

Identification Of Talent Management Practices In Central Universities In India

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ABSTRACT: *Purpose – This paper aims to identify the relevant factors of Talent Management (TM), Employee Performance (EP), and Employee Competency (EC) in two central universities of India in terms of the relationship between Talent Management and Employee performance along with an indirect relationship through Employee Competency.*

Design/methodology/approach – The study was cross-sectional, using 671 responses from respondents in two public universities (Aligarh Muslim University, AMU, and the University of Delhi, DU). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was employed to analyze the data.

Findings – The study identified two factors of Talent management, three of employee performance, and two of employee competency significant for both the Universities.

Originality/value – An important contribution of the study is the adoption of a scale taken up from developed countries and validating it in the Indian context, thereby enabling researchers and practitioners to measure talent management and its outcomes in Higher education comprehensively.

KEYWORDS: *Talent management, Employee Performance, Employee Competency, Higher Education, Central Universities*

Paper type: Research paper

I. INTRODUCTION

Talent Management (TM) can be described as—the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention, and deployment of individuals with a high potential of creating a particular value to an organization. Collings and Mellahi (2009) define strategic talent management as practices and processes involved in the systematic identification of key positions that contribute differentially to the sustainable competitive advantage of an organization, developing a talent pool to fill these roles with incumbents having high potential and performance, and designing a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these roles with capable incumbents while ensuring their continued allegiance to the firm. Talent Management has been the motivation for a more consultative, knowledge-based role of human resources in overall business management for more than 20 years. The premise is simple, enabling companies to focus on attracting the best people, as always done in a competitive marketplace, as well as their retention along with the development of existing staff. In other words, from a technological viewpoint, talent management offers enterprises the chance to recruit the best people available for responding to business needs.

Universities are communities of researchers and teachers that succeed and survive depending on their ability to attract, develop, and retain highly qualified employees. Until a couple of decades ago, an academic position would immediately provide recognition to staff members and allow them to work in an extraordinarily inspiring intellectual atmosphere. Universities' recruitment policy could be limited to carefully selecting people applying for a tenured position. As a prototype of a professional bureaucracy (Mintzberg, 1983), such a selection process would require multiple assessments over an extended period. However, over time, the land of plenty has been terminated by deteriorating demography combined with exponential growth in the research and knowledge industry. Attraction and retention of highly qualified employees have become an important issue in HRM (Flynn, 1994; Chambers et al., 1998; Solomon, 1988; Butler and Waldroop, 1999; Hiltrop, 1999; Cappelli, 2000; Van der Dussen, 2000; Langan, 2000). Both private and public employers complain about the challenges of attracting and retaining qualified employees. Universities are unable to escape this "war for talent" (Reponen, 1994; El-Khawas, 1994; Machin and Oswald, 2000; Stomp, 2000; Hardeman, 2000). Administrations in higher education can profit from the accomplishments of talent management in organizations from other industries.

Talent management is essential for high-performing academics in central universities to continue their training and development of potential new roles, identifying knowledge gaps, and working to improve competencies. These government universities are growing rapidly in terms of satisfactory annual graduations and broad discipline delivery. With this development and the retention of academic personnel, the quality of academics and talent of the university has assumed an increasingly important role.

II. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

There is a dearth of studies on talent management and knowledge management (KM) in higher education (Sunalai and Beyerlein, 2015; Veer Ramjeawon and Rowley, 2017; Paisey and Paisey, 2018). The majority of studies on TM deals with theoretical frameworks with limited focus on empirical research (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Gallardo-Gallardo and Thunnissen, 2016; Thunnissen, 2016; Mohammed et al., 2018). Moreover, empirical research on TM is either qualitative or quantitative, and only 20 percent of them use a mixed-method (Gallardo-Gallardo and Thunnissen, 2016; McDonnell et al., 2017). Similarly, recent empirical studies on KM focus on certain aspects, “such as the individualistic nature of research and loyalty to discipline, or specific elements of KM, such as knowledge sharing amongst academics” (Agarwal and Marouf, 2017; Veer Ramjeawon and Rowley, 2017). Thus, there is ample scope for research in the area of TM and KM using empirical methodologies. Admittedly, the poorly defined scope and lack of empirical studies on the subject of talent management are gradually being realized in the academic setting (King, 2015; Caiazza and Volpe, 2015). While talent tends to improve the rankings and profits of educational organizations (Diezmann, 2018; Lynch, 2015; Hazelkorn, 2017), there is scarce research on TM in higher education (Mohammed et al., 2018; Paisey and Paisey, 2018). Hence, this research adds value to the TM theory by designing a guide (conceptual model) of Talent Management Practices (TMPs) for the higher education sector. Besides, the bulk of TM research emphasizes theoretical frameworks as compared to empirical research (Tomany, 2016; Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015; Gallardo-Gallardo and Thunnissen, 2016; Thunnissen, 2016). Consequently, pragmatic evidence regarding TM is lacking in the above-mentioned sector. Therefore, this study is aimed at designing a quantitative measurement of TM for higher education using a qualitative methodology.

Secondly, most of the researchers conducted in India are on Private and deemed universities and no study has been conducted on any central university hence this study makes a major contribution towards the research in Indian Higher education.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Talent and Talent management

Reilly (2008) and Ingram (2016) consider talents and their management a motivator of organizational performance as well as a resilient block against market shifts and economic disruptions. Talent can be referred to as the knowledge and skills of an individual, enabling him/her to function creatively and contribute to the success of his/her organization (Goffee and Jones, 2007). Morton (2004) defines it as employee competence, which can positively be translated into higher performance and better organizational results. Goh (2002) and Lawson (2004) consider organizational culture as an enabler for managing talent. Besides, cultural factors such as involvement, adaptability, consistency, trust, and knowledge sharing are considered key contributors to retain the talent in an organization (Mousa and Alas, 2016; Migdadi, 2009). King (2015) opines that talent management is an interactive process that includes the following four main factors: top management—responsible for declaring a talent strategy (intent, planning, and defining the concept of “talent”); supervisors—attracting, developing, and deploying talents; talent managers—recognizing and selecting talent; talented employees that enable learning and development. An effective operationalization of talent management in an organization requires a collaborative culture, effective tools and measures, and a reporting structure for following, monitoring, and evaluating talent performance regularly. Over the past ten years, the notion of “talent management” has gained wide familiarity in human resources management literature and practices for both academic and professional purposes. Dries (2013) points out its increasing cognizance and diverse scope in organizational public environments and, more so, in private ones (Stahl et al., 2012). However, this concept is rarely addressed in empirical studies (Thunnissen et al., 2013). Although Dries (2013) claims that research on talent management has progressed from a nascent to a maturing stage, Vaiman and Collings (2013) explain the need for further empirical studies in this area from various cultural, institutional, and societal viewpoints.

1.2 Talent management in higher educational institutions

An extensive search for any research addressing talent management practices in higher education institutions by the authors of this paper revealed the following limited academic efforts. Rudhumbu and Maphosa (2015) found that managers of higher education institutions in Botswana lack awareness and experience in the development and implementation of talent-related plans. Cornuel and Verhaegen (2005) focused on Talent management practices and recorded that the level of satisfaction related to current talent management practices in academic contexts varies based on gender, ages, and ranks of academic members.

Moreover, the extent of satisfaction is primarily dependent on the legal structures, orientations, and academic status of the faculties as well. This is consistent with the assertions of Barkhuizen et al. (2014). They posit that ethnicity, age, and rank play a role in the satisfaction of talented academic members in higher education institutions of South Africa. Bradley (2016) investigated the universities for HR practices, exclusively

focusing on talent management and talent pools, and found a lack in alignment in the recruitment, development, retention, and rewarding of academic talent with the organizational strategy.

