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EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITIONS, EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE, AND LONGEVITY OF STAY IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING; A CASE OF UGANDA MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

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Abstract: Purpose: *The ever-changing environment, and the resultant demands of employees, have made it inevitable for organisations to seek Employee Value Propositions (EVPs) as a panacea for enhancing employee experience (EE), and longevity of stay of talent. The Uganda Management Institute refreshed Strategic Plan (2023 to 2025) introduced the concept of UMI Tribe, a Scientific Pay Package, medical insurance, and a research-led teaching approach aimed at fostering a value tag on employees. This study sought to examine whether or not, and how, the refreshed EVP tenets enhanced EE, as well as longevity of staff stay at the institute.*

Design: *The study preferred a single case study design focusing on Uganda Management Institute.*

Methodology: *In order to generate in-depth data, conversational interviews were preferred. In addition, a documentary review was carried out.*

Approach: *A qualitative research approach was used in order to gain understanding of the forms of Employee Value Proposition elements in the UMI Strategic Plan (2023 to 2025), and the employee lived experiences of its implementation through descriptive data.*

Findings: *The findings revealed that a competitive scientific consolidated pay package, medical insurance, research led teaching approach, and the UMI Tribe concept contributed to EE and longevity of staff stay at the institute. There was however, an apparent prioritization of the financial element. Findings further revealed the relationship between the EVP model and the strategic plan (2023-2025) EVP tenets. The need for management to continuously seek for new potential drivers for employee experience and longevity of stay, given the ever-changing work environment was also expressed.*

Originality of the research: *Studies combining Employee Value Proposition, Employee Experience and longevity of stay are scanty. This original study, contributes to the body of knowledge more so with a focus on a higher institution of learning.*

Keywords: *Employee Value Proposition; Employee experience; Longevity of stay*

1. Introduction

Trends in Uganda's labour market indicate a dire shortage of critical skills (National Labour Force Survey (NLFS), 2021; Uganda Employment Rate – 2021 Data – 2022 Forecast). As such, the ability for attraction, ensuring satisfaction and engagement, and longevity of stay of talent in an ever-changing environment remain the currency for any organisation's future (Veldsman, & van der Merwe, 2022).

Managers in both private and public entities are therefore hypothesising a possible linkage between an innovative Employee Value Proposition (EVP) with employee experience (EE), and longevity of stay (Edward, 2009).

Uganda Management Institute has overtime expressed the desire to value tag its employees through its Strategic Plans. For instance, the institute Strategic Plan (2019–2023), provided for a competitive consolidated salary package including (basic pay salary, medical cover, and housing allowance). The strategic plan further provided for; a car loan scheme, contract gratuity, a 13th pay cheque, bank loan guarantee, staff training and development, and end-of-year parties, among others. Conversely, there were indicators of low staff engagement, and intentions to quit (Annual Uganda Management Institute Governing Council Review Report, 2023). In an effort to foster a refreshed value tag on employees, a new Strategic Plan (2023–2025), was unveiled. The refreshed EVP introduced the concept of ‘UMI Tribe’, a Scientific Pay Package, medical insurance, and a research-led teaching approach. The aim was to enhance a positive work experience, and longevity of stay of talent.

A well-thought-out EVP is one that, in addition to enhancing potential talent perception of an organisation’s attractiveness, elicits staff satisfaction and engagement, and the will to stay for long with the organisation (Swanepoel, & Saurombe, 2022). Previous studies majorly focused on EVP and its contribution to organisational branding and attractiveness to talent, and not EE, and longevity of stay with an organisation (Briones, Saludes, Lagustan, Magtibay, Pagapulan, & Verano, 2025). Whether or not the EVP elements proposed in the UMI Strategic Plan (2023–2025) contributed to EE and longevity of stay was the objective of the study. In addition, the investigation explored the ways in which EVP contributed to the EE and longevity of stay. The key questions were; what EVP tenets were introduced in the strategic plan (2023-2025)? How did the refreshed EVP tenets contribute to Employee Experience and the employee longevity of stay? What is the relationship between Pawar and Charak’s Priority Model of Employee Value Proposition and the EVP tenets in the strategic plan (2023-2025)?

