QATAR UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

KEY STRATEGIES TO ATTRACT TALENTED FACULTY MEMBERS: A GLOBAL

OVERVIEW

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Title: Key Strategies to Attract Talented Faculty Members: A Global Overview.

Supervisor of Thesis: Ahmed A. Mehrez.

Background: This thesis aims to find the common themes under which employee attraction strategies fall. The paper focuses primarily on strategies universities use to attract talented faculty members, by looking at strategies round the globe.

Methods: This thesis uses *Thematic Analysis* to analyze secondary research papers to find themes. NVivo is used to analyze the sample of (30) papers. This thesis discusses steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness (quality) of the data presented.

Findings: Based on the data analyzed, seven main themes have emerged. Those themes are: work environment and culture, remuneration, brand, training and development, Management support, facilities, and application mode.

Conclusion: Education, especially higher education, seems to be the focus of more and more countries, both developing and developed, as it offers a lot of value. With this increased importance, it becomes important to make sure universities are equipped with irreplaceable resources. i.e., human capital. Through the analysis, different strategies and themes have appeared as ways to attract talented faculty members.

Keywords: talent, attract, faculty, university, strategy

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the person that was there throughout this whole

journey. Thank you for the support and guidance.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background Information

Nowadays, the ways to gain knowledge are almost endless. With the Internet, learning a new skill is one-click away. Nonetheless, such technological developments do not negate the need for "traditional" education, but rather support it. This was noticeably clear during one of the most challenging times, i.e., COVID-19 pandemic, where many institutions had to shift to online education (ZAGHAR, 2022). The pandemic also highlighted the significance of higher education institutions and the value they provide for the society as a whole (Niemczyk, 2021).

The education sector, however, is complex and has various sub-sectors. Not only that, but those sub-sectors differ from one country to another. According to (Australian Council for Educational Research [ACER], 2018)), the various areas under the umbrella of the education sector can include: early childhood, primary, secondary, vocational and higher education. Additionally, the terms used to refer to the sub-sectors could also differ. *Higher education*, which is the focus of this thesis, is sometimes termed *tertiary* or *post-secondary education* (ACER, 2018). Throughout this thesis, however, the term "higher education" will mainly be used.

The benefits of education, specifically higher education, go beyond the individual level and affect the societal and economic levels (Kyllonen, 2012). On a societal level, education is becoming more accessible, thus aiding in the process of *social mobility* (İŞERİ, 2019), which defines how people move between social statuses within a particular hierarchy (Ritterman Weintraub et al., 2015). As for the economic effect of education, the workforce education level is becoming a crucial concern for companies (Natália et al., 2018), since there is evidence linking access to higher education to having stable jobs and higher incomes (Sandoval et al., 2021).

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Therefore, providing quality education influences organizational success, which can be translated into the development of the country's economy as a whole (Borcoşi, 2018). On top of that, when comparing education with other sectors, it becomes clear that it is a priority. The chart in **Figure 1** illustrates the general government spending of 32 countries on three, arguably, very important sectors, i.e., defense, health and education, (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], *General government spending*, 2023). The results are expressed in terms of a percentage of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in the year 2021; some interesting insights could be made from these numbers.
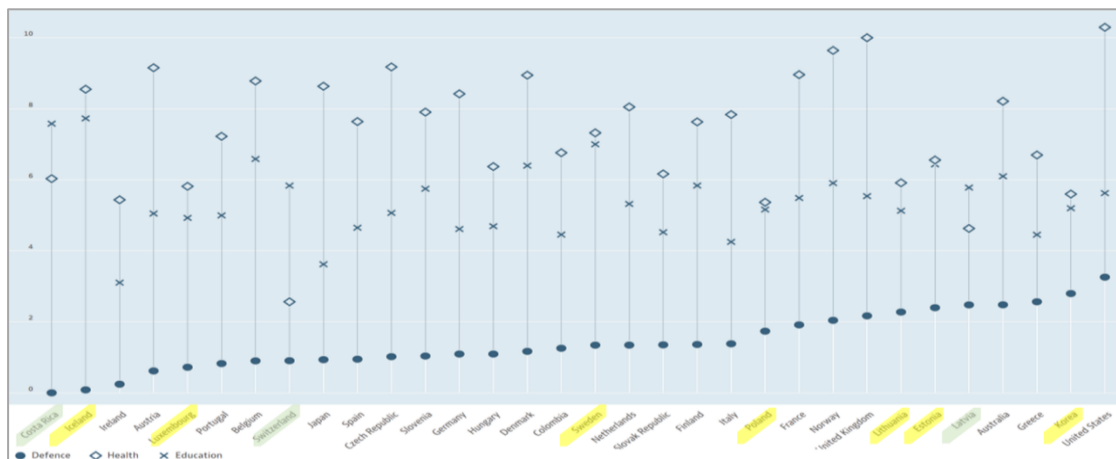
Figure 1. General government spending (defense, health, education) as % of GDP, 2021 or latest available. Source https://data.oecd.org/gga/general-government-spending.htm

As one might expect, the preponderance of the government spending was spent on the health sector. Yet, there were instances where the difference in spending between education and health was either very slight (highlighted in yellow) or spending on education exceeded health (highlighted in green). The listed countries include developing and developed countries, which can show a shared vision amongst nations. Interestingly enough, the defense sector had the lowest spending.

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With such power and influence, education institutions, especially, universities, must have what it takes to fully utilize their capacity and resources to ensure the successful delivery of processes in an effective and efficient manner (Damirchi et al., 2022). The importance of such a sector has made it the focus of many development schemes for a very long time. As Immerwahr (1998) stated, there has been a shift in focus towards higher education since the late 1990s. In fact, the number of countries supporting the higher education sector and viewing it as a main priority is growing.

One way, as discussed previously, is by providing monetary support to the sector. According to OECD, *Education spending* (2023), Chile came first when considering spending on higher education as a percentage of the GDP; Chile spent 2.69% of the GDP on higher education and is then followed by the U.S. and Canada with spending that equals 2.49% and 2.18% of the GDP, respectively. Other countries, in Europe for instance, are expressing their support by going through various expansion processes in the education sector (Barone & Ortiz, 2010).

Outside the western world, countries in the Arab world are showing their support by making education a top priority and focusing on it in their 2030 visions. Qatar, for instance, aims to achieve sustainable development and considers education a critical factor to accomplish this vision (Government Communications Office, *Qatar National Vision 2030* 2022). Other countries (e.g., United Arab Emirates, Egypt) also view education as a means to improve the economy and the move towards a *knowledge economy* (Vision of Egypt, n.d.; UAE Government, 2020). In a knowledge economy, both consumption and production are based on intellectual capital, and value is derived from intangible assets like intellectual property and the knowledge of the workforce (Hayes, 2022). For that reason, attracting the right workforce (i.e., talented) would be a great starting point to go in this direction.

Investing in the workforce (faculty members) can be through empowering them and enhancing the culture within such institutions to improve their performance, and, subsequently, students' performance (Toker, 2022). As it is with any investment, finding the return on investment (ROI) is a common follow-up step – the same applies to the education sector. Unlike other sectors where there is a direct link between the investments (costs) and benefits (returns), education is somewhat different.

This can be due to how difficult it is to measure the costs of education, as many are non-monetary, e.g., time and effort. Besides, it can take years to reap the benefits of investments in the education sector; thus, complicating the process even more. Since many universities and educational institutions might have arrived at the same conclusion, the *war for talent* begins. Another hurdle arises, as this "war" and competition are no longer bound with geographical borders due to globalization. This thesis delves deeper into the concept of talented faculty and strategies to attract them.

1.2. Purpose of Study

As emphasized before, with the ongoing war for talent, understanding how to attract talented employees becomes a great starting point. This thesis focuses on talent in higher education (universities) and the various strategies to attract such employees. However, with challenges like globalization and competition going beyond the physical boundaries, a holistic look would be especially useful. Therefore, this thesis aims to enrich the existing body of research on the higher education sector, and guide future research efforts by:

- Identifying the most common strategies universities round the globe use to attract talented faculty members.

- Categorizing the different attraction strategies into main themes to draw conclusions, and check for any trends.

By exploring the most common strategies to attract talented faculty members, educational institutions can benefit greatly, since this research and its results might act as market research. All this combined can help in the growth process of universities as well as the improvement of other processes related to attracting talented faculty members. Furthermore, through understanding the point of view of employers, future research can try and triangulate the organizations' views with employees' views on the actual realized benefits of such strategies. Such conversations are needed to enhance the work environment and help focus the time and effort in the right direction. The researcher thus aims to provide answers to the following questions:

- What are the most common strategies that universities use to attract talented faculty members around the globe?

- What are the different themes that can be used to categorize those different attraction strategies?