Moghtadaie and Taji (2016) stated that the function of in-service training programs, continuous learning, and training of technical skills were imperative for improving the performance of faculty members. Annakis et al. (2014) suggested that competency levels of talent management for Academics were substantially higher where management adopted the integration of HR systems for identifying value, measuring the performance of team and individual, assessing and developing careers, providing honest formal feedback, and a culture high-performance incentives. Though studies have been conducted in India on Private universities and deemed universities, they did not perform an empirical analysis for demonstrating the actual talent management practices in Indian Public Universities. Thus, the authors have attempted to explore how these Universities perform talent management. Moreover, the authors have sought to obtain a comprehensive image of the primary policies and/or activities pursued by the two central universities to hire, identify, empower, reward, and evaluate the performance of their academic talents as an effort towards laying the path that may be followed by Central Universities for talent management and subsequent improvement in their performance, competency, reputation, and quality of academics.

IV. METHODOLOGY

As mentioned in section 3.2, the authors observed a scarcity of studies focusing on talent management practices in public organizational environments. Moreover, they realize that the majority of organization-related literature management considers talent management as an emergent concept, including scholars Ross (2013a) and King (2015). Furthermore, the extant literature on talent management comes under the umbrella of psychology, HR management, information technology, and organizational behavior. Thus, the authors attest with the best of their knowledge that there is no research on talent management specific to public universities in India. This may largely explain the need for a study on this topic.

1.3 Development of the Instrument

This study explores scales and tools developed and validated by other researchers. We have modified the same instrument according to higher education in India, without mutating the original sense and purpose to provide clarity and understanding to the respondents, (Yu et al., 2004). A systematic literature survey helped in the identification of several instruments relevant to the study.

1.4 Content Validation and Content Adequacy

The questionnaire adopted by the authors has been implemented in a Western setting. Therefore, for ease of use and improved comprehension by higher education staff in India, a review of the number of items and adaptability in language was needed. The instrument consisted of 78 items. Two expert researchers from the field of HR were requested to review the scale items against each construct. As a result, items from one of the constructs of employee performance were modified from negative statements to positive ones, along with a few other adjustments in the language. Table 4 represents the integrated scale of Talent management, Employee Performance, and, Employee Competency.

1.5 Pre-testing

A pre-testing of the research questionnaire was conducted to figure out the problems in the questionnaire and hence, a pilot survey was performed on 43 respondents each from AMU and DU. Then to analyze the data obtained, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was employed which further refined the research instrument. After the analysis, the items were reduced from 78 items to 48 items.

1.6 Participating universities and respondents

Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and the University of Delhi (DU) were the participating universities for the research. Three faculties which were UGC accredited, namely: Arts, Social Science and Humanities and Commerce and Management were taken up as the population for sampling. The respondents for the study were the faculty members of the two universities having at least one year of working experience.

1.7 Final data collection

The data was collected using paper and pen format and face to face with the respondents therefore there were few chances of biased and partially filled responses. The researcher collected data from around 32 departments over 6 months (August 2018 to February 2019). Around 700 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members of both AMU and DU. The questionnaires were personally administered. Still, after scrutiny, few questionnaires were considered unfit for further processing due to various problems such as not returning it,

or unfilled questions, or delaying it for weeks, resulting in a final sample of 671 respondents; 340 and 331 from AMU and DU respectively.

1.8 Profile of Respondents

The respondents' profile was heterogeneous. 331 respondents from AMU comprised 70.69% males and 29.31% females. The full-time faculty comprised 61.02%, Temporary 21.45%, Guest Faculty 16.31%, and Ad Hoc 1.20% of the total population. In AMU, the majority of respondents belonged to the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities 44.71%, followed by Faculty of Arts 41.99%, and Faculty of Commerce and Management 13.29 %. The majority of the respondents were Ph.D. holders, comprising 47.43% of the total sample. 2.41% of respondents were NET/JRF qualified, and 25.37% were both NET /JRF and Ph.D., whereas the remaining 24.77% had some other qualification. Assistant Professors constituted 53.17%, followed by Professors 28.39%, and Associate Professors 18.42%.