2. Theoretical Framework

In an attempt to postulate the possible contribution of EVP to EE and the individual employee decision for longevity of stay with the institute, the Priority Model of Employee Value Proposition developed by Pawar and Charak was espoused. The model provides a framework for designing unique and appropriate EVPs for organisations while exploiting elements such as career, employee, rewards, work and institution, as indicated in Table 1 below (Pattnaik & Misra, 2016).

Table 1: Framework of Pawar and Charak’s Priority Model of Employee Value Proposition

Element	Factor
Career	Future Prospects Meritocracy Growth Opportunities Stabilities Organisation Organisational Stability
Employee	Senior Leadership Managerial Quality People Management Co-worker Quality Collegial Environment Camaraderie

Rewards	Compensation Health Benefits Leaves Retirement Benefits
Work	Work-life Balance Innovation Job Reputation Interest Alignment Job Impact Location Business Travel
Institution	Respect Product/Service Quality Ethics Employer Recognition Customer Reputation Brand Awareness Technology Level Empowerment Industry Market Position Environmental Responsibility Risk Taking Social Responsibility Informal Environment Diversity Organisation Size

Source: Charak and Zaware (2020)

Employee Value Proposition refers to the deliberate, and comprehensive offer by management to an employee in exchange for qualifications, work experience, mental and physical efforts (Ariyanto & Kustini, 2021; Review & Backhaus, 2016). Parreira and Honours (2007) offer a five-element framework for measuring EVP, which includes: (1) Rewards, both financial and non-financial, offered to employees in exchange for effort rendered to the organisation; (2) Opportunity, such as growth in the organisational ranks, further training and development, and favourable assignments and deployment; (3) Organisation, in terms of the culture, and value system; (4) Work specifications, processes, and tools; (5) People, supportive people and, harmonious working relationships. The EVP elements suggested by Parreira and Honours (2007) are aligned with the Pawar and Charak Priority EVP Model elements of career, employee, rewards, work and institution, thus qualifying the model as the most appropriate for this study.

Moreover, the Pawar and Charak Priority EVP Model suggests that employees are rational and are able to attach value to propositions, including rewards, opportunity, organisation, work, and people offered by the organisation (Veldsman & Pauw, 2018). The higher the value judgement, the more likelihood that employees will reciprocate with favourable work effort, and the will to stay with the organisation (Bagienska, 2018; Putri & Mayasari, 2025). Reciprocity will be guided by exchange quality, which includes trust, obligation, and mutual respect, and the organisation's perceived

identity of EVP elements (Rounak & Misra, 2020). Additionally, as provided for by the Pawar and Charak Model, EVP elements are not static; the dynamic environment within which organisations operate leads to expectations, as well as demands, from both employers and employees. As such, organisations that seek to design compelling EVPs at all times will regularly review and design new EVP elements, create supportive policies, a value system, a work culture, and talent management strategies (Pawar, 2016). Thus, the implementation of the refreshed Strategic Plan (2023–2025) introduced the elements of UMI Tribe, research-led teaching approach, scientific salary, and medical cover. The aim was, in part, to evoke perceptions of employees being valued by the institute, who would, thus, reciprocate by contributing towards goal attainment and their intention to stay.

Employee Value Proposition has been found to contribute to employer attractiveness, employee engagement, and employee willingness to stay with the organisation (Phungula, 2022; Pawar, 2016; Ariyanto, & Kustini, 2021; Sengupta, Bamel, & Singh, 2015; Catanzaro, 2020; Arminah, 2022). The model enables the researcher to link EVP to other outcomes, such as EE, and the likelihood of employees to want to stay with the organisation (Fuadi, 2023). Firdausy (2017) found a close alignment between the EVP Priority Model and the EVP elements of career, employee, rewards, work and institution. As such, compelling EVP design is likely to elicit the perceptions of positive EE, and eventually the willingness to stay with the organisation.

