DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH FOCUS AREAS FOR MASTER’S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES 2025

**FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC HUMAN RESOURCE AND ORGANISATIONAL STUDIES**

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| **Department** | | | Department of Public Administration and Management | |
| **Discipline** | | | Public Administration | |
| **Research Focus Area** | | | **Public Human Resource and Organisational Studies** | |
| **Capacity for 2025** | | | **9 masters students & 3PhD’s** | |
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| **Supervision Team details:** | **Academic Profile** | | | **Capacity** |
| **Prof NI Makamu**  **(Contact person for this focus area)**  **E-Mail :** [**emakamni@unisa.ac.za**](mailto:emakamni@unisa.ac.za)    **Physical address:**  Nkoana Simon Radipere Building,  Room 4-98 | Preller Street | Muckleneuk | Pretoria | 0002 | *Prof. Makamu Ntsako Idris (D Phil, M-Tech, B-Tech, ND: Public Administration), is currently an Associate Professor at University of South Africa. Prior joining the academic fraternity, he worked as a Technical Coordinator: Human Resource for the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) responsible for technical support at the Department of Health. Prof Makamu has more than 8 year’s corporate experience where he specialized in strategic Human resource management, financial management and research management. He had worked for the Department of Water Affairs, Department of Education, Tshwane University of Technology, and United Nations Breweries, Foundation for professional development before joining the academic fraternity at North-West University in the year 2013. He obtained his M-Tech and all undergraduate qualifications at Tshwane University of Technology and his Doctor of Philosophy: Public Administration at North-West University. Prof Makamu’s research interest is in Human Resource Management with special focus on Performance Management, Training and Development and Monitoring and Evaluation. He has published number of research papers in accredited journals accredited by DHET and further presented and published papers at both international and local conferences.* | | | **0 PhD’s**  **0 Masters** |
| **Prof EJ Van Der Westhuizen**  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-91  Email: [vdwesej@unisa.ac.za](mailto:vdwesej@unisa.ac.za) | Prof EJ Van der Westhuizen is currently a full professor of Public Administration in the Department of Public Administration and Management at the University of South Africa (UNISA). He received his DAdmin in Public Administration from UNISA in1993. He joined the teaching profession in 1988 following a career in human resources in the public service. He has authored numerous articles for local as well as international journals. In South Africa his articles have appeared in *Politeia, Administratio Publica, Acta Criminologica, Publico* and *Progressio*. He has addressed numerous international and local conferences He has also completed different study tours in Europe, including countries such as England, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Hungary. He has been appointed as external examiner (guest lecturer) at the University of Mauritius for the BSc (Hons) Management Studies Programme and as member of the Board of Examiners of the Centre for Professional Development and Lifelong Learning at the same institution. He has also done numerous book reviews on different textbooks in the Public Administration field and edited books for publishers. Prof van der Westhuizen is registered as Master HR Professional with the South African Board for People Practices. He has supervised dissertations and theses of several masters and doctorate students. Prof van der Westhuizen is a contributor to several books and conference publications. He is also editor of a popular publication *Human resource management in Government: A South African perspective on theories, politics and processes* (2016 ed. 2021 ed.) | | | **0 PhD’s**  **0 Masters** |
| **Prof P Hlongwane**  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-103  Email: [hlongp@unisa.ac.za](mailto:hlongp@unisa.ac.za) | Prof P Hlongwane is an associate professor in the Department of Public Administration and Management. | | | 4 Masters  2 PhD’s |
| **DR V Louw**  Office: Nkoana Simon Radipere 4-114  Email: [louwvn@unisa.ac.za](mailto:louwvn@unisa.ac.za) | Ms V Louw is currently a senior lecturer in the Department of Public Administration and Management at Unisa. She joined the teaching profession in 2006 following a career in human resources at South Cape College in George. She has authored numerous accredited articles for local journals. In South Africa her articles have appeared in *JOPA, Administratio Publica,* and *Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA*). Her research interest include governance, human resource management, organisational development, and equity. Dr Louw is a contributor to one book and various conference publications. | | | 3 Masters  1 PhD’s |
