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Modeling Talent Management in an Organization Using Structural Equation Method (Management of Education and Training in Basra Province)

Alaa Hafedh Salman. Al-Oda[1], Mehrdad. Sadeghi[2*], Riyaz Hossein Abais. Al-Murshidi[3], Saeed. Sharifi[1]

[2] PhD Student, Department of Public Administration, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
[3] Department of Cultural Management, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
[4] Department of Human Resource management, University of Karbala, Karbala, Iraq

*** Corresponding author email address**: mehr.sadeghi@khuisf.ac.ir

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A B S T R A C T

Objective: The purpose of the current research was to present a model for implementing talent management in an organization (Management of Education and Training in Basra Province).

Methodology: This study is an applied research and methodologically a mixed (qualitative-quantitative) research. The statistical population comprised of 250 managers and employees of the Education and Training department of Basra Province, and Cochran's formula was used for sampling, resulting in a sample size of 151 individuals. The sampling method was random availability. The model in question was refined through the Delphi technique across several criteria including: central conditions, causal conditions, contextual conditions, intervening variables, strategies, and outcomes, and eventually reached a consensus on 23 criteria and 80 sub-criteria. For modeling, structural equations and partial least squares were used via the SMART-PLS software.

Findings: The research results showed that the model for implementing talent management involves 6 causal conditions, 6 contextual conditions, 3 intervening factors, and 4 strategies, ultimately encompassing 3 major outcomes which, in order of priority, include individual outcomes (regular employees), inter-organizational outcomes, and organizational outcomes.

Conclusion: A reward system should be used to enhance the performance of employees and teachers, and appreciation for talents must be acknowledged. Lack of appreciation and the absence of appropriate rewards lead to a decline in productivity. Therefore, an appropriate system for appreciation and rewards must be developed. The employment examination for employees and teachers has its own conditions and complexities, and these must be optimized. Also, the education department's policy on human resources employment has not been very scientific or ethical, and to improve this, plans must be developed and implemented because primarily, appointments of managers are based on relationships, which requires a thorough review and drafting of criteria for appointing managers.

Keywords: *Talent management, Modeling, Structural equations.*

1 Introduction

Entering the third millennium and the emergence of a knowledge-based economy, human resources have been recognized as a competitive and strategic element in preserving organizational survival and increasing its productivity. The increasing demand of employers for skilled workforce and the desire of capable employees to secure valuable jobs have prompted organizations to compete with each other for attracting the best talents. Successful organizations are improving their strategies, policies, and practices to attract, develop, and retain talents essential for organizational sustainability. Talent management strategy serves as a tool that assists the organization in achieving this, striving to create conditions where the skills of promising employees are identified and utilized appropriately (Asgari et al., 2012). Competition for attracting talented employees, talent scarcity, and changes in demographic patterns have encouraged organizations to adopt strategic approaches to talent management (Amantayeva & Sartanova, 2023; Mensah, 2019).

Today's organizations face challenges such as social development, globalization, technological advancements, demographic changes, and increasing global competition. This evolutionary path not only leads to a workforce shortage but also risks the loss of knowledge and experience. Among the features that led the researcher to study talent management in police training centers were that talent management enhances performance (Basco et al., 2023; Beikzad & Ojaghi Shirmard, 2022), organizational commitment (Al-Mashdiny, 2021; Al Aina & Atan, 2020); organizational justice (Mohammad Panah & Shamkhani, 2014). While research has been conducted on talent management, these studies often examined factors influencing talent management. However, a study that field-implements talent management using Grounded Theory (examining causal factors, contextual factors, strategic factors, intervening factors, and outcomes) and then models it has not been found, hence a significant research gap is felt, which this research will fill, enriching the literature in this field. As stated, nowadays, having financial and technological resources alone does not count as the only advantage for organizations; having talented and capable individuals can not only be a competitive advantage for the organization but can also compensate for the absence or deficiency of other resources. In the current competitive environment, characterized by constant changes and continuous innovations, only those organizations that understand the strategic role of their human resources and possess skilled, knowledge-based, competent, elite, and capable human resources will succeed. Just as systematic efforts are made to attract customers, systematic actions should also be taken to attract organizational talents. The best strategy for success in competing for talents is not to gather all talented individuals, but to attract the most suitable ones. In other words, it involves discovering, attracting, managing, and engaging individuals who can be motivated, committed, and efficient in the company's work environment.

Talent management is beneficial for employees, managers, and the organizations studied in this research because comprehensive and correct talent management criteria ensure that employees and management of Education and Training in Basra Province are appointed to suitable jobs according to their abilities and talents, and their services are subsequently compensated fairly and adequately. Their development path will be clear, providing them with more and better opportunities. The results of this research can also assure the studied organizations that they have competent individuals with appropriate skills in suitable job positions. Talent management has a cycle that includes three main areas: identifying and attracting talents, retaining talents, and developing talents. Because the aforementioned organizations are no longer looking to hire manpower but are in pursuit of attracting talents; a situation referred to as the talent battle or the war for talent. In addition to gaining a competitive advantage as mentioned, employees will also benefit from the implementation of talent management, and it is necessary and essential that such research be conducted.