1.3. Paper Outline

This thesis is comprised of five chapters with the introduction being the first chapter. The following chapter is the theoretical framework and literature review. The theoretical framework section provides a guide to the theoretical guidelines the thesis is based on. Literature review provides an in-depth recap of available information about the topic of talent, managing it, and who is responsible for such tasks.

Next comes the methodology chapter, which details the steps followed to arrive at the last version of the thesis. It starts by describing the type of research. It also provides a description of the sample and how data collection was carried out. Moreover, the methodology chapter provides the rationale behind the different steps of carrying out this research. By going into great detail of the steps, future researchers can look at this thesis as a guide to do similar research.

Chapter four then shares the insights derived from the data collection process and provides an in-depth analysis of the information at hand. To further add, the chapter links the knowledge gained with what has already been said in previous research papers, i.e., literature. Finally, the paper concludes with the conclusion, limitations and future research chapter. This section restates the important points discussed in the thesis and describes the constraints to consider when doing similar research. Not only that, but the last chapter will help in directing future research topics to assist in filling the gap in the higher education research by suggesting various routes to pursue.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Framework

Though there is no right or wrong, per se, when it comes to choosing a theoretical framework, some theories maybe more appropriate than others for each type of research. This thesis uses *thematic analysis* to arrive at conclusions for the research questions. This part of the second chapter defines thematic analysis and explains its different steps. It also provides the readers with its pros and cons and a brief discussion on its history.

2.1.1   Definition

As the name suggests, thematic analysis is an analytical approach to identify, *analyze* and report themes (patterns) within the raw data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Based on this definition, thematic analysis provides researchers with techniques to derive value of raw data. So, what counts as a *theme*? Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that a theme is considered when it captures essential information in relation to the research question and represents patterns that prevail within each data item and the whole data set of the study.

There are diverse ways a researcher can use to go about finding themes. In an inductive approach, the analysis is data-driven, i.e., a bottom-up approach, and is not greatly shaped by existing literature (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Because humans are the ones conducting the analysis, the researcher's standpoint could, to some extent, shape the analysis. If the analysis process is mainly driven by theory, the analysis is considered theoretical (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The analysis process could also be discussed in terms of standpoints. Braun and Clarke (2013) explained that in experiential analysis the focus is on how participants experience the world. On the other hand, constructionist analysis on how topics are constructed (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The thematic analysis is comprised of 6 steps (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As is the case with any type of analysis, data needs to be collected before the analysis process. But, how big should the sample size be? Braun and Clarke (2013), specify a range between 2 and 400. Though the numbers seem too far from each other, (Braun & Clarke, 2013) provide further ranges depending on the size of the project/study. Once data is collected, it is time for analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) walk the readers through the six steps:

The analysis process starts with **getting familiar with the data**. To achieve the desired level of familiarity, the research/s read and reread the data at hand. In the case of interviews, however, responses must be transcribed first. Repeated exposure allows for increased immersion leading to familiarity with the depth and breadth of the data. While reading, the scholar can take notes on interesting information. Once familiarity is established, **generating initial codes** is next. The researcher can use the notes from the first phase. Through the coding process, features of the data are identified. When choosing elements to code, a good rule of thumb is checking whether this element can be assessed in a meaningful way to help understand the phenomenon. Codes provide the seed for the following phase: **searching for themes**.

One distinction between codes and themes is that themes tend to be broader. This is because the step involves refocusing on the broader picture and sorting the lengthy list of codes into potential themes where codes are relevant to the theme. Visual representation can be used during this phase. Tables and maps are a great straining point. Depending on the depth and aim of the research, the academic will explore the relationship between codes or even the main and sub-themes. The themes chosen are then put through a review process to further refine them. To **review the themes**, a

researcher can ask *"is there enough data to support this theme, or should these two themes be merged?"* These guiding questions will assist the researcher in forming clear distinctions between the different themes and will increase the coherence of data within a certain theme. That is, this phase is two-fold. Firstly, the codes are reviewed and tested for whether they come from a strong pattern. Once codes are found to be coherent, the next step is to review the themes against the data set as a whole.

During the previous stages, themes were not necessarily given a name. Now is the time to **give names to the themes**, which constitutes the "final" step of the analysis. The name to a theme should be able to capture the essence of the codes within the theme. Therefore, the codes should not be all over the place, as the theme can only explain so much. To further ensure that themes are coherent, they are analyzed in detail to make a 'story.' With this step, researchers can decide what is a theme and what is not. Finally, the researcher **produces the final report**. Now that everything is defined and refined, the researcher can put all the information in a form that would convince the reader to "trust" the study and find value in the study.

2.1.3   Advantages and disadvantages

Based on the guide provided by Braun and Clarke (2006), one can see many qualities to the thematic analysis method. One main strength that Braun and Clarke (2013) highlighted is how flexible thematic analysis is. For instance, when using thematic analysis, the researcher has freedom in choosing the data collection methods and sample size (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thematic analysis is also suitable for budding researchers. Braun and Clarke (2013) consider it accessible to those who do not even have experience in the research field, mainly due to how easy it is to follow compared to other qualitative analyses. Braun and Clarke (2013) also add that intended audience that is educated can gain access to the analysis.

As it is with any method of research and analysis, however, there will be some critiques. Those who believe the benefits do not outweigh the criticisms mainly think that thematic analysis lacks concrete guidance for analyses of higher levels (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Additionally, Braun and Clarke (2013) mention that people also criticized the fact that focusing on patterns would not provide any sense of continuity. Not only that, but with large sample size, *individual* voices can get lost (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

2.1.4 *Chronological overview*

Being used for a long time, changes and developments are bound to happen to thematic analysis. Before thematic analysis was known as that, it was likely an evolution of another type of analysis, i.e., content analysis (Joffe, 2012). In the early 1950s, Kracauer (1952) challenged this idea and stated that meaning is complex and context-specific and is not always detectable from the first look. Kracauer (1952) also indicated that this critique does not mean that qualitative is better than quantitative, on the contrary, they are complementary. Even with the alleged start from content analysis, it is difficult to understand the precise development process (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Other developments with thematic analysis regard the fact that it has three schools: reflexive, coding reliability, codebook (Braun et al.., 2019). Morgan (2022) explains that the reflexive approach is the one that is fully qualitative and has a different process to coding and conceptualizing themes. Coding reliability, on the other hand, does not view themes as meaning-based pattern, rather as domain summaries (Morgan, 2022). The last approach stands in the middle of two approaches, since it values subjectivity and involves structured approaches in the coding process (Braun et al., 2019). So, the themes are classified based on the extent to which they require using qualitative methods (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

2.2. Literature Review

This section of the paper will assist the readers in understanding the reasoning behind this thesis. Due to the differences in definitions and ways of understanding a certain concept, it is crucial to provide the knowledge needed to back up the arguments and viewpoints of a thesis. This part, therefore, answers five important questions to explain the previous knowledge of the matter at hand.

2.2.1   What is talent?

To help better understand a topic, looking at the definition is a great starting point. A quick Internet search on the definition of the word "talent" yields the following definition: a special aptitude that is athletic, creative, or artistic in nature (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) amongst many other definitions. For instance, Gallardo-Gallardo et al., (2013) lists "money" as a synonym for "talent." Tansley (2011) states that the nineteenth century marked the time where talent was defined as an intersection between personal talents and talent as ability, i.e., talent as an individual versus talent as an individual's capability or skill.

Michaels et al., (2001) mention the McKinsey definition of "talent" as the combination of one's intrinsic gifts, experiences, judgements, knowledge and ability to learn. As is the case with many words/languages, cultures can influence the interpretation of the word. Tansley (2011) lists the European and Japanese cultures as cultures of main, yet controversial, views on talent: 1) talent is an intrinsic factor and 2) talent as an accomplishment that can be achieved, respectively. Besides "talent," words like gifted, promising and able also described those exceptional workers (Ansar & Baloch, 2018). Though sample papers do not specify which talent definition they adopt, how they discuss "talented" faculty members, illudes to considering talent as "individuals" and not "capabilities."

2.2.2 Does "talent" look different in the workplace?

There are also significant differences in how the term *talent* is defined in the workplace. Generally speaking, Ansar and Baloch (2018) explain that organizations tend to view talent exclusively (only few of the workforce is gifted) rather than inclusively (each individual is recognized to have potential value). One of the early definitions for talent in the workplace suggested by Gagné (2000) describes talent as successfully mastering abilities or skills which are developed in a systematic way. From this definition, *talent* seems to be something that people possess (object approach) rather than something people are (subject approach) (Daruka, 2022).