| **Ms Khanya Mmatshepo** | Ms MP Khanya, hold a Master’s in Public Administration, honours in Public Management & Governance and BA Politics. She is a lecturer with over 8 years’ experience in higher learning institution (occupying various positions). Ms Khanya is an emerging researcher with a keen interest in HRM, Policy and local government. She presented at local and international conferences and co-published an article and book chapter. | | | 2 masters |
| **Model of supervision** | Candidates will be allocated to a supervisor but will be required to work independently within the requirements of higher degree studies. Additionally, the candidate will have to present his/her work to a panel of academic at colloquia. Additionally, the candidate should submit his/her work to be reviewed by a blind peer review process. | | | |
| **Selection criteria: Master’s/Doctorate** | In addition to the admission criteria contained in the myChoice brochure, potential students are required to prepare a **five-page** expression of interest essay describing the following:  1. Suitable topic aligned to a focus area  2. Introduction and background ((½ page)  3. Problem statement ((½ page)  4. Brief literature review (1 page)  5. Research questions and objectives  6. Research Methodology (½ to 1 page)  7. Motivation for the study (½ page)  8. Contribution to the discipline (½ page)  9. List of references  Use of recent literature is compulsory. Sources should not be older than 5 years. | | | |
| **Selection Procedure** | Refer to the qualification website for selection procedure. | | | |
| **Research scope** | Meaning of human resource management (HRM)  Management perspectives in the HRM field  Responsibilities of public human resource managers  Institutional roles of public human resource managers  HRM as an integrated process  Theoretical perspectives and the HRM discipline  Fourth Industrial Revolution and HRM (digital connectivity, upscaling of communication, prediction of outcomes, measuring of impact, workforce of the future, role of government)  Recruitment and selection of people. Recruitment policies and practices in the selection of competent and qualified candidates  Performance management improves employees’ performance and translates into better service delivery. Effectiveness of the performance management and development system in the public service  General human resource management (HRM)  HRM and public service motivation. Personnel motivation and public service delivery  Gender studies and HRM  Strategic human resource management (succession planning, workforce planning, change and HRM)  Equalising opportunities by means of affirmative action – public workplace  Career management in the public sector  Reflections on public learning programmes (problem-based learning, case studies, portfolios, storytelling, role-play, mentoring, demonstrations, group work, critical debate, professional enquiry, E-learning, mobile learning, social media, massive open online courses, open educational resources, educational games, webinars and lifelong learning)  Compensation in the public sector  Establishing and maintaining of wellness (psychosocial hazards, ergonomics and workplace design, work-life balance, work overload, fatigue, stress and bullying)  Employment relations (handling of disputes, handling of strikes, structures for collective bargaining/negotiation)  Termination and the public employee (retirement, resignations, ill-health, operational requirements, causes of dismissals, fairness of dismissals, dismissal - employee’s conduct, dismissal – employee’s capacity, dismissal – operational requirements)  Role of political leadership in a dynamic and changing environment (Mandela era, Mbeki era, Zuma era, Ramaphosa era)  Human resource development. Training influences employees’ performance  Attracting and retaining of academic talent  Effect of educators’ qualifications on learner performance  Transforming training in the South African public service  HRM in the developed world (USA, UK, Australia, etc.)  HRM in the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)  Traditional determinants of HRM in BRICS countries  HRM in Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa)  HRM and colonialism/decolonisation  Human resource governance and metrics | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Subject Field** | **This is a selection of articles and/or recent books in this research focus area. ‎Further reading over and above these is essential:**  Amos, T, Ristow, A, Ristow, L & Pearse, N. 2016. *Human resource management*.  4th ed. Cape Town: Juta.  Beniwal, VS & James, BD. 2019. Women in Indian Public Administration: Prospects and challenges. