • Design performance management processes that allow management and leadership to provide open and honest feedback
<p>High Significance/ Moderate Importance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer programmes that create opportunities for employees to work abroad through projects or secondment opportunities • Provide financial support for further studies/ sabbaticals • Offer opportunities to develop in specialist fields 		

7.3.3 Key Focus Areas

This study presented various opportunities for the organisation researched to focus on; these included the following key focus areas:

- A deeper understanding of the differences between X and Y generation and African and White ethnic groups is required. The ANOVA analysis identified areas of significant differences across these ethnic groups,
- The analysis from B player respondents reflected an urgent need for the organisation to investigate short term strategies to prevent 27% of B players from leaving the organisation within the next 12 months, and;
- Attention and efforts should be applied to the three factors identified as significant versus developing strategies and policies that focus on work life balance. A more cost effective approach would be to implement strategies that meet the retention needs of B players relating to leadership and management expectations.

7.4 Recommendations for further academic research

There has been limited academic research in understanding the retention needs of B players across a multitude of perspectives. Future research should be focused in the following areas:

- **Conduct research across other professional service firms** – in order to determine if the findings of this study are valid and consistent, research should be conducted across other professional service firm as a replication study,
- **Conduct research across other organisations** – the way professional services firms are structured and operate are different to how corporate organisations operate. Thus, by replicating this study across other industries and organisations may yield differing results, or support the conclusions of this study,
- **Adopt a qualitative research method** – a qualitative technique for future research studies can be adopted. This will allow for a deeper understanding as to why respondents believe certain factors are more important than others. This approach will contribute to building a profile for B players across organisations,
- **Assess the link between the maturity of an organisations HR practice versus the factors that influence retention** – the present research study has identified many contradictions between literature and the results of the study. A potential explanation of this may be attributed to the maturity of an organisations HR practice and policies implemented.

- **Focus on a larger Black population sample size** – further in-depth research needs to be conducted to understand and confirm the retention needs of Black B players. This research study consolidated Black, Indian and Coloured respondents into the African ethnic group, which creates a blended view of the retention requirements of non-white B players. Due to the challenges faced with racial transformation in South Africa, further research is required to understand the retention needs of Black employees across X and Y generations.

7.5 Conclusion

The key objective of this research study aimed to identify a retention framework for B players within professional service firms. This objective was addressed through understanding of the retention needs of B players across X and Y generations as well as African and White ethnic groups, embedded within the research questions defined. The findings of this research study have indicated that Reward & Recognition (Financial), Independence & Freedom and Leadership & Management factors were the most significant factors that influence the retention needs of B players.

A Factor Significance and Variable Importance Retention Framework was developed to assist HR practitioners and organisations to develop dynamic multi-dimensional strategies that are holistic in nature. This framework was then utilised to develop a specific strategy for the organisation researched.

This study addresses a significant gap in academic research pertaining to an organisations understanding of the retention needs of its B players. Though further research is required in this field, this research report presents an initial perspective on the profile of B players within an organisation. The outcomes of the research study reflected the research objective has been achieved, and provides an initial contribution to a body of knowledge to be developed around B players, within the field of retention.

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9 APPENDIX

9.1 Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Introduction to Questionnaire														
<p>Dear Participant,</p> <p>I am currently in the process of completing my Masters in Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). As part of my Masters degree I have decided to conduct research in the field of retention, specifically relating to professional service firms. This research has been approved and is supported by KPMG South Africa.</p> <p>My research aims to understand what the key factors for retention are for talented employees (like yourself) across the various divisions of KPMG, race groups and generation cohorts (age groups) . Your feedback will assist the firm in developing customised strategies to improve the retention of talented professional staff.</p> <p>You are kindly requested to participate in this research study by completing parts B and C of the questionnaire. The questionnaire should take no more than 10 minutes of your time.</p> <p>Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All information provided will be kept confidentially, and therefore this questionnaire does not require your name, age, gender or race. By completing this survey you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research.</p>														
<p>If you have any questions or concerns please contact either of the following individuals</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><i>Researcher:</i></td> <td>Keshava Naidu</td> <td><i>KPMG Sponsor</i></td> <td>Jason Davies</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>E-mail:</i></td> <td>keshava.naidu@kpmg.co.za</td> <td><i>E-mail</i></td> <td>jason.davies@kpmg.co.za</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Phone:</i></td> <td>+27 82 907 8955</td> <td><i>Phone</i></td> <td>+27 11 647 6323</td> </tr> </table>			<i>Researcher:</i>	Keshava Naidu	<i>KPMG Sponsor</i>	Jason Davies	<i>E-mail:</i>	keshava.naidu@kpmg.co.za	<i>E-mail</i>	jason.davies@kpmg.co.za	<i>Phone:</i>	+27 82 907 8955	<i>Phone</i>	+27 11 647 6323
<i>Researcher:</i>	Keshava Naidu	<i>KPMG Sponsor</i>	Jason Davies											
<i>E-mail:</i>	keshava.naidu@kpmg.co.za	<i>E-mail</i>	jason.davies@kpmg.co.za											
<i>Phone:</i>	+27 82 907 8955	<i>Phone</i>	+27 11 647 6323											
<p>Please continue and complete Part B</p>														