Lee and Kim (2023) liken the concept ‘employee experience’ to ‘customer experience’; thus, the inherent proposition that employees are important to the functioning of the organisation, and should be treated as such. Whereas there are several definitions of EE, I intend to agree more with Moganadas and Goh (2022), who look at EE as a holistic experience of employees that includes their interactions with various aspects of the work environment. Employee experience may refer to the construed cognitive and emotional perception of an employee’s work, people, organisation, and opportunities provided by the organisation (Edenia, Mohammad, Fadli, Rosmawati, & Prayudo, 2025; Kulkarni et al., 2022). Once an employee has gained an emotional and cognitive positive state of mind, they are likely to express positive behaviour and the desire to stay with the organisation (Yohn, 2020; Porkodi et al., 2024; Grover & Chawla, 2022). As such, UMI employees’ perception is likely to be shaped by the refreshed EVP elements of UMI Tribe, medical insurance, scientific salary and research-led teaching approach (Plaskoff, 2017; Jefta & Rudi 2023; Hernanda, Prawitowati, & Yulianti; Indrayani & Sari, 2025).

3. Methodology

The researcher espouses a constructionivist interpretive stance. To harness the in-depth qualitative descriptive interview data, a single case study research design was preferred. Uganda Management Institute was used as a single case with multiple participants drawn from different strata. Qualitative studies embrace purposive sampling since knowledgeable participants are sought for (Creswell, 2013). Stratified sampling on the other hand was used to recognize the different strata in a higher education institute. As such, 17 participants including staff, and members of the governing body were selected. A point of saturation was reached by the 17th participant, thus, there was no need for further interviews (Creswell, 2013). Detailed categorization is shown in the table 2 below.

To gain a more holistic understanding of staff lived experiences of the refreshed EVP, and how it contributes to employee experience and intentions to stay, the following broad interview questions were asked; What is EVP?, What EVP tenets has UMI used before the 2023-2025 strategic plan? What EVP components were introduced in the strategic plan (2023-2025)? How do the refreshed EVP components contribute to EE and longevity of stay?, were asked. The aim was to gain congruence

of the responses that were deemed accurate, while disparities were observed, and clarification was sought.

Table 2: Sampling frame

Category	Population	Number selected	Sampling method	Reason for selection
Members of Governing Council	13	3	Purposive	The Governing Council is responsible for Strategic Plan approval and overseeing implementation. The Chairperson of the Governing Council, Chairperson of the Programs Committee, and the Secretary to the governing Council were Selected.
Top Management staff	7	4	Purposive	Responsible for initiating, and implementation of approved EVP elements. The CEO, 2 deputies, and manager Planning were selected.
Teaching staff	56	5	Purposive	Impacted by the EVP elements. 4 school Deans and 1 head of department were selected.
Non-teaching staff	31	5	Purposive	Impacted by the EVP elements. The manager Human Resources, Bursar, Procurement officer, library assistant, and office assistant were selected.

Source: primary data

To enhance the credibility of the data, the interview tool and documentary review protocol were pretested on participants that did not participate in the actual study. On the onset of conducting interviews, each participant was briefed about the right to consent and confidentiality of the information provided during interviews. This was to ensure that they felt free to participate in the

study, which would enhance data accuracy (Creswell, 2013). Data was recorded using field notes, memos and reflective notes, as well as a recorder to ensure accuracy. Transcription of data was done as soon as possible in order to recall expressions of body language, and hesitations or agreements that could be interpreted for meaning.