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance* 9(3): 210–224.  Berman, EM, Bowman, JS, West, JP & Van Wart, MR. 2020. *Human resource management in public service: Paradoxes, processes, and problems.* 6th ed. London: Sage.  Denhardt, RB & Perkins, J. 2018. *The coming death of administrative man – diversity and affirmative action in public service.* New York: Taylor and Francis.  Denhardt, RB, Denhardt, JV & Aristigueta, MP. 2019. *Managing human*  *behaviour in public and non-profit organizations.* 5th ed. Los Angeles: Sage.  Dresang, Dennis L. 2017. *Personnel management in government agencies and nonprofit organizations.* 6th ed. New York: Routledge.  Florentine, Sharon. 2019. Diversity and inclusion: 8 best practices for  changing your culture. *CIO – The Wall Street Journal* [https://www.cio.com/ article/3262704/diversity-and-inclusion-8-best-practices-for-changingyour-culture.html].  Grogan, John, Maserumule, P & Govindjee, A. 2017. *Juta’s annual labour law update 2017.* Cape Town: Juta.  Hill, M & Hupe, p. 2014. *Implementing public policy: An Introduction to the study of operational governance.* Los Angeles: Sage  Holmqvist, M & Spicer, 2013. *Managing human resources by exploiting and exploring people’s potentials.* Bingley: Emerald  Kamoche, K. 2003. *Managing human resources in Africa.* New York: Routledge  Lee, GJ. 2011. *HR metrics Practical measurement tools for people management.* Randburg: Knowres  Mello, DM. 2014. *Managing human capital in the public sector.* Pretoria: Van Schaik  Naff, KC, Riccucci, NM & Freyss, SF. 2014. *Personnel management in government: Politics and process.* London: CRC  Nel, PS, Kirsten, M, Swanepoel, BJ, Erasmus, BJ & Poisat, P. 2012. *South African employment relations: Theory and practice.* Pretoria: Van Schaik  Nel, W. 2013. *Human resources management.* 2013. Cape Town: Oxford  Ng, ES, Lyons, ST & Schweitzer, L. 2012. *Managing the new workforce: International perspectives on the millennial generation.* Northampton: Edward Elgar  Nigro, LG, Nigro, FA & Kellough, JE. 2007. *The new public personnel administration.* Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth  Shafritz, RB. 2014. Introducing public administration. Harlow: Pearson  Sreejith, SS. 2015. The X factor that can help to motivate Generation Y: Performance evaluation in IT needs to move from the manufacturing model. *Human Resource Management International Digest* 23(1): 32-34  Thornhill, C. 2013. *JJN Cloete’s South African Public Administration and Management.* Pretoria: Van Schaik  Thornhill, Chris, Van Dijk, Gerda & Ile, Isioma. 2014. *Public administration & Management in South Africa: A developmental perspective*. Cape Town: Oxford.  Van der Westhuizen, *Ernst J. 2016. Human resource management in Government: A South African perspective on theories, politics and processes.* Cape town: Juta  **Legislation (Acts/Regulations)**  Republic of South Africa. 1994. Public Service Act 103 of 1994. Pretoria: Government Printer. [http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/legislation/1994  Republic of South Africa. 1995. Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995. Pretoria: Government Printer. [http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/legislation/1995]  Republic of South Africa. 2001. Public Service Regulations. (Notice R.1 of 2001). Pretoria: Government  Printer. [http://www.polity.org.za/html/govdocs/regulations/2001] | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Research Methodology** | **This is a selection books on methodology. Further reading over and above these is essential:**   * Brynard P.A & Hanekom, X.C.1997. Introduction to research in Public Administration and related academic disciplines. * Creswell, J.W. 2013. *Qualitative enquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches.* * Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research design* * De Vos, A.S. Strydom, H. Fouche, C.B. & Delport, C.S. 2011. *Research at grass roots* * Mouton, J. 2001. How to succeed in your master’s & doctoral studies: South African guide and resource book. * Byrne, M. 2001. Sampling for Qualitative Research. From: htpp://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\_mOFSL/is\_2\_73/ai\_70871448/ (accessed 14 February 2010). * O’Sullivan, E. & Russell, G.R.1995. Research Methods for Public Administrators. * O’Sullivan, E., Rassel G.R. &Berner, M. 2008.Research Methods for Public Administrators. | | | |