An example of a subject approach to defining talent is the definition of Wiliams (2000) where talent in the workplace is defined as people who fully or partially satisfy the following: demonstrating extraordinary achievements in different activities and situations; or regularly displaying potential through showing high competence. A few years later, Lewis and Heckman (2006) simply define it as "*in other words, people;*" thus, also following a subject approach. Tansley et al., (2007) defined talent in an exclusive manner by defining it as individuals who affect the performance of the organization, regardless of whether their contributions are immediate or appear in the long run. Silzer and Dowell (2010) provide two definitions: **1)** talent, sometimes, refers to the whole organization; and **2)** pool of employees who possess exceptional skills and abilities, and demonstrate them in technical or competency areas.

Though these are not all the definitions published on the topic of talent in the workplace, they do offer a quick overview of the state of literature. It also appears that different authors and researchers define talent differently. This can be due to the various ideas each research possesses. Tansley et al. (2007) argues that the type of industry and occupational field play a role in shaping the definition of "talent."

2.2.3 Who should manage talent?

The war on talent seems to also affect opinions on who should be responsible for managing talented individuals. Opinions are mixed between talent management being its own entity, or part of the human resources management (HRM) processes. Barney (1991) distinguished between HRM and talent management in terms of focus, where HRM takes all the organizational functions into account and talent management focuses on the "human" side of things, since it considers talented employees as a competitive advantage (not easily replicated by others). One can conclude that though the aims are different, overlapping still exists between them. Blass (2009) aimed to contribute to solving this problem by developing a visual representation of the different territories. The model consists of talent management, HRM, succession, development, recruitment, retention and strategy. Blass (2009) places talent management in the middle of the diagrammatical model.

Brooks (2019) argues that talent management begins with HR department but that does not mean that leadership involvement is not required. So, should there be a separate department for talent management, or should it be part of HRM? This seems to be a question that still does not have a definite answer to this day. Brooks (2019) indicates that Alex Robinson, who is a human resource and hiring manager, believes the decision to whether perform talent management practices through HR department or a separate department is dependent on the size of the organization; smaller organizations consider talent management a job for the HR manager, while bigger companies could have a more specific title for such position. Therefore, the answer is not a simple "yes" or "no." Since this study aims to benefit the vast majority of institutions, it will consider talent management as a function of human resource management.

2.2.4   How to manage talent?

The process of talent management (TM) is one that has many components. Not only that, but there are many challenges surrounding it. One challenge is how it is defined and what its boundaries are. Since *talent*, with its many definitions, is the underpinning concept of talent management, definitions will also differ. Some papers focus on TM as managing high performers in the organization, irrespective of their position (McDonnell et al., 2017). This means that employees need to be classified into distinct levels first. Schuler et al. (2011) stated that such organizations focus on managing the number of extremely talented employees necessary to face the challenge with talent shortage.

Other researchers were interested in the positions rather than the individuals. In other words, key positions are identified and form the basis of TM processes. To do so, organizations should start by identifying the vital positions and base the identification process on those positions that contribute to the competitive advantage (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). With technology being more accessible, the identification process can be supported by IT (McDonnell et al., 2017). From this view, one can conclude that not all positions within an organization need to be occupied by top performers. McDonnell et al. (2017) point out that if organizations exclusively focus on a small group of employees, ethical issues might arise.

Since the world is becoming more globalized, research on TM reflects this as well. Many papers discuss TM in the context of "global talent management (GTM)." As is the case with many other concepts, there is still no consensus on its definitions. McDonnell et al. (2017) provide a broad definition of GTM as the activities an organization performs, on a global scale, with the aim of attracting, selecting, developing and retaining talented employees to fill the strategic positions within the

organization.

An older view by Lewis and Heckman (2006) discusses TM in three different ways: **1)** TM as a part of human resource management processes since TM can include attraction, selection and career planning; **2)** TM that focuses on a selection of employees to create a talent pool; and **3)** TM that, inclusively and exclusively, focuses on talented employees in addition to their performance.

With such importance, more and more authors and researchers have produced books and academic papers on the topic of talent management (Iles et al., 2010). This could indicate that companies are placing an immense importance on talent management and its effects on the organization. Yet, the variations in opinions also make it challenging to identify the areas that fall under TM. For the sake of simplifying the research, this thesis follows the view of Ready et al. (2008) and focuses on talent attraction and retentions as the main processes of TM. Others considered more processes, e.g., identifying, developing, appraising, deploying and retaining (McDonnell, 2011).

2.2.5 *What is talent attraction…or is it retention?*

As mentioned before, TM has different sub-processes. Two of TM sub-processes that people tend to use together are attraction and retention. To further add, through the data collection process for this thesis, the words *attraction* and *retention* were used together or almost synonymously. This could be because strategies to attract employees could be the same ones to make them (retention). In fact, talent attraction is the starting point of talent retention since a substantial number of the same fundamental principles is utilized (Doane, 2009), which is something that many may overlook.

Additionally, attraction and retention work together to establish predictions about the future and put the right people in the place (Onah & Anikwe, 2016).

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Nowadays, determining who exactly is the "right" fit is becoming more complex as the number of factors to choose employees is increasing (Doane, 2009). The thesis at hand only targets *talent attraction* as it precedes employee retention.

Organization attraction was defined as early on as the mid-1960s. Vroom (1966) conducted research on the matter with the aim of measuring the attractiveness of hypothetical organizations to potential applicants. Another attempt by Rynes (1989) defined the concept of employee attraction as having prospect employees to view the organization in a positive light and would consider it as a place to work in. On a broader scale, attraction can also refer to actions taken by organizations to seek inquiries from potential candidates (Onah & Anikwe, 2016).

Amongst the various methods to recruit employees, the most common means is to attract as many employees as possible and then start filtering applicants to select those who will most potentially fit the organization's criteria (Onah & Anikwe, 2016). Attracting prospective employees to apply to an organization can take many forms, one of which is advertisements. Onah and Anikwe (2016) consider vacancy advertisements to be the main method of attracting candidates that meet the selection criteria. Nonetheless, this method, though most of the burden is carried by the advert, is passive in nature (Onah & Anikwe, 2016). The organization then forms the applicant pool. The larger the applicant pool, the better the recruitment results of qualified candidates (Lu Zhang & Gowan, 2008).

As mentioned before, there is not one way to attract and recruit employees. Those strategy combinations will vary depending on the targeted prospect employees. Therefore, with changes in demographics and organizational structures, for example, constant reevaluation of attraction methods is needed to ensure compatibility between the different elements and components of the talent management process as a whole.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Type

Collecting data for research is a prerequisite for the data analysis process. However, there are many ways to categorize data. One way is categorizing data based on the source, i.e., primary or secondary. This thesis is primarily dependent on the analysis of secondary data to produce valuable findings. *Secondary data* is defined as data compiled previously by a researcher and is now being used for a different purpose (Rabianski, 2003). On the other hand, *primary data* is defined as the data directly collected by the researcher for the topic being investigated (Rabianski, 2003).

In other words, primary data becomes secondary data after it is shared and submitted. As these are categories, there is no hierarchy with one being better than the other; the researcher identifies the suitable type for each research paper. Nonetheless, even if a researcher decides to mainly use primary data, secondary data is still used in the research, i.e., literature review. Literature reviews are used to provide the background knowledge needed for the researcher, and reader, to understand the arguments and justifications of the research (Arshed & Danson, 2015).

Amongst the numerous benefits of using secondary data is that it allows the use of shared knowledge to come up with new knowledge at lower financial and administration costs (Ruggiano & Perry, 2019). Additionally, storing data allows for development opportunities in the data management field (Boté & Térmens, 2019). To further add, secondary data has the strength of being mainly collected over time, i.e., longitudinal design (Davis-Kean & Jager, 2017). Long-Sutehall et al. (2010) suggest that most future researchers (postgraduates) can find value in using secondary data as it is "good" practice, and that the process to obtain an ethical approval may be too lengthy.

3.2. Ethics and the Re-use of Qualitative Secondary Data

As mentioned before, primary data becomes secondary data once it is collected and published. Nowadays, there are many ways for people to publish data, mainly digitally in this era. With the abundance of digitized data, the barriers to accessing information are continuing to diminish. Therefore, a lot of people make use of secondary data to conduct research. Publishing research based on secondary data can be seen as an ethical practice, since it generates more value and even reduces the burden on study participants (CAHSS Research Ethics Committee, 2020). Ruggiano and Perry (2019) indicated that some researchers find more objectivity in doing secondary research, as the person conducting the secondary research is not as emotionally invested in the data as the original researchers.

With this research being secondary research in nature, finding data would be the first step. Boté and Térmens (2019) indicates that getting the data needed to conduct secondary research analysis is not as straightforward as one might think and there are many questions surrounding the reuse of datasets. Boté and Térmens (2019) also adds that this issue is further exacerbated by the absence of established standards to use and validate the reuse of data (quantitative or qualitative). Going back to how data is now readily available online, another layer is added to this dilemma. CAHSS Research Ethics Committee (2020) highlights that guidelines to resolve ethical issues pertaining to the use of digitized (online) data are still in their preliminary stages.