Among 340 respondents from DU 59.41% were males and 40.49% were females. In the case of DU, 40.29% of respondents were employed full-time, 27.94% were temporary, 25.58% were guest faculties, and the remaining 6.17% were working on an Ad Hoc basis. The highest number of respondents belonged to the Faculty of Arts 44.41%, followed by Social Science and Humanities 39.70%, and Commerce and Management 15.88%. The majority of respondents were NET/JRF qualified, which was 42.35% of the total sample. 25.58% were Ph.D. holders, and 27.35% possessed both NET/JRF and Ph.D. Assistant Professors constituted the majority of the sample with 62.64%. Out of the remaining, 22.05% were Associate Professors and 15.29% were Professors.

V. ANALYSIS OF DATA

1.9 Exploratory factor analysis

The overall scale after data collection was put through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with principal component analysis (PCA) using Kaiser Normalization on the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) 20. It revealed the existence of seven underlying factors, namely, Talent Culture (TC), Talent Identification (TI), Task Performance (TP), Adaptive Performance (AP), Contextual Performance (CP), Social Competence (SOCM), and Self Competence (SCM). The factors that emerged were considered based on Eigenvalues (factors with Eigenvalues > 1.0 were considered) signifying the variance (Hair et al., 2010; Malhotra and Dash, 2011). Principal components analysis (PCA) was used for factor extraction and considering the total variance in the data. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test checked the suitability of data for the factor analysis resulting in satisfactory values of 0.763 (Table 1) and 0.700 (Table 2) for AMU and DU, respectively. Bartlett’s test of sphericity is a good indicator of the strength of the relationship among variables and it was significant, indicating the fitness of the sample for factor analysis (results are provided in Tables 1 and 2). Thereby, it was considered appropriate to conduct the EFA (see Tables 3 and 4). The Cronbach's alpha of the seven factors was found to be above 0.6, suggesting adequate reliability (depicted in Tables 3 and 4 for both AMU and DU, respectively).

Table 1. Sampling adequacy test for AMU

Kaiser –Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.763
Barlett’s Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	2421.865
df	300
Sig	0.000

Table 2. Sampling adequacy test for DU

Kaiser –Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.700
Barlett’s Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	2057.495
df	253
Sig	0.000

Table 3: Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis for Aligarh Muslim University

Name of the Construct	Item Code	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Talent Culture (TC)	TC2	Faculty members are rewarded for exemplary performance in a variety of ways	0.864	0.850
	TC3	Written and verbal recognition is given to faculty members when appropriate	0.821	
	TC1	Faculty members are nominated for various awards	0.807	
	TC4	Celebration of the exceptional performance of	0.758	

		faculty members		
Talent Identification (TI)	TI2	Assessment tools available within the University are used efficiently for talent identification	0.834	0.757
	TI1	The higher authorities are aware of the level at which faculty members are performing	0.833	
	TI3	The performance levels of employees are rated candidly during the performance appraisal process	0.638	
Task Performance (TP)	TP3	I share my knowledge with other faculty members and students	0.798	0.727
	TP1	I work at keeping my knowledge skills up to date	0.785	
	TP2	I think students and administration are satisfied with my work	0.769	
Adaptive Performance (AP)	AP3	I can cope well with uncertain and unpredictable situations at work	0.743	0.675
	AP1	I can cope well with difficult situations and setbacks at work	0.739	
	AP2	I come up with creative solutions to new problems	0.653	
Contextual Performance (CP)	CP2	I can fulfill my responsibilities expected from me as a faculty	0.776	0.692
	CP3	I come up with creative teaching pedagogies at work	0.653	
	CP1	I am capable of meeting my appointments	0.541	
Self-Competence (SCM)	SCM2	I have done well insofar	0.856	0.827
	SCM1	Owing to my capabilities I have much potential	0.812	
	SCM3	I perform very well at several things	0.786	
	SCM5	I have much to be proud of	0.696	
Social Competence (SOCM)	SOCM2	I help other people	0.903	0.920
	SOCM4	I get well along with others	0.893	
	SOCM3	I ask others if I can be of some help	0.860	
	SOCM5	I show care and concern for others	0.836	
	SOCM1	I am good at making friends	0.800	

Table 4: Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis for the University of Delhi

