SYNDICATE 1
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Why do higher education institutions not offer a specific retail buyer qualification for prospective students to pursue in South Africa?

PROBLEM FORMULATION

PROBLEM STATEMENT

To determine how South African retail sectors can collaborate with academic institutions to bridge the skills gap by tailoring a specific academic program.

SKILLS SHORTAGE

A critical gap exists in the retail buyer position, identified as hard-to-fill (W&RSETA 2024-2025).

UNITED NATIONS SDG 4 CONNECTION

Focus on quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. The lack of skills for retail buyers directly relates to achieving SDG 4 (UN DESA, 2024).

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Research

Research aims to answer the question "why."

Data Collection Method

Primary Data Gathering: The research data collection included the use primary data by conducting semi structured interviews.

Secondary Data: Academic peer reviewed articles has been used to collect secondary data.

Sampling

Retail Human Resources & Talent acquisitions practitioners.

Retail Buyers

Academic Institution associated W&R SETA.

All syndicate team members conducted interviews for the purpose of the research analysis.
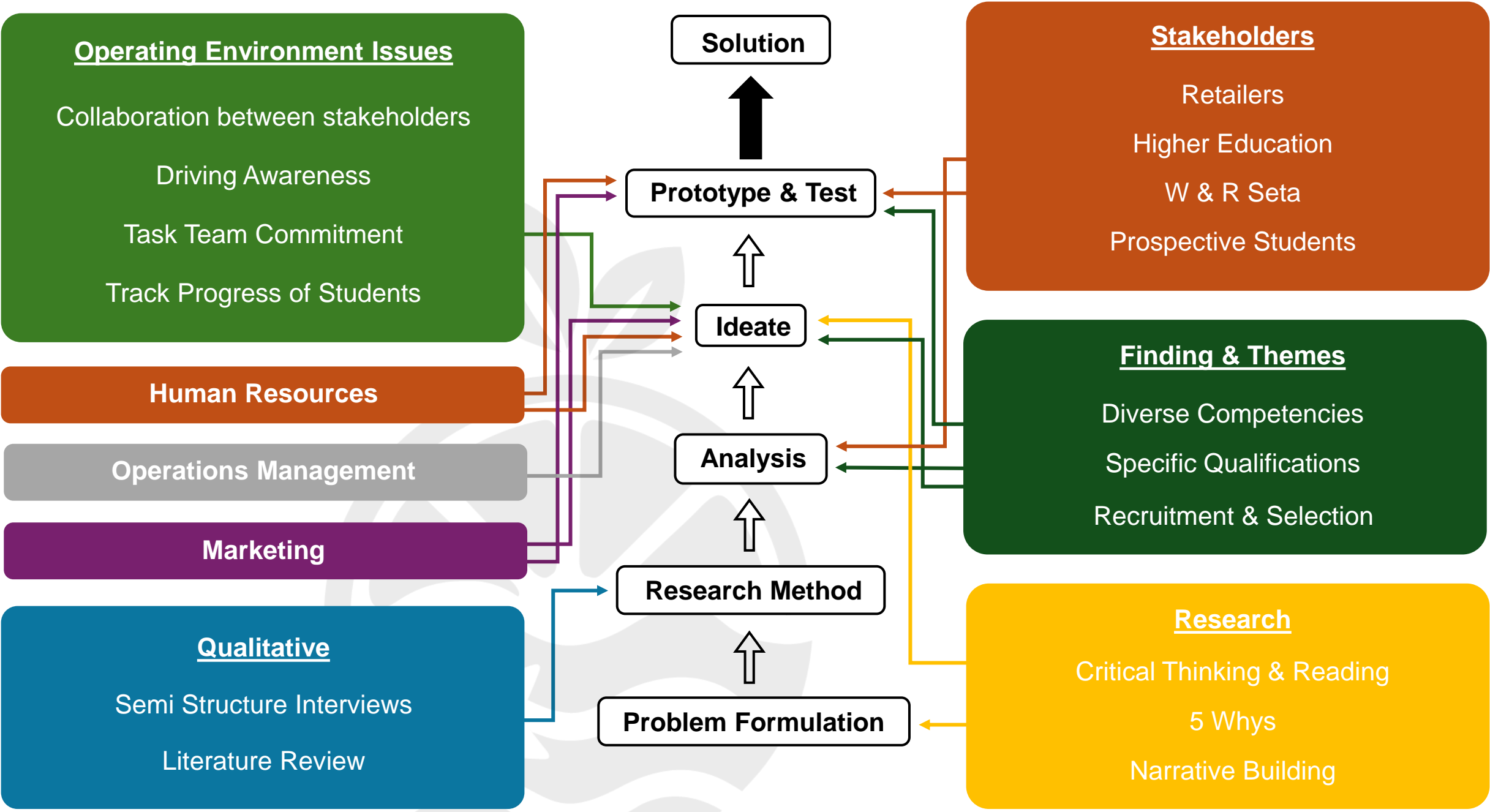
Data Analysis

Data Analysis was done manually , the feedback indicated that there are existing qualifications for Retail Buyers.