These ethical concerns, however, differ depending on the type of data being reused in the secondary research analysis. In cases where the data in question is obtained from humans like interviews and surveys. A main issue that has been expressed by many scientific researchers is related to informed consent (Boté & Térmens, 2019). That is mainly because consent is one of the first steps sought to

conduct data from people. Another criticism surrounds the differences in the various contexts (social, cultural, political) under which the parent and second studies are conducted (Ruggiano & Perry, 2019). For this study, the social, cultural or political environments do not affect the study results to a large extent because the paper analyzes common themes *regardless* of the differences. Despite the criticisms towards secondary research analysis, Ruggiano and Perry (2019) state that some researchers have acknowledged the value secondary research adds to the body of knowledge and have provided recommendations to enable this method of research.

A set of recognized, yet new, principles is introduced to help solve this issue. These are the FAIR principles, which require the data being reused for research to be **f**indable, **a**ccessible, **i**nteroperable and **r**eusable (Wilkinson et al., 2016). Wilkinson et al. (2016) adds that the various elements of the four principles are related yet can be separated and discussed independently. As this is an attempt to counteract the ethical dilemmas, the FAIR principles are a guide to scholars and not, in and of themselves, a standard (Wilkinson et al.., 2016). This could be attributed to the fact that data is versatile and comes in many shapes and forms. Some data could be more challenging to find or access due to how sensitive it is. This thesis tries to fulfill the four requirements as follows:

- **F**indable: data used in this research were obtained from different resources. Some were open-access and were available to the public, while some were provided through institution portals. They also have DOIs (digital object identifier) or equivalents.

- **A**ccessible: that data that were open-access to everyone was accessible. In addition, the researcher had access to the data through institutional portals.

- **I**nteroperable: Boté and Térmens (2019) indicate metadata (data describing the

collected data) facilitate interoperability, as it gives context regarding the data (e.g., collection method). This research provides metadata where appropriate. Ruggiano and Perry (2019) indicate that though descriptiveness is needed, too much description may put respondents' identities in danger, and removing descriptions may affect the quality of data collected.

- **R**eusable: with data being available for download, the opportunity to use them arises. All the research papers and analyzed material were downloaded in PDF format.

All secondary data collected for this thesis were not un-coded as publishing such data would be a breach of the participants' privacy. One reason is that raw data is not always readily available. Boté and Térmens (2019) attempt to explain this by stating that sharing data does not advance a scholar's career; thus, providing researchers with less incentives to publish data. Boté and Térmens (2019) also highlight the fact that the FAIR principles may be viewed as a hurdle in some research fields due to the different forms of data that require some or more security. This means that certain types of data cannot be accessed by everyone, or at all.

This, however, is not the only attempt to provide guidance to researchers for conducting secondary data analysis (SDA). Ruggiano and Perry (2019) examined different SDA papers that were based on qualitative data, and concluded the following recommendations:

- To improve clarity and transparency by **1)** describing the SDA researcher's involvement in the parent studies; and **2)** clearly state the type of research (primary or secondary).
- To consider the ethical implications by **1)** clarify how the SDA obtained ethical approval or was exempted; and **2)** actions taken by the research to protect the

participants in the SDA (e.g., de-identification of data).

- To improve rigor and identify limitations in the SDA by **1)** describing steps taken to increase SDA rigor (e.g., peer debriefing); and **2)** stating the limitations faced while conducting the SDA.

3.3. Research Trustworthiness and Rigor

This section discusses the last recommendation in the previous section regarding rigor, or, otherwise, trustworthiness. In this section, both words will be used synonymously. Even though Bishop (2009) believes that the norms for sharing data are somewhat slowly changing due to organizations and polices promoting data sharing, not everyone has the same positive view. One criticism regards bias. This is mainly because a good number of researchers in the qualitative field have not adequately described the assumptions and methodology of the study, especially the data analysis process (Gunawan, 2015). For that matter, there needs to be a way to show that this research adds value.

In "quantitative" terms, this would be demonstrated through performing validity and reliability tests. The same tests, however, cannot be used for qualitative studies. For instance, a number of researchers believe that the "value" of qualitative research cannot be fully captured and explained through the *validity* and *reliability* alone (Amankwaa, 2016). Sandelowski (1997), on the other hand, did not consider *reliability* as a useful means to measure the quality of qualitative research and preferred *validity* and *trustworthiness* instead. One might start wondering, "why do scholars need to show that their study has or adds *value* to the research field?" Amankwaa (2016) explains that anything, including academic research papers, which is believed to hold low or no value, is perceived as something that is invalid, unreliable or even sometimes worthless.

Moreover, deciding on the research value and trustworthiness is not a one-sided process. Gunawan (2015) stated that when the *reader* judges a research paper to be trustworthy, is when a research study is actually considered *trustworthy*. It is almost like "trustworthiness is in the eye of the beholder." This means that when a paper is considered worthless, findings, as well, are not worth noticing (Amankwaa, 2016). Therefore, trustworthiness is very important. As is the case with many terms, the concept of trustworthiness has different definitions.

Polit and Beck (2018) define it as the extent to which a qualitative researcher is confident in their data and analysis processes, mainly assessed through using various criteria. Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduced those criteria (i.e., credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability) to aid the assessment of qualitative research trustworthiness. It is worth mentioning that a fifth criterion was added, i.e., authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Nonetheless, this thesis uses the original work (the four elements) to describe the trustworthiness of this thesis.

Connelly (2016) reiterated all the variables and connected them to their counterparts in quantitative research. By doing this step, quantitative researchers, who want to pursue a qualitative approach, will be able to better understand qualitative research trustworthiness, since it is linked to terms they are already exposed to. Nevertheless, since both methods of conducting research are different, the analogous terms are not going to be perfect synonyms with each other. **Table 1** illustrates the criteria, their definition, and their analogous quantitative terms (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Connelly, 2016).

Table 1. Trustworthiness Criteria and Equivalent Quantitative Terms

Trustworthiness Criterion	Definition	Equivalent Term
Credibility	Confidence in the 'truth' of the study, i.e., findings	Internal Validity
Dependability	Showing that study findings are consistent and could be repeated	Reliability
Confirmability	A degree of neutrality: the extent to which results are respondent-driven rather than researcher-driven	Objectivity
Transferability	Showing that study findings have applicability in other contexts	Generalization

Out of all the trustworthiness criteria, credibility is the most important (Polit & Beck, 2014). When a study is credible, the findings of the study show a clear link to the real world. While dependability shows how the findings of a study are consistent, the conditions surrounding the study depend on the nature of the study. Since qualitative research might tend to receive more criticism in general for potential bias, it is particularly important to show that "confirmability" exists. Whenever a study satisfies this condition, it means that the results are not driven by the researcher's bias, interest or motivations.

Since one of the goals of doing research is to provide benefits for others, a qualitative study that is generalizable is more likely to be preferred. However, the quantitative term (generalizability) is somewhat different, as statistical generalization is not the same as transferability (Connelly, 2016). With all these criteria, a question still remains; how can a researcher convince the reader that the study is trustworthy? Luckily, Amankwaa (2016) provides a protocol to trustworthiness. In the protocol, Amankwaa (2016) gives examples of techniques for each criterion. Since not all the techniques need to be present in each study (Connelly, 2016), the researcher will only

discuss the procedures pertaining to the current study. **Table 2** demonstrates the different techniques used for each criterion.

Table 2. Techniques used to Ensure Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness Criterion	Technique Used
Credibility	Peer debriefing
Dependability	Auditor
Confirmability	Journaling
Transferability	Thick description

Because the nature of each qualitative study is different, giving researchers more than one option to ensure trustworthiness provides flexibility that scholars need. Starting off with **credibility**, the researcher used peer debriefing. The researcher chose more than one individual (internal and external) to conduct these meetings with to get a more holistic view. Through the meetings, thoughts and ideas present at the time are discussed (Amankwaa, 2016). Those meetings can be documented electronically for later stages in the research. Internal peers are those with experience in the area of study, which in this case was the research supervisor. External peers, who preferred to stay anonymous, were also asked to provide input, since it can be more objective as they are not associated with field of study.

To ensure **dependability**, an auditor (i.e., supervisor) revised the paper before submitting it. For one, this is a requirement of Qatar University before submission. Secondly, the auditor should be familiar with the research process; thus, being able to provide constructive feedback. The auditor should also be informed in advance to plan the time needed to ensure the auditing process is not rushed or done in a hurry.

Regarding **confirmability**, the researcher tried to show that conclusions are data-driven by extensive journaling. In their work, Lincoln and Guba (1985) mention journaling as a technique in all four criteria. Consequently, the researcher journaled all the steps, but mainly made journal entries more detailed when conducting the thematic analysis of the selected research papers. Finally, **transferability** is demonstrated in the following section in which a thick description of the sample is shared. Nonetheless, the description provided does not allow for re-identification of any participant, as only relevant information (obtained from the articles) is listed.