2 Methods and Materials

This research, given its descriptive nature, is of a mixed qualitative-quantitative type and is application-oriented in its purpose. The qualitative section of the research population consisted of 12 academic experts for identifying factors. In the modeling section, the statistical population consisted of managers and employees of the Education and Training department in Basra Province, totaling 250 individuals after consultation with human resources. The exact sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula, resulting in a sample of 151 individuals.

For data collection, a researcher-developed questionnaire was used, which was validated by experts. The questionnaire was based on the Likert scale, and its reliability was measured by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which yielded a

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total value of 0.789, indicating appropriate reliability. The validity of the content and AVE validity were also calculated and confirmed. Data analysis and hypothesis testing were conducted using structural equation modeling with partial least squares and Smart PLS software. Initially, the Delphi technique was used to finalize the identified influential factors. In this technique, each member of the group was given a questionnaire containing the desired criteria. Then, experts in this field, selected from 12 specialists familiar with all aspects, reviewed each index using the Delphi method. For the initial screening, indices identified were rated on a scale from 1 to 9, with indices scoring below 7 being eliminated. The Delphi technique concluded in the third round with final agreement. The results from the Delphi technique are shown in Table 2. As all dimensions had an average higher than 0.7, they were finalized as the main outcomes and used as the basis for measuring and designing the research questionnaire for modeling.

3 Findings and Results

Regarding gender, the sample consisted of 68 males (45.03%) and 83 females (54.96%), reflecting a slight female predominance. Age distribution showed that a small segment of the participants, 13 individuals (8.60%), were under 30 years old. The majority of participants were between 30 and 45 years old, comprising 75 individuals (49.66%), while those older than 45 years accounted for 63 participants (41.72%). In terms of educational attainment, 52 participants (34.43%) held a bachelor's degree, 81 (53.64%) had a master's degree, and 18 (11.92%) possessed a doctoral degree. The total sample size of the study was 151 individuals, ensuring a diverse representation across different demographic variables.

The results of convergent validity and Cronbach's alpha are visible in Table 1.

Table 1

Results of Convergent Validity Examination with AVE Criterion and Reliability Values

Variables	AVE	CR	CR > AVE	Alpha > 0.7
Identification and Determination of Talent Needs	0.533	0.913	OK	0.946
Identification and Discovery of Talent Resources	0.722	0.944	OK	0.853
Attraction of Talent Resources	0.611	0.927	OK	0.798
Talent Selection	0.663	0.905	OK	0.758
Talent Resources Evaluation	0.650	0.894	OK	0.790
Clear Mission and Vision of Schools	0.647	0.896	OK	0.788
Training	0.566	0.915	OK	0.723
Self-Empowerment	0.577	0.878	OK	0.704
Strategic Use of Talents	0.548	0.913	OK	0.714
Highlighting Talents in the Organization	0.747	0.914	OK	0.788
Preferred Management Style	0.557	0.922	OK	0.836
Financial and Non-Financial Compensation	0.666	0.940	OK	0.848
External Organizational and National Factors	0.687	0.924	OK	0.845
Laws, Regulations, and Policymaking	0.679	0.979	OK	0.825
School Structure	0.658	0.917	OK	0.733
Development of Talent Resources	0.699	0.868	OK	0.705
Evaluation and Alignment of Management Activities	0.686	0.944	OK	0.883
Preservation and Maintenance of Talents	0.638	0.923	OK	0.897
Development of Potential Abilities of Talent	0.644	0.877	OK	0.806
Individual Outcomes (Regular Employees)	0.678	0.866	OK	0.849
Organizational Outcomes	0.633	0.842	OK	0.738
Inter-Organizational Outcomes	0.670	0.897	OK	0.753

As seen in Table 2, since an appropriate value for AVE is 0.5, all variables have an average variance extracted higher than 0.5, confirming the results of convergent validity using this indicator. Additionally, the reliability value is also higher than 0.7, indicating appropriate reliability for the variables under examination.

As mentioned, structural equations were used to examine variables affecting the reduction of barriers in a learning organization, and the final research model is presented in Figure 1, where all dimensions in the model are significant.

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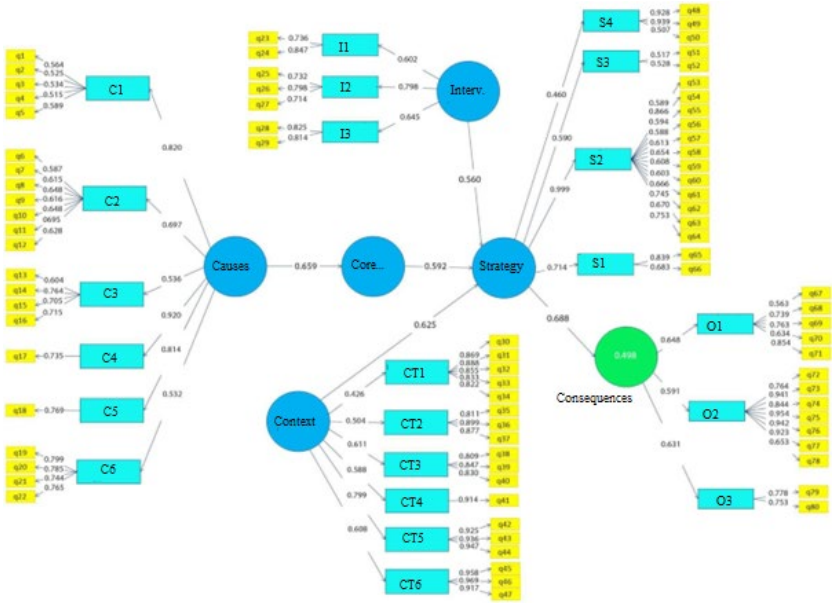
Figure 1