Questionnaire - Part B							
How to complete the Questionnaire							
This section requires you to rate each question based on a scale from: Extremely Important to Not Important at all. Please respond from a perspective that reflects your personal views. You should only have one response per question and should answer all questions.							
		Simply insert an 'X' in the box that best reflects your response per question					
No	Questions	Extremely Important	Moderately Important	Indifferent (Neutral)	Slightly Important	Not Important at all	Definitions
1	Working for a reputable brand						
2	Working for a global brand						
3	Working for a brand that is regarded as one of the best amongst competitors						
4	Culture where employees can challenge leaders						
5	Culture that recognises performance						
6	Culture that embraces diversity						
7	Leaders that deliver on promises						Leaders are defined as individuals at partner level responsible for managing a service line or department
8	Leaders that are knowledgeable						
9	Leaders that are caring and understanding						
10	Leaders that are inspirational						
11	Having a good relationship with the leaders of the business						
12	Managers that deliver on promises						Managers are defined as individuals you may report to on a daily basis or on engagements e.g. project managers, audit managers, stream leads etc.
13	Managers that are knowledgeable						
14	Managers that are caring and understanding						
15	Managers that are inspirational						
16	Having a good relationship with the managers within the business						
17	Receiving open and honest feedback, in order to improve my skills and knowledge						
18	Attending internal training courses to improve both my technical and soft skills						
19	Attending external course and/or training programs (conferences, short course, business school programmes etc)						
20	Receiving a market related package i.e. industry norm						
21	Receiving a package that exceeds market related pay i.e. being paid in the top 25% percentile for my role and ability						
22	Receiving a performance bonus based on my own performance						
23	How important would it be to you to have the ability to reduce your basic salary if the upside of your bonus is significantly higher than what you would currently expect						
24	Financial support for further studies/ sabbaticals						
25	Having medical aid benefits						
26	Having retirement fund benefits						
27	Sufficient time for maternity and paternity leave						
28	Generous leave conditions						
29	Receiving public praise for outstanding achievements						
30	Receiving a personal thank you/ praise from my manager or person I report to						
31	Receiving a personal thank you/ praise from members in the leadership of my business unit						
32	Freedom to work independently						
33	Option to work from home						
34	Ability to make my own decisions e.g. individually selecting training courses to attend, rating individuals in my team, generating my own solutions first etc						
35	Ability to enhance my skills by moving around the organisation						
36	Living close to where I work						
37	Working in modern offices						
38	Working in good working conditions						
39	Using leading technologies						
40	Having flexible working hours						
41	Having sufficient time to conduct/ participate in social activities and events (this includes time with family and friends)						
42	Friendly work colleagues						
43	Working with colleagues in a team						
44	Effective internal processes and procedures						
45	Issues raised are dealt with in an effective manner						
46	Opportunities exist to advance my career in the short term						
47	Being involved in work that is challenging						
48	Being involved in work that is complex						
49	Being involved in non-repetitive and varied work assignments						
50	Being involved in work that requires creativity						
51	Work that allows me to interact with senior management and executives at clients						
52	Getting exposure to methodologies, tools, better practices and benchmarks						
53	Opportunity to work on global projects and teams i.e. global projects that take place in South Africa						
54	Opportunity to work in other countries through secondments or projects						
55	Opportunities to develop into a specialist field						
56	Having a career plan that realistically maps the next 3 - 5 years of my career						
57	Doing work that makes best use of my skills						
Questions		Less than 6 Months	6 - 12 Months	1 - 2 years	More than 3 years		
For how much longer do you envisage staying with the firm							