Qualitative data analysis started from the field with the researcher gaining insights of possible themes while skimming the interview data (Bryman, 2017). Colour coding of similar words, phrases or sentences was carried out. Reflective notes and memos written during field work were also analysed. The many sub-themes earlier generated were collapsed into two themes and aligned to the study objectives. Data was further analysed from documents such as Uganda Management Institute Council minutes, and Annual reports. Documentary analysis provided insights of the ethos of the Council and Management while coming up with the EVP elements.

4. Results

This section presents findings grounded in interview data from a cross-section of stakeholders. Data from the interviews was content and thematically analysed, and the results are presented in the sections below. Interview data was validated through the use of more or less similar questions and evaluating responses for either concurrence or divergence in views. Thereafter, data from documents was analysed and aligned to interview data. The identified themes were; 1) EVP tenets in the Strategic Plan (2023-2025), and 2) Experiences of how EVP influenced Employee Experience and longevity of stay.

4.1 Employee Value Proportion elements in the strategic plan (2023-2025)

Prior to the institutionalisation of the refreshed Strategic Plan (2023–2025), the institute had in place a competitive consolidated salary package (basic salary, medical cover, and housing), a car loan scheme, contract gratuity, a 13th cheque, salary loans, bank loan guarantee, and end-of-year parties, among others. The list of EVP elements captured in the Strategic Plan (2019–2023) was read out to each participant during interviews in order to remind them of the existing elements, and to solicit views regarding their value judgement. Guided by the questions, ‘rank the EVP tenets as at July, 2023 in order of preference’, a value judgement measure by participants was developed as indicated in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Most valued EVP elements in the UMI Strategic Plan (2019 to 2023) as of July 2023

Element	Frequency	Percentage
Competitive pay package	4	23.5
Contract gratuity	3	17.6
Career development opportunities	3	17.6
Bank loan guarantee	2	11.7
Institute culture and values	1	5.8
13th cheque	2	11.7
Engaging job roles	1	5.8
End-of-year parties	1	5.8

Source: Primary data

Though the 17 participants were interviewed, and data was analysed, separately, there was a general consensus that UMI has progressively implemented EVP elements meant to enhance EE and longevity of stay. The progressive elements show that the institute is aware of employee value due to skill and work experience, thus develops schemes that are deliberately aimed at attracting, maintaining and retaining talent. This is underpinned by the belief that when employees psychologically feel that they are adequately valued, they will have a good EE, and this will lead to eventual longevity of stay with the institute.

The next questions were in regard to the EVP tenets in the strategic plan (2023-2025). To the question; ‘identify the key EVP elements in the strategic plan (2023-2025), several participants identified the value tag elements as; UMI tribe, a scientific salary, research-led, and provision of medical insurance instead of cash incorporated with the salary. Participant 7 further added that ‘To me the EVP tenets are not any different from the ones of the previous strategic plan. They all talk of financial gain, encourage need for oneness like UMI tribe, and medical cover which changed from cash to insurance’. While gaining insights into the various elements of EVP that UMI has implemented over time, participants expressed the inherent strategies for prioritisation of the different EVP elements. Notably, factors such as individual satisfaction and growth, recognition of individual effort, and security of tenure emerged as pivotal drivers of perceived value proposition. The analysis further shows an inclination towards financial rewards, thus the employer will need to design EVP elements that do not only attract talent, but also ones meant to evoke positive EE, as well as employee willingness to stay. In response to the question ‘which EVP element would you regard most important to you’, participant P3 explains thus: ‘For me, compensation and benefits are paramount. I need to ensure that my salary and benefits package align with my financial needs and expectations. This is because first and foremost compensation and benefits motivate employees to perform better to produce better results’. P2 reinforced this view by explaining that: ‘As an employee, financial stability is crucial for me and my family. So, I prioritise opportunities that offer competitive pay, retirement plans, and other perks that contribute to my overall well-being. With financial stability, an employee feels satisfied and performance is always at its highest peak’. By understanding and leveraging the alignment of financial benefits with employee expectations, organisations can gain a competitive edge in attracting talent, fostering satisfaction and engagement, and retaining talent in a dynamic labour market.