Final Model of The Study



In a significant state, the relationship or lack of relationship between independent and dependent variables is examined. If the t-statistic between two variables is higher than 1.96 and the significance level is less than 0.05, this means there is a significant relationship between the two variables with a 95% probability. Also, the second condition for establishing convergent validity is that factor loadings be greater than 0.4.

Table 2

Results of Overall Model Fit with GOF Criterion

GOF	Communalities Mean	R^2 Mean	GOF Calculation
0.505	0.514	0.498	√((0.514×0.498)) = 0.505

According to the results in Table 2, the obtained GOF value is 0.505, higher than 0.36, indicating a strong fit of the overall research model.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

To examine the model of implementing talent management, structural equations and the method of partial least squares were used, and eventually, the research model was drawn. In this model, it was determined that causal conditions with a factor load of 0.659 have an impact on the central phenomenon. Intervening factors with a factor load of 0.560 and contextual factors with a factor load of 0.625, and the central phenomenon with a factor load of 0.592 have impacted the strategies. Furthermore, strategies with a factor load of 0.688 have had an impact on the outcomes. As stated, in this research, the quantitative model was fitted using structural equations and quantitative methods, and various methods such as validity and reliability assessments were used to examine the model's items and factors. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the research model generally has relatively satisfactory internal consistency. To examine and establish the two conditions of validity and instrument credibility, relatively comprehensive criteria and methods were used. Three types of validity indices including internal consistency, item validity, and divergent validity were calculated in two stages of the research. In the findings section, examining three indices of model validity evaluation, it was concluded that the model's validity is appropriate in all three cases. The value of Cronbach's alpha coefficients has also increased, and appropriate composite reliability has been estimated. Then, with tests specific to model fitting measurement such as R2 and calculation of the GOF index, it was determined that its value is 0.505, consequently, the fitted model has a strong and appropriate fit, and findings from the research can be referenced.

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Given the role and importance of talent management in improving performance, since talent management in any organization, including the education department, leads to growth and advancement, the current research aimed to model the implementation of talent management in the Basra education organization. The findings of the current research indicated that the factors affecting the implementation of talent management are influenced by causal and contextual factors, and the structure of schools, the reward system, appreciation of teachers' and employees' efforts, employment conditions, and ethical principles in the process, clear organizational and school missions, drafting strategic plans and clear delineation of mission goals, values, and visions, laws, regulations, and policies, flexibility in the selection and recruitment processes of talented teachers and employees, and removing barriers to further education of employees and teachers are among the most significant items impacting the implementation of talent management. A reward system should be used to enhance the performance of employees and teachers, and appreciation for talents must be acknowledged. Lack of appreciation and the absence of appropriate rewards lead to a decline in productivity. Therefore, an appropriate system for appreciation and rewards must be developed. The employment examination for employees and teachers has its own conditions and complexities, and these must be optimized. Also, the education department's policy on human resources employment has not been very scientific or ethical, and to improve this, plans must be developed and implemented because primarily, appointments of managers are based on relationships, which requires a thorough review and drafting of criteria for appointing managers. Therefore:

The authorities of the Basra Education Department should have one-on-one meetings with each of their employees, allowing them to speak so that human capital and talents can be identified. Hence, human capital should be allowed to participate in these meetings and present their problems or ideas for improving any aspect related to work.

Appreciation should be shown for diligent and hard-working teachers and employees, and both financial and non-financial rewards should be utilized.

The Basra Education Department should create conditions that allow both school teachers and education department employees to receive training during service and even continue their education.

To improve the knowledge and skills of employees and teachers, managers and officials of the education department should welcome training courses both domestically and internationally, directing their forces to participate in these courses abroad and covering the necessary expenses.

To align organizational talents with employee expectations and organizational goals, use a team of experts to clearly explain these goals to all employees.

To maintain talents, emphasis should be placed on the job security of employees and teachers, ensuring that opportunities for growth and advancement are accessible to everyone.

The use of incentive plans, material and non-material rewards, job security and development, and the opportunity for growth and advancement based solely on individual abilities and capabilities can encourage talented employees to have a greater desire to stay in the organization, thus the Basra Education Department managers should focus on these aspects.

It is recommended that managers and officials of the Basra Education Department measure the level of organizational learning and knowledge using appropriate tests, and based on the results, seek to correct, improve, or enhance outcomes with such evaluations conducted two or three times a year.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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