3.4. Sample and Inclusion Criteria

There are many ways for a researcher to go about choosing a sample. Such flexibility allows researchers to achieve their intended study objectives, through choosing a sample that is suitable for the nature of research. One of the ways to choose a sample is purposive sampling, which means that the sample was not chosen randomly. Both the field and nature of this study warrant for a purposive sample (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). One might argue that a researcher that deliberately chooses the sample might end up with results that cannot be generalizable. To this, Teddlie and Yu (2007) explain that one of the aims of a nonprobability sample is to achieve representativeness or comparability. This could be done to represent a larger group, or to compare distinct types of cases (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

As mentioned earlier, the sample size for thematic analysis ranges between 2 and 400 (Braun & Clarke, 2013); a range is provided for the various categories (e.g., 6-10 for interviews, and 10-100 for secondary resources). Nonetheless, the way those numbers were arrived at does not seem to be clear. Fugard and Potts (2015) aim to provide a quantitative approach to finding sample sizes. It is worth mentioning that Fugard and Potts (2015) stress the fact that the method they present is a guide and

supports the decision-making process. This is not the only attempt to quantify the process of determining the sample size for thematic analyses. Other attempts decided on numbers that have worked in the "past," ignoring the particular circumstances of a study (Fugard & Potts, 2015). Not only that, but some methods do not work with certain sampling techniques. "*Theoretical saturation*," discussed by Glaser (1965), is a method that does not, for example, work with prospective studies.

The quantitative method set by Fugard and Potts (2015), requires the researcher to decide on the:

- **Power** (80, 90, 100%): which is the probability of finding the desired number of instances. Qualitative research tends to mainly use a power of 80%, which is the power going to be used in this study as well.

- **Theme prevalence** (in percentage): which is the lower threshold at which a theme is mentioned in the sample. To discover themes that involve most of the sample, a 30% threshold is recommended. In turn, choosing a lower threshold would be used if an academic is looking to discover as many themes as possible. The percentage chosen is, then, adjusted by answering this question "*How likely (in %) is it for a person, who has information to share about a theme, to actually share that information?*" Now, the threshold and expected appearance of a theme are then multiplied. For this study, the threshold is 20% and expected appearance is 100% since the sampling was purposive: 0.2 x 1.0=0.2 → 20%. The test can also be run again to find subthemes for studies with 100% expected prevalence.

- **Theme instance** (for least prevalent theme): which the least number of instances needed to consider a theme. For many studies, finding the theme once in the results is enough to record the theme. However, to better recognize a theme, two or more instances could be required. For this study, the number is four to five.

Taking all the aforementioned into consideration and using Fugard and Potts (2015) work presented in **Table 3**, the sample size should be between 27 and 33. The researcher then took the average (i.e., 30) as the sample size.

Table 3. Techniques used to Ensure Trustworthiness

Population theme prevalence (%)	Desired number of theme instances							
	1	2	3	4	5	10	20	30
5	32	59	85	110	134	249	471	687
10	16	29	42	54	66	124	234	343
15	10	19	28	36	44	82	156	228
20	8	14	21	27	33	61	116	170
25	6	11	16	21	26	49	93	136
30	5	9	14	18	21	40	77	113
35	4	8	12	15	18	34	66	96
40	4	7	10	13	16	30	57	84
45	3	6	9	11	14	26	50	74
50	3	5	8	10	12	24	45	66
55	3	5	7	9	11	21	41	60
60	2	4	6	8	10	19	37	55
65	2	4	6	7	9	18	34	50
70	2	4	5	7	8	16	31	46
75	2	3	5	6	8	15	29	43
80	1	3	4	6	7	14	27	40
85	1	3	4	5	7	13	25	37
90	1	2	4	5	6	12	23	35
95	1	2	3	4	6	11	22	33

The research papers were also chosen based on several inclusion criteria. When it comes to inclusion criteria, the researcher sets the criteria that suits the research, environment, and resources available. Though this might spark some controversy around subjectivity, explaining the reasoning behind the chosen criteria lessens the

probability of that happening. Additionally, providing thick descriptions will help other researchers conduct similar research, and will help the readers to decide the "trustworthiness" of the research. The inclusion criteria for this study are:

a) **Duration:** all the selected papers date back no more than 10 years (i.e., 2012). Within the human resource management domain, strategies do not change quickly. However, for fields, like technology, advancements may happen annually, which makes some strategies obsolete. Therefore, for this research, the ten years range is justifiable, as there are theories and strategies that prove effective to this day.

b) **Representation:** it is worth mentioning that even though this thesis's title has the word "global", i.e., the whole world, it is not always used like that. A company could be "global" even if does not have a branch in every country. Therefore, the selected papers cover as many regions as possible. Additionally, since some regions have similar environments, 1-2 countries from that region will be considered enough to represent that region.

c) **Language:** the papers collected should be in English or Arabic or translated to either language. Nonetheless, with most of the research being in English, the papers chosen are mainly in English. This could be attributed to the fact that most college-level education is delivered in English.

d) **Aim and ethics:** to further increase rigor of the study, the selected paper should aim to explicitly, or implicitly, discuss employee attraction strategies. Additionally, when needed, ethical approval should be obtained.

e) **Other aspects:** since this thesis aims to offer a basic understanding, papers (academic papers and thesis/dissertation) are chosen regardless of: university type (government/private/community college), age (year founded), size, country state.

3.5. Data Collection and Analysis

Through using Qatar Library website, Scopus and other platforms, only the articles that satisfied the inclusion criteria were used (n=30). The data collection process includes many steps which are discussed in this section. But first, **Table 4** provides descriptive data on the selected articles. To ensure thick descriptions, quotes or clues on the themes from articles were included. Themes are then discussed further.

Table 4. Articles and Themes Present in them

Title	Region	Theme/s Present	Quote/clue in the Article
Engaging Élitism: the Mediating Effect of Work Engagement on Affective Commitment and Quit Intentions in Two Australian University Groups	Australia	Brand	"Some universities rely on their élitism as one mechanism to attract and retain talented faculty" **Ferrer and Morris (2013)**
The ranking of Iranian universities based on an improved technique	Iran	Brand	"It can be concluded that high quality research … can boost the university's ranking and also attracts… faculties." **Ghane et al. (2013)**
The spin-off of elite universities in non-competitive, undifferentiated higher education systems: an empirical simulation in Italy	Italy	Brand	"…create the type of elite universities… capable of attracting the best faculty" **Abramo and D'Angelo (2014)**

Title	Region	Theme/s Present	Quote/clue in the Article
Expatriate academic staff in the United Arab Emirates: the nature of their work experiences in higher education institutions	UAE	Remuneration Facilities	"The tax-free status of salaries is attractive" "attractive university facilities and grounds" **Austin et al. (2014)**
Role of Taif University Administration in attracting talented academic contractors from the viewpoint of non-Saudi Academics	KSA	Work environment Remuneration Training/Development Management support	"The role of … Administration in attracting the talented academic… in: health insurance, social and moral support, vacations and promotions, development and scientific research support, salaries and incentives. **Farag (2015)**
"Pay, security, support and intention to quit relationship among academics in developing economy"	Bangladesh	Remuneration Management support	"The results showed that pay and supports were significant" **Joarder et al. (2015)**
Attracting, Recruiting, and Retaining Qualified Faculty at Community Colleges in Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	Work environment Remuneration Training/Development Facilities	Salary, training and development, capacity building, attractive package, research, promotions, flexibility, engagement in policy development" **Betts (2017)**
Talent Management: Attracting and retaining academic staff at selected public higher education institutions	South Africa	Remuneration Application mode	"…remuneration to be a key factor in attracting an academic" "The medium tends to influence the attraction…" **Kissoonduth (2017)**

Title	Region	Theme/s Present	Quote/clue in the Article
Management perceptions of a higher educational brand for the attraction of talented academic staff	South Africa	Work environment Brand Facilities	branding, Reputation, Organizational culture, vision, CSR, Work and surrounding environment **Saurombe et al. (2017)**
Translating tenure track into Swedish: tensions when implementing an academic career system	Sweden	Other	"…that tenure is a means to make the academic profession more attractive" **Henningsson et al. (2018)**
Factors relating to the attraction of talented early career academics in South African higher education institutions	South Africa	Work environment Brand Training/Development Other	Career development, contribute, branding, Flexibility, Job security, Innovation, Intellectual stimulation, apply skills, Autonomy **Lesenyeho et al. (2018)**
Talent management in transnational higher education: strategies for managing academic staff at international branch campuses	UAE, Armenia, Argentina, Vietnam, Malaysia	Remuneration Brand Training/Development Application mode Other	"Social platforms and referrals" "salaries" "Development" "Branding" "Research funding" "teaching awards" **Neri and Wilkins (2018)**
Academic & Managerial Talent in Universities: Examining the Applicability of Talent Management	Turkey	Work environment Training/Development Management support Other	"Administrations collaborations" "positive work environment" "developmental opportunities" "appreciation and recognition" **Akar (2019)**
Satisfaction of Teachers in job front of Higher Education: A Reality Check in Private Institutions of Bengaluru	Bengaluru	Remuneration	"Good reward system…in order to retain faculties and to attract more talented ones" **Srinidhi et al. (2019)**