Solution

Operating Environment Issues

Collaboration between stakeholders

Driving Awareness

Task Team Commitment

Track Progress of Students

Human Resources

Operations Management

Marketing

Qualitative

Semi Structure Interviews

Literature Review

Prototype & Test

Ideate

Analysis

Research Method

Problem Formulation

Stakeholders

Retailers

Higher Education

W & R Seta

Prospective Students

Finding & Themes

Diverse Competencies

Specific Qualifications

Recruitment & Selection

Research

Critical Thinking & Reading

5 Whys

Narrative Building

Retail buyer is a hard to fill position in South Africa

DEVELOPING SOLUTION

A Solution Development Approach: 7 Steps To Decision Making

IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

WEIGH THE EVIDENCE

GATHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

TAKE ACTION

IDENTIFY THE ALTERNATIVES

REVIEW THE DECISION

CHOOSE AMONG THE ALTERNATIVES

(Panpatte & Takale, 2019)

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SOLUTION DEVELOPMENT

Figure 1.1 Diagram illustrates solutions from brainstorming session to solution formulation.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO RETAIL BUYER ROLE BEING HARD TO FILL

SOLUTION DEVELOPMENT

Figure 1.1 Diagram illustrates solutions from brainstorming session to solution formulation.

- RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION
- AWARENESS & COLLABORATION WITH BROADER STAKEHOLDERS
- COLLABORATION WITH EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
- CREATE A SPECIFIC QUALIFICATION FOR A RETAIL BUYER
- TALENT MANAGEMENT: RETENTION & SUCCESSION PLANNING
- LEARNERSHIP PROGRAMS

SOLUTION **SUPPLY**

Task Team Structure
Triple Helix Approach

Head Office Role: Central coordination for strategic planning, program evaluation, and partnerships with accredited retailers and educational institutions.

Key Teams within the Task Team

- Awareness and Marketing Team

- Training and Development Team

- Recruit Talent

Objectives and Functions

- Raise Awareness

- Recruitment and Placement Team

- Provide Training and Certification

Phase 2

Awareness & Marketing Launch
Launch awareness campaigns and promotional materials.

Phase 3

Recruitment & Training Initiatives
Being recruitment drives, training programs and placements.

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Phase 4

Monitoring & Evaluation
Regularly assess effectiveness and adjust strategies based on feedback.

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SOLUTION ROLLOUT PLAN

Holistic Approach

Combines theoretical knowledge (market analysis, supplier negotiation) with practical experience through internships.

Accreditation

Aligned with Occupational Certificate: Retail Buyer at NQF Level 5, featuring tailor-made electives.

Funding and Accessibility

Financial support from W&RSETA promotes inclusivity and diversity in the workforce.

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SOLUTION BENEFITS
& VALUE ADD

NON-FINANCIAL GAINS

Training & Development

Youth Employment

Talent Pool & Succession Planning

Reducing the Skills Mismatch

Ethical & Sustainable Sourcing

Employee Productivity

1 Awareness of the qualification by potential future buyers

2 Collaboration with higher education institutions

**3** Partnerships with medium to large retailers

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FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

- The W&RSETA has sufficient staffing to effectively set up and manage the programme without needing to recruit additional staff.

- They will be no salaries considered as the task teams salaries are already absolved within their current roles.

- The Occupational Certificate for Retail Buyer course fees at R22 000 per person as per the Laduma Academy cost.

Initial Setup Cost	
	Year 1 Setup Cost
Marketing Material Once Off	R200,000.00
Total	R200,000.00

Yearly Operating Overhead Costs:								
		Rate	Year 1	Increase %	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Institution	30	R22,000.00	R660,000.00	8%	R712,800.00	R769,824.00	R831,409.92	R897,922.71
Student Travel	30	R7,000.00	R210,000.00	8%	R226,800.00	R244,944.00	R264,539.52	R285,702.68
Course Material	30	R5,000.00	R150,000.00	15%	R172,500.00	R198,375.00	R228,131.25	R262,350.94
Marketing Material			R200,000.00	10%	R220,000.00	R242,000.00	R266,200.00	R292,820.00
Prining & Stationery			R180,000.00	8%	R194,400.00	R209,952.00	R226,748.16	R277,888.01
Contingencies			R200,000.00	20%	R240,000.00	R288,000.00	R345,600.00	R414,720.00
Total			R1,600,000.00		R1,766,500.00	R1,953,095.00	R2,162,628.85	R2,398,404.35
Totals			R1,800,000.00		R1,766,500.00	R1,953,095.00	R2,162,628.85	R2,398,404.35	R10,080,628.20