| **Resources: Scholar community** | **Recruitment and Selection** Although numerous pieces of legislation have been put in place to redress discrimination and to correct imbalances in the demography of management progress to achieve greater social justice in the workplace has been slow (SAIRR, 2007). In a study by the Unilever Institute of Marketing at the University of Cape Town (2006), it was found that a significant number of black employees (65%) had changed jobs at least once within the past three years.  Some degree of turnover is inevitable and perhaps desirable, although high rates of turnover can be costly to the reputation of an institution and to the quality of instruction (Dee, 2004:593). Dysfunctional turnover occurs when an organization loses strong performing employees, whereas functional turnover results from the loss of poor performing employees (Park, Ofori-Dankwa and Bishop, 1994). An organization needs functional turnover to ensure that new talented employees replace those who do not add value.  **Talent Management** Within higher education, the demand for academic staff within Unisa has been increasing due to growing student numbers over the past few years (Barnes, 2012). This phenomenon is particularly relevant to an open distance learning institution such as Unisa where students who have not been able to secure registration at a residential university due to limited space available, are able to pursue their post-matric qualifications via correspondence education.    Higher education institutions in South Africa remain obligated to comply with transformational legislation to ensure that South Africa truly has a diversified workforce. Job hopping amongst black professionals severely compromises the achievement of equity targets. It is widely accepted today that the responsibility of retaining talented employees is that of the employer (Candy, 2005). The employer should also have a robust vision and be growing with the changing times thus giving young and ambitious talented employees’ reasons to stay much longer than 3 or 4 years.  The academic workplace has changed dramatically and the meaning of such changes in the lives of students and staff is described in terms of disruption, alienation, the loss of community and shared identity and an increase in emotional labour (Webster & Mosoetsa, 2001). The reality of an aging professoriate must be dealt with. It is also possible that talented employees are lost due to the appointment process of an institution which may be unnecessarily cumbersome, tedious and time-consuming. The recruitment and retention of especially leading and promising black scholars will remain one of the most difficult tasks facing higher education, in part because of the financial attractions of the private sector and in part because of the nature of the academic workplace (Potgieter, 2002).  **Recruitment** of a new academic starts with a potential employee finding the employee value proposition of a higher education institution appealing. Sufficient interest is generated that results in the same individual exploring possible employment opportunities within that institution. According to Metcalf et al (2005, 16) recruitment and retention is affected by the whole employment package relative to other employment. These include pay and fringe benefits, intrinsic aspects of the job (eg. for academics, teaching and research), job security, work organisation, autonomy, progression, family-friendly practices, congeniality of colleagues and the working environment etc. The more attractive the overall package, the more likely it will attract applicants and retain employees.  Baker (2007:16) defines change management as the “process, tools, and techniques to manage the human-side of the change processes meant to achieve the required outcomes.” Such a change management, according to Baker (2007:1) “should be underpinned by an overarching strategy that provides a rationale for change, vision of the future state, when the changes have to be made, an indication of how the changes are to be made, over what time period, and by whom.” In addition, Prosci (2010:3) defines change management as “(the application of) the set of tools, processes, skills and principles for managing the people–side of change to achieve the required outcomes of a change project or initiative.” Therefore, strategic planning during change management becomes paramount. | | | |
| **Potential M&D research focus areas or research projects** | | | | |
| **Unit of Analysis** | | **Research Focus** | | |
| Recruitment and selection of HRs  Performance management improves employees’ performance and translates into better service delivery.  Motivation of HRs  General human resource management  Gender studies  Human resource development | | Recruitment policies and practices in the selection of competent and qualified candidates  Effectiveness of the performance management and development system in the public service  Personnel motivation and public service delivery  Strategic human resource management  Succession planning  Strategic change management  Personnel staffing process  Gender responsive budgeting  Training influences employees’ performance  Attracting and retaining of academic talent  Effect of educators’ qualifications on learner performance  Transforming training in the South African public service | | |