Title	Region	Theme/s Present	Quote/clue in the Article
Scientific excellency model in Iran's higher education case study: Guilan university of medical sciences	Iran, Singapore	Remuneration Brand Training/Development Management support	"Top universities attract students and faculty" "management, budgets, and funding…to attract outstanding professors" "incentives are also required…" **Hoseini Moghadam et al. (2020)**
A talent value proposition framework for academic staff in a South African HEI	South Africa	Work environment Remuneration Brand Training/Development Management support Other	"Organizational Branding…" "Remuneration…main elements that constitute an attractive EB for academic staff members" **Saurombe and Barkhuizen (2020)**
Academic talent: Perceived challenges to talent management in the South African higher education sector	South Africa	Work environment Remuneration Brand Training/Development	"…salary packages including benefits are the main source of strengths in terms of its talent attraction" "…the reputation of the institution, research output and innovation" **Musakuro and Klerk (2021)**
Quest for Ranking Excellence: Impact Study of Research Metrics	India	Brand	"Institutions must have a place in the ranking to attract students, faculty" **Pakkan et al. (2021)**
What Are the Signs of a University on the Rise?	USA	Facilities	"State-of-art facilities" "achieving R2 status" **Arp (2022)**
How sustainable human resources management helps in the evaluation and planning of employee loyalty and retention: Can social capital make a difference?	Spain	Work environment	"Thus, employees are attracted to organizations that care about social issues and work to solve them" **Cachón-Rodríguez et al. (2022)**

Title	Region	Theme/s Present	Quote/clue in the Article
The Contribution of Information Technology to Enhancing the Professional Comfort of a University Professor: An exploratory study	Jordan	Work environment	Rough translation "professional comfort affects the extent to which human resources, talented employees, are attracted to work in such places" **Defoun and Sara (2022)**
Role of Digital Human Resource Management in Achieving competitive advantage: October 6 University and The British University in Egypt case studies	Egypt	Application mode	Rough translation "results showed that digital recruitment was highly applied and achieved the results wanted, i.e., attracting talented individuals" **El-Badawy (2022)**
A data analytics approach for university competitiveness: the QS world university rankings	Mexico, USA, Argentina, Chile, Brazil	Brand	"Many institutions have turned to position themselves well in university rankings as a way to attract the best academic" **Estrada-Real and Cantu-Ortiz (2022)**
Philanthropy and the sustaining of global elite university domination	UK	Brand	"Philanthropy is a critical differentiator because it enables elite universities to … attract highly qualified students, faculty and powerful supporters" **Harvey et al. (2022)**
Let nine universities blossom: opportunities and constraints on the development of higher education in China	China	Brand	"…reputation and rankings. The ascendancy of … has positioned China to attract top-tier faculty" **Hartley and Jarvis (2022)**

Title	Region	Theme/s Present	Quote/clue in the Article
An Analysis of the Faculty's Compensation Package and Part-Time Employment Policies: The Global Competitive Advantage of Higher Education in Singaporean and South Korean Universities	Singapore, South Korea	Remuneration	"… compensation package … effectively promote the retention and recruitment of outstanding faculty" **Huang C. K. et al. (2022)**
Respect and Trust: A Case Study of Higher Education Pay Scales in the United Kingdom	UK	Remuneration	"Salary is one of several factors that attract academics" **Huang Y. H. et al. (2022)**
Innovations in the Personnel and Pay System for National University Corporations in Japan	Japan	Work environment Remuneration	"… salary system, changing the age structure of teachers… these measures could help attract diverse and outstanding talents" **Lee and Yang (2022)**
A framework development for talent management in the higher education sector	South Africa	Brand Management support Other	"… utilize talent management as a strategic method to attract and retain professionals" "EVP, brand, communication and marketing" **Musakuro (2022)**
An Empirical Investigation of the Higher Educational Institutions' Attractiveness as an Employer	India	Work environment Remuneration Brand Training/Development Other	Salary, job security, promotional opportunities, working environment, training and development, recognition, brand **Prakash et al. (2022)**

Based on the inclusion criteria, **Table 5** provides a simple summary on the sample in terms of the publication year of the papers, the regions covered, and the languages of the research papers.

Table 5. Summary of the Sample

Publication	Region				Language
2013: 2	Bangladesh	Argentina	Chile	Turkey	Arabic
2014: 2	Sierra Leone	Vietnam	Brazil		English
2015: 2	South Korea	Malaysia	India		
2017: 3	South Africa	USA	Mexico		
2018: 3	Bengaluru	Iran	Jordan		
2019: 2	Singapore	Italy	China		
2020: 2	Australia	UAE	Spain		
2021: 2	Sweden	KSA	Egypt		
2022: 12	Armenia	UK	Japan		

This chapter is titled "collection and analysis" because those two actions were not done separately. Unlike dealing with numerical data that needs to be collected first and *then* analyzed, qualitative data can be analyzed as it is *being* collected – though not all the data. The second chapter discussed the steps to the thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013), this section only describes how those steps were performed:

The first step is to **transcribe and get familiar** with the dataset. Since the data is collected from published articles, there was no need to transcribe the data, nor were the transcriptions needed for this thesis. The researcher directly started getting immersed in the data by reading it and re-reading it multiple times. Every time the researcher read a paper; initial ideas were noted down. These notes served as a

reference and a guide, too. To get better results and avoid fatigue, the intervals between the reading and re-reading stages were dispersed enough to allow for effective reading and avoid forgetting the data. The time spent reading was also noted and ranged between 3-5 hours a day (not consecutive). Again, this is done to avoid fatigue, since this research is mainly carried out by one researcher.

Now that the researcher is familiar with the data, it becomes possible to **generate initial codes**. Though the steps of thematic analysis are discussed separately, they are not necessarily separate when applied. In the previous step, the researcher took note of initial ideas – these could serve as codes. However, looking at the notes on all the papers at once would be draining. This is where technology comes to the rescue – NVivo. This is a software that helps researchers keep track of codes, among other features. As the researcher was reading the data, interesting information found in the papers, that related to the topic, was highlighted. Those pieces were then put to NVivo to generate codes. All those codes were data-driven and not predetermined by the researcher.

With the codes ready, initial **search for themes** commences. Just like the search for codes, searching for potential themes requires looking at all the relevant data gathered. NVivo is also used in this step. As a matter of fact, it is used in the following two steps as well. This step, probably, required the most effort. That is because data-driven codes do not have predetermined themes to be grouped in. This means that the possibilities are endless; the researcher can sort the codes in different ways. This is what ended up happening. The number of themes and codes within the themes changed several times. In this case, a researcher can use the help of another research/s. Nonetheless, once codes are grouped into prospect themes, other steps become easier. During this stage, a "miscellaneous" theme was also added to themes, to account for

themes that were not mentioned enough. Those themes generated are called parent themes. If a researcher finds, or searches for, sub-themes (child themes) within the parent themes, another analysis needs to take place.

The analysis is almost done. The researcher now takes some time to **review the generated themes**. Since mistakes can happen, it is important to review the themes. There are two levels to this review process. Level 1 is when the themes are reviewed from the inside. Meaning that the themes are checked for coherence. If a researcher feels that the codes within the themes do not form a strong theme, then it is better to go back to the previous step. In this research, the codes were reviewed and proved to make coherent themes. Level 2 is when the reviewed themes are compared against the whole data set and whether it represents the meanings intended. As a person is coding and writing down interesting ideas, some ideas might be interesting, but are not related to the aim of the research, or do not accurately represent the collected information. In this stage, the researcher also decided to remove the themes that were present but not in the required frequency and put them under the "other" theme.

Throughout the whole process, the themes are not yet named. Once the themes are chosen and reviewed, the researcher begins to **define or name the themes**. Up until this stage, "it is not too late" to refine the analysis. The researcher still has the chance to fix the previous codes and themes if needed. This is to ensure that the overall story the research is trying to sell to the reader is well "narrated." When the researcher is satisfied with the themes generated, names can be generated. After the themes were identified in NVivo, the "rename" feature was used to assign the final names to the themes. When choosing the names for the themes, the researcher made sure that the title captured the essence of the items within the theme. Additionally, the names were very long in the beginning. The researcher tried to make the names concise keeping in

mind that the name should be an umbrella to the codes within.