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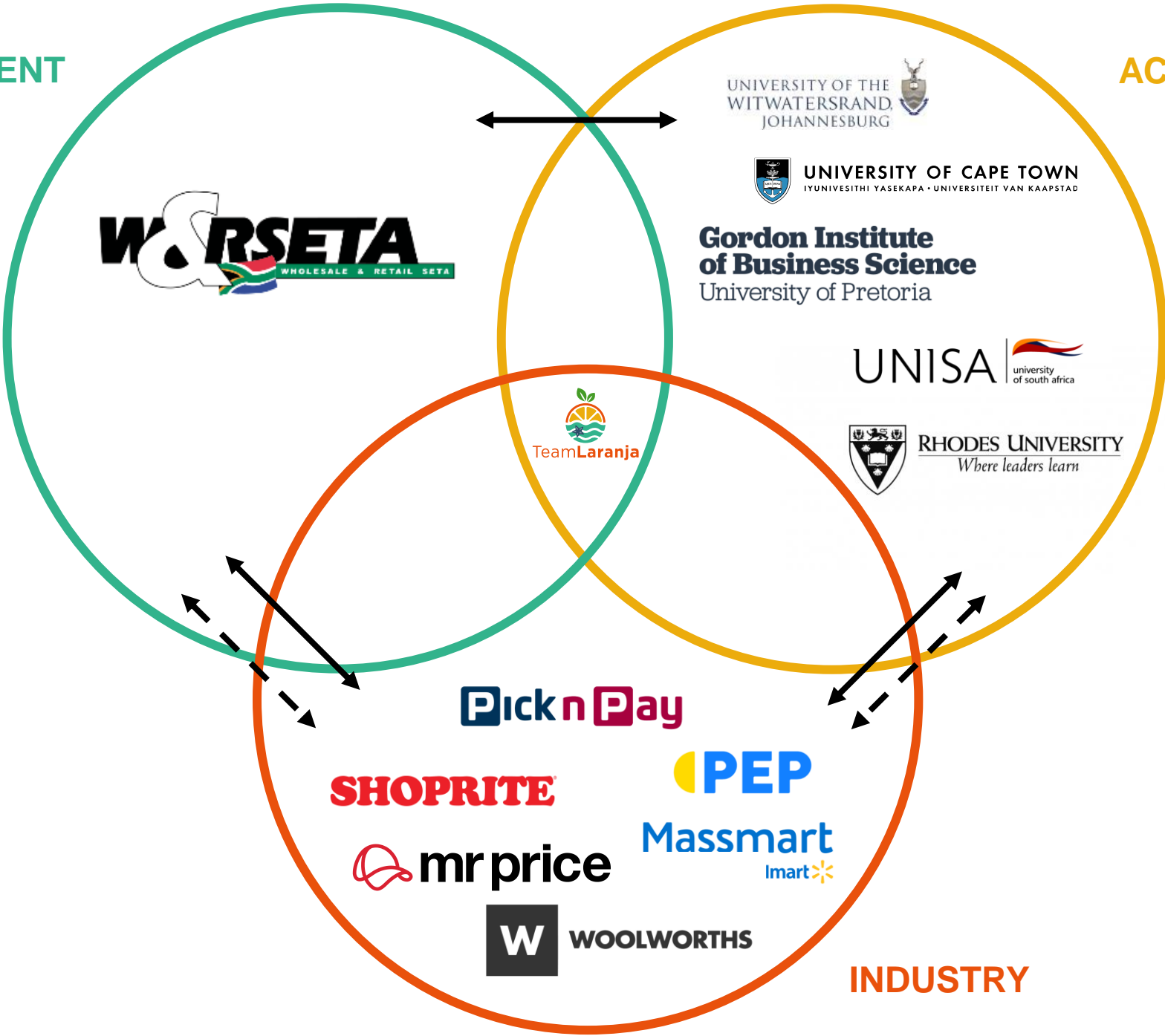
WHAT, WHAT NOW & SO WHAT?

PROBLEM STATEMENT

To determine how South African retail sectors can collaborate with academic institutions to bridge the skills gap by tailoring a specific academic program.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Theme 1:
Diverse Competencies Required and Blended Skills.

Theme 2:
Specific Qualification and Levels of Education

Theme 3:
Recruitment Challenges

Theme 4:
Internal Training Programs

Theme 5: Industry-Specific Perception

SOLUTION

Awareness of the RBDP & collaboration with broader stakeholders(*Triple helix approach*)

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