Name of the Construct	Item Code	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Talent Culture (TC)	TC4	Celebration of the exceptional performance of faculty members	0.839	0.846
	TC3	Written and verbal recognition is given to faculty members when appropriate	0.834	
	TC2	Faculty members are nominated for various awards	0.812	
	TC6	There are enough promotion opportunities in the department	0.758	
Talent Identification (TI)	TI5	A special budget for training and development of faculty provided by UGC is implemented and executed	0.856	0.854
	TI3	The performance levels of employees are rated candidly during the performance appraisal process	0.852	
	TI6	API score is enough for the acquisition of talent in universities	0.822	
	TI2	Assessment tools available within the	0.761	

		University are used efficiently for talent identification		
Task Performance (TP)	TP2	I think students and administration are satisfied with my work	0.868	0.768
	TP1	I work at keeping my knowledge skills up to date	0.817	
	TP3	I share my knowledge with other faculty members and students	0.775	
Adaptive Performance (AP)	AP3	I can cope well with uncertain and unpredictable situations at work	0.887	0.868
	AP5	I focus on positive aspects of work instead of negative	0.881	
	AP4	I have trouble setting priorities for my work	0.809	
Contextual Performance (CP)	CP1	I am capable of meeting my appointments	0.811	0.735
	CP4	I take the initiative when there is a problem to be solved	0.756	
	CP2	I can fulfill my responsibilities expected from me as a faculty	0.751	
Self-Competence (SCM)	SCM2	I have done well insofar	0.820	0.683
	SCM1	Owing to my capabilities I have much potential	0.790	
	SCM4	I am a capable person	0.751	
Social Competence (SOCM)	SOCM3	I ask others if I can be of some help	0.902	0.842
	SOCM2	I help other people	0.900	
	SOCM1	I am good at making friends	0.774	

1.10 Normality of data

Authors have suggested that the critical value of univariate normality should be between +3 to -3 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996; Churchill, 1995). The values of skewness for scale items lied between 0.226 and 1.843 for AMU, and between 0.25 and 1.78 for DU. The values of kurtosis were between 0.751 and 1.887 for AMU, and 0.71 and 1.68 for DU. Hence, all the items exhibited a univariate normal distribution

VI. FINDINGS

The study revealed that there are seven factors which are as follows: Talent Culture, Talent Identification, Task Performance, Contextual Performance, Adaptive Performance, Self-Competence, and Social-Competence for both AMU and DU though the items of these factors were different in both the Universities.

VII. IMPACT OF THE STUDY

This study primarily contributes to the development of an Integrated Talent Management Scale consisting of seven constructs, namely, Talent Culture (TC), Talent Identification (TI), Task Performance (TP), Contextual Performance (CP), Adaptive Performance (AP), Self-Competence (SC), and Social-Competence (SOCM). This insight may be used by central universities applying talent management approaches to plan their talent management practices based on all or some of the constructs. Second, the existence of an integrated scale will make it easier to assess talent management and its performance for researchers and practitioners.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

8.1 Limitations

While the appropriate steps have been taken to study and change the instrument to ensure completeness with the guidance of experts, perfectly equivalent interpretations are still almost impossible to create and all respondents may not have perceived the terminology of the questionnaire similarly. When using the instruments for the analysis, these concerns were expected.

Secondly, individuals provided the data was by their own volition. People mostly want to portray themselves nicely to others, which may have motivated some of the respondents to provide socially desirable responses. Even the assurance of confidentiality is unlikely to have removed the appeal of “social desirability” in responses. The third limitation of this study was the generalizability of the findings. The study was focused only on two central universities; hence the results cannot be generalized for other universities.

8.2 Directions for future research

This study did not address all the potential variables contributing to performance, future research may concentrate on examining the influence of talent management processes on individual performance as well as organizational performance. The present research focuses specifically on talent management practices, talent management, and conceptualization of talent. The role of technology, the effectiveness of talent management strategies, and its impact on organization performance demand an increased emphasis. Additionally, the demographic variables can be studied for testing the effect of gender, designation, or educational qualification on talent management practices. It is expected that identifying and testing several other variables through further review of literature could be useful for future research.

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