Though the steps actually stop at the earlier stage, (Braun & Clarke, 2013) still include "**produce final report**" as the final step. This step, as the name suggests, is when the final report is produced. One of the many features of NVivo is that it provides a table with the themes' summary and a visual representation of those themes (in **Appendix A**). With such knowledge, the author is then able to relate the findings of the thematic analysis back to the research question/s or literature review. Linking these pieces of information allows for a more comprehensive view, which would allow the reader to get immersed in the text and see the value of the research.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter aims to increase the rigor of this research by discussing the results in a more analytical manner. Based on said findings, the researcher provides some implications to the targeted stakeholder group/s to use the outcomes of this research.

4.1. Themes Identification

Chapter 3 provided a step-by-step guide on the means used (thematic analysis) to arrive at the main themes. This section discusses the important findings of the thematic analysis. **Table 6** illustrates the different themes and their frequency in the (30) papers chosen. Though there are themes that were repeated three times, they did not make it to the last table. Even though these themes were not repeated enough, they were combined and pointed out when found in the research body.

Table 6. Frequency of Themes

Theme Name	Frequency
Work environment and culture	21
Remuneration	19
Brand	18
Training and development	13
Management support	7
Facilities	4
Application mode	4
Others	
Job security	3
Recognition	3
Tenure	1
Marketing	1

4.1.1. Theme (1): Work environment and culture

At the top of the list is work environment and culture. This theme started as two separate themes (work environment and organizational culture). However, as answers from the papers started to overlap, the decision was taken to merge both themes into one. This might explain its prevalence in the data. It is also worth mentioning that in some papers, the theme has been mentioned via more than one code. For instance, the 2018 paper conducted in South Africa has more than two codes relating to this theme. Some codes reappeared more than one time, making it qualified to be a sub-theme.

Nonetheless, this thesis only focuses on the identification of main themes only. It is also one of the few themes that has been mentioned throughout the earlier years. This could show that it is an important aspect that attracts talented faculty members. When counting the percentage of how many times this theme appeared in individual papers (n=11), this theme is present in 36.67% of the papers. To increase transparency, this theme includes codes that mentioned *working environment* verbatim, or words like "flexible working hours, corporate social responsibility, strategic vision."

4.1.2. Theme (2): Remuneration

There is no doubt that remuneration would be at the top. This theme includes both monetary and nonmonetary aspects. This might explain its high prevalence in the collected data. Though the data includes both developed and developing countries, the remuneration theme appeared in both categories. However, this is not to be understood as faculty members around the world want a certain level of compensation. Some papers discussed how "above average" pay is desired, while others did not specify. Just like the previous main theme, sub-themes can be looked for within the data to produce more insights. Talking percentage wise, this theme was present in 14 individual papers, accounting for almost 47% of the papers.

This interesting comparison can allow for a different classification of the papers. As was the case with Theme (1), this theme was spread across countries, across years, signaling its importance. The most prevalent word to describe this theme was "salary." Other phrases and words included "compensation, incentives, pay." The theme also had some nonmonetary aspects to it. Words like "vacations, reward, recruitment packages" also appeared in the text. It is also worth noting that salary was also an attraction point for international faculty. This can indicate that this is, in fact, a "global overview."

4.1.3. Theme (3): Brand

As **Table 5** presents, this theme seems to be a persistent one, too, as it was mentioned throughout papers since 2013. This could show that the brand of a university has been and still is very important to faculty members. It is important to point out that not all the papers used the same ranking system when discussing the "brand" image of a university. This, however, does not change the fact that faculty members care about the rank and brand image of the university. As a matter of fact, the theme "brand" was present in more than half of the sample, i.e., 53%. The word "elite" also appeared to describe the reputable universities.

Other words or phrases that fall under this theme include: "reputation, image, ranking." Some papers also discussed how important rankings and the brand image are to other stakeholders, e.g., students and governments. Nonetheless, those were not considered in the codes for this theme as they do not pertain to the research questions of this study. As is the case with the earlier theme (remuneration), this was also considered a selling point for faculty members from outside the country. As a matter of fact, some of the ranking systems discussed allocate a percentage to the ability to attract foreign faculty and students as part of the "attractiveness" of a university.

4.1.4. Theme (4): Training and development

Though this theme was also present throughout many of the studies in the sample, it was a little bit more scattered compared to the previous themes. When it comes to talented workers, being able and willing to use skills without getting the chance to actually use such skills is a big obstacle. That is because talented workers would want to improve their skills and work on improving their performance. The importance of training and development could also be attributed to the changes and new emergent technologies. With the world moving in a more digitalized direction, having the required knowledge to use such technologies becomes very essential.

In this theme, being able to conduct research was considered a relevant code. This might not be applicable in other industries that are not very research oriented. Yet, many organizations are moving in the direction of research and development (R&D). Additionally, one of the papers discussed a possible correlation between this theme and the previous theme (brand). That is, when talented faculty members produce quality research (development), the rank (brand) of the university also increases. In this study, the correlation between the two themes was not explored, as it was mentioned by one study only, and is beyond the scope of the paper.

4.1.5. Theme (5): Management Support

All the previous themes were greatly present in the sample. Starting from this theme, frequency ranges between 7 and 4 times. The sample chosen for this study found managerial support as an attractive aspect of a university. "Support" here does not refer to the spoken words that any organization can promise its employees. It means the actual "help" that employees get. Part of this theme could be related to other aspects like supporting the development of employees. It is worth noting that this theme was present in many papers conducted in developing countries, e.g., KSA, Bangladesh.

Management support in general can be executed in various ways. It can be as simple as communicating effectively with employees or as complex as providing feedback on performance. Because support for the administration can take many shapes and forms, the papers expressed this theme differently. For instance, one of the papers (Akar, 2019) considered administration collaborations as a form of managerial support. On the other hand, a research paper stated that in addition to attracting prospect talent. the management support level can contribute to the decision of leaving the university (Joarder et al., 2015). Other papers mentioned management support without further specifications on what it actually refers to.

4.1.6. Theme (6): Facilities

Facilities in this thesis refer to the facilities provided and a university building and the building itself. Though the physical building does not necessarily translate to better results, it attracts both faculty and students. It is important to note that facilities could hold more significance to some colleges and fields than others. Aspects of this theme include how spacious the university campus is. Betts (2017) reported that a university that has capacity buildings has the upper hand when it comes to attracting talented faculty members. To further add, Saurombe et al., (2017) counted the surrounding environment as an attractive factor for faculty members.

With many universities around the world being set up under different circumstances, the physical elements to the job do not seem to heavily affect how attractive a university is. This could be due to the fact that faculty members might not spend that much time in the physical building. Therefore, they could forgo it being somewhat "okay." However, it is not the case for all departments. Arp (2022) indicated that the state-of-art facilities of its health science campus aided in attracting faculty members. This might explain the bare minimum frequency for this theme (n=4).

4.1.7. Theme (7): Application mode

This is the last theme extracted from the data. Again, with a minimum appearance of four times across all 30 pages, this theme does not seem to have a great weight on the decision-making process of candidate faculty. The papers that included a code on this theme mainly discussed digital means to recruit faculty members. El-Badawy (2022) discussed how the study results showed that digital recruitment assisted with attracting talented individuals. This could be attributed to how technology is becoming more and more important in the day-to-day operations of organizations. It could be assumed, then, that talented workers would want to work with organizations that are up to date with the technologies and methods of conducting work. How would prospect faculty members know that? Recruitment would be the answer, as it could be considered as the first interaction with the organization and can indicate many things.

Another application mode that was discussed was the use of referrals. When studying different universities and discussing their selling points, recruitment through referrals was mentioned as great way to attract talented faculty members (Neri & Wilkins, 2018). Neri and Wilkins (2018) added that recruitment through social platforms is also a strategy that universities use to gain advantage and attract faculty members. Based on the aforementioned, one can conclude that the medium used during the application process influences the level of attractiveness to a university. Additionally, using technology in the recruitment process can lessen the work of the human resource personnel. Not only that, but some talented individuals might tend to not be users of the traditional recruitment ways. In this case, if universities want to reach this population and win the "war," they need to adopt such methods. As a matter of fact, there is a trend towards eHRM, otherwise known as electronic human resource management. However, this topic would need to be explored more.