The inherent desire to grow among employees was apparent in the findings. As such, organisations that need positive EE and longevity of stay of talent should put in place structures, policies and programmes such as training that strengthen the growth culture of the organisation. P6 argued for professional growth by stating that: ‘I believe that continuous learning and professional growth are essential for staying relevant and competitive in today’s job market. So, I seek employers who prioritise employee development, through training programmes, mentorship opportunities, and chances for career progression. This is most likely to lead to improved employee performance, employee skills development and overall organisation performance’. In an ever-changing environment that demands new skills and experiences, professional training and development elicit employee positive experience of job security, and possibilities of growth. Moreover, in today’s knowledge age, employee feeling of obsolescence due to the absence of continuous capacity development programmes and stagnation would drive away talent.

To emphasise the differences in employee prioritisation of EVP elements, P1 stated that: ‘An organisation that values employee well-being and invests in their development is where I see myself thriving. Can you imagine a situation when a loved one is sick, and you don’t have money to take care of him or her? This is why the availability of medical insurance plays magic. It helps to avoid both psychological as well financial stress in the times of need. Most of us did not think going to gym and exercising generally had substantial meaning. However, when government directed and UMI

provided a trainer, I feel lighter and closer to colleagues, especially those from other departments that I would rarely interact with'. P1 added: "There is nothing as disturbing to an employee as being ill or having a close relative that is ill yet you don't have resources for treatment. With the medical cover, I regularly check my blood pressure or sugar levels especially that I'm ageing. The medical allowance attached to the salary had three challenges; firstly no one would actually keep the money aside to wait for the time when one is sick, secondly it attracted pay as earn tax, and thirdly, the amounts were small compared to the insurance cover. My only request is that they should consider including more children and parents to the staff medical scheme". Employee well-being measures provided by UMI include medical insurance, days off, and gym activities, among others, which go a long in evoking feelings of being valued by the institute, thus a positive EE and willingness to stay for long.

Moreover, strong institution values, appreciation of diversity, commitment to work and innovation, resonated with participants' perceptions of positive work experiences. Participant P6 states thus: "For me, EVP factors like company culture and work environment are paramount. I prioritise these over salary or job title because, ultimately, I want to work in an organisation where I feel valued and supported. The organisation should also have a positive image out there". P8 emphasised: "While salary is important, I prioritise EVP factors like organisational culture and organisational value system. A supportive work environment and an ethical organisation makes a job offer much more appealing to me and the want to be associated with such an organisation for long. I also need an organisation that is not static, one that embraces change like adapting to technology". This indicates a shift towards highly value-judging organisational values, and culture over traditional metrics like salary and job title when making employment decisions.

4.2 Experiences of implementing refreshed EVP elements enshrined in the (2023–2025) Strategic Plan

In exploring whether or not EVP tenets of the refreshed Strategic Plan (SP) led to perceptions of positive EE and ultimate resolve to stay with the institute, P5 explained: 'When I'm paid a scientific salary, I feel recognized and elevated in status compared to other lecturers in other universities. Because of the value that the institute attaches to me with the scientific salary pay, I'm always willing to renew my contract, and stay with the institute'. P16 expressed similar sentiments, by saying: 'The scientific salary is substantial. You can imagine it is almost double what our colleagues in other universities in the country earn. There is an exponential increase in research and publication probably due to the scientific salary. UMI stands out as a good employer thus staff stay for long and are always willing to renew their contracts'. Synthesis of the above extracts brings to the fore, the inherent economic drive among employees while value judging EVP elements.