Please continue and complete Part C



Questionnaire - Part C		
Ranking of Retention Factors		
Please rank the following categories in order of importance to you, by allocating 100 points to the various categories below		
EXAMPLE		
Focus Area	Explanation of focus Area	Score Allocation
Company Brand	Working for a reputable organisation that has a great market presence	10
Company Culture	Working for an organisation that encourages diversity and promotes a happy and professional culture	5
Leadership and Management	Leaders and managers that are inspirational, knowledgeable and that I can trust	10
Training	Opportunities to enhance my skills and knowledge	5
Reward and Recognition (Financial)	Being rewarded accordingly for my performance and abilities	30
Reward and Recognition (Non-Financial)	Being recognised for my efforts and contributions through praise and acknowledgement	10
Work/life Harmony	Having adequate time to participate in social events but still deliver to my clients	10
Independence and Freedom	Ability to make my own decisions and work independently	10
Work Environment (Physical)	Having a comfortable, modern work environment that uses leading technologies	0
Work Environment (Other)	Working with friendly colleagues, in an organisation that has efficient internal processes and procedures	0
Career Development and Enhancement	Having the opportunity to further my career and be exposed to global engagements	10
Total		100
Your Response		
Focus Area	Explanation of focus Area	Score Allocation
Company Brand	Working for a reputable organisation that has a great market presence	
Company Culture	Working for an organisation that encourages diversity and promotes a happy and professional culture	
Leadership and Management	Leaders and managers that are inspirational, knowledgeable and that I can trust	
Training	Opportunities to enhance my skills and knowledge	
Reward and Recognition (Financial)	Being rewarded accordingly for my performance and abilities	
Reward and Recognition (Non-Financial)	Being recognised for my efforts and contributions through praise and acknowledgement	
Work/life Harmony	Having adequate time to participate in social events but still deliver to my clients	
Independence and Freedom	Ability to make my own decisions and work independently	
Work Environment (Physical)	Having a comfortable, modern work environment that uses leading technologies	
Work Environment (Other)	Working with friendly colleagues, in an organisation that has efficient internal processes and procedures	
Career Development and Enhancement	Having the opportunity to further my career and be exposed to global engagements	
Total		0
Questionnaire Completed		
Thank you for completing the questionnaire. All information will be kept confidential. Your participation in this process is highly appreciated.		

9.2 Appendix 2: Feedback from Interviews

Table 35: Interview Feedback

Interviewees	Top Retention factors for A players	Top Retention factors for B players
Interviewee 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having respectable role models in the firm • Senior management that engages with them • Significant development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Recognition • Work life balance • Non-financial rewards
Interviewee 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Reward and Recognition • Verbal acknowledgment regarding work performed • Working in high performance teams • Alignment with leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability in career • Financial Reward and Recognition • Work/ Life balance
Interviewee 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career progression • Financial Reward and Recognition • Role Models within the firm • Firm with strong levels of integrity • Well known and reputable brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Security • A firm with a social perspective and involvement • Financial Reward and Recognition • Work/ Life balance • Adequate training opportunities • Working in capable teams
Interviewee 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to manage own careers • Complex and stimulating work • Strong and capable team members • Significant learning opportunities • Interpersonal relationships with colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execution of stimulating work • Family culture at work • Learning opportunities

Interviewees	Top Retention factors for A players	Top Retention factors for B players
Interviewee 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward and recognition • Involvement in complex and challenging work • Team environment • Ability to advance career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of contributions • Flexibility to work from home • Career planning
Interviewee 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership that shows gratitude towards the efforts of A players • Rewards and recognition • Promotion opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work life balance • Recognition of efforts by management or non-financial rewards • Being promoted at the agreed pace based on performance