Proving a visual representation of data can greatly help readers. **Figure 2** shows the reoccurrence percentage of the main seven themes.
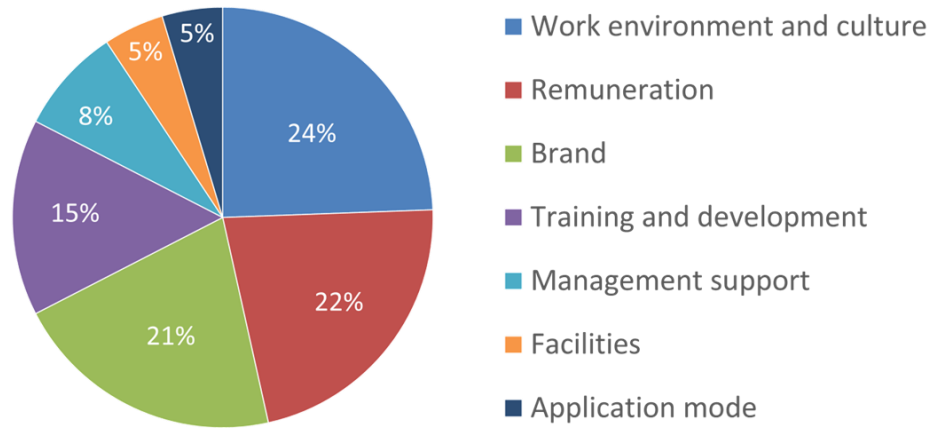

Figure 2. Reoccurrence of Themes in the Sample

4.1.8.   Other themes

To make the insights applicable to at least 20% of the sample, only themes mentioned 4 times, and more were considered. The four themes that did not satisfy the criteria are: job security, recognition, tenure and marketing. The closest to becoming a theme were the first two. This could be an interesting topic to pursue by future researchers through changing the specifications of the study.

4.2. Implications

Findings alone do not provide as much value as when they are used to derive implications. The implications of this thesis lie in the results as they may help in the development of strategies to attract talented faculty members in the context of higher education in different countries. The findings will also aim to aid university officials in introducing new strategies or enhancing the employee attraction processes that are already in place. Other organizations with similar aims and purposes can also benefit from the findings of this study, e.g., educational institutions. Some of the findings are

general and can apply to other sectors that use human resource management practices.

Additionally, this study provides guidelines for the different levels of a university. Managers and department coordinators could look at the findings and decide on practices that would work and those that would not. The reason this part of the thesis emphasizes the fact that implications are for all the different levels within the organization is that some strategies require effort from all parts of the organization while others do not. For instance, the university could claim that they have an innovation-oriented culture. If department heads and other people further down the organization chart do not believe in this orientation or not practice, there would not be much importance of having a "strong" culture. On the other hand, salary and recruitment packages are decided on by the officials at the top and the HR managers.

Since this thesis enriches the existing body of knowledge, it may increase the exposure of university leaders to various talent management strategies. When leadership in universities are familiar with more talent management strategies (e.g., employee attraction), they will be able to make more informed decisions. Informed decisions in turn will increase the likelihood of successfully implementing those strategies. Though this thesis does not provide specific solutions to universities that are struggling, it serves as a great starting point as it provides the main areas those universities should look into. So, what do the findings "imply"? Though different players can benefit from this research, this section focuses on human resource departments within universities, as they are the ones responsible for overseeing the strategies related to the research topic – attracting talented employees. When human resource managers/ officials try to plan for strategies to attract talented faculty members, they should start by paying attention to their culture and environment.

As is expected, strong cultures have more effect on employees. With a culture

that allows faculty members to use their talents, organizations can expect to find and attract talented prospective employees. Additionally, the research implies that intangible benefits provided to talented faculty members tend to have more power in swaying the decision to join a certain university. With faculty members discussing time flexibility, universities can find ways to make the work-life balance as balanced as possible. Nonetheless, unlike other occupations, options like working from home might not be as attainable. This was evident through the Covid-19 pandemic. However, a survey could be administered to both students and faculty to see if there is demand for online classes. Based on the results of that survey, universities can arrive at suitable solutions.

As for remuneration, it is not necessarily about money. As this study aimed to give a holistic overview, the data collected only considered the main themes. The papers discussed both financial and non-financial aspects of rewards. The reason non-financial were also considered in this theme was to try and account for contexts with monetary and resources restraints. The research papers also tried to provide more representation by providing evidence that even international faculty members are attracted by monetary aspects. The list of findings also implies that talented faculty members have different needs. Universities that think the resources are a restraint, could count on the other themes to attract talented workers.

Working on the brand and rank of the university could be another means for those universities. As a matter of fact, unlike salary that can be copied by other universities, the image of the university is not as easy to mimic. Therefore, higher education human resources management departments are encouraged to find ways to be perceived as "elite" by prospective applicants. Another mainly non-monetary theme is the management support. Though not many research papers mentioned management

support, it is fair to assume that the other strategies are not achievable without proper support from leaders. To further add, universities that would like to attract talented faculty members and have the needed resources can opt for the "training and development" route. Therefore, human resource managers could ensure that talented workers are continuously challenged and are able to use their skills.

In some instances, having state-of-the-art facilities can support the training and development of workers, and could be an attractive aspect in and of itself. The rest of the findings do not suffice to provide valuable implications. This mission could be left for future researchers. It is also worth noting that a good proportion of the studies collected for this research are conducted in South Africa. This could be due to the county's increasing interest in education, in general, and higher education in particular.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

5.1. Conclusion

As the world is moving forward, priorities of countries will change too. A noteworthy shift is the focus on knowledge-based economies, where people's brains are where the value lies. Though reforms to the different levels of education would all help in becoming a knowledge-based economy, focusing on the prospective employees (students in higher education) could be a more strategic step. One of the reasons to ensure that students in higher education are succeeding, is to provide them with talented faculty. In other words, universities should aim to attract talented faculty members.

The stronger the higher education sector within a country is, the more chance it has of competing in the world of knowledge-based economies. The increased competitiveness could lead to social mobility and economic growth. Nonetheless, with this being a global trend, competition intensifies and the war on talent increases. This creates challenges that can mainly be overcome by long-term, far-sighted decision-making. Preparedness of different countries is somewhat dependent on resource availability. So, variations appear when comparing developed and developing countries. Those who can allocate resources and have more institutional autonomy are more prepared.

Yet, there are some issues that all countries can work on regardless of resource allocation, such as talent management (TM). Issues relating to TM, therefore, should be a top priority for many universities and institutions. For that matter, this research is set to identify the strategies universities round the world use to attract talented faculty members. The word "world" in this thesis means countries representing most regions and not necessarily every country on the globe. The researcher started by collecting relative papers to analyze them through *thematic analysis*.

The results of this study revealed seven themes which are: work environment and culture, remuneration, brand, training and development, Management support, facilities, and application mode. The analysis yielded more themes, but those did not qualify the analysis criteria. The findings provided valuable insights to HR managers in particular, and any organization with a similar context. Managers need to have the strategic foresight needed to make the work environment more attractive; thus, making the university more competitive and contribute to the sustainability of higher education institutions though the talented knowledge workers (i.e., talented academic staff).

5.2. Limitations

As the perfect research does not exist yet, this thesis had some limitations. With the analysis being carried out by mainly one researcher, the time was very crucial. Since the thematic analysis requires reading and rereading the data, there was a time constraint. Another time-related limitation is obtaining the ethical approval (IRB). Ethical approvals are needed for primary research dealing with human subjects. Primary research can provide empirical findings that are more specific. To avoid delays, a secondary research approach was decided on. With secondary research, the researcher cannot always go back to the participants to ask further follow-up questions.

Additionally, because the paper provided a comprehensive approach to give a general look, some patterns and strategies specific to a certain region could have been missed. Furthermore, with the researcher only speaking two languages, and not all papers have translations, other valuable insights could have been lost. Having more researchers who speak other languages could help solve this problem. Though the sample tried to represent the population as much as possible, increasing the sample size could provide more insights into the themes. Moreover, the age of the sample was limited to 10 years only. Increasing the duration may help in understanding patterns.

5.3. Future Research

In the light of the conclusions, it can be recommended that future researchers look for sub themes within the parent themes in this study. This can be done through redoing the same analysis with the aim of finding connections between codes within the same theme. Other researchers can also compare these same themes and test whether repetition of a theme indicates how important it is (i.e., its weight). Furthermore, future academic researchers could conduct primary research and try to find whether patterns and results would be similar to the current findings.

With how general the aim of this thesis was since it aims to serve as a starting point for future case studies and research papers, future researchers can choose a group of countries (region), university type (public, private, community), demographic (gen z, millennials), or even study a certain academic field (medicine, business) in a university to analyze for strategies used to attract talented faculty members. For researchers who want to pursue a general approach, increasing the sample sizes would most likely produce more coherent results and support the findings of this study.

During the search process, academic papers about attracting talented faculty members in the Qatari context were not found. This highlights a new gap and opens door for upcoming papers. Future researchers could construct a survey based on the findings of this study and distribute it to faculty members in Qatar University, for example. This will help paint a clearer picture and fill in the gap of scarce research efforts in the region. Additionally, the questionnaire can test for mediating effects of age (gen z) or even culture.

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Visual representation of themes hierarchy (the bigger the area the higher the theme is in the hierarchy). In addition, a word cloud to show word frequency within codes is presented as well.