According to P13: 'EVP enhances the institute's identity and how it is perceived in the market. It gives me enlightenment of the institute's desire to adopt a culture of change and innovation when they introduced research-led teaching in order to align with global standards'. P8, arguments that: 'The element of research-led stood out for me because of its innovative approach, and reputation for leading higher institutions of learning. I feel contented that my teaching delivery is challenging, and I what to go a long way to support my students instead of cramming notes to reproduce in the exams. The institute is known for going beyond what meets the eye, through fostering a culture of creativity and innovation'. The participants seemed to point out the fact that work processes may become monotonous and uninteresting at some point, thus the need for innovative and challenging new ways. Research-led teaching enhances student-centredness, unlike the teacher-centred approach that looks at the teacher as the fountain of knowledge.

Participant P9 explained: 'For me, I would explain UMI Tribe as the uniqueness of the institute. Having values, beliefs that glue us together as a family. We are social beings, and the concepts of UMI

Tribe helps to feel the sense of oneness. We have staff that have worked with the institute for over 30 years, and still express the willingness to continue due to the collegial relationship that exist between staff. The sense of oneness, especially in times of need, i.e. when you lose a loved one or during times of sickness, fellow staff will not only contribute money, but be physically available to comfort you'. Participants shared experiences where EVP elements had influenced their decision-making process in the past. Such as; supportive work environments, characterised by inclusive workplace policies and team-building activities. In this connection, P10 asserted: 'I find myself having inner satisfaction with my work, and compelled to contribute more since the institute fosters a sense of oneness, where collegial, respect, and inclusivity are valued aspects of the organisational culture'.

In regard to medical insurance participant 14 said: 'initially medical cover was included in the consolidated salary. It was difficult for staff to keep the money for use when they fell sick. With the medical insurance, one is assured of treatment when they fall sick.' This revelation indicates that employees will require diverse elements of EVP including financial and non-financial in order for management to gain the full psychological state that enhances EE and the desire to stay.

5. Discussion

The table below indicates the key findings of the study followed by a detailed discussion of whether they agree or disagree with existing literature.

Table 4: Refreshed EVP elements introduced in the 2023–2025 Strategic Plan

	Key research questions	Key results
1	'What is EVP?,	Participants expressed that they were knowledgeable about the concept Employee Value Proportion. Most noted that it was an expression of how management values its employees through various strategies. Such strategies were indicated in the Strategic Plan.
2	What EVP tenets has UMI used before the 2023-2025 strategic plan?	Several participants mentioned elements such as; a salary package that covered (basic pay, medical, housing and transport), a 13th pay cheque, bank loan guarantee, end of year party and contribution in cases wedding or death of beloved one among others.
3	What EVP components were introduced in the strategic plan (2023-2025)?	Participants especially from the middle, and senior management mentioned the refreshed elements which included: Research Led, UMI tribe, Scientific salary and medical insurance. Participants also prioritised the financial elements over the others.
4	How do the refreshed EVP components contribute to EE and longevity of stay?	Overall, data revealed that well developed EVP elements would contribute to Employee Experience and longevity of stay with the institute. The psychological feeling of being valued by the employee would cause a state of satisfaction, the need for commitment in order to give back to management, and the desire to continue staying with the organization.

The study findings indicated that well-aligned EVP led to a positive EE and, ultimately, the desire for longevity of stay with the institute. While gaining insights into how employees perceived the various elements of EVP that UMI has implemented over time, there was an apparent expression of the inherent strategies for prioritisation of the different EVP elements. Notably, EVP elements that enhanced individual financial satisfaction and growth, recognition of individual effort, and security of tenure emerged as pivotal drivers of perceived value proposition. The analysis further shows an inclination towards financial rewards. Thus, the employer will need to design a comprehensive EVP package that evokes perceptions of financial satisfaction in addition to growth and wellness. This infers that transactional incentives with concrete economic elements created a psychological bond, leading to a positive EE and stability (Ariyanto & Kustini, 2021; Review & Backhaus, 2016; Namira & Pramesti, 2025). As such, by leveraging the alignment of competitive financial compensation with employee expectations, organisations can create a positive EE and longevity of stay in a dynamic labour market (Briones et al., 2025).