9.3 Appendix 3 – MANOVA Analysis

Table 36: MANOVA Analysis across research questions

ID	Factor	Source	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	Feedback
1	Company Brand	practice	0.032567	0.06	0.946	No Significant Difference
		age	0.086398	0.15	0.701	No Significant Difference
		race	0.049857	0.09	0.77	No Significant Difference
		rating	0.012175	0.02	0.885	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.061039	0.1	0.901	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.1094	0.19	0.665	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.818295	1.4	0.237	No Significant Difference
2	Company Culture	practice	0.325733	1.11	0.333	No Significant Difference
		age	0.157937	0.54	0.465	No Significant Difference
		race	3.158208	10.72	0.001	Significant Difference
		rating	1.229791	4.18	0.042	Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.661957	2.25	0.108	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.282272	0.96	0.329	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.066538	0.23	0.635	No Significant Difference
3	Leadership and Management	practice	0.270751	1.81	0.166	No Significant Difference
		age	0.028237	0.19	0.664	No Significant Difference
		race	0.125656	0.84	0.36	No Significant Difference
		rating	0.00689	0.05	0.83	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.094314	0.63	0.533	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.460591	3.08	0.081	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.018407	0.12	0.726	No Significant Difference
4	Training	practice	0.244195	1.24	0.292	No Significant Difference
		age	0.04828	0.24	0.622	No Significant Difference
		race	0.275701	1.4	0.239	No Significant Difference
		rating	0.003716	0.02	0.891	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.126044	0.64	0.529	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.605705	3.07	0.081	No Significant



ID	Factor	Source	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	Feedback
						Difference
		race*rating	0.038361	0.19	0.66	No Significant Difference
5	Recognition and Reward (Financial)	practice	0.624718	2.15	0.118	No Significant Difference
		age	0.9521	3.28	0.071	No Significant Difference
		race	2.235493	7.7	0.006	Significant Difference
		rating	0.573865	1.98	0.161	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.421277	1.45	0.236	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.048182	0.17	0.684	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.136528	0.47	0.494	No Significant Difference
6	Recognition and Reward (Non-financial)	practice	0.978369	3.12	0.046	Significant Difference
		age	1.983441	6.33	0.013	Significant Difference
		race	0.34765	1.11	0.293	No Significant Difference
		rating	0.063057	0.2	0.654	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.182969	0.58	0.559	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.088454	0.28	0.596	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.075395	0.24	0.624	No Significant Difference
7	Independence and Freedom	practice	0.451711	1.02	0.363	No Significant Difference
		age	1.442299	3.25	0.073	No Significant Difference
		race	0.916569	2.07	0.152	No Significant Difference
		rating	0.602375	1.36	0.245	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.467496	1.05	0.35	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.103592	0.23	0.629	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.584851	1.32	0.252	No Significant Difference
8	Work Environment (Physical)	practice	0.640091	1.87	0.157	No Significant Difference
		age	2.485611	7.24	0.008	Significant Difference
		race	0.935381	2.73	0.1	No Significant Difference
		rating	0.023242	0.07	0.795	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.82473	2.4	0.093	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	2.54131	7.41	0.007	Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.449685	1.31	0.253	No Significant Difference
9	Work Environment (Other)	practice	2.028294	3.81	0.023	Significant Difference
		age	0.006549	0.01	0.912	No Significant Difference
		race	0.083749	0.16	0.692	No Significant Difference
		rating	0.146439	0.28	0.6	No Significant Difference



ID	Factor	Source	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F	Feedback
		practice*rating	0.985331	1.85	0.159	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.055611	0.1	0.747	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.127934	0.24	0.624	No Significant Difference
10	Work Life Balance	practice	0.433688	1.2	0.303	No Significant Difference
		age	0.247112	0.68	0.409	No Significant Difference
		race	1.550156	4.29	0.04	Significant Difference
		rating	1.120394	3.1	0.08	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.216741	0.6	0.55	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.014325	0.04	0.842	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	1.059744	2.93	0.088	No Significant Difference
11	Career Development & Enhancement	practice	0.395908	1.47	0.232	No Significant Difference
		age	2.313934	8.59	0.004	Significant Difference
		race	1.559176	5.79	0.017	Significant Difference
		rating	0.462557	1.72	0.191	No Significant Difference
		practice*rating	0.194545	0.72	0.487	No Significant Difference
		age*rating	0.796981	2.96	0.087	No Significant Difference
		race*rating	0.002122	0.01	0.929	No Significant Difference

Aspects identified as significant were not relevant to this study and hence have not been analysed further