In an ever-changing environment that precipitates new demands and expectations from both employers and employees, EVP elements should not be static; rather, they should be reviewed and new innovations should be made, to enhance sustained EE and longevity of stay. The current study revealed that UMI has progressively come up with new elements of EVP aimed at addressing new expectations of both the employer and the employee. Prior to the institutionalisation of the refreshed Strategic Plan (2023–2025), the institute had in place a competitive consolidated salary package (basic salary, medical cover, and housing), a car loan scheme, gratuity, the 13th cheque, salary loans, bank loan guarantees, and end-of-year parties, among others. The refreshed Strategic Plan introduced the ‘UMI Tribe’, medical insurance, research-led teaching, and a scientific salary. The study revealed that there was a preference for the financial proposition of the scientific salary. The refreshed elements were found to reignite a sense of financial value tag, collegiality and unity of purpose, care, and empowerment. The deliberate crafting of EVP elements that align with current financial satisfaction propositions, career development opportunities, work-life balance, and company culture resonate with literature that indicates the role of EVP elements in shaping employees’ perceptions of organisational recognition and the individual intention to stay (Boswell et al., 2012; Briones et al., 2025).

The findings indicated that the refreshed EVP tenets were occasioned by the institute’s long-time investment in the training and development of its staff. The resultant effects of staff training and development were twofold; on one hand, staff training and development guaranteed quality staff and performance, while on the other hand, the institute became vulnerable to staff poaching if no adequate means of enhancing EE were put in place. Other drivers were the need to remain attractive to talent, as well as ensure employee experience by providing a competitive and comprehensive EVP package. To add to the diverse drivers of change in EVP proportions, Briones et al. (2025) suggested that organisational culture, and leadership might play a more crucial role. Additionally, participants highlighted the importance of transparent communication, and alignment of EVP elements with personal values as factors that contributed to EE and longevity of stay.

The inherent desire to grow among employees was apparent in the findings. Organisations that intend to create a positive EE and longevity of stay of talent should put in place structures, policies and programmes such as training that infer the growth culture of the organisation. Moreover, a knowledge-age workplace does not only demand new skills and experiences, but also elicit employee desire for positive experience of job security, and conjures possibilities of growth. An employee’s feeling of obsolescence and stagnation would drive away talent (Cable & Turban, 2003).

The findings indicate diverse prioritisation of EVP elements by employees. Whereas, principally, financial benefits seemed to earn a higher value tag, some participants expressed admiration for EVP

elements that express care and employee well-being. This is in agreement with Okello et al. (2021) finding that non-financial value or reciprocity would influence an individual’s job satisfaction or employee experience with an organisation. Specifically, the study points out care for the sick, support when an employee or an employee’s loved ones pass on, and the provision of a wellness trainer. Care for the sick, and support in times of death of an employee or loved ones were likely to reduce both psychological and financial stress. Given that employees are social beings, work-life balance initiatives would foster stronger relational and emotional ties between employees and the employer, leading to positive employee experience and longevity of stay (Lavenia, 2022). Conversely, as Namira, and Pramesti (2025) found out, perceived organisational support through initiatives such as wellness schemes had no significant influence on employee stability.

Additionally, strong institution values, appreciation of diversity, and commitment to work and innovation, resonated with participants’ perceptions of positive work experiences. Lavenia (2022) opines that an EVP that underscores a positive organisational culture is likely to foster higher relational ties between the employer and the employees. The results indicated that employees expressed the desire to be associated with EVP elements that had an inclination to a value system, positive culture and ethics, which enhanced the institute’s identity, and how it is perceived in the market. This indicates a diverse value prioritisation which places a higher value tag on organisational values, and culture over traditional metrics like salary and job title when making employment decisions. The participants’ emphasis on the importance of aligning personal values with organisational values echoes the literature that emphasises the role of person-organisation value fit in employee attraction and retention (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

An evolving and adaptive organisational culture was also advocated for. The results show that the EVP element of research-led teaching was seen as empowering and innovative. Indrayani and Sari (2025) indicate that fostering an innovative behaviour would evoke psychological capital and positive employee experience. Nurvitasari et al. (2021) noted that EE which includes perceptions of the work environment was likely to improve employee adaptability and support for innovations. This result is consistent with Kulkarni et al. (2022), who support the view that empowerment through innovation and organisational culture have a positive relationship with EE and are thus, likely to lead to longevity of stay (Moganadas & Goh, 2022).

Pawar and Charak suggest a Priority Model of Employee Value Proposition which highlights the key elements that should be considered while coming up with an appropriate EVP for an organization. Such elements include; career, employee, rewards, work and institution (Pattnaik & Misra, 2016). The table below attempts to align the EVP elements in the strategic plan (2023-2025) with the Pawar and Charak Priority Model of Employee Value Proposition framework.

Table 5: Alignment of EVP elements in the strategic plan (2023-2025) with the Pawar and Charak Priority Model of Employee Value Proposition framework.

Pawar and Charak Priority Model elements	UMI strategic plan (2023-2025) EVP elements	Commonalities
Rewards	Scientific salary: Tag a value measure to staff as ‘scientists’ in order for them to earn a higher salary than what government pays to humanities lecturers in higher institutions of learning.	A befitting pay package that reflects the value of the employee.

Employee	UMI tribe: Create a culture of oneness, teamwork, cordiality, collegiality, and supportive involvement	An employee is a social being. Needs an environment that promotes a sense of belonging, collegial and supportive culture
Employee	Medical insurance: Provision of medical cover to staff, spouse, and child	The employee medical cover needs to be taken care of. This has the psychological effect of perceiving care.
Work, Institution, Career	Research led: Integration of research and teaching, encourage critical thinking and problem-solving, as well as innovation	The work should be interesting, engaging, and encourages innovation. Employees will need systems that enhance growth.

Source: Charak & Zaware (2020) and modified with primary data

The above alignment demonstrates the applicability of the model.

Overall, the findings suggest that a well-designed EVP is likely to infer a value proportion tag to the employee, thus elicit a feeling of satisfaction and engagement, and the willingness to stay with the institute. However, the institute needs to consider drivers such as affordability, equity, trust and transparency. The responses demonstrate the complex nature of EE and how different aspects of EVP can appeal to individuals based on their values and preferences. Employer Value Proposition represents a strategic framework that articulates the values, culture, and benefits an organisation offers its employees in return for their contributions. Serving as a cornerstone of effective talent management, a well-crafted EVP plays a vital role in promoting deeper organisational commitment and employee intention to stay. Organisations must construct an EVP that is not only distinct and appealing, but also capable of inspiring employee loyalty and drawing prospective candidates (Putri & Sugandi, 2017).

6. Conclusion

The study sought to tease out EVP elements suggested in the refreshed Strategic Plan (2023 to 2025), and whether or not the refreshed EVP elements contributed to EE and longevity of stay at the institute. Overall, the study affirmed that an effective EVP is a strategic tool for enhancing employee experience and retaining talent, more so in a dynamic labour market. The findings are in agreement with Pawar and Charak's Priority EVP Model which serves as a good guide to managers in designing competitive EVPs for their organisations. The study postulates that employees are rational beings thus value tag the EVP elements provided by the employer leading to a psychological state, and making decisions of work engagement and stay with an organisation. Managers seeking to enhance employee experience and longevity of stay of their employees could apply the EVP framework in table 5 which demonstrates synergy between an organization's strategic plan, and Pawar and Charak Priority Model of Employee Value Proposition framework. Furthermore, managers will appreciate the need for continuous review and alignment of EVP elements with the existing conditions.

7. Further research

This study looked at a single case of a higher institution of learning thus limiting generalizability. Further studies including multiple cases, contexts, and a mixed approach could be conducted to produce more robust data.

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